

LESSON NOTES

Japanese Children's Songs #7 Shabondama

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KANJI

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KANA

1. シャボンだまとんだ
2. やねまでとんだ
3. やねまでとんで
4. こわれてきえた

CONT'D OVER

5. シャボンたまきえた
6. とばずにきえた
7. うまれてすぐに
8. こわれてきえた
9. かぜ かぜ ふくな
10. シャボンだまとぼそ

ROMANIZATION

1. Shabon dama tonda
2. Yane made tonda
3. Yane made tonde
4. Kowarete kieta
5. Shabondama kieta
6. Tobazu ni kieta
7. Umarete sugu ni
8. Kowarete kieta
9. Kaze kaze fukuna

CONT'D OVER

10. Shabondama tobaso

ENGLISH

1. My little soap bubble floated away
2. It soared up to the roof
3. Soared up to the roof and...
4. It popped and disappeared
5. My little soap bubble is gone
6. Gone before it could float away
7. Just after it was born
8. It popped and disappeared
9. Oh, wind. Oh, wind. Will you stop blowing?
10. Let my little soap bubbles float.

VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
シャボン玉	シャボンだま	shabondama	soap bubble
屋根	やね	yane	roof

壊れる	こわれる	kowareru	to be broken, to break
消える	きえる	kieru	to vanish, to disappear, to go out;V2
うまれる	うまれる	umareru	to be born
風	かぜ	kaze	wind

SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>子供の頃はよくシャボン玉で遊んだものだ。</p> <p><i>Kodomo no koro wa yoku shabondama de asonda mono da.</i></p> <p>I used to play with soap bubbles a lot when I was a kid.</p>	<p>屋根の上に猫が寝ている。</p> <p><i>Yane no ue ni neko ga nete iru.</i></p> <p>A cat is sleeping on the roof.</p>
<p>携帯が壊れました。</p> <p><i>Keitai ga kowaremashita.</i></p> <p>My cell phone broke.</p>	<p>電気が消えたので、子供達はびっくりした。</p> <p><i>Denki ga kieta node, kodomotachi wa bikkuri shita.</i></p> <p>The lights went out and the kids were surprised.</p>
<p>私は1981年に生まれました。</p> <p><i>Watashi wa 1981-nen ni umaremashita.</i></p> <p>I was born in 1981.</p>	<p>今日は風が強い。</p> <p><i>Kyō wa kaze ga tsuyoi.</i></p> <p>It's windy today.</p>

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson is the Japanese Children's Song *Shabon-dama*.

Ujou Noguchi (lyrics) and Shimpei Nakayama (melody) produced this song, and it was released in 1922.

The lyrics are about a child playing with soap bubbles. However, it is said that the

songwriter, Ujou Noguchi, was mourning the death of his daughter when he wrote this song, thinking of the soap bubbles as his daughter. Knowing this, it's easy to understand the reason this song sounds melancholy even though it's a children's song.

シャボン玉 とんだ 屋根まで とんだ

The literal translation of these lines is "The soap bubble flew. It flew up to the roof." *Shabon-dama* (シャボン玉) means "soap bubble" and *tonda* (とんだ) is the past tense of *tobu* (とぶ), which is a verb meaning "to fly." *Yane* (屋根) means "roof." If we combine these lines and write them as one, it would become *Shabon-dama ga yane made tonda* (シャボン玉が屋根までとんだ). However, it is common for there to be rhymes in song lyrics, and here *tonda* (とんだ) is repeated. Another characteristic of lyrics is that particles are often taken away. In this case, we deleted the particle *ga* (が) is deleted.

屋根まで とんで こわれて 消えた

The subject of these lines is still *shabon-dama* (シャボン玉). The literal translation of these lines is "it (the soap bubble) flew up to the roof and popped and disappeared." *Tonde* (とんで) is the *te* form of *tobu* (とぶ), meaning "to fly," and *kowarete* (こわれて) is the *te* form of *kowareru* (こわれる) meaning "to break." *Kieta* (消えた) is the past tense of *kieru* (消える) meaning "to break."

The *te* form usually means "and," and we use it to indicate that more than two things occur in sequence. So *tonde kowarete kieta* (とんで こわれて 消えた) literally means "flew up and popped and disappeared."

シャボン玉 消えた 飛ばずに 消えた

The literal translation of these lines is "The soap bubble is gone. It is gone before it flew." *Tobazu ni* (飛ばずに) contains the grammar structure *-zu ni*. *Zuni* is a compound word containing the negative auxiliary *zu* and the particle *ni*. It is attached to the negative form of a verb without *nai*, and all together, it means "without doing something."

Verb (negative stem) + ずに

**Dictionary
Form of a
Verb**

**Negative
Form**

**Stem of a Negative Form
(without Nai) + ずに**

"English"

taberu (たべる) "to eat"	tabe nai (たべない)	たべずに	"without eating"
yomu (よむ) "to read"	yoma nai (よまない)	よまずに	"without reading"
nomu (のむ) "to drink"	noma nai (のまない)	のまずに	"without drinking"

うまれてすぐに こわれて消えた

The subject of these lines is soap bubbles. The literal translation of these lines is "it (the soap bubble) was born and soon it popped and disappeared." *Umarete* (うまれて) is the *te* form of *umareru* (うまれる) meaning to "be born." *Sugu ni* (すぐに) means "soon." When すぐに comes directly after the *te* form of a verb, it indicates that something happened right after that action - in this case, the bubble popped right after it was "born."

風 風 吹くな

The literal translation of these lines is "Wind, wind. Don't blow." *Kaze* (風) means "wind," and the first part, *kaze, kaze* (風、風), sounds like one is addressing the wind. 吹くな is the negative imperative of *fuku* (吹く), meaning "to blow." The negative imperative is an extremely strong command.

Formation of the negative imperative of a verb is **dictionary form of a verb + na**.

	Dictionary Form	Dictionary Form + <i>na</i>	"English"
Class I	<i>iku</i> (行く) "to go"	行くな	"Don't go."

Class II	<i>miru</i> (見る) "to see"	見るな	"Don't look."
Class III	<i>suru</i> (する) "to do"	するな	"Don't do."

シャボン玉とばそ

This is another line said to the wind. *Tobaso* (とばそ) is the shortened form of *tobasō* (とばそう), which is the volitional form of *tobasu* (とばす), which means "to make something fly away." This volitional form works to make a proposal or to invite someone to do something. In this case, the songwriter is asking the wind to make the soap bubbles fly.

So, in conjunction with the previous line, the writer is asking the wind to stop blowing and to let the soap bubbles fly away.