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Level 2

Number of children in Japan at record low

7th May, 2014

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1405/140507-children-2.html>



Contents

The Reading	2
Matching	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
No Spaces	5
Discussion	6
Writing	7

Please try Levels 0 and 1 (easier) and the 26–page Level 3 (harder).

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THE READING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1405/140507-children-2.html>

The number of children in Japan is the lowest ever. Japan's government released figures the day before the country's Children's Day holiday on May the 5th. They show that the number of children fell by 160,000 from the previous year. It is the 33rd year in a row for the birth rate to drop. There are 13 million fewer children in Japan today than there were in 1950. Of 30 countries with a population of over 40 million, Japan has the smallest percentage of kids. Children make up just 12.8 per cent of Japan's population. In the United States, this figure is 19.5 per cent.

While the number of children is going down, the number of old people is increasing. The over-65s now make up a record 25.6 per cent of the Japanese population. The government said this will continue for many decades. The over-65s could be 40 per cent of the population in 2060. This will make life in Japan hard for young people. They will pay higher taxes to support the over-65s. The Japanese economy will be in trouble because there will not be enough young people to work. Japan has tried many things to get people to have more babies, but nothing is working.

Sources: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/05/04/national/number-of-children-in-japan-drops-for-33rd-year/>
<http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/asia/408089/number-of-children-in-japan-declines-for-33rd-year-in-a-row>
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/04/japan-population-age-children>

MATCHING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1405/140507-children-2.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. the lowest | a. figures |
| 2. Japan's government released | b. is 19.5 per cent |
| 3. the day | c. children in Japan today |
| 4. the number of children | d. ever |
| 5. the 33rd year in | e. fell by 160,000 |
| 6. There are 13 million fewer | f. of kids |
| 7. Japan has the smallest percentage | g. before |
| 8. In the United States, this figure | h. a row |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. the number of old | a. 65s |
| 2. The over- | b. in Japan hard |
| 3. this will continue | c. young people to work |
| 4. This will make life | d. working |
| 5. pay higher | e. for many decades |
| 6. there will not be enough | f. people is increasing |
| 7. Japan has tried | g. taxes |
| 8. nothing is | h. many things |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1405/140507-children-2.html>

The number of children in Japan (1) _____.
Japan's government released (2) _____ the
country's Children's Day holiday on May the 5th. They show that the
number of children fell by 160,000 from
(3) _____. It is the 33rd
(4) _____ for the birth rate to drop. There are 13
million fewer children in Japan today than there were in 1950. Of 30
countries with a population (5) _____, Japan has
the smallest percentage of kids. Children make up just 12.8 per
cent (6) _____. In the United States, this figure is
19.5 per cent.

While the number of children (7) _____, the
number of old (8) _____. The over-65s now make
up a record 25.6 per cent of the Japanese population. The
government said this will continue (9) _____. The
over-65s could be 40 per cent of the population in 2060. This will
make life in Japan hard for young people. They
(10) _____ to support the over-65s. The Japanese
economy will be in trouble because there
(11) _____ people to work. Japan has tried many
things to get people to have more babies, but
(12) _____.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1405/140507-children-2.html>

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)
