

Reading and Talking

Gray notebooks by Kokuyo

You can write with a black pen on white paper, or with a white pen on black paper. Now Kokuyo has made a notebook with gray paper. You can write in it with both black and white ink pens. This new notebook is also an unusual size. When you open it, two pages have a 16:10 size, which is the same as a computer screen. Each page also has lines from side to side and up and down to make writing and drawing easier. The 50-page notebooks went on sale on June 25th at Kokuyo's online store <<https://www.kokuyo-shop.jp/shop/>> for 900 yen.

(105 words)

What do you think about Kokuyo's new gray-paper notebook?

↳ I think it's great. / I think it's OK. / I think it's terrible. (--How come you think so? / Do you think it's going to be a popular product? / Do you have a pen with white ink?)

Are you using a notebook now?

↳ Yes, I am. / Kind of. (--What do you use it for? / Is it a notebook, or a binder with loose-leaf paper? / Are you good at taking notes?)

↳ No, I'm not. (--Were you good at taking notes when you were a student? / Did you use a binder with loose-leaf paper when you were a student?)

What kind of pencil case do you use?

↳ I use [a leather pencil case / a plastic pencil case / a can pencil case / a "gamaguchi" clasp pencil case / XXX]. (--Where did you buy it? / How long have you been using it? / Why did you choose it? / Do you remember your first pencil case in elementary school?)

↳ I don't use a pencil case. (--Do you keep your pens and pencils in a cup? / What kind of pencil case did you have in junior high and high school?)

(July 10, 2020)

More information

Gray notebooks by Kokuyo

You can write with a black pen on white paper, or with a white pen on black paper. If paper is gray, however, you can write on it with both black and white ink pens. Kokuyo, the stationary company, has made a gray-paper notebook for this reason. A quirk of human eyesight is that it's hard to see dark and bright colors at the same time. Kokuyo says its new notebook can be useful for brainstorming and developing ideas because of the contrast of black and white on the gray background.

It's not only paper color that makes this notebook different. It is also an original size. Each page is a slightly wider version of A5. When you open the notebook, a two-page spread has a 16:10 aspect ratio, which is the same as most laptop computer screens. Each page is printed with a faint grid pattern similar to graph paper, to make writing and drawing easier.

The 50-page notebooks went on sale on June 25 at Kokuyo's online store <<https://www.kokuyo-shop.jp/shop/>> for ¥900. They sold out immediately, and are expected to be back in stock in the middle of August.

(194 words)

(July 10, 2020)

Reading and Talking

The next big thing: lemonade?

What is the next popular drink after tapioca bubble tea? Some stores think that it is lemonade. *Lemonica* has 30 lemonade cafés in Japan. There is one in the Shibuya Fukuras Mall in Tokyo. At *Lemonica*, you make your own personal lemonade. Choose cold, hot, or sparkling water, how sweet, and what extra flavoring (340 yen). *Wow Wow Lemonade* trucks visit shopping malls, where they serve lemon drinks (450 yen). You can also make lemonade at home. Kaldi sells “Lemonade Base” (398 yen) that you mix with water or sparkling water.

(96 words)

Do you think lemonade is going to be as popular as tapioca bubble tea?

↳Yes, I do. / Kind of. (--Have you seen a new lemonade store recently? / Have you ever made lemonade? / Do you know any dessert that is popular now?)

↳No, I don't. (--How come you don't think so? / Do you remember any drinks that were popular in the past? / Do you like lemonade?)

What's your favorite soft drink in summer?

↳I like [XXX]. (--Is there any other drink that you like to drink in summer? / Do you drink hot coffee in summer? / Do you carry a drink in your bag in summer?)

Have you ever eaten a bowl of ramen with slices of lemon on top?

↳Yes, I have. (--When and where did you have it? / How was it? / Was it more delicious than you expected?)

↳No, I haven't. (--Do you want to try it? / Do you want to try lemon soba/udon noodle dishes? / Have you been to a ramen shop recently?)

(July 10, 2020)

More information

The next big thing: lemonade?

Tapioca bubble tea is still a fad, but people are already looking for the next big thing. Some businesses are betting that it's lemonade. A classic lemonade drink has three ingredients: sugar, water and lemon juice. This summer, novel versions are popping up everywhere.

Here are some examples. *Lemonica* first opened in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture in 2017 (Heisei 29). There are currently over 30 *Lemonica* lemonade parlors in various parts of the country, with the most famous one on the first floor of the Shibuya Fukuras Mall in Tokyo. Craft your personal lemonade by choosing cold, hot, or sparkling water, sweetness level, and additional flavoring (¥340 a cup). *Wow Wow Lemonade* is a Hawaiian lemonade stand. Its lemonade trucks visit shopping malls, where they serve drinks in plastic cups or mason jars (¥450). *Litt Up Kyoto* is a café in Higashiyama, Kyoto. Its purple “Liberte Lemonade” is served in a hexagonal bottle (¥950).

You can also do it yourself. Kaldi Coffee Farm, the imported food and drink store, sells cartons of “Lemonade Base” (¥398). Take it home and dilute it with water or sparkling water.

(190 words)

(July 10, 2020)