

Debate

“Raising the consumption tax to 10% will help our economy”

Pro

A1 If the government raises the consumption tax, they can use the revenues to sustain (support) the social security system including pension and health insurance.

Present situation: Now, the Japanese people do not benefit from a strong enough social security system, and they need one. Our social security system is going bankrupt. Before we go bankrupt, we should do something. A raise in the consumption tax is the best solution.

Effect: Now, Japan is experiencing a declining birthrate and an aging population. Japan needs more caregivers and care workers. It's a serious problem. If the government raises the consumption tax to 10%, they can use the revenues to take care of many of the elderly people.

Importance: When we become older, we will be able to benefit from that system. According to the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, the number of people who are over 100 years old in Japan is 47,756 (September, 2011). This number is about 312 times that of 1963. It means that we have to consider a solution to our aging population soon. So a raise in the consumption tax to take care of them is the best solution now.

A2 The Government can get out of the red (deficit).

Present situation: Japan has serious deficit problems. According to the Asahi Shinbun, the Japanese debt is now at 943 trillion 809 billion 600 million yen. (June 2011) This is the worst it has ever been.

Effect: It's easy and fast for the Government to gather consumption tax revenues. Whenever people buy something, they have to pay tax on it, and nobody can evade paying the consumption tax, so it's an effective way to gather revenues from everyone in Japan.

Importance: As long as people continue to buy something, The Government can gather consumption tax revenues. In 1989, the Japanese government introduced a consumption tax. At first, people complained about it, but they didn't stop buying things. Also, in 1997, the consumption tax was raised from 3% to 5%, and after that people didn't stop shopping. We can't say that raising the consumption tax is the cause of a possible economic depression. Even if the Government raises the consumption tax, rich people can buy expensive things and the Government can get tax revenues from them. Also, if people know that the tax will be raised to 10%, of course they will want to buy things before it is raised. This situation where many people buy expensive things such as TVs, houses, cars, etc. in a short time is actually good for the economy.

Natsumi Okui
Masahiro Shimomura
Natsumi Yamazaki
Takayuki Sakazume
Manami Kikuchi
Shota Uchiyama

Amu Sasaki
Ryouhei Hama
Mebae Sakaguchi
Yoshifumi Ogura
Manami Tanji
Daiki Hisamatsu

Con

DA 1 A raise in the consumption tax to 10% will widen the gap between rich and poor.

Present situation: The consumption tax is regressive, which will widen the gap between the rich and the poor. According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (2005), the tax burden ratio for the rich is 1.4%, and the ratio for the poor is 4.2%. So, this initiative will put a bigger financial burden on the poor than the rich.

Effect: Because the tax burden on the poor will increase, it will make life more difficult for them. Moreover, the Japanese consumption tax on food is the highest of all the countries belonging to the OECD. Food is a daily necessity, so everyone in Japan will have to pay higher taxes.

Importance: According to a report by the OECD in 2005, Japan's poverty rate, which shows the number of people who get less than half the average salary, is much higher than most of the other member nations of the OECD. To our surprise, Japan is ranked number five terms of poverty rate. From these data, we can argue that Japan is a nation where the gap between the rich and the poor is wide. This means that many people in our country barely have enough money for necessities, and cannot spend money freely.

DA 2 After the consumption tax has been increased, a business recession is expected to take place.

Present situation: In 1997, Japan raised its consumption tax from 3% to 5%, so consumption tax revenues have increased. Other taxes, such as the income tax and the corporation tax, however, were reduced because of this raise in consumption tax. Because the consumption tax is planned to be set at 10%, consumers will be reluctant to buy products. They will care more about not wasting things, or they may even be unwilling to buy anything. This will lead to decreased profits for corporations and decreased corporation tax revenues. In addition, because of these decreases, corporations will have a harder time to pay salaries. That is why the corporation tax and income tax will have to be decreased again. That is to say, this is a bad economic cycle, which is why we argue that raising the consumption tax is connected to an economic depression.

Effect: In 1997, consumption tax became 5% from 3%, but consumption tax revenues increased by only one trillion yen while other taxes decreased, so the total tax revenues were in fact reduced. This is a fact. Moreover, business activities have become worse nowadays. In other words, if the consumption tax becomes 10%, there is a high possibility that business activities will slow down, like in 1997.

Importance: Economic depression is connected to a reduction in the number of contractual employments, so it also increases the number of people who can't earn so much money. On the whole, the number of poor people will be greater, and it will be harder for them to pay taxes. This plan is a burden for them. As a result, the present economic depression will get worse.

Student's Voice

-Similarities and Differences Between Studying in High School and Studying at University

There are several similarities between studying in high school and studying at university. First of all, high school student groups are similar to university students groups. People with common interests gather in groups such as sports, and hobbies. Second, both high school students and university students have to get enough credits. If they don't get enough credits, they can't get promoted or graduate. However, university students must worry about getting credits more than high school students. Third, university course grading is similar to high school course grading. There is a GPA in the high school and university, so students should get a high GPA, but Japan's GPA is not as important as America's.

Furthermore, there are several differences between studying in high school and studying at university. First of all, university professors are not as strict as high school teachers. If you are late or absent from a university class, professors will usually ignore you. By contrast, high school teachers would get very angry and tell you off. Second, university is freer than high school, so university students can decide their own class schedule and their own part-time job. Third, university courses are different from high school courses because university students study major courses. On the other hand, high school students study general subjects. Fourth, university facilities are not similar to high school facilities. For example, a university has many buildings, large land, big classrooms, and a school cafeteria. However, high school does not have these things and has smaller classrooms.

As I have explained above, there are several similarities and differences between studying in high school and studying at university.

Akihiro Yamamoto

First of all, university student groups are similar to high school student groups. They make mutual friends with people with common interests and gather in groups such as sports or fashion. Likewise, university students act as a group. They usually eat lunch with their friends.

However, university professors aren't as strict as high school teachers. If you are late or absent from a university class, professors would usually ignore you. By contrast, high school teachers would get very angry and tell you off. Also university class time is longer than high school's class time. For example, a university class is 90 minutes long, but a high school class is 45~50 minutes long. Moreover, almost all university students work part-time. Similarly, high school students are also busy because of club activities or study.

As explained above, there are similarities and differences between studying in high school and studying at university. If you go to university I am sure you would have a nice experiences there.

Yukiko Tokusa

First of all, university student groups are similar to high school student groups. That is, people with common interests like sports and fashion gather in groups. Second, high school students are graded by their test scores and by their percentage of attendance. Likewise, university students are also graded this way. Another point is that university and high schools have similar facilities. Both of them have a lot of classrooms, a gymnasium, and a school store.

However, there are differences between them too. First, university professors aren't as strict as high school teachers. If you are late or absent from a university class, professors would usually ignore you. By contrast, high school teachers would

get very angry and tell you off. In addition, university students are more responsible for themselves than high school students. You must know your entire schedule at university, while high school students are told all their information by teachers.

As explained above, there are many similarities between studying in high school and studying at university, but studying at university is freer regarding almost all things, compared to studying in high school.

Emi Yamao

First of all, university student groups are similar to high school student groups. People with common interests gather in groups such as sports and fashion. Another point is that university facilities are similar to high school facilities. For example, both university and high school have a student's dining hall and a library, a school store, and a gymnasium.

On the other hand, university professors aren't as strict as high school teachers. If you are late or absent from a university class, professors would usually ignore you. By contrast, high school teachers would get very angry and tell you off.

In addition, university students are freer than high school students, because university students can choose their subjects themselves. For example, they can decide on their clothing, subjects, class times, and attendance. On the other hand, high school students must follow school rules. Moreover, school rules are usually strict, and there are too many rules.

In addition, high school students aren't as responsible as university students. If you are in trouble, your family and your class teacher will help you. By contrast, university students have to find their own solution to a problem.

As explained above, these are many similarities and differences between studying in high school and studying at university.

Tsugumi Kito

Studying in high school is often similar and different to studying at university. I will explain some of these similarities and differences for you.

One similarity is that both high school and university have student groups for people who have similar hobbies and interests. They gather together and spend time in a classroom, and some of them help the school or university. Also, both university and high school students think about their future after graduating and so attend several seminars and courses about the future after graduation.

On the other hand, there are several differences between high school and university. First, university professors aren't as strict as high school teachers. For example, if students make a noise professors don't pay attention, and if you are late or absent from a university class, professors usually ignore you. In contrast, high school teachers get very angry if you are late. Learning styles are also different. In high school, all students learn the same subjects each day, but in university each student learns different subjects. In addition, university students can choose the subjects they want to learn, but high school students cannot. Furthermore, university has more facilities than high school. For example, there is a cafeteria, bookstores and many computer rooms.

As explained above, high school and university have both similarities and differences. However, I think there are more differences, and university gives more importance to students' freedom.

Masaki Sato

No Smoking Please!

Generally speaking, many people think that smoking is disagreeable. I don't like some heavy smokers and smoking areas. Now, there are three smoking areas at Hokkai Gakuen University. In the old days there were two smoking areas, but in recent years, HGU managers added on to the facilities. This plan met with strong opposition from many non-smoking HGU students but their voice was ignored. Non-smokers have rights too. I think that the status of smokers is weakening because in many countries, smoking is prohibited in workplaces, public areas, restaurants and universities. I dislike smoking because it has a lot of disadvantages. For example, it is unhealthy, it has a bad smell, and smoking areas are an eyesore. For these reasons, I think that we should cut back on smoking areas at Hokkai Gakuen University.

Firstly, smoking is unhealthy. Everybody knows, smoking is bad for your health. It is associated with an increased risk of cancer and heart attacks. My grandfather was a heavy smoker and smoked around 10 cigarettes a day. As a result, he died of a heart attack at the young age of 64. If he had stopped smoking, probably, he would have lived longer. You shouldn't jeopardize your health by smoking. For this reason, I believe, smoking is unhealthy.

Secondly, cigarette smoke has a bad smell, so smoking is no longer allowed in public places. Smokers may not notice the smell of cigarettes, but non-smokers don't like the smell. My friend is a smoker. He smokes at home, so every piece of

furniture in his living room smells of cigarettes. I can't stand the smell of cigarettes. When asked how they felt about dating a smoker, both male smokers and non-smokers said they thought women who smoked were unattractive. Also, a growing number of employers are refusing to hire smokers because of the bad smell. I think, HGU should restrict smoking to places on the campus where nonsmokers can't smell the cigarettes.

Thirdly, smoking areas are an eyesore. It may make some people feel terrible. Smoking manners aren't the only problem. I think that people have a tarnished image of smoking areas. Where possible, these areas should not be located at the entrances of buildings like they are at HGU. HGU must cut back on smoking areas because a lot of visitors think that the university is clean. Additionally, HGU should make a thorough distinction between where people can and cannot smoke. A ban on smoking and the separation of smoking areas from public view is currently being promoted in public facilities such as schools and government offices. I feel, the reputation of the university is very important, so HGU should do the same.

In conclusion, smoking areas may be needed for smokers, but HGU should cut back on smoking areas that can be easily seen. I hope that non-smokers become more assertive of their right to a smoke-free environment. I feel smoking isn't healthy, cigarette smoke smells bad, and smoking areas look bad, that's why I want the university to cut back on smoking areas at HGU.

Toshiki Uesugi

Bests & Favorites

The best day in my life by Misato

My third year's high school festival was one of the best days of my life. At my school, we got some prizes in the school festival for the best shop, the best class flag, and the best performance, for example. All prizes have first, second, and third place. My class prepared hard to win prizes. Of course, other classes also prepared hard. We discussed a lot, and we decided to open a pizza shop in my class, but it was not normal pizza. It was like a spring roll. We calculated costs for the shop. Actually, we had to spend less than 30,000 yen to make pizza, decorate the room and make a flag. Preparing was really hard. Sometimes we had a quarrel but we were soon friends again and cooperated. Finally, we managed to make a wonderful shop. Our shop looked like an Italian restaurant, and it had a really nice atmosphere.

The day before the school festival, there were some performances such as dances, songs and special ability performances. There were also some prizes for this. My best friend and I sang a song in English. We were nervous but we sang the song well, and my classmate ate a watermelon quickly. It is one of her special abilities. I think she can become a very good comedian. At the school festival, many customers came. We were very busy making pizza. There were few people in my class compared with other classes, so it was hard run everything smoothly, but I did my best because my family and friends came to my class and encouraged me. I was really pleased when customers said our pizza was tasty. After the school festival, students' association announced the results. Fortunately, my class got many prizes. We won the best shop prize, the best flag prize and third prize for performance. We were so pleased that we cried.

Through this event, I learned a lot of things. For example, I learned how to cooperate with my class mates, how to resolve differences of opinion, and the importance of friends and family. I reconfirmed again, our class was wonderful! I will never forget that day.

One of the best days in my life by Sena

I will never forget the day when I won a marathon competition at my junior high school. When I was at elementary school, I lost to Daiki, a junior student in a marathon competition. He was fast at running. I was very sad. However, I beat him at a junior high school marathon competition. This is the story of the race.

I remember the day clearly. It was a hot August day in Chitose, and I was fourteen years old and a second-grader. The race was held near the school on an eight-kilometer course. There were two hundred runners from first, second, and third grade. The race started with a starting gun. I ran as fast as I could and at the end I was about fifty meters ahead when I hit the goal tape. Daiki was second. After the race, he told me I was very fast. Also, my friends and family celebrated my victory with me, so I was happy. Then, later that day, my family and I went to a restaurant and the food tasted much better than usual.

This was the one of the best days in my life because I practiced hard to beat Daiki for a long time. In addition, my effort paid off. Finally, I beat him. I learned that if you are strive very hard, surely that effort will pay off.

A school trip in junior high school, one of the best days of my life, by Kento

I will never forget the day when I went on a school trip in junior high school. We went to Aomori when I was in third grade. At the time, I had never left Hokkaido, and hardly ever traveled with friends, so I was especially looking forward to going. This trip was a three day trip, but the best day was the first day, which we mainly spent travelling, but I enjoyed it so much.

In the morning, we took a bus and left Sapporo. In the bus, I was talking with my best friends about different things and we really warmed up there, but I sometimes felt sleepy because the journey was too long. In the afternoon, we had lunch on the bus. After that, we played cards and visited some places. It was very fun for us. I think I yearn for this kind of sightseeing because I hardly experience it now I'm an adult. I feel lonely now. In the evening, we arrived at the hotel at last and I went to the hotel room with five of my friends. We were watching TV and talking to each other about important things that we usually do not talk about. Taking a bath in the hotel with friends was also great fun. After nightfall, we continued talking until we got tired, so it was very hard for me to get up the next day, but they are precious memories.

I want to go to Aomori with my friends again. I learned that the most important thing is not where I go but who I go with.

The best day in my life- Motoyo

Although, I have had several good days, the best day in my life was the farewell party in Aspen, Colorado.

I went there with my classmates and two escorting teachers and when I was a second grade junior high school student. We stayed with a family separately. In the party, we enjoyed ourselves a lot, for example, taking some pictures with our host families with all of us gathered together in a big group, eating and drinking many kinds of foods and drinks. We also danced *Yosako!* I was a little sad then because I knew that we had to part from each of our host families. After the party broke up, I went back to my host family's house to watch fireworks. It was so beautiful.

The next day, most of my classmates cried a lot because they were very sad to leave. It became my most unforgettable memory, so if I can, I want to meet my host

family again and talk with them about various things.

My Favorite Place

Animals are important to people's lives. Many people think that we can feel happy when we see a variety of animals' faces and actions. Especially, a zoo is my favorite place. Thus my favorite place is Asahiyama Zoo. I have two reasons for this.

First, Asahiyama Zoo makes a lot of effort. When I went there, I saw a lot of animals even though it was in the middle of winter. It must be really hard to let animals live as they are. For example, lions usually live in a warm area and it is hard for them to live in a cold area. Also, there are white bears and their habitat is a really cold area, but in the Asahiyama Zoo we can see them in the really hot summer. It goes up to over 30°C in that area, but still white bears can live in that environment. Because of these kinds of efforts that the Asahiyama Zoo staff makes to let animals live as they are, it had the most visitors among all the zoos in Japan.

Second, I respect the idea of the director of Asahiyama Zoo. When I was a high school student, the Asahiyama Zoo's director came to my high school and talked to us and I was moved by his speech. He really thinks and cares about the animals and I actually could see how he takes care of the animals and how he tries to attract visitors. For example, when I went to Asahiyama Zoo, I saw penguins flying in the water and I could really enjoy it. The director set up a special place for observing penguins. We could walk through a see-through tunnel in the water and observe them. He said that this place lets humans and penguins get closer physically and mentally.

In this way, Asahiyama Zoo has a lot of fascinating points we can enjoy and know more about animals. Therefore, my favorite place is Asahiyama Zoo. **Kodai Saito**

My favorite singer

My favorite singer is Avril Lavigne. She was born in a Province of Ontario in Canada. She is 28 years old. She looks younger than her age. She is 158 centimeters tall. She has an older brother and a younger sister. She began singing with her mother in church from the age of two. When she was twelve, she began playing the guitar. Her first album 'Let Go' was a huge hit in America, Canada and Australia. She was just seventeen. Her hit singles include 'Complicated', 'Sk8er Boi' and 'Girlfriend'. 'Complicated' was chosen as the best-selling song in Canada. Her 2nd album 'Under My Skin' and 3rd album 'The Best Damn Thing' is ranked 1st. She got married to Deryck Whibley in 2005, but they divorced in 2009. She appeared on some Japanese TV programs. She holds concert tours in many countries. She hates paparazzi.

Kanako Fukuda

Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen

This is my favorite book. I had already seen this movie before I read the book, so it was easy for me to read and understand. The book tells about love among the aristocracy of England about two hundred years ago. The main characters are two sisters, Elinor and Marianne. Their characters are opposite. Elinor, the older one, is reserved and practical, but her younger sister is emotional and believes in true love.

Marianne falls in love with a rich and handsome man named Willoughby. But he leaves her suddenly and for no reason, and Marianne is heartbroken. It seems she will never be happy again and never be able to love again. But there is another man, Colonel Brandon, who is not so young, handsome or cool as Willoughby but who always loves her and cares for her. Finally she notices that Brandon is a precious person. He proposes to her, and they are married.

Elinor also finds a man who loves her, named Edward, but he has already promised to marry another woman. It seems that they will never be together, but in the end, Edward comes and tells Elinor that the other woman has rejected him. So they are married after all.

So the story has a happy ending for both sisters.

Erika Komatsu

A World Famous Singer from Sapporo

Hatsune Miku is a famous Japanese singer, but she is not a person. She is a singing application for PCs, developed by Crypton Future Media, Inc. The company is based in Sapporo, so many people say that Miku is from Sapporo. When Miku was released, she fascinated many "otaku," which means people who are interested in cartoons, comics or video games. Many of them bought Miku and made their own original songs, and then they let Miku sing the songs and posted the videos with their own songs on Nico Nico Douga, which is a Japanese website like YouTube. A few years later, many foreign otaku were fascinated by Miku, so she became a world famous singer. Surprisingly, Miku appeared in a Toyota commercial for the Corolla car for the American market. Furthermore, Google also used her to promote Google Chrome, which is why I am sure Hatsune Miku is a world famous singer.

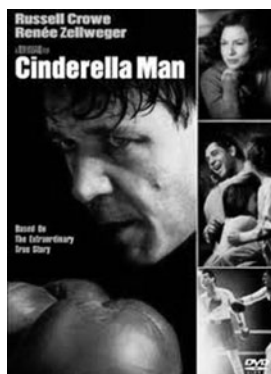
Hatsune Miku is not just a singer, but also a dancer. We can let her dance with the free Japanese software, MMD. It stands for "Miku Miku Dance," and we can use it to create 3D movies. Moreover, Miku appears in a rhythm game that is called Hatsune Miku: Project DIVA. THE gameplay is similar to other rhythm games, but we are allowed to choose from a lot of songs sung by Miku, and she dances during the gameplay. That is why she is not just a singer, but also a dancer. I am proud of her as a fellow Sapporo citizen.

Daiki Hisamatsu

Movies Movies Movies

Cinderella Man

Cinderella Man is a movie based on the true story of heavyweight boxer James J. Braddock, played by Russell Crowe. It begins in New York City in the late 1920s. James ("Jimmy") always got money for his family by fighting. But on October 29, 1929 the stock market crashed and the economy failed. Most people lost their jobs and lost their money, and he and his family became poor at this time. He even lost his boxing license.



Every day Jimmy stood outside the locked gate of the docks waiting to get a job loading heavy sacks. His right hand was broken, so it was almost impossible for him to do it, but he kept trying. His family was so poor that they couldn't even pay their electricity bill, so he had to work. But he dreamed of returning to the boxing ring.

Then one day in 1934 he finally got a chance to fight. Though his wife was opposed to the idea, he decided to fight anyway. He won. After that he got a chance to fight the champion, Max Baer. Everybody expected Jimmy to lose because Baer was so strong he had killed two men in the ring. Jimmy's wife begged him not to fight, but he decided to go through with it despite her opposition.

The world champion fight between Max Baer and James Braddock took place at Madison Square Garden on June 13, 1935. It was very exciting. Baer was looking for the knockout, but Braddock stayed away from him. The fight went all fifteen rounds. When the final bell rang, the two fighters were beaten, bloody and tired. In the end, the new heavyweight champion of the world was James J. Braddock!

Cinderella Man is not just a story about boxing. It is the story of a family who stayed together through hard times and the story of a man who fought for what he loved and believed in. The moral I learned from it is: "Where there's a will, there's a way. Never give up!"

Wataru Hatamoto

Fast Food Nation

The movie *Fast Food Nation* is a good example of American fast food culture for three reasons. First, it shows people eat much junk food almost every day. For example, people eat snacks, frozen foods, candy, and other unhealthy food. In this movie, hamburgers are the model of junk food. Recently, people can always get them anywhere because fast food chains have expanded. All American cities have many fast food restaurants such as McDonald's, Burger King, Wendy's, Jack in the Box, and other restaurants. The reason fast food restaurants can expand is that their products are sold at reasonable prices, so people can buy them easily. Why can fast food restaurants sell products at reasonable prices? The reason is that the food is produced by mass production, but it is also a big problem.



Second, the film questions the safety of food. Mass production is one of the problems. In this movie, for example, beef patties are mixed with cow manure. A company must cut down on personnel expenses by using mass production, so laymen remove the insides from cows. Many chemical "spices" are also part of the problem. Tastes and smells are artificial, so the actual taste of the meat is not important. Many fast food companies pursue only low costs and efficiency, so we should make sure whether products are safe or not. The actor Bruce Willis appears as a company executive, and he says people should not worry so much about dirty food as long as workers cook it properly at high temperatures.

Finally, *Fast Food Nation* shows the immigration problem is related to American fast food culture. The company employs immigrants at low cost, so the company can do mass production. In this movie, immigrants are treated as slaves by the factory boss (who is also Hispanic). In turn, the factory boss is treated poorly by the company's executives. Many workers live together in small houses or apartments to save money, and at the factory there are many physical risks. This relationship has given fast food culture the problems mentioned above. Everything is related to fast food's influence, so we should reconsider the costs and benefits of fast foods in our daily lives.

Rina Horigome

Night at the Museum

The movie *Night at the Museum* is a good example of American multiculturalism for three reasons. First, in the movie, there are many races such as Indian, Hispanic, Asian, and others. This shows that America has changed to multiculturalism. Also, there are strong, positive women in the movie, unlike in old traditional American movies. Second, the main character, Larry, (Ben Stiller) is low status and has bad luck. He has lost his job many times and is divorced from his wife.



In this movie there are Indians, Romans, Aztecs, and Hispanics, and they're in the same museum. At first, there were many confrontations between them, but they began getting along with each other. In addition, main characters of traditional movies have power and good images, but this movie's main character is the opposite. He had a brilliant school career and built some companies, but he failed at many business ventures. He had a wife, Erica, but they divorced because of his failures, and she took their son Nicky to her place with her new husband. Nicky loves his father and he often goes to see him. After that, Larry manages to get a night watch job at the American Museum of Natural History.

Beside these male characters, women like Rebecca and Sacajawea are important characters. Rebecca, who studies enthusiastically about Sacagawea, is a museum guide in the daytime. Sacagawea is a Shoshone Indian who was a guide and interpreter for Lewis and Clark in 1805. In traditional movies, women had no power, so this shows that women's social position has increased. Indeed, America has changed from being traditional to multicultural and has more egalitarianism.

Yuria Ikeda

My Ideal Job

Junior High School Teacher

My ideal job is a junior high school teacher. I've had this dream since I was a junior high school student. To be a teacher I have to have kindness, leadership ability, patience, the ability to understand and some other abilities. I think that the most important ability is the power of understanding. Because students are so childish towards teachers and teachers are stubborn towards students, students are different from adults so teachers have to have the power of understanding. They say that although it is easy to get a teacher's certificate, it is difficult to pass the examination. Because the number of people who want to be a teacher is many, there is a great deal of competition to be a junior high school teacher.

Shota Araya

The Right Job for Your Personality

I wanted to be a hair dresser in my childhood because my father is a hair dresser. But as I grow older I no longer think so. I wanted to be a kindergarten teacher when I was an elementary school student because I like playing with children. When I started a part-time job, I was good at talking with various people and now, I'm able to get acquainted with the people. So I do not dream of the future that has not been clearly decided yet. In the future I want to work with a lot of people. Since I have been studying English, I also want to work where I can use the power of my English.

Kotoko Satou

Police Officer

My ideal job is to be a police officer. There are a couple of reasons for this. First, I think that organized groups of gangsters are increasing so Japan has

become more dangerous than before so we should avert this danger. Second, my father is a policeman and he is working in Sapporo now. I have seen his figure since I was a child. That's why I think that I am influenced by my father. But if I really want to become a police officer, I need to build up my body because I do not know when danger will occur. So it may be difficult for me to be a police officer because I am not good at training although I like to exercise. For these reasons, my ideal job is to be a police officer.

Shouhei Okuyama

Pianist

My ideal job is a pianist. I want to be a pianist in the future because I like the piano's sound or tone. When I was an elementary school student, I started to learn and play the piano. It was enjoyable. So, I am practicing the piano now. The requirements for this job is playing skill. To get this job is very difficult. If I want to get this job, I have to practice playing the piano more and more. And I need to do it a lot of times. But I like playing the piano so I practice more and I want to be good at playing the piano.

Kaori Kawai

Wedding Planner

My ideal job is a wedding planner. I like to see that people are happy. To become a wedding planner, a person needs the ability to think of people's happiness and ability to plan. It is difficult to get this job because it is not easy to think of two other people's happiness. I must help them create memories of a life time. I think that it will make me happy if I can create their happiness.

Yui Yoshida

Fears

I'm afraid of bees and small ants, because they are poisonous. I have never been stung by a bee but I hear it is very painful and people sometimes die. We shouldn't run away but I always run quickly and I have been afraid of small ants for three years. Once, when I woke up in the morning, I found lots of ants walking all over my bed, so I was shocked.

Misaki

When I was a child, I was afraid of crows because their eyes and claws are scary. When I was nine years old, I was attacked by a crow and I went to hospital. I think they are devils.

Hayato

I'm afraid of gangsters. They often threaten other people and may become violent, so I'm scared of them. I don't want to be an adult like them, and I never want to have anything to do with them. I have many different fears like this, but I don't have a problem for the moment. I think it is usual for us to be afraid of things and it is not bad. We don't need to hide our weak points or fears.

Kento

I'm afraid of dentists. When I was young, I would often go to dentists because I had bad teeth, so I was often treated by them. During treatment, I heard the noisy sound of drills. The sound was so high tone that my head hurt as if someone hit it. The sounds always made me crazy. That's why I am afraid of dentists.

Shouhei

When I was a child, I was afraid of swimming in pools because I nearly drowned in a swimming pool.

Honoka

I'm worried about TOEIC test because it's difficult for me but it is very important for me to measure my English skills so I'm trying hard to get ready for this test now.

Yuri

When I was a child, I was scared of ghosts. I believed in ghosts because my mother said ghosts eat children if they stay up late.

Moe

I'm worried about my future because I don't know what I want to do yet. I spend every day with no concrete goal, so I worry so much about it now.

Tomoko

My club teacher is very scary. There were some strange reasons he got angry with me, for example, he said "Your face is rude!" or "You made the weather bad!". So I was afraid of him. I am also afraid of gorillas. When I was a junior high school student, I went to Maruyama Zoo. There was a gorilla and it threw some poop at me! So I am afraid of gorillas.

Hiroki

When I was a child, I was afraid of horror video games. The reason is that I once saw my father playing a game called "Bio Hazard". My father hit many zombies. I felt bad and was scared but, carelessly, I watched the game that my father played. Probably, I might be interested in the game now. However, I am not afraid of speaking to large groups because I belonged to a student council in my high school. I often announced something on the stage. Initially, I was anxious and nervous. But after I tried it, I got confidence and mental power.

Takeshi

There are three things I am not afraid of. First, I'm not afraid of the movie "Ring" because I love horror movies very much now. Second, I'm not afraid of cutting my finger in my part time job because I got used to using a kitchen knife to make dishes and my skill of cooking has improved but cutting my finger is very painful. Third, I'm not afraid of ghosts because they don't exist in the world and I have never seen one. I'm worried about giving a speech in public because I'm shy. When I am tense, I can't consider anything so it is difficult for me to talk to people I have never met before. In the future, when I do presentations at a company, I might feel tense so I need to practice giving a speech in public and talking to many people from now.

Yuto

Biographies

Freddie Mercury



Freddie Mercury, born Farrokh Bulsara, was a vocalist of the rock band 'Queen'. He was born in Zanzibar, but he immigrated to India. He started playing the piano at the age of 5. He immigrated to Britain in 1964. He attended Ealing Art College, where he learned graphic design. He joined Queen in 1970. He composed a large number of songs. He played the piano and the keyboard. Queen's fourth album called "A Night at the Opera", was a huge hit in many countries. Their hit singles include "Bohemian Rhapsody", and "You're My Best friend". Queen's albums were a huge hit in many countries, for example, "News of the World", "Jazz", and "The Game". Freddie died of a disease in 1991. He was forty-five years old. Many people think of him as the world's best vocalist. **Kento Ichimura**

Shinji Kagawa

Shinji Kagawa is a famous Japanese football player who plays for the English club, Manchester United and the Japanese national team. He started playing football at the age of 6. Cerezo Osaka noticed his talent and so he became the first player in Japan to sign a professional contract before graduating high school. In 2012, Shinji moved to the U.K. to play the Manchester United. The team is a world-famous big club. However, he plays fair with other star players. His strong point is dribbling. It is fantastic and grabs audiences. He is hugely popular in both the U.K. and Japan. Many people are hopeful of his performance in the U.K. **Okuya Suzuki**



Monkey Majik

Monkey Majik is a Japanese - Canadian pop rock band formed in 2000 in Sendai. The band currently consists of Canadian brothers, Maynard Plant and Blaise Plant, each acting as lead vocalists and guitarists, as well as two Japanese members, Tax on drums, and Dick on bass. Monkey Majik is currently signed to Binyl Records, a subsidiary of Avex Records, and are managed by Edwards Entertainment Group. Due to the natural blend of both Eastern and Western pop rock influences,



Monkey Majik has often been referred to as a "hybrid band." Much of the bands music has been cross - promoted via television programs, commercials, and movies. I like the band. **Shunsuke Ishigaki**

Shinee



Shinee is a South Korean idol group which consists of five boys. They are thought of as "contemporary band". The groups name is Shinee. It is a new word they created which combines the ending "ee" to "shine" to mean "shining", and it means "those who shine". As a contemporary band, they show trends in music, dance, and fashion. They had debut in South Korea in 2008. Their first mini album was "Replay". This is their debut song. They held an event at the Abbey Road Studios in 2011 where the Beatles recorded most their music. That was the first Asian group to record there. In addition, they made a while world contract following Hikaru Utada in Asia. My favorite member is Lee Taemin. He was born on July 18, 1993. He is 19 years old. He is the youngest in member the group. He likes singing and dancing. He began dancing the age of 8. He can play the piano, so he plays the piano in concert. They had debut in Japan in 2011. They gave concerts this year at Japanese arenas. I went to the concert in July. I love Shinee!!

Miho Ishikawa

SMAP

SMAP is a Japanese pop singing group. They are national idols. The members of SMAP are Masahiro, Takuya, Goro, Tsuyoshi and Shingo. Masahiro Nakai was born August 18 in 1972 and he is from Kanagawa. Takuya Kimura was born November 13 in 1972 and he is from Tokyo. Goro Inagaki was born December 8 in 1973 and he is from Tokyo. Tsuyoshi Kusanagi was born July 9 in 1974 and he is from Saitama. Shingo Katori was born January 31 in 1977 and he is from Kanagawa. They had a debut on September 9, 1991. Their debut event was held at the Sebuen amusement park. This event was held in the heavy rain. Their first single was "Can't stop!!-LOVING". This CD was supposed to be the No.1 in the rankings, but it couldn't take No.1. At first, they weren't very popular. However, now they are a national idol group. They are famous Japanese singers and also actors. SMAP is a great group of entertainers. **Manami Yokoo**



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Politics

Should the Japanese Government Terminate JUST?

The Japan-U.S. Security Treat (JUST) is one of the great topics for debate. Many Japanese have their own opinions and argue on the Internet, and some famous professors have published books related to JUST. However, we cannot find the best solution because the topic has many points at issue, such as trust between Japan and China, armament expansion, and economic sanctions. Though many people have their own ideas, many questions and claims seem to be off the point in discussion and debate.

Some Japanese say that the Japanese government should terminate JUST. The reason is related to the relationship between Japan and China, and the economy. Goh Chok Tong, who was the second prime minister of Singapore, claimed that JUST destroyed the relationship between Japan and China, so after terminating it, the relationship will be good. In 1997, the JLP, which is one of the political parties in Japan, also made exactly the same claim. Moreover, improvement in the relationship seems to bring good economic effects. Japan-China B2B (2008) said, "If I take this opportunity, it will not be easy to restore the relations between China and Japan. And now, the two countries lay emphasis on the construction of a strategic two-way reciprocal relationship. The first thing to do is to establish strategic reciprocal relations to trust each other. Further, China and Japan are two important countries with profits in economic development of the Asia-Pacific region, rather than a menace to each other." China is growing in terms of economy, and the Chinese economy has surpassed America's, so China is more important than America in terms of the economy. Therefore, some people say JUST should be terminated.

Some people disagree. One of the reasons is that Japan seems to depend on American power. They think that is because Japan cannot protect herself. Therefore, if JUST is terminated, Japan cannot rely on American forces, so Japan will expand her military to get self-defense power. That will cause an arms race in Asia, which would increase the risk of war. That is why some Japanese say that the Japanese government should not terminate JUST. Moreover, they have negative opinions of the economic impact. They think if JUST is terminated, cooperation between Japan and America will be destroyed because cooperation is based on JUST. If cooperation is destroyed, America will take economic sanctions when something inconvenient happens, and the economic sanctions will make the Japanese economy worse. That is a big disadvantage for Japan. Therefore, some Japanese do not want the government to terminate JUST.

Compared to the advantages, the disadvantages are much more serious, but we should not make a decision yet because this issue is quite complicated. For instance, noise created by American forces in Okinawa causes diseases related to stress, but American forces prevent arms expansion in Asia. One of the most important points is that the treaty makes our lives better. Another is how many people will be saved thanks to the treaty. In this case, terminating JUST may cause a war, as mentioned above. That means many people may die if JUST is terminated. Given the type and quantity of potential damage, the Japanese government should not terminate JUST. **Daiki Hisamatsu**

The Japanese Government

Since 2009, the Democratic Party of Japan has had political power. When they got political power, Prime Minister Hatoyama tried to raise the rate of carbon dioxide and to review public enterprises, among other things. At that time, problems came out such as distrust of money and a double power structure. That is why the Hatoyama's cabinet's approval rating dropped. It was popular to search for the administration's wasted

money. Nevertheless, national loans were issued that were larger than in the past. The government printed Y44 trillion in national loans in 2010, which is the largest so far.

Recently, the government has been arguing about the consumption tax. Before a change of administration, they said they would not make up the deficit with a new consumption tax. Prime Minister Kan and Prime Minister Noda, however, insisted clearly on the reconstruction of the economy by raising the consumption tax. Noda advocated raising the consumption tax from 5% to 10% during the election, but contrary opinion appeared from the Ozawa faction of the party and other parties working with the coalition. The reasons are insufficient cuts in expenditures and harmful effects to the economy. People's opinions are divided on this issue of raising the consumption tax.

Those who do not agree that the government should raise the tax oppose it for a number of reasons. One is the regressivity of the tax. It is a heavy burden on the poor, so it is difficult for the poor to make a living. The consumption tax is 5% now, and the poverty rate is 16%. If the consumption tax is raised to 10%, some think it is impossible to make a living. Those who do not agree with the government's idea think that the government should raise other taxes such as the income tax and introduce a luxury tax. By doing so, the government will not worsen the situation for the poor.

Of course, there are people who agree with the government's idea. As I said before, Japan has a large amount of national loans. According to the Department of Treasury, all loans are Y900 trillion. If it continues to increase, Japan may fall into financial crisis. Corporate and income taxes are already very high, so if Japan raises these taxes, some companies and some high income earners will complain that it is unfair. Furthermore, Japan had a bad accident, the Tohoku Earthquake, so Japan needs a reconstruction fund as soon as possible. According to a Japan Research Institute article, the government needs more than Y40 trillion for reviving the stricken area.

If Japan raises the tax to 10%, it can increase the revenue about Y13 trillion more than this year's revenue. Some of those who agree with the government's idea think that the government should raise the tax temporarily and set the period of time. Actually, I do not know whether raising the consumption tax is right or not. I agree with the opinion that the government should raise the tax for a set time in order to revive the Tohoku area and its people.

Yuki Ishikawa

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EDITOR'S NOTE

We are on the lookout!

North-Sea Lookout aims to publish as much student writing as possible.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

North-Sea Lookout is a place you can publish your own opinions about any topic that concerns you. If you want to write a letter to the editor, please put it in Prof. Zeff's mailbox. If you prefer, you may have your name withheld from publication with your letter.

This issue shows the high level of writing in English achieved by Hokkai-Gakuen University students. An ongoing interest of our writers is the international homestay and travel experience. In addition, past issues have contained topics as varied as cooking rice and surfing the Internet.

North-Sea Lookout needs your viewpoints on whatever interests you. Your opinions, concerns, and experiences are important. Please don't hesitate to write about them, and then submit them to us. We welcome all submissions.

Fiction, Poetry and Photography Wanted!

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