

LESSON NOTES

Particles #19

Tell Them How You Really Feel with Japanese Particles Wa and Ga!

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KANJI

1. かおる: テストどうだった？
2. ひろみ: うーん。今日のテストは問題が簡単だった。
3. かおる: ひろみは、頭がいいなあ。
ひろみは、いつも何時間勉強するの？
4. ひろみ: うーん。あれ？顔があかいよ。どうしたの？
5. かおる: え？そう？。。。なんだか、お腹が痛いんだよね。
6. (パターン)
7. ひろみ: 佐藤先生！大変！かおるが倒れた。

KANA

1. かおる: テスト どうだった？
2. ひろみ: うーん。きょうのテストは もんだいが かんたんだった。
3. かおる: ひろみは、あたまが いいなあ。
ひろみは、いつも なんじかん べんきょうするの？
4. ひろみ: うーん。あれ？かおがあかいよ。どうしたの？
5. かおる: え？そう？。。。なんだか、おなかが いたいんだよね。
6. (パターン)

CONT'D OVER

7. ひろみ: さとうせんせい！たいへん！かおるがたおれた。

ROMANIZATION

1. KAORU: Tesuto dō datta?
2. HIROMI: Ūn. Kyō no tesuto wa mondai ga kantan datta.
3. KAORU: Hiromi wa, atama ga iinā.
Hiromi wa, itsumo nan-jikan benkyō suru no?
4. HIROMI: Ūn. Are? Kao ga akai yo. Dōshita no?
5. KAORU: E? Sō?... Nan daka, onaka ga itainda yo ne.
6. (batān)
7. HIROMI: Satō sensei! Taihen! Kaoru ga taoreta.

ENGLISH

1. KAORU: How was the test?
2. HIROMI: Hmm...the questions on today's test were easy.
3. KAORU: Hiromi, you're smart.
How many hours do you always study?
4. HIROMI: Hmm...huh? Your face is red. What happens?

CONT'D OVER

5. KAORU: Huh? Really? My stomach kind of hurts.
6. (thud)
7. HIROMI: Ms. Sato! Help! Kaoru collapsed!

VOCABULARY

| Kanji | Kana | Romaji | English |
|-------|-------|-----------|--|
| テスト | てすと | tesuto | test, quiz |
| 大変 | たいへん | taihen | serious, terrible, tough, in trouble; Adj (na) |
| お腹 | おなか | onaka | stomach, belly |
| 赤い | あかい | akai | red; Adj(i) |
| 顔 | かお | kao | face |
| 何時間 | なんじかん | nan-jikan | how many hours |
| いつも | いつも | itsumo | always, usually; Adv. |
| 頭 | あたま | atama | head |
| 簡単 | かんたん | kantan | easy, simple; Adj(na) |
| 問題 | もんだい | mondai | question, problem |
| 倒れる | たおれる | taoreru | to fall, to collapse; V2 |

SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>明日、テストがあります。 <i>Ashita tesuto ga arimasu.</i></p> <p>We have a test tomorrow.</p> | <p>大変な一日だった。 <i>Taihen na ichinichi datta.</i></p> <p>It was a rough day.</p> |
|--|---|

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>お腹が痛いです。 <i>O-naka ga itai desu.</i></p> <p>I have a stomachache.</p> | <p>その赤いかさは、だれのですか。 <i>Sono akai kasa wa dareno desu ka.</i></p> <p>Whose red umbrella is that?</p> |
| <p>朝、顔を洗います。 <i>Asa, kao o araimasu.</i></p> <p>I wash my face in the morning.</p> | <p>何時間寝ますか。 <i>Nan-jikan nemasu ka.</i></p> <p>How long do you sleep?</p> |
| <p>シンガポールは、いつも暑いんです。 <i>Shingapōru wa, itsumo atsui desu.</i></p> <p>It's always hot in Singapore.</p> | <p>頭が痛いんです。 <i>Atama ga itai desu.</i></p> <p>I have a headache.</p> |
| <p>日本語は簡単ですか。 <i>Nihongo wa kantan desu ka.</i></p> <p>Is Japanese easy?</p> | <p>ちょっと問題があります。 <i>Chotto mondai ga arimasu.</i></p> <p>I have a bit of a problem.</p> |

台風で、木が倒れた。
Taifū de ki ga taoreta.

A tree fell over due to the typhoon.

GRAMMAR

The Focus of This Lesson Is the Particles *Wa* and *Ga*.

今日のテストは問題が簡単だった。

Kyō no tesuto wa mondai ga kantan datta.

"Hmm...the questions on today's test were easy."

In this lesson, you'll compare more uses of *wa* and *ga*.

Construction: [Noun 1] *wa* [Noun 2] *ga* [adjective]

This is one of the most common sentence structures in Japanese grammar.

N2 is a part of N1 or a member of N1, and the following adjective gives information about N2. In other words, N1 possesses N2, and the following adjective explains N2.

When N1 is a person, the following "[N2] *ga* [adjective]" part describes the physical or mental state of N1.

For Example:

1. 私は頭が痛い。
Watashi wa atama ga itai.
"I have a headache."
2. ケントは気が短い。
Kento wa ki ga mijikai.
"Kent is short-tempered."

When N2 is a part of N1 or a member of N1, the following adjective explains the characteristic of N2.

For Example:

1. きりんは首が長い。
Kirin wa kubi ga nagai.
"Giraffes have long necks."
Literally, "As for giraffes, they have long necks."
2. この部屋は窓が大きい。
Kono heya wa mado ga ōkii.
"This room has big windows."
Literally, "As for this room, the windows are big."
3. このチームは選手がいい。
Kono chīmu wa senshu ga ii.
"This team has good players."
Literally, "As for this team, the players are good."

Wa and Ga in Negative Sentences

As you have already learned, *ga* precedes certain verbs or adjectives. (See Lessons 2, 4, and 10.) However, in answering a question and when those verbs or adjectives are in the negative form, we usually replace the *ga* with *wa*.

For Example:

1. A: ケントさんは漢字が読めますか。
Kento-san wa kanji ga yomemasu ka.
"Kent, can you read Chinese characters?"
B: いいえ、(わたしは)漢字は読めません。
lie, (watashi wa) kanji wa yomemasen.
"No. I can't read Chinese characters."
2. A: ケントさんは、兄弟がいますか。
Kento-san wa kyōdai ga imasu ka.
"Kent, do you have brothers or sisters?"
B: いいえ、(わたしは)兄弟はいません。
lie, (watashi wa) kyōdai wa imasen.
"No. I don't have any brothers and sisters."

が (ga) Indicating the Speaker's Surprise

Generally speaking, when talking about something surprising or unexpected, the particle *ga* marks the topic or subject.

The particle *wa* indicates a state or event that always happens.

For Example:

1. わたしは、6時に起きる。
Watashi wa roku-ji ni okiru.
"I get up at six."
2. 日本のポストは赤い。
Nihon no posuto wa akai.
"Mailboxes in Japan are red."

The particle *ga* indicates the speaker's surprise, and we use it when the speaker sees something unusual or when something unexpected happens.

For Example:

1. ケントが、六時に起きた。
Kento ga roku-ji ni okita.
"Kent got up at six o'clock!"
(You can assume that the speaker wasn't expecting Kent to get up that early.)

2. 空が赤い。
Sora ga akai.
"The sky is red!"
(The speaker saw that the sky was red and expressed their surprise.)

Reference

の (*no*) as a possessive marker ⇒ Lesson 1

は (*wa*) as a topic marker ⇒ Lesson 1

の (*no*) indicates a colloquial question ⇒ Lesson 4

Practice

Fill in the blanks with particle *wa* or *ga*.

1. 私 () 目 () 痛い。
Watashi () me () itai.
"My eye hurts."
2. けい子 () 目 () 大きい。
Keiko () me () ōkii.
"Keiko has big eyes."
3. A: 英語が話せますか。
Eigo ga hanasemasu ka.
"Can you speak English?"
B: いいえ。英語 () 話せません。
ie. Eigo () hanasemasen.
"No. I can't speak English."
4. あのレストラン () ケーキ () おいしい。
Ano resutoran () kēki () oishii.
"That restaurant serves good cake."
5. うわ! 水 () 冷たい!
Uwa! Mizu () tsumetai.
"Wow, the water is cold!"

6. A: 車が欲しいですか。
Kuruma ga hoshii desu ka.
"Do you want a car?"
B: いいえ。車 () 欲しくありません。
ie. Kuruma () hoshiku arimasen.
"No. I don't want a car."

Answer:

- 1) *wa, ga*, 2) *wa, ga* 3) *wa*, 4) *wa, ga*, 5) *ga*, 6) *wa*