



Why April? The Secret of the Japanese School Year

Read the story. 英文を読もう。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

❶ In Japan, spring is the season of new starts. Students graduate in March and start a new school year in early April. At the entrance ceremony, families take photos under the cherry blossoms. Many people think school starts in April because of the flowers. But the real reason is about money.



❷ In the 1870s, Japanese universities started in September, like schools in Europe. Then, in 1886, the government changed its money year. The new year for money started in April. Farmers paid taxes after they sold their rice in the fall, so the government needed time. Schools used government money, so they started in April, too. Some people say the army was another reason. Young men had to sign up for the army in April. Schools did not want to lose their best students.

❸ Slowly, more and more schools moved to April. Elementary schools followed by 1900. The big universities were the last to change, in 1921. Today, schools, companies, and city offices all start their year in April.

❹ Most countries start school in September, but not all. South Korea starts in March, and India often starts in April, like Japan. In 2020, Japan talked about moving to September. But many people said it was too difficult to change so quickly. So for now, Japanese students still say goodbye in March and hello in April.

Words 単語

graduate 卒業する

entrance ceremony 入学式

government 政府

tax 税金

fiscal year 会計年度

follow あとに続く、従う

diploma 卒業証書

romantic ロマンチックな、夢のある



Reading Check

Choose the best answer. 正しいものを選ぼう。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

1. What is the passage mainly about?

- (A) How to take good photos under cherry trees
- (B) Why the Japanese school year starts in April
- (C) Why French students wear uniforms
- (D) How rice is grown in Japan

2. When did Japanese universities start their year in the 1870s?

- (A) in January
- (B) in March
- (C) in April
- (D) in September

3. Why did the government need time before April?

- (A) Farmers paid taxes after selling rice in the fall.
- (B) Teachers were on vacation in winter.
- (C) Cherry trees bloomed in April.
- (D) The emperor's birthday was in March.

4. In paragraph 3, the big universities were the last to change. What does this mean?

- (A) They never changed to April.
- (B) They changed before elementary schools.
- (C) They changed after all the other schools.
- (D) They changed back to September.

5. Why does Lucas say it's not very romantic?

- (A) Because the cherry trees have no flowers.
- (B) Because the reason for April is about money.
- (C) Because he does not like photos.
- (D) Because school in France is better.

True or False? 正しいければ T、ちがえば F に○

The Japanese school year starts in April.	T / F
Japanese universities always started in April.	T / F
Japan's money year started in April from 1886.	T / F
Every country in the world starts school in September.	T / F



Word Work

Words & phrases. 単語のれんしゅう。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

① Match the pictures and the words. 絵と単語を線で結ぼう。



● backpack



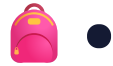
● camera



● graduation



● school



● diploma



● cherry blossom

② Fill in the blanks. 語群から選んで () に入れよう。

photo

year

July

April

gate

entrance

blossoms

September

snow

England

Emma's First Day

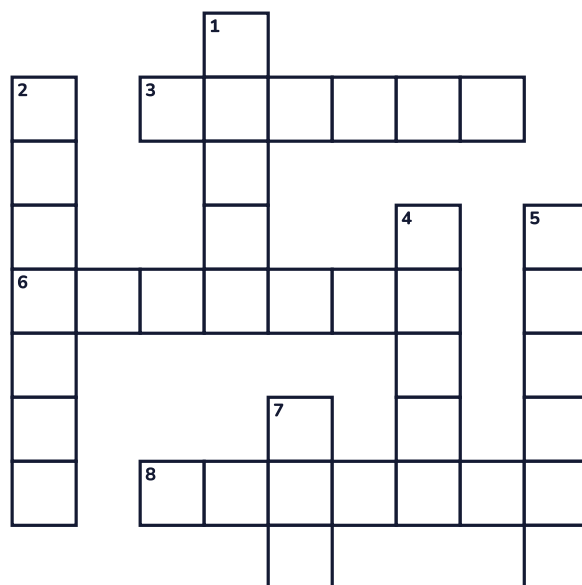
Emma is from (1) _____. In her country, school starts in (2) _____. But in Japan, it starts in (3) _____. On the first day, there is an (4) _____ ceremony. The cherry (5) _____ are pink and pretty. Emma takes a (6) _____ with her new friends at the school (7) _____. She is happy to start a new (8) _____.



Crossword Puzzle

Read the clues and fill in the puzzle. ヒントを読んで、クロスワードを完成させよう。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____



Across →

- 3 The season after winter. (6)
- 6 You get this paper when you finish school. (7)
- 8 A person who helps you learn at school. (7)

Down ↓

- 1 The fourth month of the year. (5)
- 2 A person who studies at a school. (7)
- 4 The third month of the year. (5)
- 5 A tree with pink flowers in spring. (6)
- 7 Money people must pay to the government. (3)



Word Search

Find the hidden words. かくれた単語を探そう (→ ↓ ↘ ↗)。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

L	P	P	H	W	D	E	H	D	T	D	T	S
P	U	F	W	B	D	C	V	N	R	I	F	M
H	N	L	R	K	R	J	E	S	U	P	B	L
O	P	J	W	A	F	D	E	B	Y	L	U	N
T	Y	W	M	O	U	H	N	K	D	O	M	E
O	T	T	M	T	A	P	R	I	L	M	K	K
M	E	D	S	S	F	S	N	W	B	A	N	C
I	A	J	D	P	V	P	P	O	Y	K	L	L
W	C	R	O	R	J	K	S	C	H	O	O	L
N	H	W	G	I	U	L	J	T	F	M	V	G
N	E	T	A	N	N	G	W	G	L	V	I	D
S	R	F	T	G	A	S	K	L	U	R	P	T
W	S	A	E	L	T	C	H	E	R	R	Y	E

Find these words! 10

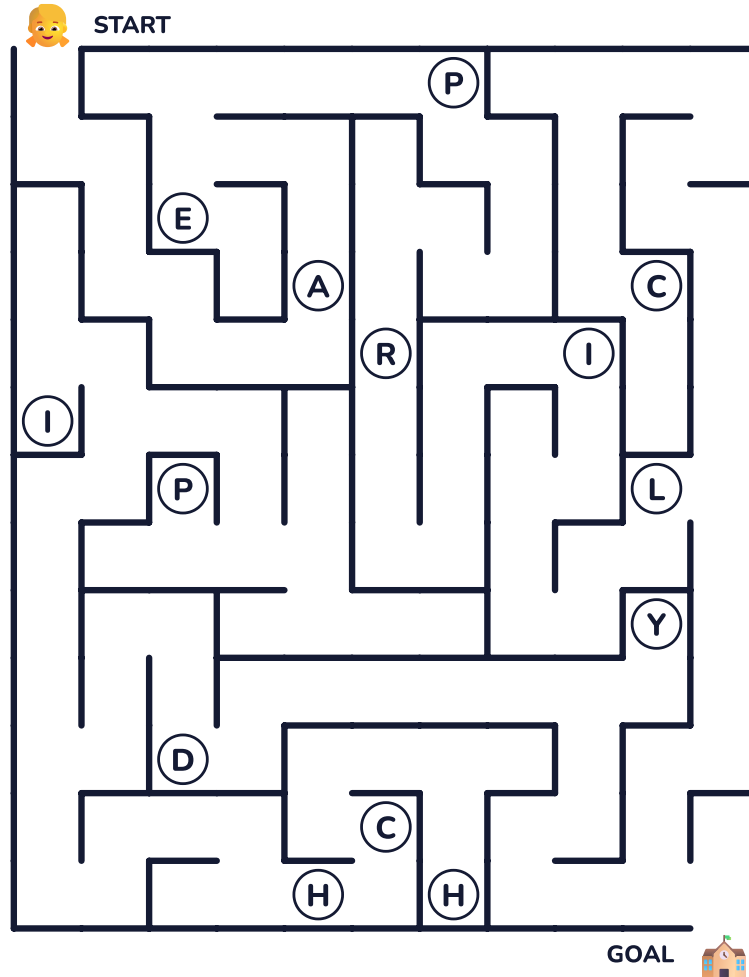
- ☐ APRIL
- ☐ CHERRY
- ☐ DIPLOMA
- ☐ GATE
- ☐ MARCH
- ☐ PHOTO
- ☐ SCHOOL
- ☐ SPRING
- ☐ STUDENT
- ☐ TEACHER

**Maze & Sentences**

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

Help Yuki get to her new classroom!

Collect the letters on the right path. What is the secret word? 正しい道の文字を集めると、ひみつの言葉になるよ。

**Secret word:** _____



Class Activity & Writing

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

Let's Write! 英語で書いてみよう。

I think the school year should start in _____ because _____.

At my graduation, I want to say "thank you" to _____ because _____.



Trace & Color

Trace the words. Then color the picture! なぞって書こう。絵に色を塗ろう。

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____



graduation



cherry blossom



school



diploma



backpack

Draw your Graduation & Entrance Ceremonies! 卒業式と入学式（日本の4月スタート）の絵を描こう。