



ROUND 21

The Fix For a "Boring Life" - Sei Shonagen - The Pillow Book

Source: School of Life

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※ 문의 070 8246 0570

1. Vocabulary *Check the meaning of these words/expressions in the dictionary.*

💡 Today's Expression(오른쪽 링크 클릭) - [To pull oneself together](#)

- Definition
- Example

QR코드를 통해 To pull oneself together의 설명 영상을 보실 수 있습니다.



1. **Lament**(verb) to express sorrow, regret, or dissatisfaction
ex) She **lamented** the lack of excitement in her life.

"It feels natural, at times, to **lament** how boring our lives are. "

2. **Antidote** (noun) - a remedy or solution to counteract or relieve something undesirable
ex) Seeking adventure and new experiences can be an **antidote** to the monotony of daily life.

"It feels natural, at times, to lament how boring our lives are. We do the same sorts of things each week, nothing special or exciting ever seems to happen. We enviously compare our dull routines to the adventures of others. An **antidote** to our sense of tedium can be found in the work of Sei Shonagon."

3. **Tedium**(noun) If you talk about the tedium of a job, task, or situation, you think it is boring and rather frustrating.
ex) She began to wonder whether she wouldn't go mad with the **tedium** of the job.

"An antidote to our sense of **tedium** can be found in the work of Sei Shonagon."

4. **Uneventful** (adjective) - lacking in interesting or notable events
ex) A place where dull people lead **uneventful** lives.

"Despite the high-status of her job, her daily life was, externally, deeply **uneventful**: an afternoon's carriage ride outside the walls of the court compound might be the highlight of a year."

5. **Sermon** (noun) - a religious discourse or speech delivered by a preacher
ex) She went on a day trip to hear a **sermon** at the local church.

"A day trip to hear a sermon in a temple seems to have been the farthest extent of her travels."

6. **Billowing** (adjective) - expanding or flowing out in a large cloud or mass
ex) The curtains were billowing in the breeze, creating a dramatic effect in the room.

"A curtain at an open window **billowing** in the breeze."

7. **Maneuver** (verb) - to move or guide skillfully or carefully
ex) The porters expertly **maneuvered** the heavy load through the narrow hallway.

"Porters cleverly **maneuvering** a big load that one would think would be impossibly cumbersome to carry."

8. **Cumbersome** (adjective) - large or heavy and therefore difficult to carry or use; unwieldy
ex) The large suitcase was **cumbersome** to lift and carry up the stairs.

"Porters cleverly maneuvering a big load that one would think would be impossibly **cumbersome** to carry."

2. Listening Drill

It feels natural, at times, to lament how boring our lives are. We do the same sorts of things each week, nothing special or exciting *ever seems to happen*. We enviously compare our dull routines to the adventures of others.

An antidote to our sense of tedium can be found in the work of Sei Shonagon. Around a thousand years ago, she *kept a journal* of the decade or so she spent as a lady-in-waiting at the Imperial Place in Kyoto, then the capital of Japan.

Despite the high-status of her job, her daily life was, externally, deeply *uneventful*: an afternoon's carriage ride outside the walls of the court compound might be the highlight of a year; a day trip to hear a sermon in a temple seems to have been the *farthest extent of her travels*; she spent almost all of her time indoors, in just two or three rooms; she saw the same few people *month after month*; her work largely involved keeping respectfully silent, knowing when to bow and remembering the complex titles of various officials.

And yet, her work, *The Pillow Book* gives the impression that she had a wonderful open minded time.

We don't really know where the lovely title of the book came from; perhaps she slept with it under her head, *occasionally adding* a thought or observation by the light of the moon.

Typically Shonagen asks herself questions, for instance: what is the nicest time of day? In the summer: it's the night, especially if it's raining; in Spring she prefers the dawn; in Autumn, sunset; in winter, the morning.

An 'event' in her day includes observing the frost on the branches of a plum tree or enjoying the beating of the rain on the veranda roof.

Such things don't *sound very thrilling*, but by concentrating on them and appreciating them, they become deep sources of satisfaction.

Or Shonagen might ask herself: what is it fun to see? It might be someone who is usually very formal in their dress turning up looking a bit disheveled; a curtain at an open window *billowing in the breeze*; a cat walking easily along the top of a *narrow railing*; water droplets on leaves in the garden; porters *cleverly maneuvering* a big load that one would think would be impossibly cumbersome to carry; or people whose clothes match the color of the room *they are in*. Shonagen makes long lists of words that *sound intriguing*, and of place names that sound romantic.

She *delights in* describing little things that annoy her: someone who takes too long telling a good story; something clever she could have said, but didn't think of at the time; trying to get something done too quickly, making a mess of it and having to start all over again.

As we read we might wish our life were as interesting as hers: and yet Shonagen is secretly sharing the technique that would make our own existence equally rich if we just knew to ask ourselves more interesting questions.

As with so many great books, Shonagen's pillow book leaves us not so much wanting to read it again as to start writing our own private version.

3. Summary

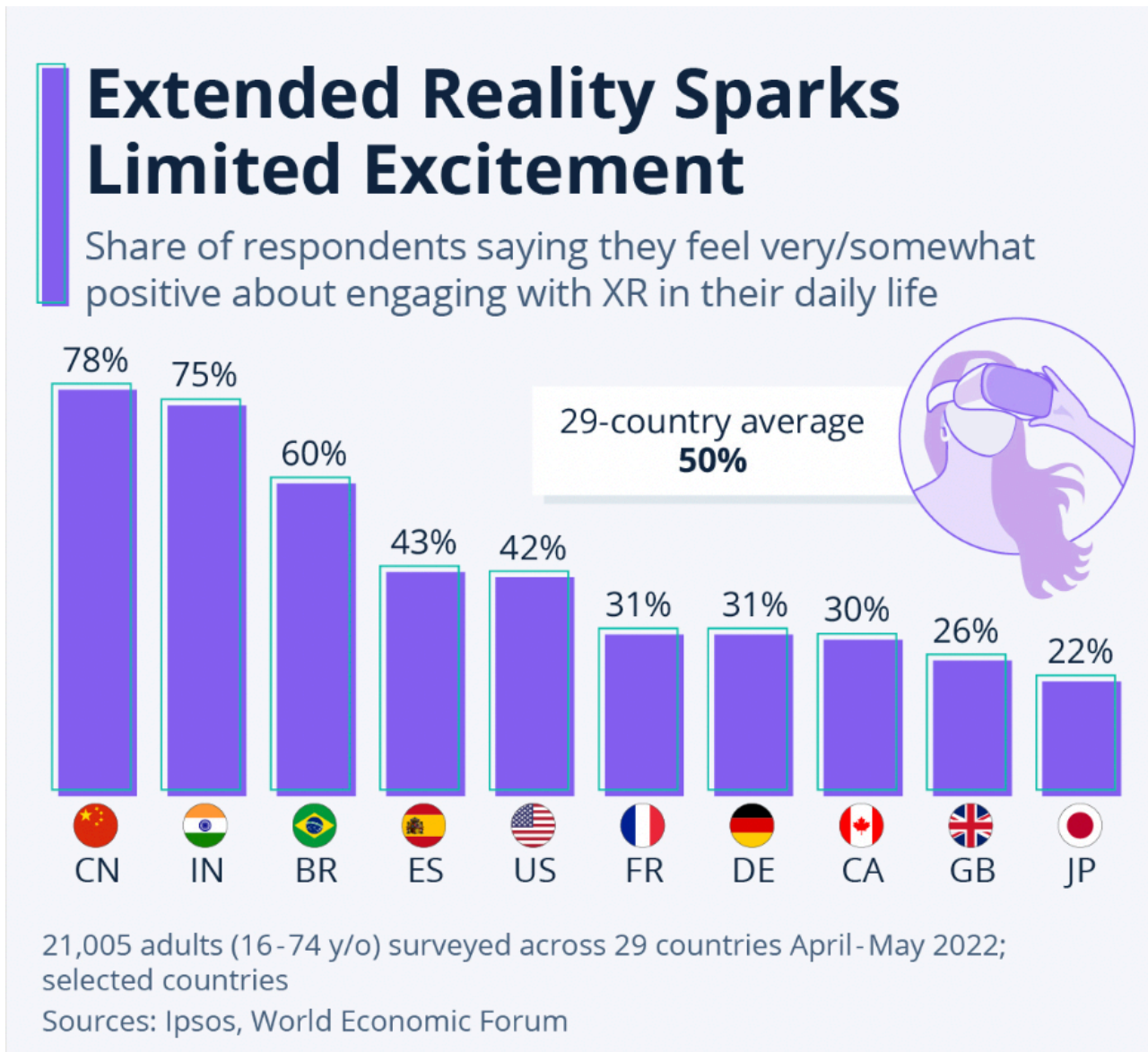
Summarize what you have seen/heard in two or three sentences

Tip.

Answer the questions using vocabularies that you learned in the vocabulary section.

4. Describing The Chart

Describe what is the general idea being expressed by the graph. Discuss it to your class. Try to interpret what you see in the chart.



Extended Reality Sparks Limited Excitement

by Felix Richter, Jun 6, 2023

Whatever you want to call it: virtual, augmented, mixed or [extended reality](#) has never really lived up to its hype. The often-clunky headsets are as far from mass adoption as they are from being fashion accessories and aside from gaming, no one has really figured out what to use them for. That is, until yesterday, when Apple's announcement of the long-awaited Vision Pro headset breathed new life into the entire category.

But while Apple is betting a lot on "spatial computing", as would like us to call it, to become the next big thing in tech, consumers aren't quite as enthusiastic about the [still nascent category](#). In a survey conducted across 29 countries in April/May 2022, [Ipsos found](#) that just 50 percent of the 21,005 respondents felt very or somewhat positive about using virtual, augmented or extended reality devices or applications in their daily lives, with most highly developed markets in Europe and North America showing even less excitement.

This goes to show how many skeptics Apple will have to convince if it really wants to make extended reality the next computing platform. But if anyone can do it, it's Apple, the company that turned AirPods, which were widely ridiculed at launch, into a must-have accessory.

Questions

1. What 's the take away of the graph?
2. What extra information can help you understand the graph even better?
3. Do you have any interesting findings? What's your guess about it?

5. Discussion Questions

Let's begin at the easy category. You are expected to have prepared your answers already before the class begins

Average

2. Sei Shonagon mentioned that she had made lists of words that sound intriguing. What are some words or phrases that you find intriguing and why?

Difficult

1. According to Sei Shonagon, observing little things like the frost on the branches of a plum tree can bring deep satisfaction. Can you think of a small detail or observation from your own life that has brought you unexpected joy?

Note1

Date: _____ Topic _____

Expression of the Day

Write Down idioms/ phrasal verbs that you learned in the sessions

Have you used today?

Week 1.

Yes

No

Week 2.

Yes

No

Words of the Day

Please write down vocabularies and idioms that you have learned at Talksharp and try to practice them in your own sentences today. Once you use any of them today? Please cross them out.

Useful Sentences

Video Script is a good source to enhance your verbal sentences. Put a note of sentences that you want to learn

Today's Correction

Write down today's correction.

Note 2

Please write down Korean sentences difficult for you to convey in English

Sentence1

Sentence2

Sentence3

Please write sentences above in English so that you could never fail again

Sentence1

Sentence2

Sentence3

Put a note of vocabularies or idioms that you want to learn