

B2  
Discussion  
Topics  
2018

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Date	Class #	Content	Topic	Preparation Score	Self-evaluation Score	Reaction Score
	1	Supplementary 1				
	2	Discussion #1	Exploration / Travel			
	3					
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**Website for B2**

PDF copies of materials for this course can be found at this website.

**B2 : <http://www.pellit.org/b2>**

### 1 Topic: Exploration / Travel

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Article: Elon Musk Releases Detailed Plans for Colonizing Mars and Other Planets

#### Vocabulary

1 adaptability	7 LCC (Low Cost Carrier)	13 safety
2 adventure	8 migrate	14 settlement
3 astronaut	9 one-way trip	15 souvenir
4 colonization	10 package tour	16 trailblazer
5 day trip	11 private / public –sector	17 travel alone
6 high / low season	12 round trip	18 unexplored regions

#### Discussion questions

- \*2 Do human beings need to migrate to other planets? Why does outer space fascinate people?
- \*3 What is the most interesting city to visit in your country?
- \*4 What kind of adventure would you like to have in your life?
- 5 What is something that you have learned from a foreign person or culture?
- 6 What was the most interesting place you have ever visited?
- 7 What was your best / worst trip?

### 2 Topic: Sports in Society

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Article: IOC approves addition of 5 sports for 2020 Tokyo Olympics

#### Vocabulary

1 amateur	7 gambling	13 physical health
2 athlete	8 intramural	14 professional
3 broadcast	9 make an effort	15 relieve stress
4 competition	10 manners	16 spectator
5 economic effect	11 martial arts	17 sports leagues
6 fan	12 mental health	18 volunteer

#### Discussion questions

- \*2 Why are sports so important in society? How do they contribute to society?
- \*3 What do you think about international competitions like the World Cup or Olympics?
- \*4 What do you think about traditional Japanese sports? Is it necessary to support them?
- 5 What do you think of the five sports approved for the 2020 Olympics?
- 6 What do you think about sports clubs in junior high and senior high school?
- 7 What do you think about the sports clubs in university?

### 3 Topic: Importance of a Person's Name

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Article: Good or Bad, Baby Names Have Long-lasting Effects

#### Vocabulary

1 appropriate, inappropriate	7 feminine, masculine	13 popular
2 change	8 future impact on life	14 regret
3 cherish	9 identity	15 self-esteem
4 Chinese character	10 individuality	16 trend
5 decide	11 origin	17 unique
6 expectation	12 parents' responsibility	18 unusual

#### Discussion questions

- \*2 How do you think parents should decide a child's name? How was your name decided?
- \*3 Do you think a person should be able to easily change their name or not?
- \*4 How do you think names will change in the future?
- 5 What names are popular now? Why?
- 6 What tools are there to choose names in your country?
- 7 What do you think about the names of old people in your country?

#### **4 Topic: Convenience Store Culture**

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Article: 5 Reasons Japanese Convenience Stores Rock

##### **Vocabulary**

1 alcohol	7 groceries	13 serving size
2 candy	8 innovate	14 snack foods
3 convenient	9 part-time worker	15 soft drinks
4 distribution	10 payment service	16 store clerk
5 franchise	11 retailer	17 toiletries
6 fresh	12 security camera	18 waste

##### **Discussion questions**

- \*2 What convenience store do you like the best? How often do you use a convenience store?
- \*3 Can traditional shops survive in the future? Why or why not?
- \*4 What is positive / negative about the development of convenience stores?
- 5 What do you think about convenience stores throwing away food?
- 6 Are convenience stores a good place to work?
- 7 What service do you want convenience stores to add?

#### **5 Topic: Genetically Engineered Food**

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Article: Op-Ed: 'Label It Yourself' campaign — Citizen action to label GMOs

##### **Vocabulary**

1 allergic	7 ethical problem	13 mandatory labeling
2 biological pollution	8 food safety	14 modifying
3 biotechnology	9 gene splicing	15 pesticides
4 consumer rights	10 general public	16 quarantine
5 GMO (genetically modified organism)	11 yield	17 transgenic
6 digestion	12 herbicides	18 conventional way

##### **Discussion questions**

- \*2 What are some reasons people support genetic engineering?
- \*3 What are some reasons people oppose genetic engineering?
- \*4 Would you eat genetically engineered animals or plants?
- 5 Do you support or oppose genetic engineering?
- 6 What is the government policy regarding genetically engineered foods in your country?
- 7 When you buy food do you check the label for information about the food?

#### **6 Topic: Smoking and Drinking in Society**

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Article: What's Wrong With the Drinking Age

##### **Vocabulary**

1 addiction	7 nicotine	13 binge drinking
2 asthma	8 secondhand smoke	14 drinking age
3 E-cigarette (electronic cigarette)	9 smoke-free	15 drunk
4 emphysema	10 tobacco	16 DWI (driving while impaired)
5 inhale	11 alcoholism	17 social drinking
6 lung cancer	12 being carded	18 toast

##### **Discussion questions**

- \*2 Should people have the right to smoke? What are the merits of tobacco?
- \*3 What do you think of underage smoking and drinking?
- \*4 How is drinking a part of your culture?
- 5 How did you learn about the effects of tobacco? What do you think about them?
- 6 How were you educated about drinking? What do you think about drinking?
- 7 What do you think of the drinking habits of university students?

## 7 Topic: Economic Inequality

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Article: Economic Inequality: It's Far Worse Than You Think

### Vocabulary

1 American Dream	7 pay gap	13 rich people
2 debt	8 perception	14 savings
3 distribution of wealth	9 poor people	15 stocks
4 economic inequality	10 property	16 unequal
5 inheritance	11 rags-to-riches	17 upward social mobility
6 meritocracy	12 reality	18 wealth

### Discussion questions

- \*2 What do you think about economic inequality in your country?
- \*3 What do you think about the Japanese government providing aid to poor countries?
- \*4 Are you optimistic about your future and your economic mobility?
- 5 How do you feel wealth (in %) should be divided between five social classes from wealthy to poor?
- 6 Do you believe that success is due to individual talent and effort, like most Americans?
- 7 What do you think about the universal income concept?

## 8 Topic: Japanese Longevity

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Article: Japan an unhealthy longevity superpower

### Vocabulary

1 adult mortality	7 high blood pressure	13 quality of life
2 aging population	8 life span	14 slow food
3 body-mass index	9 lifestyle factors	15 smoking
4 diet	10 longevity	16 suicide
5 exercise	11 lung cancer	17 universal health care
6 genetic predisposition	12 obesity	18 yearly health check

### Discussion questions

- \*2 How is your diet different from older people's diet? What do you think about your lifestyle, now?
- \*3 How do you think longevity is going to change Japanese society?
- \*4 What are the causes of stress for young people today?
- 5 What do you think about smoking and the trend of more women smoking?
- 6 What do you think about the problem of the high suicide rate in Japan?
- 7 What do you think about Japan's health care system?

## 9 Topic: Student Life

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Article: Loving homework

### Vocabulary

1 abolish	7 gap year	13 perform
2 benefit	8 healthy lifestyle	14 physical activity
3 concentration	9 lifestyle	15 pushed
4 cram school	10 overnight cramming	16 study habits
5 entrance examination	11 parents	17 weekday
6 expectations	12 pass / fail	18 weekend

### Discussion questions

- \*2 If you are asked by children about the meaning of studying, how will you answer?
- \*3 What do you think about children going to a cram school?
- \*4 Describe your study habits in junior high school and high school.
- 5 What do you think about the volume of homework in university?
- 6 Have you ever done *ichiyazuke*, overnight cramming?
- 7 Do you have a fear of failing in school or have you had such an experience?

## **10 Topic: Robots in Society**

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Article: The Robot Reality: Service Jobs Are Next to Go

### **Vocabulary**

1 android	7 economic disparity	13 mass production
2 artificial intelligence (AI)	8 efficient	14 produce
3 assembly	9 employment, unemployment	15 remote-controlled
4 bipedal robot	10 humanoid	16 replace
5 coexistence	11 labor	17 robotics
6 cutting-edge	12 manufacturing	18 threat

### **Discussion questions**

- \*2 What do you think about engineers making human-like robots?
- \*3 How do you think drones will change our lives?
- \*4 What do you think about medical robots being used to do operations on humans?
- 5 What do you think about military robots?
- 6 What kinds of tasks should robots be used for?
- 7 What do you think about self-driving cars?

## **11 Topic: Modern Society Viewed through Buzzwords**

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Article: 'Superhuman' slugger tops year's list of buzzwords

### **Vocabulary**

1 annual	7 in vogue	13 sarcastic
2 catchphrase	8 mass media	14 society
3 change	9 odd	15 spread
4 comedy	10 politics	16 technology
5 fashionable	11 popularity	17 trend
6 impress, impression	12 reflect	18 web-related word

### **Discussion questions**

- \*2 What words do you like or dislike on this list? Why?
- \*3 What do these words tell us about modern Japanese society?
- \*4 What words would you add to this list? Why?
- 5 What words would you like to see disappear from daily use?
- 6 Why are many unknown words nominated as buzzwords?
- 7 What words do you think will be selected this year?

## **12 Topic: Impact of Sleeping on Health**

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Article: Sleep deprivation has genetic consequences

### **Vocabulary**

1 all-nighter	7 insufficient sleep	13 shuteye
2 biological clock	8 irregular sleeping pattern	14 skimping
3 body clock	9 lifestyle	15 sleep deprivation
4 circadian rhythm	10 metabolism	16 sleep disorder
5 diabetes	11 negative effect	17 sleep loss
6 insomnia	12 obesity	18 sleeping habit

### **Discussion questions**

- \*2 What do you think about your sleeping habit?
- \*3 What are the reasons that many students do not get enough sleep?
- \*4 What is your ideal schedule for a day?
- 5 What lifestyle changes will help people sleep better?
- 6 What experience do you have of not getting enough sleep? How did it affect you?
- 7 What do you think about the sleeping habits of the adults you know?

### 13 Topic: Seasons of the Year / Natural Disasters

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Article: The Four Seasons in Japan

#### Vocabulary

1 archipelago	7 guerrilla rainstorm	13 mudslides
2 blizzard	8 hot and humid	14 thermometer
3 cherry blossoms	9 hydrometer	15 thunderstorm
4 deluge	10 landslides	16 tornado
5 fall colors	11 lightning	17 tremor
6 flash flood	12 mold	18 warning

#### Discussion questions

- \*2 Describe the winter and summer in your prefecture.
- \*3 In your prefecture, how is the weather during the rainy season?
- \*4 How do seasons affect the economy where you live?
- 5 What experiences have you had with severe weather?
- 6 What season do you like best/least? Why?
- 7 What experience have you had with natural disasters?

### 14 Topic: Status of Women in Society

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Article: Japanese Women Face Tough Reality in Work and Marriage

#### Vocabulary

1 breadwinner	7 housewife	13 promotion
2 corporate discrimination	8 housework	14 raising children
3 economic participation	9 income	15 recruitment
4 economic status	10 lifestyle	16 traditional roles
5 gender gap	11 managerial track	17 transfer
6 general clerical track	12 opportunity	18 workforce

#### Discussion questions

- \*2 What do you think about the lack of women politicians?
- \*3 How should companies change to give women more opportunities?
- \*4 What do you think about the lack of women professors at Tohoku University?
- 5 What woman politician do you like / dislike? Why?
- 6 Should there be any differences in the way men and women are treated by an employer?
- 7 Are there any jobs that should be only for men or women?

### 15 Topic: Japan's Amazing Food Culture

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Article: Ramen vs. *Washoku*: The Changing Face of Japanese Cuisine

#### Vocabulary

1 bland	7 feast	13 palate
2 boom	8 flavor	14 platform food
3 comfort food	9 food tourism	15 ramen shop
4 consumption	10 gastro-nationalism	16 staple food
5 culinary	11 gourmet	17 taste
6 dine	12 Japanese cuisine	18 tasty

#### Discussion questions

- \*2 Describe your typical food life. How is it different from your parents or grandparents?
- \*3 What do you think of *washoku*?
- \*4 Why do you think ramen is so popular? What do you think of ramen?
- 5 What do you think of food tourism?
- 6 What foods do you think represent Japanese cuisine?
- 7 What do you think of the cuisine offered at the Tohoku University cafeterias?