

Answer to Question # 10: Answer 2 is correct.

Answer: Generally speaking, こと (KOTO) = “intangible thing.” For example, 今日どんなことをしましたか (kyou donna koto wo shimashita ka) = “today what sort of things did you do?”

こと (koto) has a number of idiomatic meanings, as well:

- 1) ことにする (koto ni suru) = “to decide.” For example, 食べることにします (taberu koto ni shimasu) = “I decide to eat.”
- 2) ことになる (koto ni naru) = “to schedule.” For example, 大阪に行くことになりました (oosaka ni iku koto ni narimashita) = “I was scheduled to go to Osaka.”
- 3) ことがある (koto ga aru), combined with PAST plain speech verbs, = “something has happened.” For example, 日本に行ったことがあります (nihon ni itta koto ga arimasu) = “I have gone to Japan.”
- 4) ことがある (koto ga aru), combined with plain NON-PAST verbs, = “sometimes something occurs.” For example, お酒を飲むことがあります (osake wo nomu koto ga arimasu) = “sometimes I drink sake.”
- 5) ことはない (koto wa nai) = “it isn’t necessary.” For example, 行くことはない (iku koto wa nai) = “you don’t have to go.”

By contrast, generally speaking, もの (MONO) = “tangible thing.” For example, いろいろなものを買いしました (iroiro na mono wo kaimashita) = “I bought various things.”

もの (mono) also has various idiomatic meanings:

- 1) もの (mono) can mean “because,” in colloquial speech only. For example, you might ask your friend どうして食べませんか (doushite tabemasen ka) = “why don’t you eat?”, and she might reply おいしくないもの (oishikunai mono) = “because it isn’t delicious.” もの (mono) can be shortened to もん (mon) in very informal speech.
- 2) ものです (mono desu) or ものだ (mono da) can convey a mild command or suggestion. For example, 朝、人にあったらおはようと言うものです (asa hito ni attara ohayou to iu mono desu) = “morning, when you meet people you should say ‘Good Morning.’”
- 3) Finally, ものです (mono desu) or ものだ (mono da) can be used to express EMOTION, such as excuses, exclamations, nostalgia, desire, and conviction. For example, フランスに一度行って見たいものです (furansu ni ichido itte mitai mono desu) = “one time I would like to go to France and see.” Here the term もの (mono) is used to express emotion (i.e., a strong desire), and it can be omitted without changing the basic meaning of the sentence.

Therefore, ANSWER # 2 IS CORRECT.

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Question # 10: "Koto and Mono"

You want to say, "I'd like to go to France one time and see." You've been dreaming about visiting France for awhile, and you want to put some emotion into your statement.

Which of the following 2 Japanese sentences is correct?

1. フランスに一度行って見たいことです (furansu ni ichido itte mitai koto desu).
2. フランスに一度行って見たいものです (furansu ni ichido itte mitai mono desu).