

Choose one of the topics below. Indicate the number of the topic that you have chosen. In English, write 100 to 130 words about the topic. Correctly indicate the number of words you have written at the end of the composition.

(2020年 一橋・前期)

- 1 Introduce your favorite Japanese book to a non-Japanese speaker.
- 2 Describe a situation when you felt proud of yourself.
- 3 Explain the differences between a friend and an acquaintance.

昨年から一転して、自由に意見を述べる形式になった。久しぶりで賛否を論じる形式になるかとも思われたが…。やはりあらゆるタイプに対応できる発想力と、それを表現できる英語力を鍛えておく必要がある。ただし、前年の画像の問題に比べるとかなり易化したことは間違いない。何も書けなかったという人はほとんどいないだろう。

したがって、阿佐谷英語塾の解答例は省略し、コメント(*)も最小限に止めます。

【1. A予備校・解答例1】

I'd like to introduce the book Santaro No Nikki, written by Jiro Abe, a famous philosopher who lived from 1883 to 1959. This book was written in 1914, when he was 31 years old. In this book he wrote about his own mental agonies, and the thinking process he used to overcome them. He was very introspective and always concerned with questions like "Who am I?", "What can I achieve in the world?", and "Am I talented?", which often face young people. However, he reflected deeply and finally came to realize that what was important for humans was not whether they were gifted, but whether they were sincere and faithful. His words still guide me. I highly recommend this book. (121 words)

【1. B予備校・解答例】

My favorite Japanese book is The Woman in the Dunes by Kobo Abe. It's about a man who goes to a remote area looking for a rare beetle. He needs a place to sleep, and the local people suggest he stay with a woman who lives at the bottom of a crater in some nearby sand dunes. They trap him there, and force him to fill buckets with sand which they take away to prevent their village from being covered. The man at first fights against his situation, but later comes to accept it. Also, his relationship with the woman changes. At first, he sees her as an enemy, but gradually he falls in love with her. I like this book because it powerfully describes humans' struggles to be free. (130 words)

*The Woman in the Dunes by Kobo Abe: 安部公房『砂の女』の英訳題名

(次ページに続く)

【1. C予備校・解答例】

My favorite Japanese book is "Momotaro" an old Japanese fairy tale. It is about an old man and woman who did not have children of their own. One day, when the old woman was at the river washing their clothes, a huge peach came floating down the river. After taking the peach home and splitting it open, the old couple saw a boy come out! They named him Momotaro and raised him with love. After he had grown up, Momotaro left home to banish evil devils on the island of Onigashima. On the way, a dog, monkey, and pheasant agreed to join Momotaro in exchange for the old woman's millet dumplings she had given him. They traveled to the island, defeated the devils, and returned home with the devils' treasure. (130 words)

*pheasant: キジ millet dumplings: きび団子

【2. A予備校・解答例1】

I feel proud of myself every time my parents say to me "We are proud of you." I still remember the first time I felt so. When I was five, my parents bought me a bike for my birthday, and I started learning to ride it. The first day, I was totally at a loss. I didn't even know how to pedal. I somehow got it moving, but fell off again and again, probably because I wasn't going fast enough. For a couple of days, I practiced at least two hours a day. Balancing was really hard. Then, finally, still a bit awkward, I managed to go fast enough. "Look! I'm riding a bike!" I yelled to my parents, and they said, "Great! We're so proud of you!" (128 words)

【2. B予備校・解答例】

Last October, I was waiting in line for a bus in Tachikawa, western Tokyo. The bus terminates at Haneda airport, so travelers from other countries sometimes use it. A woman in front of me asked me in English if I knew what time the bus would arrive at the international terminal. She said she was worried that she would miss her flight. It was the first time I had ever been spoken to by a foreigner, but I asked the driver and was able to give her the information she needed. We chatted for a few minutes on the bus, and when I got off at my stop, the woman thanked me for my help and complimented me on my English. It made me feel proud for a few minutes! (130 words)

【2. C予備校・解答例】

The day I felt the most pride in my life was when I gave a piano recital in my hometown in front of all my classmates and people living in the area. I had been learning the piano since I was quite young, and though it was hard and not always enjoyable, eventually I came to enjoy playing and getting better. One day I saw a notice at school inviting students to perform at a charity concert for the victims of the terrible earthquake and tsunami in the Tohoku region, and I immediately signed up to play. I will never forget the applause after I finished my piece. I was proud that I had continued with the piano and could now help people who had suffered so much. (128 words)

【3. A予備校・解答例1】

A friend is a person you can completely rely on when you have trouble; you are confident you can tell them anything and ask them for useful advice. If the friend knows about your trouble, they can advise you what to do and help you improve the situation, which makes the bond between you and them even stronger. On the other hand, you will be afraid to be honest with an acquaintance because an acquaintance does not feel deep sympathy for you, and might even go so far as to tell others what you told them just for fun. In the end, an acquaintance can do more harm than good to you. (112 words)

*下線部の them と they は、何を受けているのか?

【3. B予備校・解答例】

A friend is a person we have a strong personal relationship with. We like, trust and respect him. We share a lot of information with him, and vice versa. We know about his family, his strengths and weaknesses, his hopes and his fears. We would not hesitate to help him if he were in trouble, and would call him if we needed help ourselves. An acquaintance, by contrast, is someone we often come into contact with but do not know very well. We might work or study with this person, but do not socialize or share much private information with him. We might not even like him very much. We have more acquaintances than friends in our lives, but the latter are more important to us. (126 words)

【3. C予備校・解答例】

I think that the difference between a friend and an acquaintance is that a friend will be there when you really need him or her, for example when you are in serious trouble or simply need someone to talk to and listen to you. An acquaintance is just someone you know, who you have a more superficial relationship with. Often such people will quickly disappear if they feel you are in trouble or need some help. However, a friend will want to know what is wrong and how to help you. A friend will tell you when you are doing something wrong, but an acquaintance will usually not do that. Today unfortunately, many of us have more acquaintances than friends. (120 words)

Choose one of the proverbs below and explain in English what you believe it means. Your explanation should be 100 to 140 words in length. Indicate the number of the proverb you have chosen. Correctly indicate the number of words you have written at the end of the composition. (2021年 一橋・前期)

- 1 A pig and a farmer should not try to be friends.
- 2 A late reply is worse than no reply at all.
- 3 The right word is more effective than the wrong book.

2020年と類似した出題形式だが、今年のほうが書きにくいかもしれない。架空の諺の意味を説明することを求められているので、それぞれ、適切な situation をイメージしなければならないからだ。3つの中では、家畜と飼育者の関係を論じる 1, 次いで 2 が比較的書きやすいと思われる。3 も "The right word is more effective than the wrong book" を、簡潔な言葉と冗長な文章の説得力の対比と考えれば、特に書きにくいトピックではない。2019年の画像の問題よりははるかに平易である。半分は想像力、残り半分が英語力のテストである。なお語数の上限が10語増えて140語になったが、大勢に影響はないだろう。

A予備校が計6例の解答を挙げてくれているので、今回も阿佐谷英語塾の解答例は省きます。

【1 A予備校・解答例1】

My interpretation of this proverb is that a friendship is hard to establish between a man and an animal. If there were a friendship between them, it would mean that they could trust each other. However, there is seldom such a relationship between the two individuals that cannot communicate through language, and this proverb refers to a friendship between a domestic animal and its owner. As they get to know each other better, the pig may begin to worry that the farmer will one day sell him or turn him into pork. For fear of such things, the pig will behave in a way that is not offensive to the farmer to make him happy. As a result, the farmer will mistakenly assume that the pig trusts and loves him. This is hardly the beginning of a friendship. (138 words)

【1 A予備校・解答例2】

This means that everyone should accept their place in the social hierarchy. Just as in nature, where humans are superior to other animals in intelligence and social organisation, in human society the ruling elite is superior to ordinary people. A farmer and a pig cannot be friends because the farmer knows he will eventually have to kill the pig and either sell its dead body or eat it himself. The pig, of course, knows nothing about this. Similarly, in the social hierarchy, those at the top cannot make friends with those below them because they know that one day they may have to force them to do something dangerous, like fight a war against another country. This is why it is in the interests of the ruling elite to keep ordinary people as ignorant as a pig on a farm. (140 words)

【1 B予備校・解答例】

When it is applied to farming, this proverb obviously means that a farmer should not become attached to his pig because one day he will have to sell it. If he sees the animal as a friend, either he will be unable to do this and will lose money, or he will experience stress when the pig is taken away to be butchered. It is difficult to see how this proverb can be applied to life in general, however, because using the word 'pig' to refer to a person is unusual and rude. Does it mean, for example, that a boss should not form close attachments to his employees because this will make it difficult for him to fire them? I'm not sure. (123 words)

【1 C予備校・解答例】

I believe that this proverb means that if a farmer who keeps and raises pigs in order to butcher them to sell or eat were to become friends with one or a number of pigs, then he might have difficulty when it came time to kill them. Pigs, like humans, are social animals and are much happier, and learn from being, in a group. If humans and pigs become too friendly, then the humans would not be able to easily kill them, and the pigs of course would not understand why their 'friends', the humans, were now going to cause them harm. Perhaps the proverb is telling us to understand our priorities in life and that sometimes we need to make difficult choices. (123 words)

【2 A予備校・解答例 1】

I believe this proverb means it is worse to answer something you have to late than not at all. This saying seems to me to be the antithesis of the popular proverb, "Better late than never", which means it is better to start doing what you've got to late than not at all. I think the saying in question applies, for example, when someone asks you for help. If you don't reply to their request at all, they can at least decide to deal with the problem they face by themselves, and, as a result, may manage to solve it. However, if you reply to it late, regardless of whether you respond in a way that helps them or not, you make them wait too long and they lose the chance to overcome their difficulty. (135 words)

【2 A予備校・解答例 2】

This means that information is only useful if it is given in time for it to be used by the person who has requested it. If you ask someone a question and you do not receive a reply, it may be because they do not know the answer or that they are not interested in telling you what you want to know; but that is not really a problem. You can always ask somebody else or try to find the answer for yourself. However, if you are made to wait a long time for an answer, which arrives a long time after you have asked the question, it may be that you have already missed the chance to act on the information you requested. (124 words)

【2 B 予備校・解答例】

Not receiving a reply to a letter, email or text message is usually worse than receiving a late one because it implies that the person you have written to does not respect you. However, there are situations where this proverb is true. Imagine, for example, you invite a friend to join you and four others for dinner at your house. If she does not respond, you may feel hurt, but this does not make your work more difficult. You simply prepare food for five people instead of six. On the other hand, if she replies late and says she wants to attend, she both hurts your feelings and inconveniences you. She implies that you are not very important and forces you to make some last-minute arrangements for her. (128 words)

【2 C 予備校・解答例】

This proverb is probably trying to explain that often the timing of messages and answers to questions or requests is often more important than the actual content. For example, let's say I want to get married and am in love with a particular girl. I write her a letter telling her about my feelings for her and that I would like to marry her. I also explain that my father is seriously ill, and I would like to hold the wedding while my father is still alive. If she does not reply, then I would not wait forever and would look for someone else to marry. But if she writes back long afterward telling me she does not want to marry me, I would feel very terrible wondering why and lose confidence in finding a partner. (136words)

【3 A 予備校・解答例 1】

I believe this proverb symbolizes the way advice works for us. Any kind of advice that a book provides won't be effective if it is not fit for your specific problems or purposes. Suppose you think you are a bit too fat and you should lose weight. Of course, there are countless how-to books available on that matter, but if the information contained in the book you have chosen isn't in line with your eating habits, your physical or genetic traits, or your medical history, it won't be effective. If, on the other hand, someone who knows a lot about these things gives you some advice, it can be very effective. (111 words)

【3 A 予備校・解答例 2】

This means that the judgment of people you know and trust is more useful than the opinion of someone you have never met, regardless of how famous they are or how important they are in their field. Just like the thousands of so-called "self-help" books that you see in bookshops, there are lots of social-media influencers, experts or celebrities who try to persuade people to follow their lead. The problem in both cases is that those books and experts can only address a problem or issue in a general way; they cannot really know how to help you as an individual because they don't know anything about your circumstances. On the other hand, a real friend or a close family member who does know you and your situation can really help with a friendly word of advice. (137 words)

【3 B 予備校・解答例】

This proverb would be easier to understand if it were rewritten as 'Sometimes, the right word is better than a good book.' As it is, it seems to be stating the obvious, saying simply that a good thing is better than a bad thing. However, perhaps the intended meaning of the proverb is 'if you want to get your message across to other people, you should keep it short.' This is particularly true today, when we are constantly bombarded with information from the mainstream media and the internet. People do not have the time or the energy to concentrate on long, detailed explanations. (103 words)

【3 C 予備校・解答例】

This proverb is trying to explain the importance of simplicity and efficiency in life, and that more is not necessarily better than less. You can spend a long time reading an entire book about something when a single word might do better in explaining what you are looking for. Nowadays, many people tend to use too many words when speaking and writing and most of the words are redundant. For example, I often hear reporters on TV use expressions such as "at this particular point in time" when the single word "now" would say the same thing in a much more efficient way. And of course, the other danger is that reading the 'wrong' book can lead us down a dangerous path and end up 'feeding' us the 'fake news' we hear so much these days. (136 words)

Choose one of the pictures below and describe it in English. Your description should be 100 to 140 words in length. Indicate the number of the picture you have chosen. Correctly indicate the number of words you have written at the end of the composition. (2022年 一橋・前期)

①



②



③



2022年に再び3年ぶりで画像の説明を求める問題になった。どこから持ってくるのか、ユニークというよりも意味不明な画像を題材にしているが、こうした出題は受験生の英作文の力を計るのに相応しいのだろうか。このタイプの出題形式はほとんど想像力のテストである。想像力は大切だが、受験生の「英語を書く力」の不足を考えると、この種の想像力を英語の試験で試すことは適切なのだろうか。現実逃避の隠れ蓑になる恐れもある。高校生が日本と世界が直面する課題に目を向けるためにも、政治・経済・社会・文化に関わる諸々の問題を取り上げるべきではないだろうか。

【(1) 阿佐谷英語塾・解答例】

There are two middle-aged men photographed in this picture. One of them seems, no doubt, an actual person bending over very close to the other. He is looking the other in his eyes. On the other hand, at first sight, the other person looks like a life-size statue of a man sitting on a bench, reading a newspaper with his legs crossed. However, maybe both are actual human beings. They are communicating, but what one says makes the other feel uncomfortable. So he is staring angrily at him. In reality, some unknown artist gave a live man unique makeup and made him look like a statue to deceive people playfully. However, I cannot distinguish the statue-looking man's leg from that of the bench. Therefore, I cannot help but suspect this figure is, including the bench, an actual statue after all. (140 words)

*上限の140語の解答を例示した。最後の2つのセンテンスを省くと110語になる。

* (1)は(2), (3)と比べるとまだ書き易いように思われる。というよりも, (2)と(3)の画像を英語でどう説明したら高得点をもたらえるのだろうか。(2)はモチーフの奇抜さはともかく, 画像自体が不鮮明であり, (3)に至っては, この種の写真を取り上げる意図が不明である。したがって, (2), (3)の解答例は省略します。

【(1) A予備校・解答例1】

A man is speaking to a bronze statue of a middle-aged man who is sitting on a bench with his legs crossed, with a newspaper on them. The statue is a work of art which was created and donated to the town by an avant-garde artist. Her motifs are usually ordinary people in everyday life, and this work is a good example of the type of sculpture she often creates. The statue is so realistic that it looks as if the bronze man were animate and were really looking back from his paper at the man who is leaning close and jokingly speaking to him. However, the bench has only one leg and, surrealistically, still stands normally. (117 words)

【(1) A予備校・解答例2】

This picture seems to have been taken outside, perhaps in the courtyard of a museum. It shows a very realistic statue of a man in a suit sitting on a bench. He has been reading a newspaper but now is looking over his shoulder at something else. It is a little hard to see clearly, but actually it seems that one end of the bench is held up by the man's leg, so maybe the sculpture is not just the man but also includes the bench. A real man is also in the picture. The man seems fascinated by the statue and is looking at it very carefully, or perhaps he is just posing for a photo that he thinks is funny. (122 words)

【(2) A予備校・解答例1】

In this picture, there is a huge sculpture on the right which looks like Rodin's famous statue, "The Thinker." The statue as we know it has the right elbow on the left thigh, but interestingly, the thinker in this picture has his left elbow on his right thigh. So this must be a fake. On the left, we can see a crowd of people. Many of them are wearing a helmet and gas mask, and one of them is holding some kind of weapon, probably a rifle. The man at the forefront is holding one of the handles of what looks like a riot shield, and there is thick smoke floating in front of the crowd. It could be that some kind of riot is occurring and the local police are trying to suppress it. (135 words)

【(2) A予備校・解答例2】

This is a picture with the famous statue "The Thinker" on the right, and, on the left, policemen who seem to be trying to maintain order in the middle of a riot. The statue is enormous in comparison with the policemen, who look very small. It may be that the statue is closer to the camera than the policemen, thus creating this effect. It is not clear who the policemen are fighting against because there is only smoke in front of them, but because of the composition of the photo, it somewhat looks like the policemen are fighting against the statue. There is a lot of action on the left side of the picture and no action at all on the right. (122 words)

【(3) A予備校・解答例1】

This photo shows photographers taking pictures of two men fighting with swords as if it were ancient times. It is a show that is being put on during a large sporting event, and the photographers understand that the two men are acting, not actually trying to kill each other. So, the photographers are relaxed and just looking for the right moment to release the shutter. Even so, the two men look as if they are in a serious fight. At this very moment it looks like one man is trying to finish off the other man, who has fallen down, but the calm looks on the photographers' faces let us know that the men are not really fighting for their lives. (121 words)

【(3) A予備校・解答例2】

This is an odd picture because it looks like a photo to which figures from a painting have been added. Because of their clothing, and because they have swords, the figures look like they are from the movie Gladiator. They have been fighting but one has fallen and the other is stabbing him, so the fight is probably almost over. In the background of the picture there are real people who seem as if they are watching the fight. Most of the people have cameras, as if they went there in order to take photos of the fight. A couple of the people seem quite bored, however. (107 words)

【(1) B予備校・解答例】

This photograph shows a life-size sculpture of a bald, middle-aged man sitting on a bench. It is quite realistic and appears to be in a quiet public street or a park. The bench is very plain and the man is wearing an ordinary jacket and pants. He is resting a newspaper on his knee but something has interrupted his reading. He has turned away from his newspaper and is looking angrily at something over his left shoulder. This pose adds tension to what would otherwise be a rather boring piece of art. A member of the public, ironically also a bald, middle-aged man, has bent down and placed his face very close to that of the seated figure to look into its eyes. He is interacting with the sculpture, which is perhaps what the artist hoped would happen. (138 words)

【(2) B予備校・解答例】

I believe this photograph was taken during a protest in a Paris street. On the right we can see Rodin's famous The Thinker statue. Behind it, there are clouds of dark smoke, which might be from tear gas fired by the police or from barricades set on fire by protesters. The latter are not visible, but we can assume that they are attacking the police. On the left of the picture, riot police wearing crash helmets, gas masks and bulletproof vests are using their

shields to protect themselves from objects being thrown at them. The photographer has composed the picture to create a powerful sense of drama. The huge statue towering over the officers seems to doubt their ability to restore law and order. (124 words)

【(3) B予備校・解答例】

This photograph seems to show the reenactment of a fight between two gladiators in a temporary arena. The smaller of the two men has no armor and just a short sword, and yet he appears to be winning. His opponent has arm padding, a helmet, a face guard and a large sword, but he has been knocked to the ground and is about to be stabbed in the heart. A dozen or so tourists are watching and taking photographs from behind a barrier. The organizers of this event do not seem to have spent much money on it. The costumes worn by the two men look very cheap, and the spectators are separated from the fighters by a simple cloth sheet. No wonder they look unimpressed. (127 words)

【(1) C予備校・解答例】

This picture describes a common sight these days in many European cities of a life-size metal sculpture of man or woman often sitting on a bench. In this case, the statue is an old man sitting on a bench with his newspaper open and turned to the side, and there is another man with glasses within this angle of view. He is peering into the face of the statue trying to figure out whether the statue is really a statue, or whether it is a flesh-and-blood person like himself pretending to be a statue with special makeup. The humorous thing about this picture, however, is that the man bending over is doing this so his wife can take a funny photo of them together. (124 words)

【(2) C予備校・解答例】

This picture describes what happens when a giant happens to sit down outside some small country village to take a rest and think a bit deeply about his life. Most people are afraid of giants, and this has always been that way. The truth is that people are afraid of anything and anyone that is different from them. In this case, the village men have gathered, put on helmets, and are approaching the giant with weapons from behind their shields. They don't have a plan, but while they are afraid, they are also curious about this giant who is sitting so calmly and quietly. For starters, the villagers have just set up a smoke screen to see what the giant will do. (122 words)

【(3) C予備校・解答例】

This is a picture of two men fighting and dressed like gladiators in the times of the Roman Empire, when events like these were quite popular among the Roman citizens. This is just a performance for modern-day tourists, and although the two men are fighting with swords, you can see that one man has his arm covered in a sort of cushion to protect his sword arm. He also has a helmet to protect his head. The other man does not have any protection, but that man seems to be winning, like we often see in the movies. In the background you can see a lot of tourists taking photographs so they can show their friends and families back home about their trip to Rome in Italy and how they actually watched some gladiators fight for real. (137 words)