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## Level 6 – 1st June 2026

### Japan's population falls three million in five years

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

## Contents

The Article	2	Discussion (Student-Created Qs)	15
Warm-Ups	3	Language Work (Cloze)	16
Vocabulary	4	Spelling	17
Before Reading / Listening	5	Put The Text Back Together	18
Gap Fill	6	Put The Words In The Right Order	19
Match The Sentences And Listen	7	Circle The Correct Word	20
Listening Gap Fill	8	Insert The Vowels (a, e, i, o, u)	21
Comprehension Questions	9	Punctuate The Text And Add Capitals	22
Multiple Choice - Quiz	10	Put A Slash ( / ) Where The Spaces Are	23
Role Play	11	Free Writing	24
After Reading / Listening	12	Academic Writing	25
Student Survey	13	Homework	26
Discussion (20 Questions)	14	Answers	27

Please try Levels 4 and 5 (they are easier).

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# THE ARTICLE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

The population of Japan has fallen by over three million in the past five years. This is the largest drop since records began in 1920. Japan's internal affairs ministry has released preliminary figures for its 2025 census. This demographic survey is conducted every five years. The latest one reveals that the number of residents in October 2025 was 123,049,524. This was a drop of 3,096,575 from the 2020 survey — a fall of 2.5 per cent. The census is the third in a row to show a decrease. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said: "It was confirmed again that the population decline is advancing even further." He vowed to promote "comprehensive measures" to address the downturn.

The government attributed the decline to various factors. These included historically low birth rates. In 2025, there were around 706,000 births in Japan. This compared to around 2.5 million annual births during the postwar baby boom. Successive governments have introduced many measures to encourage couples to have babies. They have expanded child allowances, increased parental leave, and subsidized early years education. However, these have had little success. Japan is one of the world's oldest societies. The increasingly greying population is putting considerable strain on healthcare systems, pensions, and the labour force.

Sources: [https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20260529\\_08/](https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20260529_08/)  
<https://japantoday.com/category/national/update1-japan's-population-marks-sharpest-drop-to-123-mil.-in-2025-census>  
<https://japannews.yomiuri.co.jp/society/general-news/20260529-329935/>

# WARM-UPS

**1. POPULATION DECREASE:** Students walk around the class and talk to other students about population decrease. Change partners often and share your findings.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, talk about these topics or words from the article. What will the article say about them? What can you say about these words and your life?

population / five years / records / demographic / survey / residents / census / decline  
government / birth rates / baby boom / couples / parental leave / subsidies / pension

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. DEPOPULATION:** Students A **strongly** believe depopulation is a good thing; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**4. BIRTH RATE:** What do you think of these ideas for increasing the birth rate? Would they make you act? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	What I Think	Me
Free childcare		
Lower taxes for parents		
More playgrounds		
More public housing		
More support for fathers		
Family-friendly companies		

**5. JAPAN:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word "Japan". Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. A SHRINKING POPULATION:** Rank these with your partner. Put the most worrying things at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- Fewer babies
- Emptying villages
- Bus services stopping
- Shop closures
- People living alone
- High taxes
- No pension money
- Nurse shortages

# VOCABULARY MATCHING

## Paragraph 1

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| 1. ministry      | a. Related to a group of people and their characteristics.                              |
| 2. preliminary   | b. Including many parts and dealing with everything important.                          |
| 3. census        | c. A government department that is responsible for a particular area of public affairs. |
| 4. demographic   | d. An official count of the people living in a country or area.                         |
| 5. in a row      | e. Not final or complete yet.   |
| 6. vowed         | f. One after another with no break.   |
| 7. comprehensive | g. Promised to do something.  |

## Paragraph 2

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 8. attributed  | h. Things that help cause a result or situation.                   |
| 9. factors     | i. A time of fast growth and success.                              |
| 10. boom       | j. Paid part of the cost to make something cheaper.                |
| 11. successive | k. Said that something was caused by a particular person or thing. |
| 12. measures   | l. Pressure caused by too much demand or difficulty.               |
| 13. subsidized | m. Actions taken to achieve a goal or solve a problem.             |
| 14. strain     | n. Following one after another.                                    |

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

1. The drop in Japan's population is the biggest since records began. **T / F**
2. Japan conducts a demographic survey once a decade. **T / F**
3. The decline in population was over three per cent. **T / F**
4. It is the fourth consecutive census that has shown a fall in population. **T / F**
5. Japan is experiencing a fall in its birth rate it has not seen before. **T / F**
6. During the postwar baby boom, 2.5 million babies were born every year. **T / F**
7. Japan has taken many successful measures to increase its population. **T / F**
8. Japan's ageing population has negative effects on the pension system. **T / F**

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** (The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>preliminary</b>   | a. pressure    |
| 2. <b>conducted</b>     | b. steps       |
| 3. <b>in a row</b>      | c. deal with   |
| 4. <b>vowed</b>         | d. consecutive |
| 5. <b>address</b>       | e. handouts    |
| 6. <b>attributed</b>    | f. initial     |
| 7. <b>measures</b>      | g. workers     |
| 8. <b>allowances</b>    | h. promised    |
| 9. <b>strain</b>        | i. carried out |
| 10. <b>labour force</b> | j. accredited  |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |                                    |                          |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. released preliminary            | a. row                   |
| 2. demographic                     | b. on healthcare systems |
| 3. the third in a                  | c. address the downturn  |
| 4. population decline is advancing | d. force                 |
| 5. comprehensive measures to       | e. boom                  |
| 6. attributed the decline          | f. even further          |
| 7. historically low birth          | g. figures               |
| 8. during the postwar baby         | h. rates                 |
| 9. putting considerable strain     | i. survey                |
| 10. the labour                     | j. to various factors    |

# GAP FILL

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

The population of Japan has (1) \_\_\_\_\_ by over three million in the past five years. This is the largest (2) \_\_\_\_\_ since records began in 1920. Japan's internal affairs ministry has released preliminary figures for its 2025 (3) \_\_\_\_\_. This demographic survey is conducted every five years. The latest one reveals that the number of (4) \_\_\_\_\_ in October 2025 was 123,049,524. This was a drop of 3,096,575 from the 2020 survey — a fall of 2.5 per cent. The census is the third in a (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to show a decrease. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said: "It was (6) \_\_\_\_\_ again that the population decline is advancing even (7) \_\_\_\_\_." He vowed to promote "comprehensive measures" to (8) \_\_\_\_\_ the downturn.

*confirmed*  
*drop*  
*address*  
*census*  
*further*  
*residents*  
*fallen*  
*row*

The government attributed the decline to (9) \_\_\_\_\_ factors. These included historically low birth rates. In 2025, there were around 706,000 (10) \_\_\_\_\_ in Japan. This compared to around 2.5 million annual births during the postwar baby (11) \_\_\_\_\_. Successive governments have introduced many measures to encourage (12) \_\_\_\_\_ to have babies. They have expanded child allowances, increased parental leave, and subsidized early (13) \_\_\_\_\_ education. However, these have had little (14) \_\_\_\_\_. Japan is one of the world's oldest societies. The increasingly (15) \_\_\_\_\_ population is putting considerable strain on healthcare systems, pensions, and the labour (16) \_\_\_\_\_.

*boom*  
*years*  
*force*  
*various*  
*success*  
*couples*  
*births*  
*greying*

# LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

- 1) Japan's internal affairs ministry has \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. released preliminary figurines
  - b. release preliminary figures
  - c. released pre-luminary figures
  - d. released preliminary figures
- 2) This was a drop of 3,096,575 from \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. the 2020 scurvey
  - b. the 2020 survey
  - c. the 2020 surveille
  - d. the 2020 surf way
- 3) The census is the third \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. inner row
  - b. in a row
  - c. in arrow
  - d. in the row
- 4) It was confirmed again that the population decline is \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. advancing even future
  - b. advancing even furrier
  - c. advancing even farther
  - d. advancing even further
- 5) He vowed to promote "comprehensive measures" to \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. address the U-turn
  - b. address the intern
  - c. address the downturn
  - d. address the upturn
- 6) The government attributed the decline \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. to various factors
  - b. to various factories
  - c. to various vectors
  - d. to various fractals
- 7) This compared to around 2.5 million annual births during the \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. postwar baby boom
  - b. postwar baby boon
  - c. postwar baby beam
  - d. postwar baby bone
- 8) expanded child allowances, increased parental leave, and subsidized \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. early year education
  - b. early ears education
  - c. early years education
  - d. earlyish years education
- 9) However, these have \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. had little success
  - b. had little succeed
  - c. had little excess
  - d. had little successive
- 10) putting considerable strain on healthcare systems, pensions, and \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. the labour fierce
  - b. the labour farce
  - c. the labour force
  - d. the labour fours

# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

The population of Japan (1) \_\_\_\_\_ over three million in the past five years. This is the largest drop since records began in 1920. Japan's internal affairs ministry (2) \_\_\_\_\_ figures for its 2025 census. This demographic survey is conducted every five years. The latest one reveals that the (3) \_\_\_\_\_ in October 2025 was 123,049,524. This was a drop of 3,096,575 from the 2020 survey – a fall of 2.5 per cent. The census is the third (4) \_\_\_\_\_ to show a decrease. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said: "It was confirmed again that the population decline (5) \_\_\_\_\_ further." He vowed to promote "comprehensive measures" (6) \_\_\_\_\_ downturn.

The government attributed (7) \_\_\_\_\_ various factors. These included historically low birth rates. In 2025, there were around 706,000 births in Japan. This (8) \_\_\_\_\_ 2.5 million annual births during the postwar baby boom. Successive governments have introduced (9) \_\_\_\_\_ encourage couples to have babies. They have expanded child allowances, increased parental leave, and subsidized (10) \_\_\_\_\_. However, these have had little success. Japan is one of the (11) \_\_\_\_\_. The increasingly greying population is putting considerable strain on healthcare systems, pensions, and (12) \_\_\_\_\_.

# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

1. When did Japan first start to keep population records?
2. How often does Japan conduct a population census?
3. What was the fall in population as a percentage?
4. How many censuses in a row now show a population fall?
5. What did the government promise to promote?
6. What did the government attribute the drop to?
7. How many babies were born in Japan in 2025?
8. What happened in the postwar years?
9. What has the government subsidized?
10. What is the ageing population straining besides pensions and healthcare?

# MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

- 1) When did Japan first start to keep population records?
  - a) 1209
  - b) 1902
  - c) 1290
  - d) 1920
- 2) How often does Japan conduct a population census?
  - a) every three
  - b) every five years
  - c) every 10 years
  - d) every 20 years
- 3) What was the fall in population as a percentage?
  - a) 1.5
  - b) 2.0
  - c) 2.5
  - d) 3.0
- 4) How many censuses in a row now show a population fall?
  - a) three
  - b) four
  - c) five
  - d) six
- 5) What did the government promise to promote?
  - a) managers
  - b) parents
  - c) comprehensive measures
  - d) kindergarten teachers
- 6) What did the government attribute the drop to?
  - a) climate change
  - b) various factors
  - c) a weak yen
  - d) immigration
- 7) How many babies were born in Japan in 2025?
  - a) 702,000
  - b) 704,000
  - c) 705,000
  - d) 706,000
- 8) What happened in the postwar years?
  - a) There was a baby boom.
  - b) Maternity clinics were built.
  - c) There was free school milk.
  - d) Marriage hit an all-time high.
- 9) What has the government subsidized?
  - a) contraception
  - b) maternity care
  - c) early years education
  - d) IVF treatments
- 10) What is the ageing population straining besides pensions and healthcare?
  - a) community relations
  - b) the labour force
  - c) prices
  - d) education

# ROLE PLAY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

## **Role A – Fewer Babies**

You think fewer babies is the biggest worry with depopulation. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as worrying. Also, tell the others which is the least serious of these (and why): higher taxes, emptying villages or fewer workers.

## **Role B – Higher Taxes**

You think higher taxes is the biggest worry with depopulation. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as worrying. Also, tell the others which is the least serious of these (and why): fewer babies, emptying villages or fewer workers.

## **Role C – Emptying Villages**

You think emptying villages is the biggest worry with depopulation. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as worrying. Also, tell the others which is the least serious of these (and why): higher taxes, fewer babies or fewer workers.

## **Role D – Fewer Workers**

You think fewer workers is the biggest worry with depopulation. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as worrying. Also, tell the others which is the least serious of these (and why): higher taxes, emptying villages or fewer babies.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look online / in your dictionary to find collocates, information on, synonyms for... the words 'population' and 'birth rates'.

population	birth rates

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• past</li><li>• figures</li><li>• conducted</li><li>• reveals</li><li>• row</li><li>• address</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• various</li><li>• historically</li><li>• compared</li><li>• child</li><li>• success</li><li>• strain</li></ul>
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# POPULATION DECREASE SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

Write five GOOD questions about population decrease in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

# POPULATION DECREASE DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. What did you think when you read the headline?
2. What images are in your mind when you hear the word 'Japan'?
3. Are there too many or too few people in your country?
4. What do you think of the size of the global population?
5. What problems come with overpopulation?
6. Why has the world's population increased so much?
7. What problems come with shrinking populations?
8. Are shrinking populations good for the environment?
9. What measures can countries take to address shrinking populations?
10. What will the world's population be like a century from now?

*Japan's population falls three million in five years – 1st June 2026*  
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# POPULATION DECREASE DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

11. Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
12. What do you think of when you hear the word 'population'?
13. What do you think about what you read?
14. Why are birth rates so low in many countries?
15. What can governments do to encourage couples to have children?
16. What do you think about maternal and paternal leave?
17. What are the problems of ageing societies?
18. What are your concerns about your old age?
19. Should retirement ages increase to 80?
20. What questions would you like to ask Japan's government?

# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

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# DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

# LANGUAGE - CLOZE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

The population of Japan has (1) \_\_\_\_\_ by over three million in the past five years. This is the largest drop since records began in 1920. Japan's internal affairs ministry has released (2) \_\_\_\_\_ figures for its 2025 census. This demographic survey is conducted every five years. The latest one reveals that the number of (3) \_\_\_\_\_ in October 2025 was 123,049,524. This was a drop (4) \_\_\_\_\_ 3,096,575 from the 2020 survey — a fall of 2.5 per cent. The census is the third in a (5) \_\_\_\_\_ to show a decrease. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said: "It was confirmed again that the population decline is advancing even further." He (6) \_\_\_\_\_ to promote "comprehensive measures" to address the downturn.

The government (7) \_\_\_\_\_ the decline to various factors. These included historically low birth rates. In 2025, there were around 706,000 births in Japan. This compared (8) \_\_\_\_\_ around 2.5 million annual births during the postwar baby boom. Successive governments have introduced many measures to encourage (9) \_\_\_\_\_ to have babies. They have expanded child allowances, increased parental leave, and subsidized early years education. However, these have had (10) \_\_\_\_\_ success. Japan is one of the world's oldest societies. The increasingly (11) \_\_\_\_\_ population is putting considerable strain (12) \_\_\_\_\_ healthcare systems, pensions, and the labour force.

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |                |                 |                |               |
|-----|----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1.  | (a) felled     | (b) fallen      | (c) falls      | (d) falling   |
| 2.  | (a) qualifying | (b) preliminary | (c) prelude    | (d) pulmonary |
| 3.  | (a) resides    | (b) residents   | (c) presidents | (d) residents |
| 4.  | (a) at         | (b) of          | (c) in         | (d) at        |
| 5.  | (a) low        | (b) row         | (c) mow        | (d) pow       |
| 6.  | (a) wowed      | (b) sowed       | (c) vowed      | (d) towed     |
| 7.  | (a) set        | (b) held        | (c) attributed | (d) stuck     |
| 8.  | (a) of         | (b) at          | (c) to         | (d) by        |
| 9.  | (a) twos       | (b) duos        | (c) pairs      | (d) couples   |
| 10. | (a) little     | (b) small       | (c) few        | (d) dearth    |
| 11. | (a) greying    | (b) grain       | (c) groin      | (d) granule   |
| 12. | (a) by         | (b) at          | (c) on         | (d) of        |

# SPELLING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

## Paragraph 1

1. Japan's internal affairs ytiimnsr
2. ipmrareinly figures
3. crdmhgiopea survey
4. the number of esnresidt
5. the suecsn is the third in a row
6. pmoehsrvecnei measures

## Paragraph 2

7. udteitatr the decline to various factors
8. csciuvsees governments
9. They have expanded child casloenlwa
10. isbiusezdd early years education
11. nrecedsboila strain on healthcare systems
12. iespsonn and the labour force

# PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

**Number these lines in the correct order.**

- ( ) census. This demographic survey is conducted every five years. The latest one reveals that the number
- ( ) couples to have babies. They have expanded child allowances, increased parental
- ( ) further." He vowed to promote "comprehensive measures" to address the downturn.
- ( ) leave, and subsidized early years education. However, these have had little
- ( ) of 2.5 per cent. The census is the third in a row to show a decrease. Japan's Chief Cabinet
- ( ) of residents in October 2025 was 123,049,524. This was a drop of 3,096,575 from the 2020 survey — a fall
- ( ) rates. In 2025, there were around 706,000 births in Japan. This compared to around 2.5 million annual births during
- ( ) records began in 1920. Japan's internal affairs ministry has released preliminary figures for its 2025
- ( ) Secretary said: "It was confirmed again that the population decline is advancing even
- ( ) strain on healthcare systems, pensions, and the labour force.
- ( ) success. Japan is one of the world's oldest societies. The increasingly greying population is putting considerable
- ( ) The government attributed the decline to various factors. These included historically low birth
- ( **1** ) The population of Japan has fallen by over three million in the past five years. This is the largest drop since
- ( ) the postwar baby boom. Successive governments have introduced many measures to encourage

# PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

1. by fallen has Japan's million over population three .
2. began drop is largest records since the This .
3. affairs figures has internal Japan's ministry preliminary released .
4. advancing decline even further is population The .
5. address comprehensive downturn measures Promote the to .
6. attributed decline factors government The the to various .
7. Annual baby births boom during postwar the .
8. babies couples encourage have Many measures to to .
9. is Japan of oldest one societies the world's .
10. considerable healthcare is on putting strain systems This .

# CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

The population of Japan has *fallen / felled* by over three million in the past five years. This is the largest *drop / dropping* since records began in 1920. Japan's internal affairs ministry has released preliminary *figurines / figures* for its 2025 census. This demographic *scurvy / survey* is conducted every five years. The latest one reveals that the number of *residents / residence* in October 2025 was 123,049,524. This was a drop *at / of* 3,096,575 from the 2020 survey — a fall of 2.5 per cent. The census is the third *on / in* a row to show *a / the* decrease. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said: "It was *confirmed / conformed* again that the population decline is advancing even further." He vowed to promote "comprehensive measures" to address the *downturn / upturn*.

The government *contributed / attributed* the decline to various factors. These included historically low *born / birth* rates. In 2025, there were around 706,000 births in Japan. This *comparison / compared* to around 2.5 million annual births *while / during* the postwar baby *boom / boomers*. Successive governments have introduced many *measures / measurements* to encourage *couples / couple* to have babies. They have expanded child allowances, increased parental leave, and subsidized early years education. However, these have had *few / little* success. Japan is one of the world's oldest societies. The increasingly greying population is putting *considerable / considerate* strain on healthcare systems, pensions, and the labour *farce / force*.

**Talk about the connection between each pair of words in italics, and why the correct word is correct. Look up the definition of new words.**

# INSERT THE VOWELS (a, e, i, o, u)

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

Th\_ p\_p\_l\_t\_\_n \_f J\_p\_n h\_s f\_ll\_n by \_v\_r thr\_\_  
m\_ll\_\_n \_n th\_ p\_st f\_v\_ y\_\_rs. Th\_s \_s th\_ l\_rg\_st  
dr\_p s\_nc\_ r\_c\_rds b\_g\_n \_n 1920. J\_p\_n's \_nt\_rn\_l  
\_ff\_\_rs m\_n\_stry h\_s r\_l\_\_s\_d pr\_l\_m\_n\_ry f\_g\_r\_s f\_r  
\_ts 2025 c\_ns\_s. Th\_s d\_m\_gr\_ph\_c s\_rv\_y \_s  
c\_nd\_ct\_d \_v\_ry f\_v\_ y\_\_rs. Th\_ l\_t\_st \_n\_ r\_v\_\_ls  
th\_t th\_ n\_mb\_r \_f r\_s\_d\_nts \_n \_ct\_b\_r 2025 w\_s  
123,049,524. Th\_s w\_s \_ dr\_p \_f 3,096,575 fr\_m th\_  
2020 s\_rv\_y - \_ f\_ll \_f 2.5 p\_r c\_nt. Th\_ c\_ns\_s \_s  
th\_ th\_rd \_n \_ r\_w t\_ sh\_w \_ d\_cr\_\_s\_. J\_p\_n's Ch\_\_f  
C\_b\_n\_t S\_cr\_t\_ry s\_\_d: "\_t w\_s c\_nf\_rm\_d \_g\_\_n th\_t  
th\_ p\_p\_l\_t\_\_n d\_cl\_n\_ \_s \_dv\_nc\_ng \_v\_n f\_rth\_r." H\_  
v\_w\_d t\_ pr\_m\_t\_ "c\_mpr\_h\_ns\_v\_ m\_\_s\_r\_s" t\_ \_ddr\_ss  
th\_ d\_wnt\_rn.

Th\_ g\_v\_rnm\_nt \_ttr\_b\_t\_d th\_ d\_cl\_n\_ t\_ v\_r\_\_s  
f\_ct\_rs. Th\_s\_ \_ncl\_d\_d h\_st\_r\_c\_lly l\_w b\_rth r\_t\_s.  
\_n 2025, th\_r\_ w\_r\_ \_r\_\_nd 706,000 b\_rths \_n J\_p\_n.  
Th\_s c\_mpr\_d t\_ \_r\_\_nd 2.5 m\_ll\_\_n \_nn\_\_l b\_rths  
d\_rng th\_ p\_stw\_r b\_by b\_\_m. S\_cc\_ss\_v\_ g\_v\_rnm\_nts  
h\_v\_ \_ntr\_d\_c\_d m\_ny m\_\_s\_r\_s t\_ \_nc\_\_r\_g\_ c\_\_pl\_s  
t\_ h\_v\_ b\_b\_\_s. Th\_y h\_v\_ \_xp\_nd\_d ch\_ld \_ll\_w\_nc\_s,  
\_ncr\_\_s\_d p\_r\_nt\_l l\_\_v\_, \_nd s\_bs\_d\_z\_d \_\_rly y\_\_rs  
\_d\_c\_t\_\_n. H\_w\_v\_r, th\_s\_ h\_v\_ h\_d lttl\_ s\_cc\_ss.  
J\_p\_n \_s \_n\_ \_f th\_ w\_rld's \_ld\_st s\_c\_\_t\_\_s. Th\_  
\_ncr\_\_s\_ngly gr\_y\_ng p\_p\_l\_t\_\_n \_s p\_ttng  
c\_ns\_d\_r\_bl\_ str\_\_n \_n h\_\_lthc\_r\_ syst\_ms, p\_ns\_\_ns,  
\_nd th\_ l\_b\_\_r f\_rc\_.

# PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

the population of japan has fallen by over three million in the past five years this is the largest drop since records began in 1920 japans internal affairs ministry has released preliminary figures for its 2025 census this demographic survey is conducted every five years the latest one reveals that the number of residents in october 2025 was 123049524 this was a drop of 3096575 from the 2020 survey a fall of 25 per cent the census is the third in a row to show a decrease japans chief cabinet secretary said it was confirmed again that the population decline is advancing even further he vowed to promote comprehensive measures to address the downturn

the government attributed the decline to various factors these included historically low birth rates in 2025 there were around 706000 births in japan this compared to around 25 million annual births during the postwar baby boom successive governments have introduced many measures to encourage couples to have babies they have expanded child allowances increased parental leave and subsidized early years education however these have had little success japan is one of the worlds oldest societies the increasingly greying population is putting considerable strain on healthcare systems pensions and the labour force

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2606/260601-japans-shrinking-population.html>

The population of Japan has fallen by over three million in the past five years. This is the largest drop since records began in 1920. Japan's internal affairs ministry has released preliminary figures for its 2025 census. This demographic survey is conducted every five years. The latest one reveals that the number of residents in October 2025 was 123,049,524. This was a drop of 3,096,575 from the 2020 survey—a fall of 2.5 percent. The census is the third in a row to show a decrease. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary said: "It was confirmed again that the population decline is advancing even further." He vowed to promote "comprehensive measures" to address the downturn. The government attributed the decline to various factors. These included historically low birth rates. In 2025, there were around 706,000 births in Japan. This compared to around 2.5 million annual births during the postwar baby boom. Successive governments have introduced many measures to encourage couples to have babies. They have expanded child allowances, increased parental leave, and subsidized early years education. However, these have had little success. Japan is one of the world's oldest societies. The increasingly greying population is putting considerable strain on health care systems, pensions, and the labour force.





# HOMework

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out more about this news story. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. POPULATION DECREASE:** Make a poster about population decrease. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. SHRINKING POPULATIONS:** Write a magazine article about encouraging decreases in population. Include imaginary interviews with people who are for and against this.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?** Write a newspaper article about the next stage in this news story. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

**6. LETTER:** Write a letter to an expert on population decrease. Ask him/her three questions about it. Give him/her three of your ideas about this. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## VOCABULARY (p.4)

1. c    2. e    3. d    4. a    5. f    6. g    7. b  
8. k    9. h    10. i    11. n    12. m    13. j    14. l

## TRUE / FALSE (p.5)

- 1 T    2 F    3 F    4 F    5 T    6 T    7 F    8 T

## SYNONYM MATCH (p.5)

1. f	2. i	3. d	4. h	5. c
6. j	7. b	8. e	9. a	10. g

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.9)

- 1920
- Every five years
- 2.5
- Three
- Comprehensive measures
- Various factors
- 706,000
- There was a baby boom
- Early years education
- The labour force

## WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER (p.19)

- Japan's population has fallen by over three million.
- This is the largest drop since records began.
- Japan's internal affairs ministry has released preliminary figures.
- The population decline is advancing even further.
- Promote comprehensive measures to address the downturn.
- The government attributed the decline to various factors.
- Annual births during the postwar baby boom.
- Many measures to encourage couples to have babies.
- Japan is one of the world's oldest societies.
- This is putting considerable strain on healthcare systems.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.10)

1. d    2. b    3. c    4. a    5. c    6. b    7. d    8. a    9. c    10. b

## ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Please check for yourself by looking at the Article on page 2.  
(It's good for your English ;-)