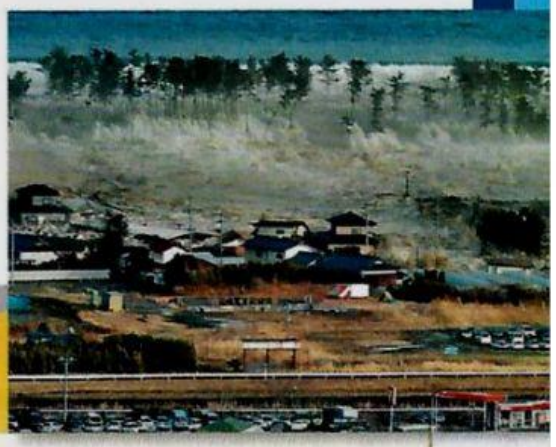
8 Reading

A 2.13 Read the article quickly and say who:

1 was sleeping?
2 was on a bicycle?
3 saw lights moving?
4 felt like a fish?
5 was playing a game?
6 saw vehicles moving up and down?
7 thought she was sick?
8 was not in Japan?



What were you doing when...?

On the anniversary of the terrible tsunami in Japan in March 2011, *Japan Today* asked readers: **What were you doing when the earthquake hit?**

Mike, Australian News Editor
I was waiting to board my plane to Japan from Sydney when they announced the earthquake and that Narita airport was closed. So we were stuck at the airport. The next morning, we left for Japan. It was terrible.

Kumiko, Japanese Advertising Consultant
When the earthquake hit, I was chatting with my colleague. First, I thought I was feeling dizzy and asked my colleague: "Is it shaking, or is it just me?" "Yes, it's shaking," he answered.

Jiro, Japanese Operations Director
I was in a café in Tokyo, for a casual meeting with my boss. Cars and taxis were driving along the street, and when the earthquake hit they started to move up and down like waves on the sea.

Hiroki, Japanese Student
I was playing Starcraft 2 on my laptop at home. My team was winning. Then the quake started. I wrote: "We are having an earthquake here and it's huge. I think this is the big one. Today I'm going to die." My teammate said: "Please sell your items before you leave." (I didn't sell my items—I left!)

Nestor, Filipino Marketing Consultant
I was swimming in the pool at my gym. I felt like a goldfish in a bowl. The lifeguard blew her whistle and asked me to get out of the pool and go home because they planned to close the gym.

Christopher, American Chef
I was making cream puffs at a cooking school in Kobe, on the fourth floor of the building. I started to feel dizzy. A few seconds later, my teacher said "It's an earthquake! Look, the lights are swinging."

Anita, American Singer
I was going to a concert and I was riding my bike to the station. As I approached the stoplight, I saw people holding each other in a strange way, like they were drunk... I looked up, and saw and heard the power lines moving.

Astrid, German Teacher
I was having a nap with my three-month-old daughter when the building started shaking. Usually I don't mind earthquakes, but this one was different!!! IT FELT BIG! I grabbed my baby, opened the door, and dived under the table!!!

8 comments (Login to comment) Share E-mail

B Re-read and match the **bold** words to their meanings. Which two stories did you like best?

1 **stuck** at the airport
2 I was feeling **dizzy**
3 it's **huge**
4 the lifeguard blew her **whistle**
5 I **dived** under the table
6 the lights are **swinging**
7 I **grabbed** her

- ☐ a feeling like you are moving in circles
- ☐ moved quickly, head first
- ☐ moving from side to side
- ☐ very big
- ☐ took her quickly
- ☐ not able to leave
- ☐ an instrument to make noise

C MAKE IT **PERSONAL** Dramatic interruptions. What were you doing when you heard about...

a the tsunami?
b 9/11?
c another important moment?

I was eating breakfast. They interrupted my favorite show to announce the tsunami on TV.

I was flying home when my wife had our son, so I missed the birth. Horrible!

Workbook p. 12

2.5 What do you have in your pockets?

ID Skills Understanding and Retelling a Story

A 2.14 Read and choose the best title for the story.

1 Cooking Can Be Dangerous 2 Woman Hurt by Beach Rocks 3 Husband Attacks Wife with Hose

STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN!

Unbelievable! Did you read this story about the woman who had rocks in her cargo shorts when suddenly something weird happened?

So, the woman was carrying the orange stones in her shorts, because her children found them on the beach and gave them to her. (What nice kids! ☺) The poor woman was standing in the kitchen about an hour after they got home when her shorts caught fire! Yes! They CAUGHT FIRE! Imagine her husband's surprise too—the poor guy was reading the paper or something and suddenly he saw that his wife was on fire! Well, he thought fast and took her outside and started hosing her with water from the garden hose. And that's when the firefighters and paramedics arrived, as he was spraying his wife with water. So, of course, the surprised paramedics treated her and took her to the hospital. They said it was the first time they ever saw something like that. The rocks were still smoking when they arrived at the hospital! Those were very flammable rocks!

Anyway... so what on earth happened? Well, the authorities are investigating, but they think that there was phosphorous on the rocks (the orange parts in the photo). Apparently, when phosphorus is exposed to air, it burns at extremely high temperatures. And the woman? Well, she got severe burns on her right leg and right arm and her husband got burns on his arm too, but they survived.

The moral of the story? Don't put the things your kids give you in your pockets! ☺

B Re-read. True (T), false (F) or not mentioned (N)?

1 The rocks were in the woman's pocket.
2 She found the rocks on the beach.
3 She was cooking when the rocks caught fire.
4 Her husband called the emergency services.
5 The paramedics often see burning rocks.
6 Phosphorous caused the fire.

C Read World of English and explain the difference between the underlined phrases in A.

D Imagine you are the woman, her husband, one of her kids, a firefighter or paramedic. Write a blog about what happened. Read each other's blogs. Which is the most dramatic?

"We got an emergency call from an old woman. She told us there was a woman on fire!"

World of English

To light a fire is intentional. *To catch fire* is accidental. When something is burning, it is *on fire*. And, in an emergency, you shout "*Fire!*"