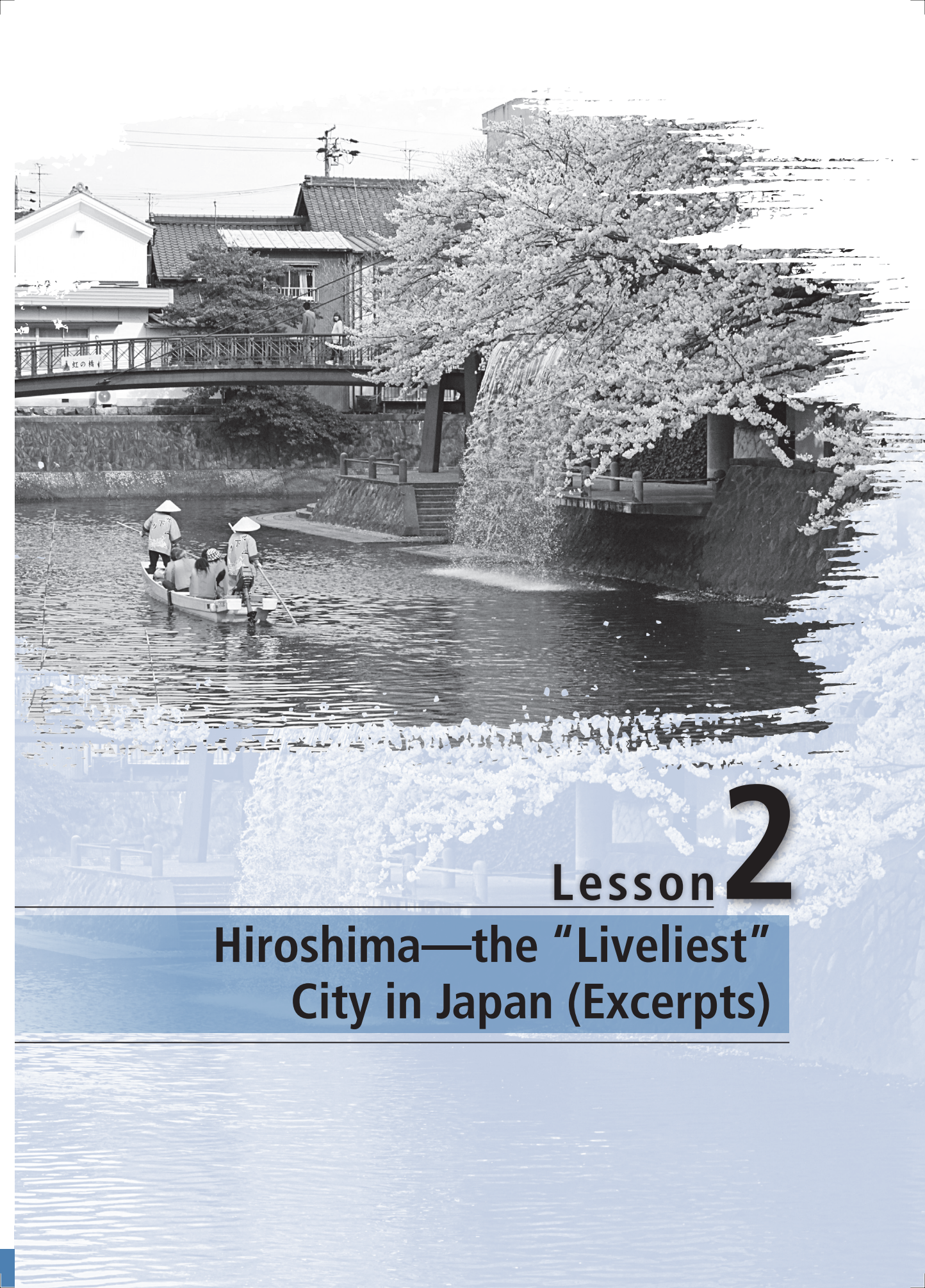


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Lesson **2**

Hiroshima—the “Liveliest” City in Japan (Excerpts)



Hiroshima—the “Liveliest” City in Japan (Excerpts)

Jacques Danvoir

- 1 “Hiroshima! Everybody off!” That must be what the man in the Japanese stationmaster’s uniform shouted, as the fastest train in the world slipped to a stop in Hiroshima Station. I did not understand what he was saying. First of all, because he was shouting in Japanese. And secondly, because I had a lump in my throat and a lot of sad thoughts on my mind that had little to do with anything a Nippon railways official might say. The very act of stepping on this soil, in breathing this air of Hiroshima, was for me a far greater adventure than any trip or any reportorial assignment I’d previously taken. Was I not at the scene of the crime?
- 2 The Japanese crowd did not appear to have the same preoccupations that I had. From the sidewalk outside the station, things seemed much the same as in other Japanese cities. Little girls and elderly ladies in kimonos rubbed shoulders with teenagers and women in Western dress. Serious-looking men spoke to one another as if they were oblivious of the crowds about them, and bobbed up and down repeatedly in little bows, as they exchanged the ritual formula of gratitude and respect: “Tomo aligato gozayimas.” Others were using little red telephones that hung on the facades of grocery stores and tobacco shops.

- 3 “Hi! Hi!” said the cab driver, whose door popped open at the very sight of a traveler. “Hi,” or something that sounds very much like it, means “yes.” “Can you take me to City Hall?” He grinned at me in the rearview mirror and repeated “Hi!” “Hi!” We set off at top speed through the narrow streets of Hiroshima. The tall buildings of the martyred city flashed by as we lurched from side to side in response to the driver’s sharp twists of the wheel.
- 4 Just as I was beginning to find the ride long, the taxi screeched to a halt, and the driver got out and went over to a policeman to ask the way. As in Tokyo, taxi drivers in Hiroshima often know little of their city, but to avoid loss of face before foreigners, will not admit their ignorance, and will accept any destination without concern for how long it may take them to find it.
- 5 At last this intermezzo came to an end, and I found myself in front of the gigantic City Hall. The usher bowed deeply and heaved a long, almost musical sigh, when I showed him the invitation which the mayor had sent me in response to my request for an interview.
- 6 “That is not here, sir,” he said in English. “The mayor expects you tonight for dinner with other foreigners on the restaurant boat. See? This is where it is.” He sketched a little map for me on the back of my invitation.
- 7 Thanks to his map, I was able to find a taxi driver who could take me straight to the canal embankment, where a sort of barge with a roof like one on a Japanese house was moored. The Japanese build their traditional houses on boats when land becomes too expensive. The rather arresting spectacle of little old Japan adrift amid beige concrete skyscrapers is the very symbol of the incessant struggle between the kimono and the miniskirt.
- 8 At the door to the restaurant, a stunning, porcelain-faced woman in traditional costume asked me to remove my shoes. This done, I entered one of the low-ceilinged rooms of the little floating house, treading cautiously on the soft tatami matting and experiencing a twinge of embarrassment at the prospect of meeting the mayor of Hiroshima in my socks.
- 9 He was a tall, thin man, sad-eyed and serious. Quite unexpectedly, the strange emotion which had overwhelmed me at the station returned, and I was again crushed by the thought that I now stood on the site of the first atomic bombardment, where thousands upon thousands of people had been slain in one second, where thousands upon thousands of others had lingered on to die in slow agony.
- 10 The introductions were made. Most of the guests were Japanese, and it was difficult

for me to ask them just why we were gathered here. The few Americans and Germans seemed just as inhibited as I was.

11 “Gentlemen,” said the mayor, “I am happy to welcome you to Hiroshima.”

12 Everyone bowed, including the Westerners. After three days in Japan, the spinal column becomes extraordinarily flexible.

13 “Gentlemen, it is a very great honor to have you here in Hiroshima.”

14 There were fresh bows, and the faces grew more and more serious each time the name Hiroshima was repeated.

15 “Hiroshima, as you know, is a city familiar to everyone,” continued the mayor.

16 “Yes, yes, of course,” murmured the company, more and more agitated.

17 “Seldom has a city gained such world renown, and I am proud and happy to welcome you to Hiroshima, a town known throughout the world for its—oysters.”

18 I was just about to make my little bow of assent, when the meaning of these last words sank in, jolting me out of my sad reverie.

19 “Hiroshima—oysters? What about the bomb and the misery and humanity’s most heinous crime?”

20 While the mayor went on with his speech in praise of southern Japanese sea food, I cautiously backed away and headed toward the far side of the room, where a few men were talking among themselves and paying little attention to the mayor’s speech.

21 “You look puzzled,” said a small Japanese man with very large eyeglasses.

22 “Well, I must confess that I did not expect a speech about oysters here. I thought that Hiroshima still felt the impact of the atomic cataclysm.”

23 “No one talks about it any more, and no one wants to, especially, the people who were born here or who lived through it.”

24 “Do you feel the same way, too?”

25 “I was here, but I was not in the center of town. I tell you this because I am almost an old man. There are two different schools of thought in this city of oysters, one that would like to preserve traces of the bomb, and the other that would like to get rid of everything, even the monument that was erected at the point of impact. They would

also like to demolish the atomic museum.”

26 “Why would they want to do that?”

27 “Because it hurts everybody, and because time marches on. That is why.” The small Japanese man smiled, his eyes nearly closed behind their thick lenses. “If you write about this city, do not forget to say that it is the gayest city in Japan, even if many of the town’s people still bear hidden wounds, and burns.”

*

28 Like any other, the hospital smelled of formaldehyde and ether. Stretchers and wheelchairs lined the walls of endless corridors, and nurses walked by carrying nickel-plated instruments, the very sight of which would send shivers down the spine of any healthy visitor. The so-called atomic section was located on the third floor. It consisted of 17 beds.

29 “I am a fisherman by trade. I have been here a very long time, more than twenty years,” said an old man in Japanese pajamas.

30 “What is wrong with you?”

31 “Something inside. I was in Hiroshima when it happened. I saw the fire ball. But I had no burns on my face or body. I ran all over the city looking for missing friends and relatives. I thought somehow I had been spared. But later my hair began to fall out, and my belly turned to water. I felt sick, and ever since then they have been testing and treating me.”

32 The doctor at my side explained and commented upon the old man’s story, “We still have a handful of patients here who are being kept alive by constant care. The others died as a result of their injuries. Or else committed suicide.”

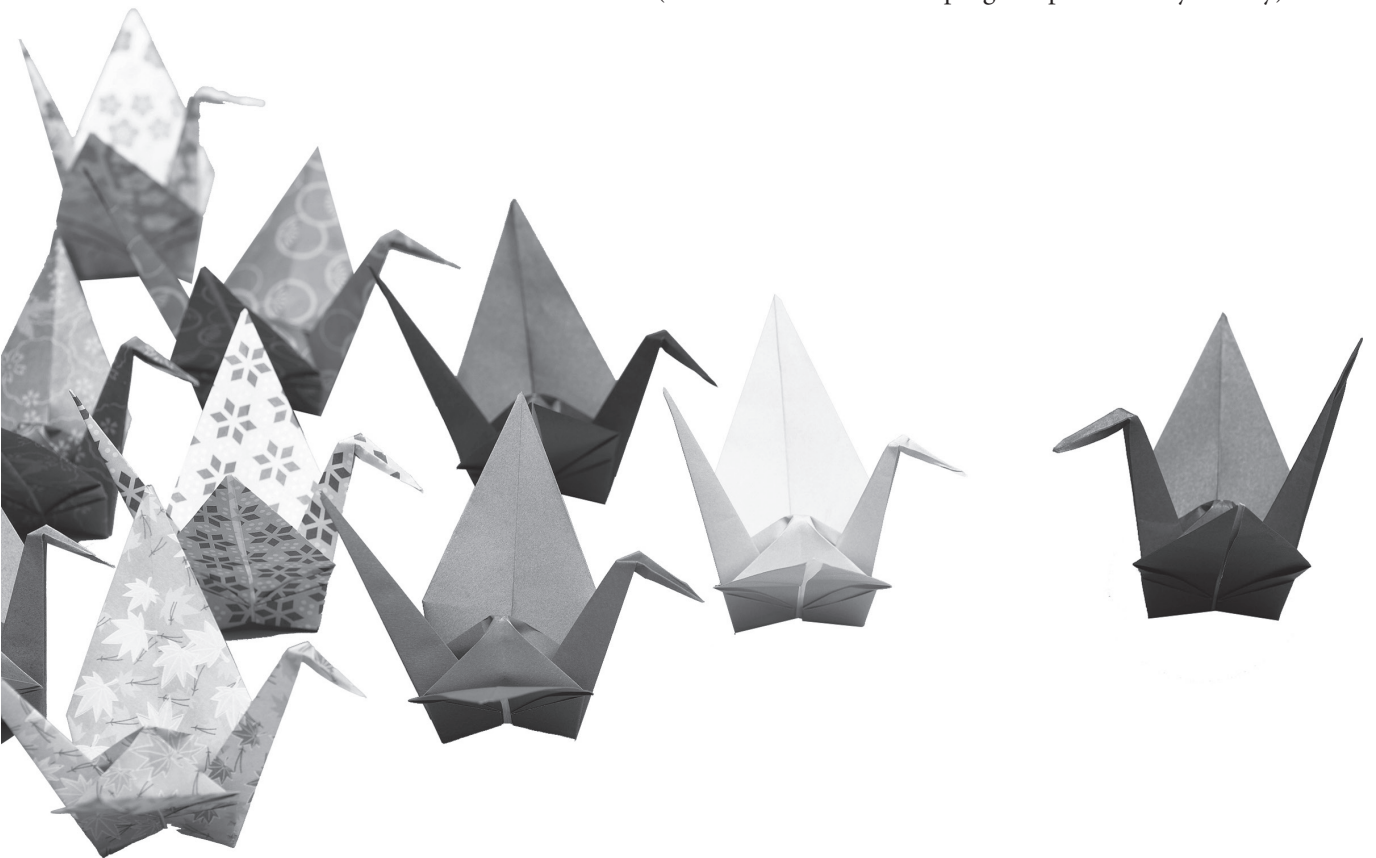
33 “Why did they commit suicide?”

34 “It is humiliating to survive in this city. If you bear any visible scars of atomic burns, your children will encounter prejudice on the part of those who do not. No one will marry the daughter or the niece of an atomic bomb victim. People are afraid of genetic damage from the radiation.”



- 35 The old fisherman gazed at me politely and with interest.
- 36 Hanging over the patient was a big ball made of bits of brightly colored paper, folded into the shape of tiny birds.
- 37 “What’s that?” I asked.
- 38 “Those are my lucky birds. Every day that I escape death, each day of suffering that helps to free me from earthly cares, I make a new little paper bird, and add it to the others. This way I look at them and congratulate myself on the good fortune that my illness has brought me. Because, thanks to it, I have the opportunity to improve my character.”
- 39 Once again, outside in the open air, I tore into little pieces a small notebook with questions that I’d prepared in advance for interviews with the patients of the atomic ward. Among them was the question: Do you really think that Hiroshima is the liveliest city in Japan? I never asked it. But I could read the answer in every eye.

(from an American radio program presented by Ed Kay)



Aids to Comprehension

This is a feature story or simply a feature, a type of journalistic writing. Feature stories may appear in newspapers, magazines, on TV or radio. The one we are studying was presented on an American radio program.

About "Hiroshima—the 'Liveliest' City in Japan"

A feature story covers a selected issue in depth. Unlike news stories (especially hard news stories) which must be objective and timely, feature stories take more time to write and are usually longer and express a point of view. There are some apparent differences between news stories and feature stories. A news story has a more or less standard way of beginning: In the first paragraph the reporter tells 5 Ws—who, what, when, where and why. In a word, the most important information is contained in the first paragraph or first few paragraphs, and the rest of the news story is organized in an inverted pyramid, that is to say, the paragraphs are arranged in reverse order of importance. Since news stories are written for readers to have a quick glance, after reading the first few paragraphs the readers may stop anywhere without missing important information. In contrast, the purpose of a feature story is to hold the readers' attention and make them read the story from beginning to end. For such an aim, the reporter, first of all, chooses something interesting to write about and a unique angle to present the story. The subject of a feature story can be a person, or a group of people, a place, a thing, an event, an accident, etc. The main idea may not be stated at the beginning but somewhere in the article. So to read a feature story, we should pay attention to the structure. Another thing deserving our attention is the style of the writer. Styles of feature stories vary from reporter to reporter. A unique style is one of the factors making a feature story successful. Feature stories may begin in various ways. Since feature story writers have more time and space to develop a topic in more depth than news writers do, they give a lot of attention to their writing style in order to make the story interesting or entertaining. The writer usually chooses his/her unique perspective to report the story and so the writer's personal opinions and feelings find expression in the writing. Feature stories can exhibit a huge range

in difficulty and sophistication.

The subject of the feature story “Hiroshima—the ‘Liveliest’ City in Japan” is about a place—Hiroshima. The story is mainly divided into three parts: the writer’s arrival at Hiroshima, the reception by the city mayor, and his visit to the atomic ward in the hospital.

The writer uses the first-person narrative voice. The story begins with the writer’s arrival at the railway station. The writer does not try to conceal his emotions about the city or his attitude toward the atomic bomb. In the very first paragraph he says, “I had a lump in my throat and a lot of sad thoughts on my mind.” He asked, “Was I not at the scene of the crime?” On his way to his destination he observed the crowds of Japanese.

At the reception, the writer expected the mayor to talk about the atomic bomb and its tragic impact. To his great surprise, the mayor referred to Hiroshima as the “liveliest city in Japan.” The puzzled writer was told by an elderly Japanese man that there were two schools of thought in Hiroshima about the bomb.

With many prepared questions, the writer visited the atomic ward in the hospital. He interviewed atomic bomb victims and came to his conclusion about Hiroshima.

Notes

1. **Hiroshima (Para. 1):** 広島 (日本城市名). It is a seaport, the capital of Hiroshima prefecture in southwest Japan. On August 6, 1945, Hiroshima was the first city to be struck by an atomic bomb, dropped by the U.S. Air Force, directly killing an estimated 80,000 people. By the end of the year, injury and radiation brought total casualties to 90,000-140,000. Approximately 69% of the city’s buildings were completely destroyed, and about 7% severely damaged. Hiroshima was proclaimed a City of Peace by the Japanese parliament in 1949. Since then the city of Hiroshima has received international attention as a desirable location for holding international conferences on peace as well as social issues. Since 1955, an annual world conference against nuclear weapons has met in Hiroshima. The city has an estimated population of 1,154,391 (in

2006), while the total population for the metropolitan area was estimated as 2,043,788 in 2000.

2. **Nippon (Para. 1):** (*Japanese*) Japan.
3. **kimono (Para. 2):** (*Japanese*) A loose robe with wide sleeves and a broad sash traditionally worn as an outer garment by the Japanese.
4. **Tomo aligato gozayimas (Para. 2):** (*Japanese*) Thank you very much.
5. **tatami (Para. 8):** (*Japanese*) Straw matting used as a floor covering in a Japanese home. It is a custom of the Japanese to remove their shoes once they go indoors, walking on the tatami matting in their socks.
6. **humanity's most heinous crime (Para. 19):** There was, and still is, scholarly and popular debate over the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki near the end of World War II. The fundamental issue that has divided scholars over a period of several decades is whether the use of the bomb was necessary to achieve victory in the war. Supporters of the bombings generally assert that they caused the Japanese surrender, preventing massive casualties on both sides in the planned invasion of Japan. Those who oppose the bombings argue that it was militarily unnecessary, inherently immoral, a war crime, or a form of state terrorism.
7. **the monument that was erected at the point of impact (Para. 25):**
In 1949, a design was selected for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. Hiroshima Prefecture Industrial Promotion Hall, the closest surviving building to the location of the bomb's explosion, was designated "A-Bomb Dome" in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.
8. **the atomic museum (Para. 25):** The full name is Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, which is located in Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, in central Hiroshima. It was opened in August 1955 with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Hall (now the International Conference Center Hiroshima). The museum presents the facts of the atomic bombing, with the aims of contributing to the abolition of nuclear weapons throughout the world, and of promoting world peace.

Words & Expressions

facade (Para. 2)	the front of a building; the part of a building facing the street
martyred (Para. 3)	killed or destroyed because of someone's belief
intermezzo (Para. 5)	a movement coming between the major sections of a music work; a brief prelude or diversion
embankment (Para. 7)	a raised structure (as of earth or gravel) used to hold back water
barge (Para. 7)	a large boat, usually flat-bottomed, for carrying heavy freight on rivers, canals, etc.
beige (Para. 7)	grayish-tan
incessant (Para. 7)	never ceasing; continuing or being repeated without stopping or in a way that seems endless; constant
twinge (Para. 8)	a sudden brief feeling of remorse, shame, pain, etc.
bombardment (Para. 9)	an attack with or as with artillery or bombs
spinal (Para. 12)	脊椎的
oyster (Para. 17)	牡蛎
reverie (Para. 18)	dreaming, thinking or imagining, especially of agreeable things; fanciful musing; daydreaming
heinous (Para. 19)	outrageously evil or wicked; abominable
cataclysm (Para. 22)	catastrophe; a momentous and violent event marked by overwhelming upheaval and destruction
formaldehyde (Para. 28)	(化) 甲醛
ether (Para. 28)	(化) 乙醚
stretcher (Para. 28)	a light frame covered with canvas, etc. and used for carrying the sick, injured or dead
nickel-plated (Para. 28)	镀镍的
genetic (Para. 34)	基因的, 遗传性的
ward (Para. 39)	a room or division of a hospital set apart for a specific group of patients

Exercises

I. Oral Presentation

Make a five-minute presentation in class based on your research.

Suggested topics:

1. The atomic bombing of Hiroshima
2. Debate over the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
3. Hiroshima today

II. Questions

A. Questions on the Content:

1. Can you guess the writer's occupation? What detail in the text supports your guess?
2. What do you think of the aim of the visit?
3. What thoughts were on his mind when the writer arrived at the railway station of Hiroshima? What was his attitude toward the atomic bombing of Hiroshima?
4. Did the writer find the Japanese crowds preoccupied with the same thoughts?
5. How did Hiroshima strike the writer?
6. Why did the mayor's speech puzzle the writer? What had the writer expected the mayor to say?
7. Where did the writer go after the reception? What was the purpose of his visit?
8. Why did some victims commit suicide?

B. Questions on Structure and Style:

1. Did the writer narrate the events in the order of their occurrence?
2. Can you identify words or expressions in the text that reveal the writer's attitude toward the atomic bombing of Hiroshima?
3. What Japanese cultural traits did the writer notice in his brief observations of the city?
4. What was the writer's major impression of the city? What symbol did the writer use to describe his impression?
5. Paragraphs 11-18 describe the mayor's welcome speech. Comment on the technique the writer uses in suspending the attention of the readers. What effect is achieved by this technique?
6. Do you think the end of the story is well written? Why?
7. Why is the word "liveliest" in the title put in quotation marks?

III. Paraphrase

Explain the following sentences in your own words, bringing out any implied meanings.

1. Serious-looking men spoke to one another as if they were oblivious of the crowds about them... (Para. 2)
2. At last this intermezzo came to an end, and I found myself in front of the gigantic City Hall. (Para. 5)
3. The rather arresting spectacle of little old Japan adrift amid beige concrete skyscrapers is the very symbol of the incessant struggle between the kimono and the miniskirt. (Para. 7)
4. ...experiencing a twinge of embarrassment at the prospect of meeting the mayor of Hiroshima in my socks. (Para. 8)
5. The few Americans and Germans seemed just as inhibited as I was. (Para. 10)
6. After three days in Japan, the spinal column becomes extraordinarily flexible. (Para. 12)
7. I was about to make my little bow of assent, when the meaning of these last words sank in, jolting me out of my sad reverie. (Para. 18)
8. ...and nurses walked by carrying nickel-plated instruments, the very sight of which would send shivers down the spine of any healthy visitor. (Para. 28)
9. Because, thanks to it, I have the opportunity to improve my character. (Para. 38)

IV. Practice with Words and Expressions

A. Look up the dictionary and explain the meanings of the italicized words.

1. And secondly, because I had a *lump* in my throat... (Para. 1)
2. Little girls and elderly ladies in kimonos *rubbed shoulders with* teenagers... (Para. 2)
3. The tall buildings of the *martyred* city flashed by... (Para. 3)
4. Just as I was beginning to find the ride long, the taxi *screeched* to a halt... (Para. 4)
5. The rather *arresting* spectacle of little old Japan adrift amid beige concrete skyscrapers... (Para. 7)
6. At the door to the restaurant, a *stunning*, porcelain-faced woman... (Para. 8)
7. ...when the last words *sank in*... (Para. 18)
8. There are two different *schools* of thought in this city of oysters... (Para. 25)
9. "I'm a fisherman *by trade*." (Para. 29)

B. Explain how the meanings of the following sentences are affected when the italicized words are replaced with the words in brackets. Pay attention to the shades of meaning of the words.

1. That *must be* what the man shouted. (was) (Para. 1)
2. *Was I not* at the scene of the crime? (Was I at the scene...?) (Para. 1)

3. *Elderly* ladies rubbed shoulders with teenagers. (old) (Para. 2)
4. He *grinned* at me in the rearview mirror. (smiled) (Para. 3)
5. He *sketched* a little map on the back of my invitation. (drew) (Para. 6)
6. I treaded *cautiously* on the tatami matting. (carefully) (Para. 8)
7. I stood on the *site* of the first atomic bombardment. (spot) (Para. 9)
8. They would also like to *demolish* the atomic museum. (destroy) (Para. 25)
9. It is the *gayest* city in Japan. (most delightful) (Para. 27)
10. The old fisherman *gazed* at me politely and with interest. (stared) (Para. 35)

C. Discriminate between these synonyms.

1. puzzle, confuse, perplex, confound, bewilder, dumbfound
2. heinous, outrageous, horrible, evil, wicked

V. Translation

A. Translate the following sentences into English, using the words or expressions given in brackets.

1. 礼堂里一个人都没有，会议一定是延期了。(must)
2. 那座现代建筑看上去很像个飞碟。(much like)
3. 四川话和湖北话在北方人听起来很相似，有时难以区别。(much the same as)
4. 一看见纪念碑就想起了在战斗中死去的好友。(the very)
5. 他陷入沉思之中，没有理会同伴们在谈些什么。(to be oblivious of)
6. 他干的事与她毫无关系。(to have...to do)
7. 她睡不着觉，女儿的病使她心事重重。(mind)
8. 这件事长期以来一直让我放心不下。(mind)
9. 他喜欢这些聚会，喜欢与年轻人交往并就各种问题交换意见。
(to rub shoulders with)
10. 几分钟以后大家才领悟他话中的含意。(to sink in)
11. 土壤散发着青草的气味。(to smell of)
12. 我可以占用你几分钟时间吗?(to spare)
13. 你能匀出一张票子给我吗?(to spare)
14. 那个上了年纪的灰头发的人是铜匠。(by trade)

B. Translate the following sentences into Chinese.

1. And secondly, because I had a lump in my throat and a lot of sad thoughts on my mind that had little to do with anything a Nippon railways official might say. (Para. 1)
2. The very act of stepping on this soil, in breathing this air of Hiroshima, was for me a far greater adventure than any trip or any reportorial assignment I'd previously taken. Was I not at the scene of the crime? (Para. 1)

3. The tall buildings of the martyred city flashed by as we lurched from side to side in response to the driver's sharp twists of the wheel. (Para. 3)
4. Quite unexpectedly, the strange emotion which had overwhelmed me at the station returned, and I was again crushed by the thought that I now stood on the site of the first atomic bombardment, where thousands upon thousands of people had been slain in one second, where thousands upon thousands of others had lingered on to die in slow agony. (Para. 9)
5. "Seldom has a city gained such world renown, and I am proud and happy to welcome you to Hiroshima, a town known throughout the world for its—oysters." (Para. 17)
6. "There are two different schools of thought in this city of oysters, one that would like to preserve traces of the bomb, and the other that would like to get rid of everything, even the monument that was erected at the point of impact." (Para. 25)
7. "If you write about this city, do not forget to say that it is the gayest city in Japan, even if many of the town's people still bear hidden wounds, and burns." (Para. 27)
8. "But later my hair began to fall out, and my belly turned to water." (Para. 31)

C. Translate Paragraphs 38 and 39 into Chinese.

Read, Think and Comment



Below are the first four paragraphs of a long feature story. Read and think about the following questions:

1. How does the feature begin?
2. What do you think this feature is about?
3. Where is the main idea of the feature stated?

On a California hillside thick with scrubby redwoods and poison oak, Mike Fay missed a step, started to slide, and felt something with a sharp point jab the top of his left foot. After bushwhacking hundreds of miles in sandals, he was used to such insults to his 52-year-old feet. But this time the splinter was really bad. It bounced off a bone, lodged in a tendon, and refused to come out. Finally his hiking partner, Lindsey Holm, grabbed it with a pair of pliers and after several sharp tugs, yanked it free.

“You could hear me yelling from mountaintop to mountaintop,” Fay says. “It was of one of the most painful things I’ve ever experienced,” which is something coming from a man who was once gored 16 times by an elephant. He taped up the wound, shouldered his pack, and as he had for the past three months, kept walking.

After three decades of helping save African forests, Mike Fay, a Wildlife Conservation Society biologist and National Geographic Society explorer-in-residence, now has redwoods in his blood. His obsession with the American trees began a few years ago after he completed an exploration of the largest jungle remaining intact in Africa.

In the fall of 2007 he resolved to see for himself how Earth’s tallest forest had been exploited in the past and is being treated today. By walking the length of California’s range, from Big Sur to just beyond the Oregon border, he wanted to

find out if there was a way to maximize both timber production and the many ecological and social benefits standing forests provide. If it could be done in the redwoods, he believed, it could be done anywhere on the planet where forests are being leveled for short-term gain...He and Holm—a self-taught naturalist born and raised in the redwood country of northern California—took pictures and detailed notes on their 11-month trek, exhaustively recording wildlife, plant life, and the condition of the forest streams. They talked to the people of the redwoods as well: loggers, foresters, biologists, environmentalists, café owners, and timber company executives—all dependent on the forest.