

■ 「むすび」の言葉 ことば Musubi Words

おむすび is another word for おにぎり, and in both cases, お has become an inseparable part of the word. But without お、むすび has a wealth of other meanings!


むす め 結び目 means 'a knot', and ちょう むす 結び, literally 'butterfly knot', refers to a bow knot. The verb

means 'to tie', eg. く むす つひもを結ぶ, to tie your shoelaces. It also means to join, connect or link,

eg. 絵 え と ことば 言葉 むす を結んでください 'Connect the pictures to the words', or はし その橋 ほんしゅう は本州 きゅうしゅう と九州を

むす 結んでいる 'That bridge connects Honshu and Kyushu'.

むす 結ぶ is also used figuratively in a number of expressions:

<small>けいやく</small> 契約 <small>むす</small> を結ぶ	to tie up a contract	
<small>て</small> 手 <small>むす</small> を結ぶ	to ally yourself with eg. another company	
<small>み</small> 実 <small>むす</small> を結ぶ	to bear fruit	
<small>はなし</small> 話 <small>むす</small> を結ぶ	to conclude (wind up) a talk	
<small>えん</small> 縁 <small>むす</small> を結ぶ	tie the knot (of destiny) ie. to get married	

From the last expression comes えんむす 縁結び, 'matchmaking' or 'marriage'. えんむす かみさま 縁結びの神様, the god

of love and marriage, is the god to whom you make your ねが ごと 願い事, wish, for a wife or husband!

こめ ことば
お米の言葉 Rice Words

As you know, omusubi are made from Japan's staple grain, rice. Rice is extremely important to the Japanese, and this is reflected in the number of equivalents in Japanese for the English word. ^{いね}稲 refers to the rice plant, eg. ^{いね}稲を刈る, to harvest rice.



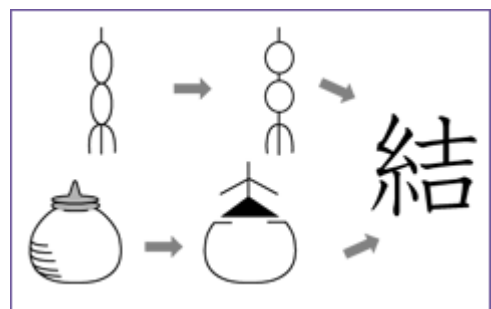
^{こめ}米 refers to raw rice, and this could be ^{はくまい}白米, white rice, or ^{げんまい}玄米, unpolished brown rice. ^{はん}ご飯 refers to cooked rice, and hence 'a meal'. For the Japanese, rice is conceptually the main part of ^{わしやく}和食, a Japanese meal, and is served in ^{おわん}おわん, a bowl. The accompanying dish of fish, vegetables, meat etc. is referred to as ^{おかず}おかず. When rice is served on ^{おさら}おさら, a plate, as in ^{よう}洋食 (Western food), it is referred to as ^{ライス}ライス.

かん じ
漢字

おむすび is written in hiragana, but the kanji ^結結 used for ^{むす}結び and ^{むす}結ぶ has the following origin. The left-hand side (糸) gives the meaning of thread. The right-hand side (吉) gives the pronunciation ^{ケツ}ケツ and comes from a picture of a tightly closed earthen jar. This is another example of ^{けいせいもじ}形声文字, kanji with one component that hints at meaning, and one that gives the pronunciation and sometimes adds meaning. As mentioned in the last issue of Dear Sensei, these make up the majority of kanji. After coming to Japan, this kanji took on the added meanings of 'last' and 'riceball'.

Here are some compound words reflecting the various meanings of this kanji:

^{けつろん}結論 (conclusion) ^{けっか}結果 (result) ^{けっこん}結婚 (marriage)



おむすびの具
Omusubi fillings

「おむすびの具では何が一番好きですか？」

What is your favourite omusubi filling?'

This was a question put to 11,966 people as part of a campaign to eat more rice

- ごはんを食べよう！

The results were as follows: (Survey in 2012)

❖	しゃけ (tinned salmon)	26%
❖	うめぼし 梅干 (pickled plum)	16%
❖	めんたいこ 明太子 (chilli cod roe)	14%
❖	ツナ (tuna)	11%
❖	こんぶ 昆布 (kelp)	10%
❖	たらこ (cod roe)	9%
❖	かつお (dried bonito)	4%
❖	その他 (other)	10%

Resource ご飯を食べよう国民運動推進協議会

<http://www.gohan.gr.jp/>