

Answer to Question # 35.

The correct answers are 2, 3, and 5.

終わる (OWARU) means “finish,” but it’s an INTRANSITIVE verb, meaning that it cannot act on an object. For example, you may NOT say 仕事を終わる (shigoto wo owaru) = “I finish the work.” Instead you must say 仕事が終わる (shigoto ga owaru) = “the work finishes.”

Therefore, ANSWER # 1 is INCORRECT.

Many Japanese verbs exist as paired twins, with one transitive verb and one intransitive verb in each pair. The TRANSITIVE TWIN of the intransitive verb 終わる (owaru) = “finish” is 終わらせる (OERU) = “finish.” This verb CAN act on an object.

Therefore, ANSWER # 2 is CORRECT.

By the way, it’s also appropriate to use the CAUSATIVE form of 終わる (owaru), 終わらせる (OWARASERU), to say “please finish the work.” 仕事を終わらせてください (shigoto wo owarasete kudasai) = “please cause the work to finish.” This sentence might be addressed to the leader of a group, implying that he or she should make the group members finish, but it could also be addressed to an individual who is solely responsible for the work. However, note that the exact same sentence 仕事を終わらせてください (shigoto wo owarasete kudasai) can also mean “please let me finish the work,” depending on the context.

仕上げる (SHIAGERU) also means “finish,” and it’s a TRANSITIVE verb, capable of acting on an object like 仕事 (shigoto). 仕上げる (shiageru) implies that we already started the work and want to finish it up. By the way, I asked my wife to select the safest verb from the ones discussed in this post, the one that a beginner might use with confidence when asking someone to finish work, and she chose this one.

Therefore, ANSWER # 3 is CORRECT.

仕上がる (SHIAGARU) also means “finish,” but it’s an INTRANSITIVE verb and cannot act on an object.

Therefore, ANSWER # 4 is INCORRECT.

済ませる (SUMASERU) and 済ます (SUMASU) are both TRANSITIVE verbs that mean “finish.” Their INTRANSITIVE fraternal twin (or “triplet,” to push this analogy a little further) is 済む (SUMU) = “finish.” Both 済ませる (sumaseru) and 済ます (sumasu) can act on objects.

済ませる (sumaseru) is more polite and thus more appropriate to use when addressing older people, while 済ます (sumasu) is more direct and might be better used when addressing children. However, Noriko feels that 仕事を済ましてください (shigoto wo sumashite kudasai) sounds AWKWARD and should not be used.

Therefore, ANSWER # 5 is CORRECT, but ANSWER # 6 is INCORRECT.

Please note that 済ませる (sumaseru) is also the CAUSATIVE form of 済む (sumu), so the sentence 仕事を済ませてください (shigoto wo sumasete kudasai) could also mean “please let me finish the work,” depending on the context.

By the way, 出来上がる (DEKIAGARU) is another verb that means “complete” or “become ready.” However, 出来上がる (dekiagaru) is an INTRANSITIVE verb. Apparently it has no transitive equivalent.

Finally, another transitive verb that can mean “finish” is まとめる (MATOMERU). Its intransitive twin is まとまる (matomaru). However, まとめる (matomeru) also carries the meanings “bring together,” “bundle,” or “arrange.” Therefore, 仕事をまとめてください (shigoto wo matomete kudasai) means something like “please arrange the work or put it together,” rather than “please finish the work.”

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Question 35. “Finish.”

You want to say, “Please finish the work.” Which of the following 6 answers is correct?

1. 仕事を終わってください。 (shigoto wo owatte kudasai)
2. 仕事を終えてください。 (shigoto wo oete kudasai)
3. 仕事を仕上げてください。 (shigoto wo shiagete kudasai)
4. 仕事を仕上がってください。 (shigoto wo shiagatte kudasai)
5. 仕事を済ませてください。 (shigoto wo sumasete kudasai)
6. 仕事を済ましてください。 (shigoto wo sumashite kudasai)