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Level 5 – 20th April 2026

Japan invents new word for days of 40°C heat

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<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-5.html>

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Please try Levels 4 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-5.html>

Climate change is having consequences on language – the creation of new words. Japan's Meteorological Agency (JMA) has introduced a new word into the Japanese dictionary. The word is "kokushobi," which literally means "cruelly hot day" or "harshly hot day". It will be used when describing or forecasting days when temperatures are 40°C or above. There was an online poll of weather-based terminology. The questionnaire was because of the recent scorching weather. Website visitors selected their preferred word. There were 478,000 responses. The word *kokushobi* got nearly 203,000 votes.

There has been record-breaking heat in Japan. There have been days of 40°C or above every year since 2018. In August 2025, a town in Gunma Prefecture recorded the highest temperature ever in Japan. The mercury rose to 41.8°C. There were nine more days of 40°C temperatures. More records were broken in 2025. This was the hottest year since records began in 1898. The Mainichi newspaper wrote: "Tokyo recorded 25 days over 35°C, compared with an annual average of just 4.5 days. Kyoto logged 52 days above that, compared with an 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-5.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. an unforeseen consequence | a. of new words |
| 2. the creation | b. weather |
| 3. the Japanese | c. word "kokushobi" |
| 4. The neologism is the | d. nearly 203,000 votes |
| 5. conducted an online | e. lexicon |
| 6. scorching | f. preferred word |
| 7. visitors selected their most | g. poll |
| 8. The word <i>kokushobi</i> garnered | h. on language |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. There has been record- | a. records began in 1898 |
| 2. the highest temperature ever | b. average of just 4.5 days |
| 3. The mercury | c. observed in Japan |
| 4. More records were | d. 52 days above that |
| 5. the hottest year since | e. rose to 41.8°C |
| 6. Temperatures were 2.36°C | f. breaking heat |
| 7. an annual | g. broken in 2025 |
| 8. Kyoto logged | h. above average |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-5.html>

Climate change (1) _____ on language – the creation of new words. Japan's Meteorological Agency (JMA) has (2) _____ word into the Japanese dictionary. The word is "kokushobi," which literally means "(3) _____" or "harshly hot day". It will be used when describing (4) _____ when temperatures are 40°C or above. There was an online poll of (5) _____. The questionnaire was because of the recent scorching weather. Website visitors selected (6) _____. There were 478,000 responses. The word *kokushobi* got nearly 203,000 votes.

There has been (7) _____ in Japan. There have been days of 40°C or above (8) _____ 2018. In August 2025, a town in Gunma Prefecture recorded the (9) _____ in Japan. The mercury rose to 41.8°C. There were nine more days of 40°C temperatures. More (10) _____ in 2025. This was the hottest year (11) _____ in 1898. The Mainichi newspaper wrote: "Tokyo recorded 25 days over 35°C, compared with an annual average of just 4.5 days. Kyoto (12) _____ above that, compared with an average of 18.5 days."

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2604/260420-harshly-hot-days-5.html>

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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) _____

