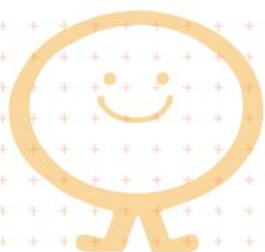


2026 年度

英文精読

・ 英文を精読する。11～15



STUDY COLLABO.



11.

People today are worried about food safety. As a result, the popularity of “organic” farming of fruits and vegetables is increasing. But what exactly does organic farming mean?

It is probably easier to explain what organic farming is not. Organic farming does not use pesticides or fertilizers. Instead, this style of farming uses natural methods to protect plants and help them grow. So, organic agricultural products are thought to be generally safer than non-organic ones.

In the United States, about two percent of all food is grown using organic methods. The U.S. government officially licenses farms as “organic” if they pass an examination. Presently, there are about 10,000 licensed farmers in the U.S., and this number is growing by about 20% a year.

12.

In addition to food safety, another reason for the popularity of organic fruits and vegetables is that they taste better. This is why many restaurants only buy organic products.

A lot of people think organic farming is not competitive compared to other methods because it cannot grow the same quantity of food. However, new research has shown that organic farming only grows, on average, about five percent less than non-organic methods. Still, organic food today is more expensive than non-organic food. But when the environmental and health costs of non-organic farming are considered, such as the pollution of water by pesticides, most people would agree that the higher price of organic farming is in fact a small price to pay for our health and safety.

13.

When we watch kittens and puppies playing, we realize that through play they are learning how to live. They learn various physical skills, such as how to jump over barriers without getting hurt. They also learn social interaction. For example, if a kitten bites his sister too hard, she will get angry and bite him back. These physical and social skills form part of the training that young animals need in order to grow up.

Just as kittens and puppies learn about how to live through play, so do children. But in present-day Japan, especially in cities, there is not much space for children to play in. Children need to release their energy for their mental and physical health. They need space, especially outdoors, so that they can run, jump, and yell.

14.

Another point to consider is how much time children have to play. Some people say that four to five hours a day of playing outdoors with others is necessary, even for twelve-year-olds.

It is very doubtful, however, whether any Japanese children get that much free time. Concerned about their future in an increasingly competitive society, parents generally tell their children to study more; very few would tell them to go out and play.

What do these children do at home when they are not studying? They tend to spend time by themselves. They play video games or watch TV, for instance. These activities do not teach them how to get along with others. This can only be learned through playing with other children. They need to play without being told what to do by adults in order to learn about leadership and group harmony on their own. Outdoor space is particularly suitable for this purpose. Children need a proper outdoor environment where they can freely spend their time playing with friends.

15.

Bamboos are the fastest-growing plants on Earth. A typical bamboo grows as much as 10 centimeters in a single day. Certain species grow up to a meter during the same period, or about 1 millimeters every 2 minutes. You can actually see the plant grow in front of your eyes. Most species of bamboo reach maturity in just 5 to 8 years. Compare this to other popular hard woods that barely grow an inch in a week. Trees such as oak can take up to 120 years to reach maturity. But when it comes to flowering, bamboos are probably one of the slowest plants in the world. The flowering of bamboos is an interesting phenomenon, because it is a unique and very rare occurrence in the plant kingdom. Most bamboos flower once every 60 to 130 years. The long flowering intervals remain largely a mystery to many scientists.

