

Japanese city asks tourists to stop 'sand graffiti'

25th May, 2019



Photo: Tottori Prefecture Government

A city in Japan is having a problem with graffiti. However, it is not the usual type of graffiti with paint from spray cans being used to write on walls. It is graffiti in sand. Officials in the city of Tottori are asking tourists to

refrain from writing messages and pictures in the sand of its giant sand dunes. The officials said the graffiti causes damage to the dunes and destroys the pleasure others get in looking at the sand. They said that more than 3,300 cases of 'sand graffiti' have occurred at the tourist hotspot in the last decade. The Mainichi newspaper said there were more than 200 cases reported last year. In January, two overseas tourists were ordered to erase a 25-metre-long message that read: 'Happy Birthday Natalie'.

The Tottori Sand Dunes are famous throughout Japan for their natural beauty. They are the largest and longest sand dunes in the country and form part of a scenic geo-coastal park on the Sea of Japan coast. The biggest dune is 50 metres high. The dunes stretch for 16 kilometres along the coast. The local government wants to improve tourists' understanding of the importance of the dunes. It will set up more signs in English, Chinese and Korean asking people to respect the dunes. More and more tourists are visiting the site each year. A spokesman said: "We are concerned about whether the rules are fully understood, but we want to continue to protect views of the beautiful sand dunes."

Sources: mainichi.jp / guardian.com / insider.com

Writing

Over-tourism is a big problem and should be reversed. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

city / graffiti / spray cans / tourists / sand / damage / pleasure / hotspot / overseas / famous / natural beauty / coast / signs / respect / views / concerned / Japan

True / False

- a) A Japanese city is worried about spray can graffiti on its sand dunes. T / F
- b) City officials want tourists to stop writing messages in the sand. T / F
- c) There were over 3,300 cases of graffiti at the sand dunes last year. T / F
- d) A woman called Natalie write a wedding message on the sand dunes. T / F
- e) The article said the Tottori Sand Dunes are the longest in Asia. T / F
- f) The biggest sand dune is 50 metres high. T / F
- g) The city will put English, Chinese and Korean signs at the sand dunes. T / F
- h) The city is unsure about whether people will follow rules at the dunes. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. problem | a. ruins |
| 2. refrain from | b. picturesque |
| 3. destroys | c. 10 years |
| 4. decade | d. take care of |
| 5. cases | e. all over |
| 6. throughout | f. difficulty |
| 7. scenic | g. be mindful of |
| 8. improve | h. incidents |
| 9. respect | i. avoid |
| 10. protect | j. raise |

Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about sand dunes?
- b) What do you think of graffiti?
- c) What do you think of people who do graffiti?
- d) How might making designs in sand dunes damage them?
- e) Should people who do graffiti be punished?
- f) What kinds of graffiti are there in your town?
- g) How can we educate people to respect nature more?
- h) What advice do you have for the city officials?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. A city in Japan is having | a. hotspot |
| 2. paint from | b. others get |
| 3. asking tourists to refrain | c. signs in English |
| 4. destroys the pleasure | d. Japan |
| 5. at the tourist | e. from writing messages |
| 6. famous throughout | f. coastal park |
| 7. form part of a scenic geo- | g. a problem with graffiti |
| 8. The dunes stretch for 16 kilometres | h. are fully understood |
| 9. It will set up more | i. spray cans |
| 10. concerned about whether the rules | j. along the coast |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Do you think graffiti is art?
- What natural beauty is your country famous for?
- Is tourism a good thing?
- Do signs with rules make a tourist site less attractive?
- What are the problems of having too many tourists?
- How can people protect natural sites from damage?
- What questions would you like to ask the city officials?

Spelling

- it is not the lasuu type of graffiti
- the ueepaslr others get
- 3,300 cases of 'sand graffiti' have roudrecc
- at the tourist thpotos
- two evosaers tourists
- a 25-metre-long sgesmea
- famous gttouruohh Japan
- natural butyae
- part of a scnice geo-coastal park
- evpoirm tourists' understanding
- asking people to eptresc the dunes
- rotptec views of the beautiful sand dunes

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. a	4. c	5. h
6. e	7. b	8. j	9. g	10. d

Role Play

Role A – Graffiti

You think graffiti is the best kind of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their kinds. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): calligraphy, manga or cartoons.

Role B – Calligraphy

You think calligraphy is the best kind of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their kinds. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): graffiti, manga or cartoons.

Role C – Manga

You think manga is the best kind of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their kinds. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): calligraphy, graffiti or cartoons.

Role D – Cartoons

You think cartoons are the best kind of art. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their kinds. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): calligraphy, manga or graffiti.

Speaking – Art

Rank these with your partner. Put the best kinds of art at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| • graffiti | • installation art |
| • calligraphy | • computer graphics |
| • manga | • face painting |
| • modern art | • animated cartoons |

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	F	d	F	e	F	f	T	g	T	h	T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.