



Remembering an Era, Not Just a Person

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

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____



- 1 Showa Day is unusual among national holidays because its legal purpose is not to celebrate the person whose birthday it marks. According to the law, it is a day to look back on the Showa era, a period of turbulent days followed by recovery, and to reflect on the nation's future.
- 2 That careful wording reflects the complexity of the era itself. The roughly nineteen years before 1945 included war, while the forty-three years after it brought democracy under a new constitution and rapid economic growth. Few periods in modern history contain such sharply different chapters under a single name.
- 3 Perhaps for this reason, the holiday did not come easily. The first bill passed the upper house in 2000 but died when the lower house was dissolved, and a second bill met the same fate in 2003. The main opposition party, which had voted against the first version, later supported it, and the third bill finally passed in 2005. The story shows how a single date can carry several layers of national memory. For students, April 29 offers a ready-made starting point for asking how a society chooses what to remember.

Comprehension

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) Showa Day celebrates the life of one emperor.
- (B) Showa Day asks people to look back on a complex era, and its long road to becoming law shows how hard it is to choose what to remember.
- (C) Showa Day was created quickly because everyone agreed on it.
- (D) The Showa era was a time of peace from beginning to end.

2. According to the law, what is Showa Day for?

- (A) To celebrate the emperor's birthday with a party
- (B) To start Golden Week
- (C) To look back on the Showa era and reflect on the nation's future
- (D) To remember the end of the war only

3. What happened to the first Showa Day bill?

- (A) It passed the upper house in 2000 but died when the lower house was dissolved.
- (B) It passed both houses in 2000.
- (C) It was rejected by the emperor.
- (D) It became law in 2003.

4. What can we infer from the sentence "Few periods in modern history contain such sharply different chapters under a single name"?

- (A) Most eras in modern history were longer than the Showa era.
- (B) The Showa era had no economic growth.
- (C) The writer thinks the Showa era should be renamed.
- (D) It is difficult to describe the Showa era with one simple message.

5. In paragraph 1, the word "turbulent" is closest in meaning to

- (A) full of confusion and sudden changes
- (B) quiet and peaceful
- (C) rich and successful
- (D) short and simple

6. Why does the writer mention students in the last sentence?

- (A) To say that students should not have a holiday on April 29.
- (B) To suggest that April 29 is a good starting point for students to think about how a society decides what to remember.
- (C) To explain that students voted for the third bill.
- (D) To show that students know more history than lawmakers.



Vocabulary, Paraphrase & Summary

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

Class _____ No. _____ Name _____

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. mark | a. happening very quickly |
| 2. reflect on | b. a written plan for a new law that lawmakers vote on |
| 3. wording | c. to officially end a group such as a parliament |
| 4. complexity | d. to celebrate or remember an important event on a special day |
| 5. constitution | e. to think carefully about something |
| 6. rapid | f. the words that are chosen to say or write something |
| 7. bill | g. the state of having many different parts that are hard to understand together |
| 8. dissolve | h. the basic set of laws and rules of a country |

Paraphrase — say it in your own words

1. “Showa Day is unusual among national holidays because its legal purpose is not to celebrate the person whose birthday it marks.”

Hint: Start with "Most birthday holidays" and use "But".

2. “Perhaps for this reason, the holiday did not come easily.”

Hint: Use "maybe" and "it took a long time".

3. “The story shows how a single date can carry several layers of national memory.”

Hint: Use "one day" and "many different meanings".

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: National holidays should be named after eras or people.

FOR 賛成

- A name like Showa Day tells people exactly which part of history to think about, so the holiday has a clear purpose.
- Many countries keep holidays for past leaders, such as Washington's Birthday in the United States and Gandhi's birthday in India, so it is a common way to remember history.
- If the name is general, like Greenery Day, people may forget the history behind the date.

Add your own reason:

AGAINST 反対

- An era like Showa includes both war and recovery, so naming a holiday after it can cause disagreement, as the two failed bills show.
- Holidays named after ideas, such as nature or culture, can be shared by everyone, whatever their view of history.
- When a holiday is named after a person, people may think it celebrates that person, even when the law says its purpose is different.

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>