

**Eiken Grade 1 2015-3A**

No. 1 Agree or disagree: Japan's predicted labor shortage will cause a national crisis

*I agree that Japan's predicted labor shortage will cause a national crisis. Let me explain. First, because of the dropping number of young people entering the labor market, certain jobs in Japan cannot be filled by Japanese people alone, especially jobs that are dirty, dangerous or difficult. That is the reason why the government is beginning to allow in foreign workers. But the increase in the number of foreigners in Japan causes other problems because of language and cultural differences. Secondly, labor costs are increasing due to the labor shortage. As labor costs increase, the prices of products and services increases. This make Japanese products and services less competitive in the global marketplace. Finally, equal opportunity for women in Japan will likely be forced on companies. This is a good thing in some ways, because women still earn much less than men and have only a small percent of top management positions. But if women are motivated to work longer as well as work full-time, they will likely marry later, have fewer children or choose not to marry at all. This would reduce an already low birthrate. For these reasons, I believe that Japan faces a national crisis caused by the growing labor shortage.*

No. 2 Will the human race one day destroy itself?

*I do believe that the human race will eventually destroy itself. There are several reasons I feel this way. First of all, humans have made great scientific progress, and the pace of this progress is becoming faster and faster. However, the ability of humans to control the effects of this progress has not increased. For example, humans have developed more powerful weapons of mas destruction than ever before, enough to destroy all human civilization. Despite this, wars and risky confrontations between the superpowers continue to occur. Moreover, mistakes in human scientific development now have the potential for very serious consequences. For example, intelligent technologies could decide to overtake humankind, as we often see in science fiction movies. Or deadly human-developed germs could accidentally escape and spread, killing most of the world's population. Finally, economic development and greed are leading to the destruction of our environment on a larger and larger scales, including global warming, the extinction of animal and plant species, and the destruction of forests and oceans. Unfortunately, nation have not been able to come to a consensus about how to resolve these problems. They are move concerned about their*

*economies and domestic politics. For all of these reasons, I am very pessimistic about the future of humankind.*

No. 3 Is enough being done to fight the trade in illegal drugs?

*I do not believe enough is being done to fight the trade in illegal drugs. In fact, the drug trade is growing year after year. I have three reasons why I believe not enough is being done. First, there are not enough coordinated efforts among nations to stop the illegal drug trade. Some nations are now even changing their laws to make illegal drug usage legal. Other countries continue to have harsh punishments. Without a coordinated effort, it is difficult to make progress. Second, the profits from the illegal drug trade are so high that it is difficult to combat it. I hear that the illegal drug trade makes up about half of the income for all organized crime worldwide. Such high amounts of money have the power to influence political leaders and law enforcement, especially in the less developed nations. Many countries do not have the resources to fight against powerful drug cartels. Third and finally, the illegal drug trade is like a fire that cannot be completely put out. If drug trade or a drug cartel is stopped in one area, it starts up in another. Drug traffickers are creative with flexible networks. For these reasons, I believe we are losing the war against illegal drugs.*

No. 4 Does the massive media play a positive role in society?

*I firmly believe that the mass media plays a positive role in society. There are many reasons to support this argument. Here, I will focus on three. First, people can gain valuable information on a daily basis, whether from newspapers, TV or the radio. The media provides us with updates on the latest weather, health, world affairs and other topics relevant to our lives in a timely manner. Second, we have become smarter and wiser due to the quality of the information provided by news organizations. The information we gain from the media provides us with the tools to improve our lives and to make our society a better place by raising awareness about various issues. For example, news reports broadcast by the media have been used to overthrow dictatorships and expose corrupt leaders. Finally, the mass media has made us feel more connected to others around the world through news stories and feel more connected to others around the world through news stories and articles. Whenever a disaster abroad is reported on the news, we as viewers are able to show our compassion and support by raising money for the victims. For the reasons I mentioned, I believe the mass media has played a key role in changing societies for the better.*

No. 5 Can keeping animals in captivity be justified?

*I believe keeping animals in a limited number of well-maintained zoos and aquariums can be justified. In fact, I believe it is now imperative at this time of environmental change and species extinction. Let me explain. First, zoos have become centers for animal research and conservation. Researchers are able to study animal behavior close up, sharing their knowledge with other who are involved in field animal management. In fact, zoos have become closely involved in field research, as well. Though some people argue that zoos should not exist due to animal welfare issues, zoos play a key role in the fight to stop animal decline and extinction. Seocnd, the effort to protect animals and their environments requires the understanding and support of the general public. Zoos and aquariums create awareness about animals and they play a vital role used for rescuing, protecting, and breeding hundreds of species that are in danger of extinction. I have read about several programs at zoos that are working to protect and breed endangered pandas, birds and amphibians, as well as working to understand the reasons they are dying. For these reasons, keeping animals in captivity can clearly be justified.*