

Answer to Question # 33. Answers 1, 3 and 4 are correct.

As we discussed in the answer to Question 10, generally speaking, こと (KOTO) = “intangible thing,” and もの (MONO) = “tangible thing.” A tangible thing is one that can be touched or directly perceived by the five senses.

たくさんのこと (takusan no koto) = “many intangible things,” such as ideas, and is OK in this situation.

Therefore, ANSWER # 1 is CORRECT.

By contrast, たくさんのも (takusan no mono) = “many tangible things,” such as chairs and tables, and is NOT OK in this situation.

Therefore, ANSWER # 2 is INCORRECT.

いろいろ (iroiro) is a na adjective meaning “various” or “many kinds of things.” いろいろな (iroiron na) is often shortened to いろんな (ironna) in ordinary speech. いろいろ (iroiro) implies greater variety than たくさん (takusan) but is equally appropriate to use if one is talking about “many ideas.” いろいろなこと (iroiro na koto) = “many kinds of intangible things” and is OK in this situation.

Therefore, ANSWER # 3 is also CORRECT.

From what we’ve said so far, you probably think that Answer 4 is incorrect. However, my Japanese consultants tell me that いろいろなもの (iroiro na mono) = “many kinds of things” is an idiomatic phrase that can be used even when one is talking about intangible things like ideas.

For example, the following 3 sentences are all correct: いろいろなものを教えています (iroiro na mono wo oshiete imasu) = “she is teaching many kinds of things.” いろいろなものを書いていきます (iroiro na mono wo kaite imasu) = “I am writing many kinds of things.” いろいろなものがわかっています (iroiro na mono ga wakatte imasu) = “he is understanding many kinds of things.” [Of course, it’s also correct (and maybe safer for a beginner) to use こと (koto) instead of もの (mono) in all three of these sentences.]

Therefore, ANSWER # 4 is also CORRECT.

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Question 33. “A lot of things.”

You want to say, “I’m learning a lot of things.”

Which of the following 4 Japanese sentences is correct?

1. たくさんのことを習っています。(takusan no koto wo naratte imasu).
2. たくさんのものを習っています。(takusan no mono wo naratte imasu).
3. いろいろなことを習っています。(iroiro na koto wo naratte imasu).
4. いろいろなものを習っています。(iroiro na mono wo naratte imasu).