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Level 4 – 20th April 2026

Japan invents new word for days of 40°C heat

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-4.html>

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Please try Levels 5 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-4.html>

Climate change is creating new words. Japan's Meteorological Agency (JMA) has created a new Japanese word. The word is "kokushobi". It means "cruelly hot day" or "harshly hot day". It will be used when describing days of 40°C temperatures. There was an online poll to choose the new word. Website visitors selected their preferred word. There were 478,000 responses. The word kokushobi got nearly 203,000 votes.

Japan has had record-breaking weather, with days of 40°C or above every year since 2018. In August 2025, a northern town recorded Japan's highest ever temperature. The mercury rose to 41.8°C. There were nine more days of 40°C temperatures. The year 2025 was Japan's hottest since records began in 1898. The Mainichi newspaper said that Kyoto recorded 52 days over 35°C, compared with an annual average of 18.5 days.

Sources: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2026/04/17/japan/japan-severely-hot-day/>
<https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20260417/p2a/00m/0na/008000c>
https://www.jma.go.jp/jma/press/2604/17a/20260417_40degree_name.pdf

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-4.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Climate change is | a. hot day |
| 2. Japan's Meteorological | b. their preferred word |
| 3. created a new | c. Agency |
| 4. cruelly | d. of 40°C temperatures |
| 5. describing days | e. poll |
| 6. an online | f. creating new words |
| 7. visitors selected | g. nearly 203,000 votes |
| 8. The word kokushobi got | h. Japanese word |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Japan has had record- | a. rose to 41.8°C |
| 2. days of 40°C | b. average |
| 3. every year | c. or above |
| 4. The mercury | d. began in 1898 |
| 5. nine more days of | e. over 35°C |
| 6. Japan's hottest since records | f. breaking weather |
| 7. Kyoto recorded 52 days | g. 40°C temperatures |
| 8. an annual | h. since 2018 |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-4.html>

Climate (1) _____ new words. Japan's Meteorological Agency (JMA) (2) _____ new Japanese word. The word is "kokushobi". (3) _____ hot day" or "(4) _____". It will be used when describing days of 40°C temperatures. There was (5) _____ to choose the new word. Website visitors selected (6) _____. There were 478,000 responses. The word kokushobi got nearly 203,000 votes.

Japan has had (7) _____, with days of 40°C or above every year since 2018. In August 2025, (8) _____ recorded Japan's (9) _____. The (10) _____ 41.8°C. There were nine more days of 40°C temperatures. The year 2025 was Japan's hottest (11) _____ in 1898. The Mainichi newspaper said that Kyoto recorded 52 days over 35°C, compared with (12) _____ of 18.5 days.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-4.html>

Climate change is creating new words. Japan's Meteorological Agency (JMA) has created a new Japanese word. The word is "kokushobi". It means "cruelly hot day" or "harshly hot day". It will be used when describing days of 40°C temperatures. There was an online poll to choose the new word. Website visitors selected their preferred word. There were 478,000 responses. The word kokushobi got nearly 203,000 votes. Japan has had record-breaking, with days of 40°C or above every year since 2018. In August 2025, another town recorded Japan's highest ever temperature. The mercury rose to 41.8°C. There were nine more days of 40°C temperatures. The year 2025 was Japan's hottest since records began in 1898. The Mainichi newspaper said that Kyoto recorded 52 days over 35°C, compared with an annual average of 18.5 days.

HOT DAYS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about hot days in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

