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Level 2 – 2nd April, 2021

Earliest cherry blossoms in Japan city in 600 years

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210402-cherry-blossoms-2.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 1 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210402-cherry-blossoms-2.html>

Cherry blossoms in Japan bloomed at their earliest in 600 years. Researchers say blossoms in the city of Kyoto peaked on the 26th of March. This peak was a day earlier than the previous record set in 1409. Data on Kyoto's cherry blossoms go back 1,200 years. As far back as the year 812, officials at Japan's imperial court wrote about the blooms in diaries. Japan had much warmer weather in the first few months of this year. Meteorologists say this is because of climate change. They say plants are flowering and blossoming earlier than normal because of global warming.

Cherry blossoms are important in Japanese culture. People keep a close eye on the news of blossoming times from cherry-blossom forecasts. The blossoms are called "sakura" in Japan. People plan trips to famous cherry blossom spots and have picnics under the sakura. The blossoms provide Japan with an important economic boost each spring. A Japanese newspaper explained the importance of sakura. It wrote: "Sakura has deeply influenced Japanese culture for centuries. It has regularly been used in poetry and literature. Their fragility is seen as a symbol of life, death and rebirth."

Sources: <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20210331/p2g/00m/0na/038000c>
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-56574142>
<https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/climate-change-japan-cherry-blossoms-b1824373.html>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210402-cherry-blossoms-2.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. bloomed at their earliest | a. months of this year |
| 2. This peak was a day | b. in 1409 |
| 3. the previous record set | c. than normal |
| 4. Data on Kyoto's cherry blossoms go | d. in 600 years |
| 5. As far back as | e. of climate change |
| 6. in the first few | f. earlier |
| 7. this is because | g. the year 812 |
| 8. blossoming earlier | h. back 1,200 years |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Cherry blossoms are important | a. and literature |
| 2. keep a close eye | b. cherry blossom spots |
| 3. The blossoms are called | c. of life |
| 4. People plan trips to famous | d. on the news |
| 5. an important economic | e. culture |
| 6. deeply influenced Japanese | f. in Japanese culture |
| 7. used in poetry | g. boost |
| 8. seen as a symbol | h. "sakura" in Japan |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210402-cherry-blossoms-2.html>

Cherry blossoms in Japan bloomed at (1) _____
600 years. Researchers say blossoms in the city of Kyoto peaked on
the 26th of March. This peak was (2) _____ than
the previous (3) _____ 1409. Data on Kyoto's
cherry blossoms go back 1,200 years. As
(4) _____ the year 812, officials at Japan's
imperial court wrote about the blooms in diaries. Japan had much
warmer weather in (5) _____ months of this year.
Meteorologists say this is because of climate change. They say
plants are flowering and blossoming (6) _____
because of global warming.

Cherry blossoms (7) _____ Japanese culture.
People keep a (8) _____ the news of blossoming
times from cherry-blossom forecasts. The blossoms are called
"sakura" in Japan. People (9) _____ famous cherry
blossom spots and have picnics under the sakura. The blossoms
provide Japan with an important economic
(10) _____. A Japanese newspaper explained the
importance of sakura. It wrote: "Sakura has deeply influenced
Japanese culture for centuries. It has (11) _____ in
poetry and literature. Their fragility is seen as
(12) _____ life, death and rebirth."

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210402-cherry-blossoms-2.html>

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CHERRY BLOSSOMS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2104/210402-cherry-blossoms-2.html>

Write five GOOD questions about cherry blossoms in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

| | STUDENT 1 _____ | STUDENT 2 _____ | STUDENT 3 _____ |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Q.1. | | | |
| Q.2. | | | |
| Q.3. | | | |
| Q.4. | | | |
| Q.5. | | | |

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

