
第 3 講

① 次の英文を読んで、設問に答えよ。

The Chinese never invented an alphabet, and so ended up with a ^(A)*writing system which is so hard to learn that it is a wonder they did not abandon it and start again. (1) using a small and simple set of symbols — such as *letters — to spell out the sounds which they made when they spoke, they decided to use much
5 more complicated symbols — *kanji* — (ア)(heads, the, to, when, represent, ideas, their, in) they spoke the sounds of their language.

There are thousands of ideas in the heads of a highly civilized people with a long, long history, so they have invented thousands of symbols. The Hebrew alphabet has only 18 letters, and the English alphabet uses only 26. There are over 50,000 *kanji*,
10 and there may well need to be thousands more as time goes by. Many things exist today that (2) when *kanji* were created. Not even the most imaginative people could have foreseen the computer age and space travel.

With an alphabet even a bad speller can usually (3) to communicate, but with Chinese symbols, there is almost no room for error. ^(a) You either can remember
15 several thousand *kanji* and write them down correctly, or you are illiterate, meaning unable to read and write. Some symbols are pictures, some of them are just shapes, and some of them have no particular structure which gives a clue to their meaning. *Kanji* are fun. They are incredibly difficult to learn. They are fascinating and appealing. They fall from your memory on a bad day, and (4) to return when
20 you call for them. Their beauty is enchanting. Sometimes *kanji* come into your dreams and move as if they were alive. Foreigners feel it is impossible to learn *kanji* when they first see how many thousands there are. Most of them give up without even trying to learn. Those who continue are considered a little crazy by their friends and the Chinese alike.

25 Chinese teaching methods are of necessity based on memorization and repetition of facts until they sink deeply into the brain. The mental power needed to be able to read and write the language is truly amazing. Chinese language education certainly trains the memory: few Chinese bother with writing down phone numbers. ^(b) They