

## LESSON NOTES

# Video Culture Class: Japanese Holidays #1 New Year's Day

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## CONTENTS

- 2 Kanji
- 3 English
- 4 Vocabulary
- 5 Sample Sentences

# 1

# KANJI

1. 「元日」とは年の初めを祝う日です。カレンダーでは1月1日のみが祝日ですが、実際には1日から3日までを「三が日」と呼び、会社や店によっては休業するところもあります。毎年この時期独特の行事や慣習があります。新たな年になって最初に会ったときには、「明けましておめでとうございます」と挨拶します。
2. 元日の朝のことを特別に何と呼ぶでしょうか。
3. 正解はこのビデオの最後に紹介します。
4. 自宅や海辺、山頂などで初日の出を拝みます。元日の朝食には、雑煮やお節料理を食べます。雑煮は、餅が入った汁物で、地方や家庭によって味付けが違います。「伸びる餅のように、命が延びますように」と、長寿を願って食べるのです。お節料理も、健康で無事に一年が過ぎせるように、という願いが込められた食べ物です。そして、神様から一年の加護をいただくため、晴れ着を着て、家族や友人と一緒に初詣に行きます。
5. 日本では、正月になると前の年にお世話になった人や友人・知人などに年賀状を送る習慣があります。年賀状には新年の挨拶や抱負を書いたり、その年の干支の絵や近況が伝わる写真などを印刷したりします。昔は、年の初めに「お年始」といって、知人宅に挨拶に行ったり、反対に知人が訪ねて来たりする習わしがありました。次第に簡素化され、現在の年賀状になったといわれています。
6. 子どもたちは両親や祖父母、親戚や両親の知人などからお年玉をもらいます。これは、正月だけの特別なおこづかいで、子どもたちはとても楽しみにしています。お年玉は紙製の「お年玉袋」に入れて渡されます。金額の相場は、小学生では3000円から5000円くらい。中学生では5000円程度、高校生や大学生になると10000円前後です。
7. 一般的に、初詣は正月の日中にお参りをしますが、大晦日の深夜0時、前の年から新しい年に切り替わる時間帯に神社をお参りする人もいます。これを「二年参り」と呼びます。
8. さて、ここでクイズの答えです。

CONT'D OVER

9. 正解は「元旦」です。「旦」の字は太陽を表す「日」という漢字の下に、左から右に向かって横棒を一本、書きますね。これは、「地平線から昇りつつある太陽」を表しているのです。だから、「元旦」ということばは1/1の朝を意味していることとなります。

## ENGLISH

1. New Year's Day is a day that celebrates the start of the year. While the calendar marks only January 1st as a holiday, the whole period from the 1st to the 3rd is known as Sangnichi, and some companies and stores close during this time. Unique events and customs take place at this time each year. When you meet someone for the first time in a new year, you greet them with "Happy New Year!"
2. What is the morning of New Year's Day called?
3. The first sunrise of the year is worshipped at places including homes, the beach, and mountains. Zoni ("rice cakes boiled with vegetables") and Osechi dishes (festive New Year's food) are eaten on New Year's Day. Zoni is a soup containing rice cakes, the seasoning of which depends on the family and region. It is eaten with the hope for longevity and there is a saying that goes "Just like a rice cake stretches, so shall one's lifespan." Osechi dishes are also eaten with the wish of having a happy and safe year. In order to seek blessings from God for the year, families and friends wear their finest clothes and visit a shrine.
4. In Japan it is customary to send New Year's cards to friends or acquaintances who have helped you in the previous year. In the New Year's cards greetings and hopes for the year are written, as well as information on how the person is getting along. A picture of the zodiac is also included. In the past there was a New Year's custom called O-Nenshi in which people would either visit the homes of their acquaintances, or receive acquaintances as guests. This custom has gradually been simplified and is now at the point where greeting cards are exchanged.

CONT'D OVER

5. Children receive O-Toshidama ("New Year's gifts") from their parents, grandparents, relatives, and parents' friends. Since this only happens at New Year, children get very excited about it. O-Toshidama are placed into a paper envelope called O-Toshidama bukuro. The average amount given to an elementary school-aged child is around 3,000 to 5,000 yen. As they grow older, middle school-aged children receive around 5,000 yen, and those of high school age receive around 10,000 yen.
6. Generally speaking, people go to the shrine to pray during New Year's Day, but there are also those who visit at midnight as time passes from the previous year to the new year. This is called Ninen-mairi.
7. Now it's time for the answer to the quiz.
8. The correct answer is Gantan (元旦). The character旦 is made up of 日, which is the character for "sun," under which a single horizontal line is drawn from left to right. This line depicts the sun rising over the horizon. The characters 元旦 have therefore come to represent the morning of January 1st.

## VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
元旦	がんどつ	ganjitsu	New Year's Day
初詣	はつもうで	Hatsumōde	The first visit to a shrine of the year
年賀状	ねんがじょう	nengajō	New Year's greeting postcard
干支	えと	eto	zodiac signs
三が日	さんがにち	sanganichi	the first three days of the New Year
正月	しょうがつ	shōgatsu	New Year's Holidays
雑煮	ぞうに	zōni	Japanese soup containing mochi rice cakes

お節料理	おせちりょうり	osechi-ryōri	traditional Japanese New Year foods
抱負	ほうふ	hōfu	ambition
お年玉	おとしだま	otoshidama	New Year's gift of money
初日の出	はつひので	hatsu-hinode	the first sunrise of the year
慣習	かんしゅう	kanshū	custom
大晦日	おおみそか	Ōmisoka	New Year's Eve
お参り	おまいり	omairi	worship, a visit to a temple or a shrine
元旦	がんたん	gantān	New Year's Day
地平線	ちへいせん	chiheisen	horizon

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>初詣ではお守りを買ひ、古いお守りを返します。</p> <p><i>Hatsumōde de wa omamori o kai, furui omamori o kaeshimasu.</i></p> <p>At the first visit to the shrine of the year, people buy lucky charms and protective charms for the coming year and return those from the past year.</p>	<p>友人に年賀状を送った。</p> <p>I sent a New Year's greeting postcard to my friend.</p>
<p>お正月には、地域でもちつき大会が行われます。</p> <p><i>O-shōgatsu ni wa, chiiki de mochitsuki taikai ga okonawaremasu.</i></p> <p>There are glutinous rice-pounding events held locally in Japan on New Year's Day.</p>	<p>お年玉をもらいました。</p> <p><i>Otoshidama o moraimashita.</i></p> <p>I received a gift of New Year's money.</p>
<p>12月31日は大晦日です。</p> <p><i>12-gatsu 31-nichi wa ōmisoka desu.</i></p> <p>December 31 is New Year's Eve.</p>	<p>新年には、多くの日本人がお参りに行く。</p> <p><i>Shin'nen ni wa ōku no nihon-jin ga o-mairi ni iku.</i></p> <p>In the New Year, many Japanese pay a visit to a shrine or a temple.</p>

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元旦に神社へお参りに行く。

*Gantan ni jinja e o-mairi ni iku.*

I visit a shrine on New Year's Day.

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