

LESSON NOTES

Video Culture Class: Japanese Holidays #22 Labor Thanksgiving Day

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KANJI

1. 11月23日は「勤労感謝の日」です。この日は「勤労（きんろう）をたつとび、生産を祝い、国民がたがいに感謝しあう」日として定められました。もともとは、「新嘗祭（にいなめさい）」が行われる日です。この儀式は、農作物の恵みに感謝する、という趣旨（しゅし）で行なわれ、現在でも残っています。
2. 「新嘗祭（にいなめさい）」とは誰が行なう儀式でしょうか。
3. 正解はこのビデオの最後に紹介します。
4. 時代が進むにつれ、農業だけでなく、広く労働一般に感謝し、働くことの大切さを認識する日として位置づけられるようになりました。家族の中でお互いに、一年の労働に感謝し合う日になっています。特に、子ども達は普段の生活を振り返り、両親のおかげで自分たちが快適に暮らしていけるのだ、ということを確認します。そして、一生懸命働いてくれている両親に感謝の気持ちを表すのです。
5. 日ごろ、家族のために働いてくれている父親や母親に感謝の気持ちを伝えます。手紙を書いたり、プレゼントをしたりするだけでなく、普段はあまり取り組むことのない家事を手伝う子どももいます。しばしば行なわれるのは料理。兄弟姉妹で協力して、台所で奮闘します。そんな姿を、親たちはとても喜びます。
6. 社会人として自分自身が働いている場合、「自分へのご褒美（ほうび）」と称（しょう）して、普段は買えないものを買ったり、外食をしたりする人もいます。特に、この時期は暑すぎず寒すぎず、また晴天（せいてん）も多い気候であるため、祝日を利用して日帰り旅行をすることもあります。十分にリフレッシュして、翌日からの活力にします。
7. 第二次世界大戦後、GHQの政策によって、生産を祝う感謝祭と、勤労に感謝する「レイバー・デー」を併（あわ）せた祝日が考案され、それが、勤労感謝の日となりました。
8. さて、ここでクイズの答えです。

CONT'D OVER

9. 正解は、天皇です。農業国である日本は、古くから神々（かみがみ）に農作物（のうさくもつ）の収穫を感謝する風習（ふうしゅう）がありました。また、その年の収穫物（しゅうかくぶつ）は国家としても、国民を一年間養う（やしなう）大切な蓄え（たくわえ）となります。そこで、天皇が、国民を代表して、その年に採（と）れた米や豆などを神に供（そな）えたり、天皇自身も食べたりして感謝の気持ちを表すのです。

ENGLISH

1. November 23rd is Labor Thanksgiving Day. The day was established as one on which to value hard work, celebrate productivity, and for the people to thank each other. Originally on this date a ritual called Niinamesai was held. This is a ritual that shows thanks for the blessings of crops, and it remains to this day.
2. Who performs the Niinamesai ritual?
3. You'll find out later.
4. As time progressed, it was not just agricultural workers who were given thanks, but also laborers in general. This led to the day being regarded as a time to recognize the importance of work. It has become a day in which each member of the family thanks the others for the hard work completed over the course of the year. Children in particular look back at their everyday lives and reaffirm that it is thanks to their parents that they are able to live so comfortably. So they express their gratitude to their parents, who work so hard.
5. Children convey their feeling of gratitude to their mother and father, who work for the family every day. They express these feelings not just by writing a letter or giving a present, but many do so by helping out with the housework—something they don't normally do. They often cook, and together with their siblings, struggle along in the kitchen. This is a sight that makes parents very happy.

CONT'D OVER

6. Among those who work as members of society, some treat themselves to something special, like buying something they normally wouldn't, or eating out at a restaurant. In particular, since this time of year is neither too hot nor too cold, and since the weather is often sunny, many people take advantage of the national holiday to go on a day trip. Those who do feel refreshed and approach the next day with renewed vitality.
7. After the Second World War and in accordance with the GHQ policy, a celebration of production, and Labor Day, where gratitude is expressed for hard work, were combined into a national holiday. This is what is known today as Labor Thanksgiving Day.
8. Now it's time for the answer to our quiz.
9. The correct answer is the emperor. In Japan, which is an agricultural country, since ancient times there has been a custom of thanking the gods for the crops. In addition to this, the annual harvest became an important reserve for the country as a means to feed the people for the entire year. Therefore, the emperor makes offerings of food such as rice and beans that were produced during the year to the gods, on behalf of the people. Even the emperor himself expresses gratitude for the food that has been produced, by eating the offering.

VOCABULARY

Kanji	Kana	Romaji	English
蓄え	たくわえ	takuwae	stock
養う	やしなう	yashinau	to feed
勤労感謝の日	きんろうかんしゃのひ	Kinrō kansha no hi	Labour Thanksgiving Day
活力	かつりよく	katsuryoku	energy
考案する	こうあんする	kōan suru	to devise
尊ぶ	たっとぶ	tattobu	to value, to prize, to esteem, to respect
新嘗祭	にいなめさい	niinamesai	New Harvest Festival
収穫	しゅうかく	shūkaku	harvest, crop

奮闘する	ふんとうする	funtō suru	to struggle
褒美	ほうび	hōbi	reward
取り組む	とりくむ	torikumu	to work on
位置づける	いちづける	ichi zukeru	position

SAMPLE SENTENCES

勤労感謝の日は、日々の勤労をねぎらう日
です。

*Kinrō kansha no hi wa, hibi no kinrō o negirau hi
desu.*

Labour Thanksgiving Day is the day for rewarding
daily hard work.

そろそろ収穫の時期だ。

Sorosoro shūkaku no jiki da.

It's about time to harvest crops.