



When Is Someone "Old"?

Read the passage and answer the questions. (CEFR B1–B2)

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____



- 1 When Respect for the Aged Day began as a village event in 1947, the guests were people aged 55 and over. Today, many 55-year-olds are at the peak of their careers, and some local governments now invite only residents aged 75 or older to their annual celebrations. The holiday has stayed the same, but the meaning of "old" has moved.
- 2 The numbers explain why. Government data shows how quickly the picture has changed. In 2026, people aged 65 or older made up 29.6 percent of Japan's population, the highest share in the world, and more than 107,000 people were at least 100. In other words, about three in ten people in Japan are now 65 or older. Over nine million people aged 65 or older were still working.
- 3 This success has a cost. As the number of 100-year-olds grew, the government replaced the pure silver cup it gives them with a cheaper silver-plated one, and many towns have reduced their cash gifts. Some people see this as a sad loss of tradition. Others argue that respect should be measured by health care and jobs, not by gifts.

Comprehension

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Respect for the Aged Day should be moved back to September 15.
- (B) Most older people in Japan no longer want to work.
- (C) As Japan's population has aged, the idea of who is "old" and how society honors older people has changed.
- (D) Japan gives more expensive gifts to older people than any other country.

2. According to the passage, what share of Japan's population was 65 or older in 2026?

- (A) 29.6 percent
- (B) 13.8 percent
- (C) 55 percent
- (D) 75 percent

3. What did the government change about its gift for 100-year-olds?

- (A) It stopped giving any gift.
- (B) It gave cash instead of a cup.
- (C) It gave the cup only to people over 107.
- (D) It replaced the pure silver cup with a cheaper silver-plated one.

4. What can be inferred from the passage?

- (A) The first party in 1947 was held for people aged 75 or older.
- (B) Giving gifts to every 100-year-old has become more expensive as their number has grown.
- (C) Japan has the smallest share of older people in Asia.
- (D) Most 55-year-olds in Japan have already retired.

5. In paragraph 1, the word "peak" in "at the peak of their careers" is closest in meaning to

- (A) the end
- (B) the top of a mountain
- (C) the highest or most successful point
- (D) the first step

6. Why does the writer mention that over nine million people aged 65 or older were still working?

- (A) To show that many people in this age group are still active, so the idea of "old" is changing.
- (B) To argue that older people should stop working at 65.
- (C) To explain why the silver cup became cheaper.
- (D) To compare Japan's workers with workers in other countries.



Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

Match the words with the definitions. Then rewrite and summarize.

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

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|-------------|---|
| 1. peak | a. to put a new or different thing in the place of something |
| 2. career | b. to make something smaller in size, amount, or number |
| 3. resident | c. to judge how good, large, or important something is |
| 4. annual | d. the time when something is at its highest or best level |
| 5. share | e. the series of jobs that a person has during their working life |
| 6. replace | f. a person who lives in a particular place |
| 7. reduce | g. happening once every year |
| 8. measure | h. the part of a total amount that belongs to a group |

Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “Today, many 55-year-olds are at the peak of their careers, and some local governments now invite only residents aged 75 or older to their annual celebrations.”

Hint: Split it into two sentences. Use "are doing their best work" and "only people over 75".

2. “The holiday has stayed the same, but the meaning of "old" has moved.”

Hint: Use "Although" and replace "has moved" with "has changed".

3. “Others argue that respect should be measured by health care and jobs, not by gifts.”

Hint: Start with "Other people believe" and use "a better way to show respect".

Summary

Summarize the passage in about 50 words.



Debate & Opinion Essay

Prepare for a debate. Then write your opinion (100–150 words).

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

Motion: Japan should stop giving gifts to people who turn 100 and spend the money on health care instead.

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- More than 107,000 people were 100 or older in 2026, and the number keeps growing, so the cost of gifts will keep rising.
- A silver-plated cup does not help anyone live a healthier life, but money for nurses and hospitals does.
- As the passage says, respect can be measured by health care and jobs. Useful support shows more respect than a cup.

Add your own reason:

AGAINST 反対

- The cup and the letter from the Prime Minister are a special moment for families, and that feeling cannot be bought with health care.
- The cost of one cup is very small compared with the whole health care budget, so stopping it would not change much.
- Many people already see the cheaper cup as a sad loss of tradition. Ending the gift completely would make older people feel forgotten.

Add your own reason:

Opinion	<i>I believe / I think that ...</i>
Reason 1	<i>First, ... For example, ...</i>
Reason 2	<i>Second, ... In fact, ...</i>
Counter	<i>Some people say ... However, ...</i>
Conclusion	<i>In conclusion, ...</i>