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Japan company's 'energy-saving' staff haircut

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

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29th August, 2011

THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

A Japanese company has ordered all of its 2,700 employees to get identical hairstyles. This unusual request is its efforts to help the country save energy. The Tokyo-based construction firm Maeda Corporation has requested that men have a short back-and-sides and women have a "cute" bob with a longer fringe that can be swept to one side. Company spokeswoman Chizuru Inoue explained: "Our company is very keen on protecting the environment and we encourage our staff to adopt many environment-friendly actions." She added: "We are not sure of the data yet, but we believe if people have short hair, they do not need to use their hair driers for so long and they will use less water." Some staff are confused about which style they must have and have been asking which salons give the best cut.

The energy-saving initiative is part of a national campaign to reduce energy consumption following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March. Japan has been struggling to produce enough electricity since the tsunami ended production at the Fukushima plants. The disaster resulted in a review of the country's energy policy that now means less than a quarter of its remaining nuclear plants are in use. The government has talked about a move away from nuclear energy towards more sustainable technologies. Many government institutions have taken measures to save power, including a reduced use of air-conditioning in offices and schools. Many employees cannot turn down the air-con below 27 degrees in the hottest summer months.

WARM-UPS

1. SAVING ENERGY: Walk around the class and talk to other students about saving energy. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

Japanese companies / hairstyles / save energy / protecting the environment / salons / energy-saving initiatives / struggling / sustainable / institutions / air conditioning

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. INITIATIVES: How can we save energy with these things? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change and share again.

	qqqqqqqq
Studying	
Chatting to friends	
Surfing the Internet	
Going on a picnic	
Breakfast	
While shopping	

4. ENERGGY CONSUMPTION: Students A **strongly** believe we can all reduce our energy consumption; Students B **strongly** believe we can't. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. USING LESS: What would affect you most? Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the ones that would affect you most at the top. Change partners and share your rankings again.

- electricity
- water
- paper
- money
- food
- the car
- your computer / mobile phone
- soap

6. HAIRSTYLE: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'hairstyle'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. A Japanese company has found a way to cut hair for no money. | T / F |
| b. Staff at a Japanese company have to get the same haircuts. | T / F |
| c. The company has data showing its initiative produces results. | T / F |
| d. All staff know where to go to get a haircut. | T / F |
| e. The staff haircuts are because of Japan's nuclear disaster in March. | T / F |
| f. Only around 25% of Japan's nuclear power plants are being used. | T / F |
| g. The company in the article is Japan's first to try to conserve energy. | T / F |
| h. Many office workers in Japan cannot sit in offices cooled to 24 degrees. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. ordered | a. puzzled |
| 2. request | b. eager to |
| 3. swept | c. plan |
| 4. keen on | d. catastrophe |
| 5. confused | e. instructed |
| 6. initiative | f. lessened |
| 7. struggling | g. appeal |
| 8. disaster | h. establishments |
| 9. institutions | i. brushed |
| 10. reduced | j. battling |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. its efforts to help the | a. to one side |
| 2. a longer fringe that can be swept | b. remaining nuclear plants |
| 3. adopt many environment- | c. of the data yet |
| 4. We are not sure | d. initiative |
| 5. confused about which | e. energy consumption |
| 6. The energy-saving | f. friendly actions |
| 7. a national campaign to reduce | g. country save energy |
| 8. struggling to produce | h. technologies |
| 9. a quarter of its | i. style they must have |
| 10. more sustainable | j. enough electricity |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

A Japanese company has (1) _____ all of its 2,700 employees to get identical hairstyles. This unusual request is its (2) _____ to help the country save energy. The Tokyo-based construction (3) _____ Maeda Corporation has requested that men have a short back-and-sides and women have a "cute" bob with a (4) _____ fringe that can be swept to one side. Company spokeswoman Chizuru Inoue explained: "Our company is very keen on protecting the environment and we encourage our staff to (5) _____ many environment-friendly actions." She added: "We are not sure of the (6) _____ yet, but we believe if people have short hair, they do not need to use their hair driers for so long and they will use less water." Some staff are (7) _____ about which style they must have and have been asking which salons give the best (8) _____.

confused

adopt

firm

cut

ordered

data

efforts

longer

The energy-saving initiative is part of a national (9) _____ to reduce energy consumption following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March. Japan has been (10) _____ to produce enough electricity since the tsunami ended production at the Fukushima plants. The disaster resulted in a (11) _____ of the country's energy policy that now means less than a quarter of its (12) _____ nuclear plants are in use. The government has talked about a move away from nuclear energy towards more (13) _____ technologies. Many government institutions have taken (14) _____ to save power, including a (15) _____ use of air-conditioning in offices and schools. Many employees cannot turn (16) _____ the air-con below 27 degrees in the hottest summer months.

remaining

down

struggling

campaign

measures

review

reduced

sustainable

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

A Japanese company has _____ 2,700 employees to get identical hairstyles. This unusual request _____ the country save energy. The Tokyo-based construction firm Maeda Corporation has requested that men have a short back-and-sides and women have a "cute" bob with a longer fringe that can _____ side. Company spokeswoman Chizuru Inoue explained: "Our company _____ protecting the environment and we encourage our staff to adopt many environment-friendly actions." She added: "We are not _____, but we believe if people have short hair, they do not need to use their hair driers for so long and they will use less water." Some staff _____ style they must have and have been asking which salons give the best cut.

The energy-_____ of a national campaign to reduce energy consumption following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March. Japan has been _____ enough electricity since the tsunami ended production at the Fukushima plants. The disaster _____ of the country's energy policy that now means less _____ its remaining nuclear plants are in use. The government has talked about a move away from nuclear energy towards more sustainable technologies. Many government institutions _____ to save power, including a reduced use of air-conditioning in offices and schools. Many employees cannot _____ below 27 degrees in the hottest summer months.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'hair' and 'cut'.

hair	cut

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ordered• efforts• swept• adopt• data• confused	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• reduce• enough• review• plants• measures• degrees
---	--

STUDENT SAVING ENERGY SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

Write five GOOD questions about saving energy 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.

SAVING ENERGY DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'haircut'?
- c) What do you think of this energy-saving measure?
- d) Would you follow company orders to cut your hair the same as everyone else?
- e) Do you think more power would be saved if all staff had to shave their head completely and be bald?
- f) Should more companies look at novel ways to save energy?
- g) Is this initiative unfair to women, who generally have longer hair?
- h) Do you think energy-saving haircuts could catch on around the world?
- i) Should this company be rewarded for its idea?
- j) What three adjectives would you use to describe this story?

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SAVING ENERGY DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What energy-saving initiatives do you know of?
- c) What energy-saving initiatives would you like to see in your country?
- d) Is it good that Japan is relying less on its nuclear power plants?
- e) What is your country's policy on nuclear power? Is it good?
- f) How effective are sustainable technologies in your country?
- g) Will we be using more or less power in the future?
- h) Would energy-saving initiatives like the haircuts only work in a country like Japan?
- i) What interesting energy-saving plans can you think of?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Chizuru Inoue?

LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1108/110829-saving_energy.html

A Japanese company has (1) ____ all of its 2,700 employees to get identical hairstyles. This unusual request is its efforts to help the country save energy. The Tokyo-based construction (2) ____ Maeda Corporation has requested that men have a short back-and-sides and women have a "cute" bob with a longer fringe that can be (3) ____ to one side. Company spokeswoman Chizuru Inoue explained: "Our company is very keen (4) ____ protecting the environment and we encourage our staff to adopt many environment-friendly actions." She added: "We are not sure of the data yet, but we believe if people have short hair, they do not need to use their hair driers for (5) ____ long and they will use less water." Some staff are confused (6) ____ which style they must have and have been asking which salons give the best cut.

The energy-saving initiative is part of a national campaign to reduce energy consumption (7) ____ the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March. Japan has been (8) ____ to produce enough electricity since the tsunami ended production at the Fukushima plants. The disaster resulted in a review of the country's energy policy that now means less than a quarter of its (9) ____ nuclear plants are in use. The government has talked about a (10) ____ away from nuclear energy towards more sustainable technologies. Many government institutions have taken (11) ____ to save power, including a (12) ____ use of air-conditioning in offices and schools. Many employees cannot turn down the air-con below 27 degrees in the hottest summer months.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) order | (b) orders | (c) ordering | (d) ordered |
| 2. | (a) firm | (b) film | (c) form | (d) farm |
| 3. | (a) sweep | (b) swept | (c) sweeps | (d) sweeping |
| 4. | (a) in | (b) by | (c) as | (d) on |
| 5. | (a) to | (b) by | (c) so | (d) a |
| 6. | (a) for | (b) about | (c) of | (d) to |
| 7. | (a) follow | (b) followed | (c) follows | (d) following |
| 8. | (a) struggling | (b) smuggling | (c) snuggling | (d) strutting |
| 9. | (a) remains | (b) remaining | (c) remainders | (d) remain |
| 10. | (a) misplacing | (b) relocation | (c) walk | (d) move |
| 11. | (a) treasures | (b) pleasures | (c) measures | (d) enclosures |
| 12. | (a) reduced | (b) compressed | (c) downed | (d) fallen |

Japan company's 'energy saving' staff haircut – 29th August, 2011

HOMework

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about saving energy. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. SAVING ENERGY: Make a poster about saving energy. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. ENERGY-SAVING HAIRCUT: Write a magazine article about energy-saving haircuts. Include imaginary interviews with someone who was ordered to have one (and thinks it's a good idea) and someone who was ordered to have one but doesn't want one.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to an energy expert. Ask him/her three questions about energy-saving haircuts. Give him/her three of your ideas for us to save energy. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. F d. F e. T f. T g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. ordered | a. instructed |
| 2. request | b. appeal |
| 3. swept | c. brushed |
| 4. keen on | d. eager to |
| 5. confused | e. puzzled |
| 6. initiative | f. plan |
| 7. struggling | g. battling |
| 8. disaster | h. catastrophe |
| 9. institutions | i. establishments |
| 10. reduced | j. lessened |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. its efforts to help the | a. country save energy |
| 2. a longer fringe that can be swept | b. to one side |
| 3. adopt many environment- | c. friendly actions |
| 4. We are not sure | d. of the data yet |
| 5. confused about which | e. style they must have |
| 6. The energy-saving | f. initiative |
| 7. a national campaign to reduce | g. energy consumption |
| 8. struggling to produce | h. enough electricity |
| 9. a quarter of its | i. remaining nuclear plants |
| 10. more sustainable | j. technologies |

GAP FILL:

Japan company's 'energy-saving' staff haircut

A Japanese company has (1) **ordered** all of its 2,700 employees to get identical hairstyles. This unusual request is its (2) **efforts** to help the country save energy. The Tokyo-based construction (3) **firm** Maeda Corporation has requested that men have a short back-and-sides and women have a "cute" bob with a (4) **longer** fringe that can be swept to one side. Company spokeswoman Chizuru Inoue explained: "Our company is very keen on protecting the environment and we encourage our staff to (5) **adopt** many environment-friendly actions." She added: "We are not sure of the (6) **data** yet, but we believe if people have short hair, they do not need to use their hair driers for so long and they will use less water." Some staff are (7) **confused** about which style they must have and have been asking which salons give the best (8) **cut**.

The energy-saving initiative is part of a national (9) **campaign** to reduce energy consumption following the Fukushima nuclear disaster in March. Japan has been (10) **struggling** to produce enough electricity since the tsunami ended production at the Fukushima plants. The disaster resulted in a (11) **review** of the country's energy policy that now means less than a quarter of its (12) **remaining** nuclear plants are in use. The government has talked about a move away from nuclear energy towards more (13) **sustainable** technologies. Many government institutions have taken (14) **measures** to save power, including a (15) **reduced** use of air-conditioning in offices and schools. Many employees cannot turn (16) **down** the air-con below 27 degrees in the hottest summer months.

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d 2 - a 3 - b 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - d 8 - a 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a