



Houseplant obsessions

Morning Speech #11

By Sophie

Good morning! It's getting very cold these days so I hope you are able to stay warm, particularly during those early morning and late evening commutes. Personally, I love the crisp air in the morning and evening and warm afternoon days.

Some of you know that I have a little problem. I have a slight 'obsession'* with houseplants. In my 3 years here I have collected about 30 different plants. From cactus (さぼてん) to ferns (シダ) I have many types of plants, some survive and others sadly don't. One of my more interesting plants is called a Bird's Nest Fern (シマオオタニワタリ). The reason I like it so much is that the leaves have a very interesting shape. The leaves are long, hard and slender, but they are a little wavy on the edges. The baby leaves come out looking very light green and then they grow to become firm and a darker shade of green. In nature, these plants can actually be seen growing in the tree between the trunk and the main branches.



bird's nest fern



Now, you may think I am unique in my little obsession with plants but this is actually not the case. Many people my age and younger have a growing passion towards plants. Part of that is because people are waiting longer to have children or not at all. Many people my age are turning to plants to nurture. Some sales in plant stores have seen a 50% increase in plant sales in the last few years. Also, many new Instagram accounts are devoted to people's houseplants, just as some people would do the same for their beloved cats and dogs. Maybe there is something telling in these numbers and social media following of plants, that plants can give us a sense of comfort and peace in a world that sometimes feels like chaos.

On another note, I would like to make a warm welcome to Helena, our new exchange student from Germany. She will be staying with us for a while so please make her feel welcome. ☺

Please choose the correct answer:

*'Obsession' here means to be **really passionate about something** (casual)

1) What is Sophie's obsession? A) Dogs and cats B) Bird Nest Fern C) Houseplants D) Instagram account for her plants	2) What are the features for the Bird Nest Fern? A) Wavy leaves B) Hard leaves C) Slim leaves D) All of the above
3) How much has plant sales increased by? A) One quarter B) One third C) One half D) Double	4) Why are more young people getting houseplants? A) They have a desire to nurture something B) There are no children C) They are cheaper than dogs D) They have allergies

