

CrossTalk

September CROSSWORDS Language Studio's Newsletter 2006

MABON



September is the month of the Autumn Equinox here in the Northern hemisphere. This year it falls on the 23rd. There are two equinoxes in the year. The other, the Spring Equinox,

occurs in late March. Along with these there are two other important solar occurrences during our earth's trip around the sun – the two Solstices.

As everyone knows, the earth takes a year to travel around the sun in an almost perfect circle. But, the earth's polar axis is not aligned with the plane of its orbit; it tilts at an angle of 23.5°. This means that when one of the earth's Poles points towards the sun, the other points away from it. The point in either hemisphere where the sun's position reaches its highest (or lowest) extreme, as observed from the earth during its year-long journey, is called the Solstice – one in Summer (the longest day of the year), one in Winter (the shortest). During this journey (keep in mind that 23.5° angle) the sun appears to “move” between these two extremes, crossing over the equator twice in a year. Equinoxes (from the Latin, “equal nights”) occur at the point where the sun appears directly above the equator. On both Equinox days, we experience an equal amount of daylight and night, about 12 hours of each.

But during the Northern Hemisphere's

Autumn Equinox, the penguins at the South Pole will welcome the first appearance of the sun in six months! And at the North Pole, the polar bears will be bracing themselves for 6 months of darkness!

For many societies, the Autumn Equinox has had special significance as a time to celebrate the “Second Harvest”. Traditionally, this is the time to reap the benefits of a long summer's hard work. The crops are in, the harsh winter is still 6 weeks, or so, away and food is plentiful. Enjoy the rest, and the feast, while you can!

But while many have, and do, view the Autumn Equinox as a time to celebrate “the good life”, it is also a time to honour the dead; observe how the sun appears to be “dying” (to those in the north) on its slow journey to the south. Or, think of it as the bounty gathered from the land providing nourishment, but also resulting in the death of those plants and vegetables harvested. Thus, the Autumn Equinox, or as it is sometimes called, Mabon (the title of this month's article), is a celebration of the cycle of life. And as surely as the



sun is now moving away from us, it will begin to return when the next Equinox arrives in late March – the Spring Equinox!

Glossary

(These words are in colour in the story)

Hemisphere 半球

occurrence できごと

align 正しい関係位置に無い

tilt 傾く

extreme 極端

bracing 準備する

reap 手に入れる

harsh 厳しい

bounty 恵み

harvest 収穫する

A Word From Us



Joshua Says: I'm glad to see we are welcoming many new students to Crossroads. It's campaign time again and there are gifts for your friends when they join up – something for you too! So, please continue to introduce your friends during this campaign and we will do our best to make their dream of speaking English come true!

Junko Says: We have started to issue “library cards” at Crossroads. You can borrow any of the books from our library with one, any time! It is free for all students to use our library, and you can even take the books out with this card! We want everyone to start using the library, so please ask me at the office for your own card!



Alice Says: Well “hello” from Crossroads' newest recruit! It's a pleasure to meet you all. I arrived in Matsuyama on September 4th and subsequently fell down a long flight of stairs at the airport! Thankfully, only my pride was hurt. It wasn't exactly what I hoped my first experience of Japan would be, but at least it will be unforgettable! I hope the rest of my time in Japan will be just as memorable for good reasons!

Iain Says: Can you believe it?! I've lived in Japan for over eight years and I haven't been to Kyoto! Happily, that all changed last week as Kyoko and I went there for a summer trip. I wasn't mentally prepared for how beautiful the gardens and temples are. We just walked around in silence. It was impossible to take everything in, in such a short time, so I hope we get to go back in the near future.



Greg Says: It is that time of year where people begin to snifle and catch colds. Well for the past week I have been as “crook as a dog”. Each and every September / October I get knocked over with a heavy dose of the flu and this year was no exception, although a little earlier than expected. The Japanese flu seems to hang around for a lot longer than the Australian flu!!! I remember a few years ago in Sendai I had a cold for a month, but finally I got better. Why is the flu so strong in Japan???

Adrienne Says: In one of my classes all the ladies, about 50 to 70 years old, collectively shook their heads sadly and asked, “What is wrong with Japan these days?” “Why are children attacking their parents?” But then the topic turned to the subject of elderly women killing their husbands, they all began to smile. And then the smiles turned to giggles when they began discussing the methods used. When someone asked, “Why are we laughing?” The giggles then turned into howls of laughter! What does this mean...??



Dean Says: Well, the warmer weather is finally drawing to a close and the nights are getting cooler. It's almost time to think about getting the winter wardrobe ready. Suddenly, one night you'll be caught without your jacket. So, prepare soon! The cold days are not far away, now.

William Says: Autumn has arrived! The afternoon sun is still hot, and the weather feels like summer in eastern Canada to me. I enjoy this weather the most – great for hiking! I already climbed Mt. Ishizuchi once this year and will go again to see the turning of the leaves. This mellow heat is ideal – and the best part of my day is practicing guitar next to Ishite River.



Yuka Says: Now that the awfully hot summer is over, I really welcome the cool autumn breeze. And this is the best time for reading. I assume a lot of you are book lovers and I'm one of you. Reading books is a good thing of course, but keeping them is a problem. With limited space for keeping them, I sometimes wonder how I can dispose of them. Among the mountains of books around us, I know few of them are worth reading more than once, but I can't help feeling guilty when I throw a book away. Do you have any ideas for solving this problem?!

A Word From You



Setsuko Says: I work for NTT and I have been a student here for 3 years. I am famous for many hobbies, one of which is dancing. I like many kinds of dance: social dance, ballet, flamenco, Yosakoi, Gaiya and many others. Gaiya is a wonderful dance from Uwazima. In fact, Gaiya means "wonderful"! I have been to Okayama, Chiba and Sendai performing these dances. Dancing has really taken me all over the world. I even got to dance Yosaki in New York!

*Natasha's
News from
Canada!*

Notice Board



Ah! The Market! An open-air market where you can find all Seasons' foods! From traditional cheese to the best apples! Oh! Without forgetting of course the chocolate dipped blueberries! The market is not only a place to buy food, it's also a place to meet the farmers and know everything about the food itself! This also promotes buying local food and helps the local people to make a better living.



Here are a few shots from last month's Summer Roof-top B-B-Q Party...



Net News

NET LESSONS:

Are you too busy to come to CROSSROADS to study? Try our *lessons on the internet* -- It's CROSSROADS in your home or office! You get CROSSROADS' great teachers, teaching programs, even classmates, *all on-line!* Call for details.

NET SITE OF THE MONTH:

Go here for some interesting info about equinoxes:
<http://liftoff.msfc.nasa.gov/2002/news-autumnaequinox.asp>

NET NOTEBOOK: Don't forget to take a look at the Internet activity notebook in our open-house. You'll find games, news and English learning sites.

Courses you can take at CROSSROADS

GENERAL COURSES:

2 x's 60mins / week
1 x's 90mins / week
Private 1 x / week
Semi-Private 1 x / week

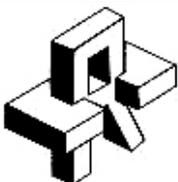
MOTHER & CHILD, group or private
KIDS, group or private

COSMOPOLITAN COURSES:

"Singing in English" with Alice
Yoga with Dean
Guitar with William
"Cooking in English" with Alice
"Magic English" with Iain
Piano with Adrienne
Acting with Alice

FRENCH with Natacha
SPANISH with Patricio
RUSSIAN with Natasha
GERMAN with Marita & Matthias
CHINESE with Noriko
KOREAN with Kim

NETLESSONS:
group or private



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