

LESSON 2 Is Seeing Believing?

Part 1

Ken introduces Utagawa Kuniyoshi's illusionist art to Emma.

Japan has a long history of illusionist art. // Utagawa Kuniyoshi was an *ukiyo*e artist / who produced many works in the Edo period. //

Picture A seems to be a portrait of a man. // However, / it consists of many naked men. // Next, / in Picture B, / you see the Japanese word / that means eel. // However, / each of the three letters / actually consists of cats, / which Kuniyoshi loved throughout his life. // Last, / look at Picture C. // The man seems to be in a bad mood. // Now, / turn the picture upside down. // It looks different. //

Kuniyoshi's works are a good example of a combination / of artistic sense and a sense of humor. //

Part 2

Emma introduces the illusionist works of Maurits Escher to Ken.

The Netherlands also has a history of illusionist art. // Maurits Escher was a printmaker / in the 20th century. // At first sight, / Escher's prints seem to be realistic and normal. // However, / he actually shows the unreal and unnatural / in his works. //

In *Drawing Hands*, / each hand is drawing the other. // It is very confusing. // In *Waterfall*, / you see the water run / from the bottom of the waterfall / back up to the top. // In *Relativity*, / you lose your sense of direction. // You cannot say / what is up / and what is down. //

I feel / that the works of both Utagawa and Escher / challenge the saying / "Seeing is believing." // I cannot believe my own eyes. //

Part 3

Ken and Emma find an Internet news report on the practical use of illusionist art.

The Big Dipper Times

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Will a flower bed stop illegal bike parking?

January 31, 2020

Illegal parking of bikes / has been an irritating problem / for the people in Osaka. //
Now an 8-year-old boy in Toyonaka City / has thought of a way / to solve this problem. //
He believes / that people will not park their bikes / on a flower bed. //

The city office adopted the boy's idea. // Then it began an experiment / together
with Osaka University and a company. // It put an illusionist picture of a flower bed /
on a public sidewalk. // From a distance, / the picture just looks like / an ordinary flat
drawing of flowers. // From nearby, / however, / the flowers suddenly seem to stand up
in 3-D. // City officials are hopeful / that the idea will work. // After the first week, /
they saw / that illegal parking had decreased. //