

Mount Ishizuchi

(Ehime Shimbun: January 30, 2025)

Hearing all the school songs of all the elementary schools in the eastern part of Ehime prefecture, I have to say that from the viewpoint of regional character, Saijo's are the most special. The word "Mount Ishizuchi" appears in over 70% of Saijo City's school songs. In the lyrics, Mount Ishizuchi is praised for its shape and for watching over children. I realized that Mount Ishizuchi is the symbol of this area.

In fact, you can see a gift from the mountain everywhere throughout the city. Abundant underground water nurtured by the mountain range springs out in various places, something known as "Uchinuki". Underground water is used not only as water for daily life, but also for growing Saijo's special eggplants and for sake brewing. Saijo is absolutely a city of water.

The famous mineral water may produce new industries. JR Shikoku will start land-based salmon farming, making use of underground water in Saijo. The company plans to raise young salmon into adult fish of two kilograms in the thirteen water tanks installed at the Hiuchi branch of Ehime Prefectural Fisheries Cooperative, working together and shipping them out.

Salmon is a popular sushi item. Currently Norway's salmon is used for much of domestic demand, but the amount of its supply is reaching its limit. The movement to start land-based farming where artificial environmental growing conditions can be managed has been spreading nationwide.

While worrying about the decline of marine resources, farming can be relied on to provide delicious fish. If farming is successful, production volume may not be affected by red tide. If the amount of work can be reduced with IT technology in farming, the problem of labor shortage can be solved. Since they can ship products all year round, their dreams will expand.

Local salmon is raised by the groundwater from Mount Ishizuchi, the highest mountain in western Japan. It seems that Mount Ishizuchi will become a cool promotional item.

ONE POINT JAPANESE

「^{うけみけい}受身形」の^{つか}使い方

How to use "passive voice"

A : このあ^{にほんご}いだ、日本語の^{べんきよう}勉強で、^{うけみけい}受身形を^{れんしゆう}練習したよ。
Kono aida, nihongo no benkyō de, ukemi kē o renshū shita yo.
(The other day I studied the passive voice in Japanese.)

B : へー、^{むずか}難しかった？

Hē, muzukashikatta?

(Really? Was it difficult?)

A : ^{むずか}難しかったけど、おもしろかったよ。

Muzukashikatta kedo, omoshirokatta yo.

(It was difficult, but interesting.)

例えば「^{たと}雨に^{あめ}降^ふられて ^{たいへん}たいへんだった」とか。

Tatoeba "Ame ni furarete taihen datta" toka.

(For example, "I got rained on, it was terrible!")

B : ^{あめ}雨にも^{つか}使うの？ おもしろいね。

Ame nimo tsukau no? Omoshiroi ne.

(It's even used for rain? That's interesting.)

A : ^{ことし}今年は^{あつ}暑かったから、^{うみ}海に^{くらげ}クラゲが^{たくさん}たくさんいたよ。

Kotoshi wa atsukatta kara, umi ni kurage ga takusan ita yo.

(It was hot this year so there were a lot of jellyfish in the sea.)

B : ちょっと ^{こわい}こわいな。^{くらげ}クラゲって、^さ刺^{いた}されると^{いた}痛いんだよね。

Chotto kowai na. Kurage tte, sasareru to itaindayo ne.

(They're a little scary. If you get stung by a jellyfish, it really hurts.)

高校生の ^{こうこうせい}時^{とき}、^さ刺^{あし}されて ^{あし}足が ^{ぱんぱん}パンパンに ^は腫^はれたんだよ

Kōkōsē no toki, sasarete ashi ga pampan ni haretanda yo.

(I got stung when I was in high school and my feet swelled up like crazy.)

A : どう ^{したの}したの？ なにか ^{うれし}うれしそう。

Dō shitano? Nanika ureshisō.

(What's up? You look happy.)

B : ^{しゃちょう}社長に ^{しごと}仕事を ^{ほめ}ほめられたんだ。うれしい。

Shachō ni shigoto o homeraretanda. Ureshī.

(My work was complimented by the boss so I'm happy.)

< by Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

Feel free to contact us at:

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What's New?

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From Student to Teacher: A Cross-Cultural Journey

David Shimamoto

It's funny how life sometimes brings us back to where we began.

2025 marks my eighth year living in Japan and my fourth year living in Niihama. Looking back, it feels like a full-circle journey, and I consider myself extremely fortunate to live and work in this wonderful city. This is the story of how I became an English teacher in Niihama.

I was born and raised in the United States, but my first visit to Ehime prefecture was when I was just two years old. My mother is originally from Tokyo, but shortly after she and her sister immigrated to the U.S. in their twenties, their parents moved to Ehime, where my grandfather was hired as a professor at Ehime University. During my childhood, I visited my grandparents' home in Toon City nearly every summer. For a couple of weeks each year, I even attended the nearby Kitayoshii Elementary School as a visiting student. I remember struggling with language and cultural differences at first, but I gradually made friends and came to appreciate these differences. It was through these early experiences that I became immersed in Japanese culture and developed a curiosity not only about Japan, but also about the world. Back in the U.S., I often found myself

reading travel books and memorizing maps. In my early teenage years, I dreamed of one day experiencing life in other countries.

When I was in high school, another dream began to take shape. I was inspired by several teachers who helped me enjoy subjects I had never been interested in before. I realized that teaching was a meaningful and influential profession—one that could truly make a difference. In college, I began volunteering at a junior high school, and I quickly developed a passion for teaching that has stayed with me ever since.

After graduating from college, I spent much of my twenties traveling around Asia and teaching in both South Korea and Japan. Once I began living in Japan, I realized that my familiarity with the culture was a real asset. I felt that I could make a meaningful impact here in a way I might not be able to elsewhere. Seeing a fulfilling path forward as an English teacher in Japan, I returned to school to earn a master’s degree in language teaching.

When I began searching for jobs around Japan, one opportunity caught my eye: a position at National Institute of Technology, Niihama College. It stood out not only because of my professional goals, but also because of my personal connection to Ehime. My grandmother, who was 92 at the time, was still living alone in the same house in Toon City. Since both of her daughters were in the U.S., I felt a strong sense of responsibility—as her only remaining family member in Japan—to be nearby and support her. I applied for the position, and shortly thereafter, I was hired as an assistant professor in the English department.

When I was a child, my classmates and teachers at a local elementary school in Ehime sparked my interest in other cultures and planted the seeds of curiosity that would shape my life. Now, somehow, life has brought me back to the place where it all started. This time, I have the privilege of being on the other side—helping young people in Niihama feel the same spark of curiosity and excitement for language and culture that first brought me here.



Futuristic Adult Diapers in WORLD EXPO 2025
(Ehime Shimbun: June 25, 2025)

A fashion show displaying various designs of adult diapers was held in the EXPO Hall at World Expo 2025 on June 24th. While most people are reluctant to wear diapers, the ones on display convey fashion as well as function. Visitors enjoyed the show with thirty-one unique and futuristic diapers, completely different from conventional ones.

The skirt-like design with black and red ruffles exhibits a loincloth-type diaper decorated with a gold leaf and knee-length pants to be used for set-up in a complete concept known as “ROCK & MODE”. Models wearing the groundbreaking diaper designs confidently strutted down the runway under the colorful lights and sounds over projection mapping.

After hearing many comments like “I don’t like to be seen in a diaper” or “I want to enjoy fashion”, the show was planned by General Incorporated Association Japan Welfare & Medical Fashion Association in Amagasaki city, Hyogo prefecture. Seven diaper manufacturers including Kao, Unicharm Corporation and Daio Paper Corporation (both from Shikokuchuo city), and Wacoal Holding Corporation (a major underwear company) worked together to produce diapers that you’ll want to wear.

Taiko-dai Floats in Motion Painted on Manhole Covers
(Ehime Shimbun: May 14, 2025)

Niihama city has installed colored manhole covers in front of JR Niihama Station featuring Niihama Taiko-dai floats with the aim of helping citizens understand sewage projects more deeply. On May 11th a debut ceremony was held for local children, who were excited about all of the manhole covers showing brave and gorgeous Taiko-dai floats. A city worker said, “Since the station is a gateway to the city, we want a lot of visitors to take interest in Niihama city itself, including Niihama Taiko Festival.”



This newsletter is published by SGG, a volunteer group that helps foreigners living in and around Niihama. If you need any advice, information, or support, please contact SGG. SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions, or ideas for monthly articles.
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* This month’s editors are T.Hoshita & Y.Amano

September Events

- ☆ **Ishiyama Naoji Exhibition & Louvre Copperplate Prints Exhibition** at Niihama City Museum
What better place to enter the unique world of copperplate engraving than Niihama, the city of copper.
Date: September 6 (Sat) - October 19 (Sun) 9:30am – 5:00pm
Fee: Adult ¥1000 / 65 years and older ¥800 / Free for university students and younger
- ☆ **Niihama Taiko Drum Festival in September** in the Aeon Mall Parking Lot
Date: September 15 (Mon, national holiday) 11:00am – 4:00pm
- ☆ **Imotaki Stew in Niihama** along the Kokyuryo-gawa riverbed, west side of Niihama City Gymnasium
Date: September 12 (Fri) – October 19 (Sun) 6:00pm – 9:00pm
Reservation: One week before the date is required. Contact Niihama Cuisine and Foodstuff Industry Cooperative
TEL: 0897-33-3920



Online Information in English from Niihama City

- ☆ **A Guide for Living in Niihama** 
- ☆ **The Niihama Medical Institution Map** 
- ☆ **Trash & Garbage Sorting Information** 
- ☆ **What’s New? in English** 
- ☆ **Niihama Tourist Information**
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