

My Daily English Diary
2020 (Year of the Mouse)

Wednesday, January 1st

Happy New Year! It's freezing this morning, but beautifully sunny. I'm in the car on the way to my In-laws' house to celebrate the new year. We will eat many traditional Japanese foods such as 'osechi' and 'mochi'. I'm looking forward to a relaxing time with family--

Thursday, January 2nd

Today was sunny. It's still the New Year's holidays here in Japan, so I had a day off from my usual, busy Thursday schedule. So around sunset, I walked to the local shrine to say "Hello!" It was a lovely, relaxing day.

Friday, January 3rd

Today was nice and sunny. We drove up north to a famous shrine in Takachiho. It has many ancient cedar trees. One of them is over 800 years old! They were so tall and big around. Now we are on the way back home down the coast. It will probably take about 3 hours... Well, at least it's a beautiful drive--



Saturday, January 4th

It was sunny today and a little windy. I had nice warm vegetable curry for dinner. Yesterday when we visited the shrine, we got a good luck charm. Tonight, we just put it up in the loft window. It is for protecting the home. I hope it keeps us all nice and safe this year!

Sunday, January 5th

Today I got up very early for a special all-day karaoke marathon party. We entered the karaoke room at 9:00 in the morning... and now it's 2:00 in the afternoon... And we're still here! We've been singing all our favorite songs: some classics (like Queen) and new pop hits (like Cold Play and Taylor Swift) and even some Disney! "Let it go!" There's still many songs and many hours to go before my voice dies out-- so I'll get back to it!



Monday, January 6th

Today was mostly sunny. I had bean sprouts curry for lunch. It was very satisfying. Today was my first day of lessons in the new year, so I was pretty busy. But I was very happy to see my students again!

Tuesday, January 7th

Today is mostly cloudy. I had oatmeal for breakfast. It was nice and filling. Now I'm taking a quick tea break... I'm very busy on the computer today. And the farmers down in the valley are busy in their fields. Everyone is working so hard!

Wednesday, January 8th

Today is quite warm and sunny. And it's been super windy! The wind blew lots of branches down from the cedar trees. It's kind of a mess. So I'm picking them up. Actually, they're perfect for starting fires in the wood stove. So I'm happy to use them later tonight!

Thursday, January 9th

Today was sunny. I had English lessons all day. I made a video about the word "karaoke". Check it out!
https://youtu.be/GVzISQ_EXGE



Friday, January 10th

Today is sunny and warm. So I went for a walk before breakfast. The farmers were already busy with their tractors. So early! And a little noisy too... When I got home, I enjoyed some hot cocoa with soymilk. It was a nice way to start my day.

Saturday, January 11th

It was cloudy this morning, but now it's nice and sunny again. The weather report says it will get colder next week, so I got some more firewood ready. Cutting it and carrying it is hard work!

Sunday, January 12th

It suddenly rained a lot in the middle of the night last night. And today it's been mostly cloudy. I'm glad I brought some firewood in yesterday! Now I'm going to have some nice warm soup for dinner... I'll toast some bread too! Mmm...



Monday, January 13th

Today was sunny but cold. I was up very early in the morning with a special online English lesson. It went well. Then I had sticky rice 'mochi' with sweet red beans for breakfast. We toasted the mochi balls on the wood stove. It was so yummy!

Tuesday, January 14th

Today was cold and rainy. It was very misty too. So damp! I had soup and Spanish-style rice for lunch. It was good. We had the fire going all day long, so we used up all the firewood. Tomorrow I'll have to prepare some more!

Wednesday, January 15th

It was totally clear and sunny today. I brought in more firewood this morning. In the afternoon, I had another long business meeting. This time, I installed some new hardware on my computer for a work project. I'm excited to start sometime new!



Thursday, January 16th

Today was rainy and cold. I had English lessons all day. So I made a video about the phrase "pretty busy". Check it out!

<https://youtu.be/0RepQ2iKA+4>

Friday, January 17th

Today was mostly rainy. But it finally stopped in the late afternoon. Then the sun came out a little at the very end. Now it's making a beautiful sunset. The weather report says it will be freezing tonight, so I had better get ready...!

Saturday, January 18th

Today was sunny. So I went for a walk. But there was a very cold breeze blowing-- Wow! Chilly! Then, when I was getting ready for a nice warm bath, my electric razor broke and scratched my cheek. Ouch! I guess I'll have to go shopping for a new one soon...

Sunday, January 19th

I just got out of the movie theater. We watched the latest Star Wars movie, "The Rise of Skywalker". It was so exciting! And full of interesting surprises. Wow! Now I'm a little hungry... So I'm off to the food court!



Monday, January 20th

This morning is a little cloudy and cold. But I got a good night's sleep last night, so I went for a run. It felt great! Now I will make oatmeal with 'natto' fermented soybeans and a fried egg on top. Yum!

Tuesday, January 21st

It's nice and sunny today. I'm using this new drawing tablet with my computer for a new work project. It's a little hard to get used to, but it's pretty cool and very handy! Tomorrow I will take these test files and check them with the project manager. Wish me luck!

Wednesday, January 22nd

Today is mostly cloudy. I'm getting ready for a project meeting in the downtown. Recently my electric razor broke, so I bought a new one last night. Let's see how it works! Oooh, nice--

Thursday, January 23rd

Today was rainy but warm. I had English lessons all day. So I made a video about the phrase "I guess I will..." Check it out!

<https://youtu.be/dsuNltbp2Go>



Friday, January 24th

Today is cloudy. Our internet is down. Oh no! I think it's because of the hard rain yesterday... I have to call the phone company to fix it. So unfortunately my daily diary videos will be a little late... I'm sorry!

Saturday, January 25th

Today is rainy. The morning was foggy and misty. Very mysterious... It's the Chinese New Year today! The Year of the Mouse has officially begun. Yay! One of my English students made me a card to celebrate. I think it's so cute! Thank you!

Sunday, January 26th

Today is rainy again. We're on a road trip through the mountains. I just had a nice vegetable curry with mushrooms for lunch. It was very nice. There's a very interesting bridge here. It has an unusual square shape. Well, I'm off again to the shrines to celebrate the lunar new year--!



Monday, January 27th

Today is quite rainy. So wet! For lunch, I had toasted brown rice porridge. It was very satisfying. On our road trip through the mountains yesterday, we saw many wild animals. We saw a badger, some pheasants, and three big boars. They were cute, pretty, and exciting! Wow!

Tuesday, January 28th

It's partly sunny today. I went to the dentist. They pulled out one of my upper wisdom teeth. The dentist was very kind and careful, so I have no pain. Yay! But wow! It was kind of a big event for my mouth...! Now I'm bleeding a little and have to be careful when eating for a few days...

Wednesday, January 29th

Today is mostly cloudy. I'm feeling fine, but I'm eating soup all day because of my dental experience yesterday... it's easy to eat. I'll go back to the dentist next Tuesday for another tooth pulling. I can't really say that I'm looking forward to it...

Thursday, January 30th



The weather was crazy today! The morning was nice and sunny, and not so cold. I was busy driving to my many English lessons. Then suddenly, huge, dark clouds came over. And then little balls of ice were bouncing off my car windshield. It was hail. Wow! I was so surprised! There was also a lot of thunder and lightning really close. BOOM!

Friday, January 31st

Today was sunny. But last night was freezing. So this morning, the cars were covered with ice. So cold! My mouth is feeling better now, so tonight I had a rice omelet for dinner. It was so good to eat solid food again!

Saturday, February 1st

Today was nice and sunny. So I went for a walk. It's been a long time! Tonight I watched a movie, "Green Book". It was a heartwarming story about some difficult problems in American society. It was very moving.

Sunday, February 2nd

Today, when I was watching one of my videos, I noticed that my neck is swollen up on the right side. It must be from getting my wisdom tooth pulled last week. Well, very soon I'll get the left one pulled out too, so then I'll be matching...

watch the video version here → <https://youtu.be/39CVZZk9K6k>



Monday, February 3rd

Tomorrow I'll go to the dentist to get my last wisdom tooth pulled out... So I think my mouth will need a break. So this week, I'll try something new with this diary. I will update it every FEW days instead of every day. And each diary will be just a little bit longer. Also, I will talk more about the past, present, and future. That's actually more natural, and good practice for you! So let's try a little experiment!

Thursday, February 6th

Well, on Tuesday, I returned to the dentist to remove my lower left wisdom tooth. The dentist pulled it out pretty smoothly, but it made a loud noise at the very end: CRACK! It scared me a little... But everything was totally fine.

Yesterday, my jaw was a little sore, and it was hard to open my mouth wide. So I gave my mouth a rest. I ate very soft, soupy foods all day. And I didn't talk much. Instead, I worked on the computer all day.

Today, I have English lessons all day. I have to talk a lot! I hope my mouth can handle it! Tomorrow, I'll try to relax a little more and maybe watch a movie in the evening. I'm really looking forward to eating normal food again...!



Saturday, February 8th

Today is nice and sunny. So I went for a short walk. I found a bright red ladybug crawling down the middle of the road. Ladybugs eat bad bugs, so I picked it up and brought it home to our garden.

Last night I watched a movie, "Fantastic Beasts" 2. It was very interesting. The story was pretty complicated, but I loved seeing all the magical creatures. There was even a Japanese 'Kappa' water spirit! I was quite surprised. I'm looking forward to the next sequel.

I have an English lesson very early tomorrow morning. I have to get up at 5 am! So I'll go to bed very early tonight. Tomorrow, I'll do some housework. I need to go shopping for food. And I need to prepare more firewood for the next week. Busy, busy, busy!



Tuesday, February 11th

On Sunday, I did a lot of work around the house. I stacked some firewood, and brought some into the house to keep us warm. Then yesterday I did some work on a voice recording project. I've been a little busy...

Today is sunny, but it's freezing cold! When I took out the trash this morning, I saw white frost everywhere on the ground. I sure am glad I got all that firewood ready!

Tonight I will go to a live concert to see my favorite singer/songwriter, Ai Nagayoshi. The concert will be in a small local cafe. She has a very powerful voice, and I'm sure she will fill up the space with amazing sound. So I'm really looking forward to it. I had better go get ready--!

Thursday, February 13th

Today was surprisingly sunny and warm. I had English lessons all day. My mouth still hurts a little from getting my teeth pulled last week. So I made a video about "wisdom teeth". Check it out!

https://youtu.be/Pr_SywSMBfs



Saturday, February 15th

Today is rainy. And I'm sick in bed all day. I have a runny nose, and I feel a little weak. Last night I had a high fever all night, so it was very hard to sleep. My temperature was around 39 degrees Celsius, and I had a terrible headache. It was actually a little scary...

Yesterday, I watched a movie to try and relax. I saw "Pirates of the Caribbean" 5. But it wasn't very relaxing. I really enjoyed the first movie of the series, but honestly, this one was pretty bad...

I need to do some work tomorrow, so I hope I can recover quickly. I'm eating soft rice porridge with pickled plum and drinking lots of water and herbal teas. I think I'll take a nap now to get some good rest while my temperature is normal...



Monday, February 17th

Today is mostly sunny, but very cold. The weather has been pretty crazy lately. Last week it was rainy and warm, like spring! But yesterday, a strong, cold wind started blowing. So now it's freezing at night again!

Yesterday, I finished one of my recording projects. So today I did some housework. I did some laundry, and I went to the local spring to get some drinking water. Now I have to get ready for my English lessons in the evening...

Tomorrow, I am supposed to go to the dentist again. This time just for a simple teeth cleaning. But I still don't feel so well yet. My fever and headache are gone. Yay! But my nose is still having some trouble. So I'll cancel my dentist appointment. Maybe I'll change it to next week... I'd better go call them!

Wednesday, February 19th

It's -1 Celsius this morning! The weather got even more crazy on Monday night. It suddenly started snowing! It was just a tiny bit, but we rarely get any snow around here... So it was quite a surprise!

Yesterday, while I was driving into the city to give an English lesson, a strange whining noise started coming from my car's engine. So I had to stop at the auto mechanic on the way. Now I am driving a loaner car while he checks mine...



While I was sick last week, I didn't feel like shaving. So I let my beard grow out. It's an interesting look. But I'm getting tired of it. So today I will shave it all off again. I'll go get started--!

Sunday, February 23rd

Today was nice and sunny. It was still cold outside, but the sun came through the windows and it got quite hot in the house. I was sweating! Now the temperature is just perfect. I had a bad cold last week, and it was really hard to talk. But now my voice is finally starting to clear up.

Yesterday, the auto mechanic finished fixing my car. So I went and picked it up. Luckily, it was just a small part that was making the big, bad engine noise. So the repairs were not too expensive. I'm happy to have my car back in good condition!

Tomorrow is a holiday, but I have some work to get done. I hope I can finish it quickly and take a little break. Last week was so busy and hectic! I'm a little tired... I think I'll go to bed now and try to get an early start tomorrow—



Wednesday, February 26th

It's pretty warm today. And my voice is almost back to normal. I'm quite happy about that!

I got some good news yesterday. I went to the dentist again for a regular teeth cleaning. They scrubbed and scraped and polished my teeth. Then they checked my teeth for cavities. But they didn't find any. Yay! So now I'm finished with the dentist for a while. I will go back for the next check and cleaning in six months... I'm very happy about that!

Tomorrow, I have many English lessons in the city. But after some teeth-pulling, a bad cold, and some car repairs, I'm happy for my life to return to normal... I'll go get ready for it!



Saturday, February 29th

Since last night it's been cold and rainy. Today is a special day because February usually has only 28 days. Today is an extra bonus day! Let's use it well!

Last night I saw the movie "CATS" at the cinema. It was pretty weird! But I really enjoyed it. There wasn't really a story. And the people-cats were a little strange looking. But the music and dancing was great. So I thought it was fun!

Tonight, I will host a Philosophy Cafe event at a local restaurant. We will get together and talk about some topics that are very difficult to think about. It will be a big stretch for our minds. But I think it will be very interesting! So I'm really looking forward to it! Tomorrow, I will do some work on the computer. It's a busy weekend for me!



Monday, March 2nd

Today is sunny and kind of hot! It's nice after the rainy weekend. I did a little cleaning around the house this morning, and now I'm getting ready for my English lessons tonight.

Last Saturday, I was planning a Philosophy Cafe event with some other teachers. I was looking forward to it! But unfortunately, many people are worried about the new coronavirus. So I cancelled the event. I was a little sad, but it's important to protect everyone's health.

Tomorrow, I will try teaching one of my usual English lessons through the internet. We will use an online video meeting app called Zoom. It will keep everyone safe from spreading any illnesses. I hope it works well for the lesson! I'll keep my fingers crossed--



Friday, March 6th

Last night was very cold again, but today is nice and sunny. So I'm doing lots of laundry! For lunch, I had curry and rice with bean sprouts. It was very satisfying.

My online lesson on Tuesday was a big success. It was really fun too! And it was safe and convenient for everyone. So tonight I'll do it again. Sometimes modern technology causes trouble in our lives, but other times it is so helpful. Like now during the spread of the new coronavirus...

Actually, this weekend, I'll be very busy working from home. I have some business meetings and an early-morning lesson. I also have another big recording project to work on. I'd better start getting ready--!



Monday, March 9th

Today is nice and sunny. So I went for a walk. It felt good. Then I had a piece of blueberry cake and some tea for breakfast. It was refreshing. Our indoor plants have some tiny bugs on them called aphids. So I got some ladybug babies to eat them. I just released them on the plants. I hope this works!

Yesterday, I had an English lesson very early in the morning. I had to get up at 4:30 am! The moon was still up! It was a great lesson though. And I was able to get a lot of work done after it--

Speaking of the moon, tomorrow is the full moon. But it's already pretty big and bright. In fact, it was so bright last night that I had trouble sleeping. So I'm a little tired today... I wonder if I have time for a quick nap?

Wednesday, March 11th

The weather has been pretty wild lately. On Monday night it started raining a lot, and yesterday a strong, cold wind was blowing. Today is sunny again, but cold. And tonight will be freezing. Wow! I will have to prepare the water pipes outside so they don't freeze and break overnight...

Yesterday, I checked on the baby ladybugs I recently released in the house. I have been gently spraying water on the plants so they could have something to drink. I found one of them climbing around

watch the video version here → <https://youtu.be/39CVZZk9K6k>



and eating the little aphid bugs. Yay! Please eat all you want!

Tomorrow is my busy day as usual. I have English lessons all day. But I also need to clean the air filters in our gas heater, air conditioner, and refrigerator. I hope I can make time for it in the morning. Well, I'd better get to work making my lesson plans--

Saturday, March 14th

Today was sunny, but still cold. I had homemade pasta for lunch. It was great! I did a lot of work on the computer today, so my eyes are a little tired...

Yesterday, I went out to the local spring to get more drinking water. It's very nice and fresh! I go once a week to get it. Life in the mountains can be so wonderful!

I have a lot of work tomorrow too. So I'll go to bed soon. Lately, I am reading a book in bed before I sleep. The book is a fantasy story called "The Silmarillion". It's pretty long... almost 450 pages! But it's a perfect bedtime story. I think I'll go get started...



Monday, March 16th

Today is sunny. Yesterday was very windy. And it blew lots of branches down from the trees. I had to pick them up after taking out the garbage.

Last night, I watched a movie called "Cry Baby" on DVD. It is Johnny Depp's very first movie. He was so young! And cute! It's a very strange and silly movie, but it has a positive message. So I like it. And it's a lot of fun to watch. It has some fun music and dancing too!

Tonight I have three English lessons to prepare for. And before my lessons I will have a rice omelet for dinner at the cafe. Their rice omelets are always nice and filling. I'm looking forward to it.



Saturday, March 21st

Today was sunny and warm. Yesterday was a holiday, so it's a three-day weekend! I wanted to do something special, but I also wanted to avoid the crowds. So today I went on a long hike in the mountains.

We got boxed lunches from the local farmers market and drove to the trailhead. We were surprised to see many cars! But the trail is long, so we didn't really see many people on the way. We stopped to eat our lunch about halfway up. It was very nice eating outdoors in the nature...

Coming back down was actually the hardest part. Now my legs are a little sore and my feet hurt. But it sure felt good to walk in the forest. It's been a long time!

I have another early morning online English lesson tomorrow from 6 am. So I'm going to go take a nice hot bath now and get in bed early. I need a good rest after today's exercise!



Tuesday, March 24th

Today is nice and sunny. Sunday was a little rainy, so now the plants are starting to become green again. It seems like spring is on its way. I had a nice walk taking the recycle plastics down to the trash station.

A couple of weeks ago, I put some baby ladybugs on the indoor plants to eat the bad aphid bugs. Yesterday I noticed one of the baby ladybugs sitting very still on a leaf. It was big and fat. It is changing into an adult now. Maybe next week it will be fully grown into a beautiful red beetle with its classic black spots. I'm looking forward to seeing it!

Today and tomorrow I have a lot of work to do with my English lessons and updating my website. I just finished cooking some rice, so I'll have that for lunch with some soup first. Excuse me while I go eat!



Sunday, March 29th

The past few days have been quite rainy. Today it is supposed to take a little break. But the sun hasn't come out yet... For some reason, I woke up at 4 am this morning and couldn't get back to sleep. So I got up and started my day. I'm a little surprised, but I feel pretty good. And I got a lot done already today!

On Tuesday, just after I made my last video, there was an earthquake. It wasn't so big here, but the house was swaying back and forth. I was on the second floor at the time, So I could really feel it moving. Well, that's a little part of daily life here in Japan...

This afternoon, I will go to my parents-in-laws' house to do a little work. They need some help fixing things in the garage. I will have lunch there too. I had better go get ready!



Wednesday, April 1st

It's sunny again today! Lately, it rains on and off almost every day. But today is very nice outside. And it's getting a little warmer. So I just started up my exercise plan again. Yesterday I went for a long walk. And today I did some muscle training exercises like pushups. It's been a long time! So I couldn't do so many today... But I won't give up!

Exercise always makes me really hungry, so I ate a lot today. Just after my morning routine, I had oatmeal with 'natto' fermented soybeans and a fried egg on top. Then I ate a big bowl of curry and rice for lunch. I hope I can wait a little longer for dinner tonight...!

Tomorrow will be a very busy day of English lessons. Then on Friday I have a big meeting with the local English teachers in my town. I'm looking forward to meeting them! I always enjoy talking about English education. I hope together we can improve the local English skills for the new school year!



Thursday, April 30th

Wow! It's been a long time! But I'm finally back!

I'm sorry about the long delay. But my tablet suddenly broke, so I couldn't shoot videos anymore. I had to research and find a new one on Amazon. That wasn't easy because I need an Android tablet that can use a free mobile SIM card. They are not as common as you might think...

Then I had to order it and get the delivery. That was actually pretty quick because I'm an Amazon Prime member. Finally, I had to set the new tablet all up again. That took forever...!

But now I'm back in action. With a new and improved mobile device! Yay!

Lately it has been sunny almost every day. And it is definitely getting warmer. I am usually getting up around 5:00 am now, and I'm enjoying going for walks in the morning.

Spring is here and every day many small bamboo shoots pop up from the dirt around this mountain. I pull them up and we cook them in our rice for lunch and dinner. Yum!

Well, I have a very busy day today, so I had better get started. I'm glad to be back, and I'm looking forward to sharing more diary entries with you!



Tuesday, May 5th

Yesterday was so hot! I really couldn't believe it. I had a lot of work to do outside in the garden, and I got pretty sweaty. Today is cloudy and a little cooler, but still pretty warm. Today I'm working indoors at the computer. I just had a nice lunch of stir-fried zucchini with ginger on rice. It was great! Well, my last diary video was really long... so I will keep this one short and get back to work!



Sunday, May 10th

To all the mothers out there, "Happy Mother's Day!" I hope you get lots of love and appreciation from your families today!

I live very far away from my own mother, literally on the other side of the world! But, she will get a surprise from me this year. I will tell you more about it in my next diary video (just in case she's watching this!).

Also, tomorrow morning I will give her a call on Skype. If I call her now, it will be way too early! But when I call her on my Monday morning, it will be Sunday evening for her, and still Mother's Day. Time zones make family holidays and birthdays a little complicated!



Tuesday, May 12th

Today I visited a local junior high school to give some English lessons. It was very fun to be back in a big public classroom again. The students were very active and energetic. We all had a great time!

Yesterday morning, I called my mother for Mother's Day. We had a very nice talk. Two weeks ago, I had sent her a package with masks and some small gifts. The masks are handmade by my mother-in-law here in Japan. And one of the small gifts is a custom hero action figure that has my face on it. One of my past coworkers special ordered it for me. So, two very unique Mother's Day gifts! My mother said she had received the package just before Mother's Day, and that she really liked them. Yay! I was very happy to hear it.



Saturday, May 16th

Today we made bread! Recently, we started preparing dough for some homemade bread. This morning we baked it in the oven. The outside crust is a little hard, but the inside is nice and soft. We used it to make sandwiches for lunch. Yum!

Before that, I joined a virtual birthday party on Skype for an old friend in the USA. Our friends from all around the world got together to celebrate his birthday. It was nice to see everyone again after such a long time.

Now it's getting later in the afternoon and I'm getting a little hungry again. Hmm... maybe I'll have some soup with more of our fresh homemade bread?

