

第 1 問

問 1 **Article 1.** While vending machines are found throughout the country today, they were not originally developed in Japan. It is generally believed that the first one was constructed by a Greek mathematics teacher about 2,200 years ago. This machine sold special water used in prayers at temples. People who wanted to purchase the water put in a coin, which hit a metal lever attached to a string. Then, the weight of the coin let a specific amount of water pour out until the coin fell off. This ensured that people received an equal portion of the special water.

問 2 **Article 2.** Early routs were often formed naturally on land. They gradually developed over long periods of time while people traveled them on foot or horseback. A significant turning point in their history arrived when the first wheeled carts appeared in ancient times. Once this happened, people recognized the importance of well-maintained routs. Therefore, towns, cities, and entire countries improved them in order to prosper. As a result, life became more convenient, communities grew, economies evolved, and cultures expanded. The importance of land routes increased further, especially after the appearance of automobiles.

問 3 **Article 3.** This concept can be interpreted as a trade-off that requires choosing one option over another. A trade-off happens whenever two options are possible but only one can be selected. For example, City Y, which has benefited by promoting its famous historical spots and beautiful night view to attract tourists, is considering adopting another approach by investing more in industry. However, only one choice can be made due to a limited budget. If the city carries out its new plan, a trade-off will occur. The economy might be improved through the growth of industry, but the number of tourists might decrease.

## 第2問

In many schools, students learn how to tell their ideas to others and they may have chances to make a speech. It is very useful because speaking well is important in your life. To make a good speech, you should try to speak in a big voice. If you do so, it will be easier for listeners to hear you. Choose the words you use carefully and listeners will understand you better. Using your hands is also nice. Listeners will see how you move your hands and understand what is important in your speech. If you try these things, you can improve your speech. However, there is another way to make a good speech.

Have you tried to use a “pause” while you make a speech? It is a great way to make your speech better. You don’t say any words but listeners can still understand you. It is interesting, right? Then, why is it effective?

First, you can get attention from listeners. For example, try to put a pause before you start your self-introduction. Your listeners will pay more attention to you. Even during a speech, you should take a pause before the things you really want to say. When you take a pause, your listeners will wonder why you stopped talking. They will try to listen to you more carefully to know what is spoken next.

Second, a pause can give listeners time to think and they will understand what the speaker is saying better. If your speech continues without a pause, it is difficult for the listeners to understand your message well. However, if you stop and wait for a little time after you say an important thing, the listeners can follow you more easily.

Third, putting a pause is good for speakers, too. When you speak without pauses, sometimes it’s hard to remember what you are going to say. If you keep worrying about the thing you are going to say next, can you guess what will happen? A good speech will be too difficult to make. However, when you speak with some pauses, you don’t have to feel so nervous and you may not forget your message. Then, you can speak with confidence.

Some people think that it’s not good to stop talking while others are listening to you. That may be true in a conversation. When you talk with other people, time is shared with each person there. So, it’s difficult to take a pause. However, when you make a speech, you usually speak to a group of people and the speaking time is given only to you. That means that you can decide how to take a pause in your own way. So, using a pause in an effective way is one of the important parts of making your speech.

To be a wonderful speaker, it is necessary to use a lot of different skills for better communication with people. How about trying to put a pause when you make a speech next time?

*501 words*

第 1 問

問 1 **Article 1.** The greatest problem faced by the global vending machine industry in its expansion was not the use of coins; it was paper money. This was a challenge as it proved easy for dishonest individuals to make money that could fool machines. This forced the vending machine industry to establish better detection methods and was one reason countries took steps to develop money that was difficult to counterfeit. Now, vending machines have become technologically advanced, not only to prevent problems with cash but also to accept credit cards and more recent forms of electronic payment.

問 2 **Article 2.** Visits to the homes or studios where famous authors or artists lived can provide insights into their works, even if those places aren't obvious in their creations. For example, visiting the childhood home of a well-known writer can reveal where the inspiration for stories or characters came from. Stepping into an artist's studio can offer visitors opportunities to experience the same environment and look at the same things as the artist did. This can make people feel closer to the works of art and appreciate them more deeply.

問 3 **Article 3.** One way to help save a friendship in trouble is to keep in touch. When we think a friend has done something that hurt our feelings, our first response may be to cut off contact. However, it may be better to swallow our pride and avoid doing that. For example, Mary watched her friend Susan's children every week until Susan finished night school and graduated. But after that, Mary did not hear from Susan for several months. So, she felt that Susan had been just using her. She decided not to talk to her any more. In the end, however, Mary forced herself to ignore her own feelings and told Susan about her disappointment. Susan immediately apologized and told her that she had been just trying to catch up with things after completing her studies. Susan would never have known there was a problem if Mary had not mentioned it. Not cutting off contact, even when we may be angry, is very important for maintaining good relationships.

## 第2問

Do you often use your smartphone when you don't have anything to do? When you ride a train in Japan, you find that many people are using their smartphones. In the past, however, Japanese people often read books when they had time. When Perry came to Japan from America in the Edo period, he was surprised to find that so many Japanese people were interested in reading books. Later, in his book, he said that Japanese people enjoyed learning from books and that was amazing.

Today, there are some Japanese people who don't often use libraries, so some libraries are trying to start new things. For example, some libraries have volunteers who visit people's houses with books for them. This is good for people who live a long distance from the library and cannot go there easily. Some libraries feature books no one has borrowed yet. Some people want to read those books. In other libraries, music is played softly, so many people feel good while they are reading books or studying there.

There is another interesting event, "Human Library." It is held in several places, like libraries and schools, or even outside. Usually, when you visit a library, you borrow books and read them, but in this event, you borrow humans. You can choose a person, sit together, and listen to ideas and experiences from the person. You can also ask the person some questions. In this special "library," you have one important thing to remember. You must respect the person. When you borrow books, you treat them carefully. Just like that, you must treat the humans well.

Human Library is becoming popular around the world. Now, this event is held in over ninety countries. Why is it popular? Some people think that this event gives them a chance to tell other people about their ideas and experiences, so they want to be "books" in Human Library. Other people think that learning new things from listening to someone's story is very interesting. People have different reasons to enjoy Human Library, but they all can enjoy communication in this event.

Some people may think that listening to someone's story in Human Library is better than reading books borrowed from libraries. However, there is not much difference between them. Why? Writers often record their ideas and experiences and share them with the readers, both now and in the future. Readers often learn what the writers are thinking and what is important in the writers' lives. When they have questions while they are reading, they usually continue reading and try to find the answers. When you think about these things, you can find that reading books is as good as listening to someone's story. Which do you want to choose for communication?

*460 words*

第1問

問1 **Article 1.** For people who enjoy historical novels, it can be rewarding to visit one of the sites that they have read about. This is true even if the place appears to be only an open space. The knowledge they have of the area enables them to bring the scene back to life. They can picture how the people lived there, or imagine how historical events took place at that location. When visitors use their minds to transform such desolate scenes into rich and full visions, they are engaging in a pleasurable and creative process. At the same time, they gain better understandings of what they have read.

問2 **Article 2.** How do people keep friendships for a long time? In one study, researchers interviewed many people who had been friends for a long time in order to find out the secret. They found that those people kept small misunderstandings from growing into large disputes which might cause their friendships to end. By taking their friends' viewpoints and not being afraid to express their honest feelings, those who were interviewed were able to keep something minor from growing into a major argument.

問3 **Article 3.** We succeeded in entering this unexplored liquid safely. The scenery around us was very similar to that of our planet, with soft plants gently waving back and forth. We also noticed a variety of thin swimming creatures. How exciting! We have found life on this planet! However, we cannot see any creatures capable of producing an advanced civilization. Without arms, these swimming creatures wouldn't be able to build complex machines even if they were smart. Are the leaders of this planet hiding from us? Do they have reservations about meeting us? Is that why they use those flying objects to check out space? Hopefully, we will be able to find some answers.

## 第2問

Last year I had a cool experience in a hot city in Japan. My grandmother lives there. My family stays at her house for a week in August every year. When I was little, I did not like going there because it is one of the hottest cities in Japan. I was there when the city had the hottest day in Japan in 2007. It was 40.9°C! It was too hot, and I was very tired. But it was different last year. I had my coolest summer because I joined “Cool Share.”

Do you know about “Cool Share?” It is a new idea for saving energy. On a hot summer day, when we are at home, we use more than 50% of energy for air conditioners. So if we turn them off and get together at one cool place, we can save a lot of energy. This idea came from a design team of an art university. People in my grandmother’s city thought it was a good idea and began “Cool Share.”

I will tell you about my “Cool Share” experiences I had last summer. The city has many “Cool Share” spots. You can go to some public places, for example, the city libraries, museums, and community centers. You can read books, see art, and play games while you are sharing the cool air there. I am in the *shogi* club in my high school. I joined a *shogi* event at the community center near my grandmother’s house. I was very excited because I met great *shogi* players there. One of them was Mr. Sasaki. After the event, I was invited to his house. He teaches *shogi* there. People visit his house in the hot afternoon and play *shogi*. I went there almost every day. It became my favorite “Cool Share” spot. Mr. Sasaki did “Cool Share” at home, and the cool air was not the only thing we shared there. Now the people who were there are all my friends.

There are other good things at “Cool Share” spots. Sometimes you will be surprised to receive some benefits there. If you say, “I turned the air conditioner off in my house and came here for ‘Cool Share,’” some restaurants will give you something to drink and you will not need any money for that. At some hair salons, your hair will be washed with a special shampoo that makes you cool.

I think there are two good things about “Cool Share.” If more people turn their air conditioner off and come out for “Cool Share,” they can save more energy. If more people get together in one place, they can make a lot of friends. My *shogi* experience is a perfect example for that. The city shows many good examples to other cities that try to follow their nice actions. I think their actions are “cool.” Now I know the hottest city may be the “coolest” city in Japan, too. I am going to visit my grandmother and see my friends again this summer.

*507 words*

第1～2問

[ 講義 ]

OK. What is blue carbon? You know, humans produce too much CO<sub>2</sub>, a greenhouse gas. This creates problems with the earth's climate. But remember how trees help us by absorbing CO<sub>2</sub> from the air and releasing oxygen? Trees change CO<sub>2</sub> into organic carbon, which is stored in biomass. Biomass includes things like leaves and trunks. The organic carbon in the biomass then goes into the soil. This organic carbon is called "green" carbon. But listen! Plants growing on ocean coasts can also take in and store CO<sub>2</sub> as organic carbon in biomass and soil—just like trees on dry land do. That's called "blue" carbon. Blue carbon is created by seagrasses, mangroves, and plants in saltwater wetlands. These blue carbon ecosystems cover much less surface of the earth than is covered by green carbon forests. However, they store carbon very efficiently—much more carbon per hectare than green carbon forests do. The carbon in the soil of the ocean floor is covered by layers of mud, and can stay there for millions of years. In contrast, the carbon in land soil is so close to the surface that it can easily mix with air, and then be released as CO<sub>2</sub>. Currently the blue carbon ecosystem is in trouble. For this ecosystem to work, it is absolutely necessary to look after ocean coasts. For example, large areas of mangroves are being destroyed. When this happens, great amounts of blue carbon are released back into the atmosphere as CO<sub>2</sub>. To avoid this, ocean coasts must be restored and protected. Additionally, healthy coastline ecosystems will support fish life, giving us even more benefits.

[ 講義の続き ]

Look at this graph, which compares blue and green carbon storage. Notice how much organic carbon is stored in each of the four places. The organic carbon is stored in soil and in biomass but in different proportions. What can we learn from this?

*319 words*

第 1 ～ 2 問

[ 講義 ]

What is happiness? Can we be happy and promote sustainable development? Since 2012, the World Happiness Report has been issued by a United Nations organization to develop new approaches to economic sustainability for the sake of happiness and well-being. The reports show that Scandinavian countries are consistently ranked as the happiest societies on earth. But what makes them so happy? In Denmark, for example, leisure time is often spent with others. That kind of environment makes Danish people happy thanks to a tradition called “hygge,” spelled H-Y-G-G-E. Hygge means coziness or comfort and describes the feeling of being loved. This word became well-known worldwide in 2016 as an interpretation of mindfulness or wellness. Now, hygge is at risk of being commercialized. But hygge is not about the material things we see in popular images like candlelit rooms and cozy bedrooms with hand-knit blankets. Real hygge happens anywhere—in public or in private, indoors or outdoors, with or without candles. The main point of hygge is to live a life connected with loved ones while making ordinary essential tasks meaningful and joyful. Perhaps Danish people are better at appreciating the small, “hygge” things in life because they have no worries about basic necessities. Danish people willingly pay from 30 to 50 percent of their income in tax. These high taxes pay for a good welfare system that provides free healthcare and education. Once basic needs are met, more money doesn’t guarantee more happiness. While money and material goods seem to be highly valued in some countries like the US, people in Denmark place more value on socializing. Nevertheless, Denmark has above-average productivity according to the OECD.

[ 講義の続き ]

Here’s a graph based on OECD data. People in Denmark value private life over work, but it doesn’t mean they produce less. The OECD found that beyond a certain number of hours, working more overtime led to lower productivity. What do you think?

*326 words*