

Part 1

- A) Comprehension questions on the text. Read the text and choose the correct answer. You must choose and answer only 2 out of the 3 questions below (0,4 points each).

When Princess Mako of Japan, Emperor Naruhito's niece and the daughter of his younger brother, Crown Prince Fumihito, wed in Tokyo on Tuesday, there was no lavish ceremony, and none of the rites traditionally associated with Japanese royal weddings. In another first, she is forgoing the lump sum payment of about \$1.3 million that female royals receive after they lose their imperial status by marrying a commoner. The reason: public disapproval of her groom, Kei Komuro, 30, a recent law graduate, because of a financial dispute involving his mother. Rather than spend taxpayer money on the wedding, which was delayed for years amid the controversy, the couple simply registered their marriage at a government office. In the coming weeks, they are expected to quietly leave Japan for a new life in the United States.

The couple's dramatic exit from royal life has riveted the media in Japan and elsewhere, drawing comparisons to Britain's Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan Markle. Palace officials said this month that Mako, who turned 30 Saturday, had developed complex post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of being "unable to escape" the attacks on her, Komuro and their families.

Their story has also drawn attention to a looming succession crisis for the Japanese monarchy, which is said to be the oldest in the world. With ascension to the Chrysanthemum Throne restricted to the male bloodline, the family is running low on members - 17 in total now that Mako is married. Neither Naruhito's daughter, Aiko, nor Mako and her sister, Kako, are in line because they are women. Now the crown's future rests on the shoulders of Mako's 15-year-old brother, Prince Hisahito, the only heir of his generation.

Questions about the fate of the imperial family are part of a broader debate about the role of women in Japanese society, said Ken Ruoff, director of the Center for Japanese Studies at Portland State University and the author of *Japan's Imperial House in the Postwar Era, 1945-2019*. "We're talking about the national symbol, and if the national

symbol is limited only to males, that says quite a lot about the state of gender equality in Japan," he said.

Changes to Japanese law after World War II confined the emperor to a symbolic role and drastically reduced the size of the imperial family, removing 11 of 12 branches. Of the 17 remaining royals, five are male, including former Emperor Akihito, 87, who abdicated in 2019, and his younger brother, Prince Hitachi, 85. The family's numbers will continue to shrink as more of its female members marry, increasing the burden of royal duties for those who remain.

The Japanese government has tried to address the problem before, with proposals including restoring the royal status of men from the former branches and allowing women to remain in the family after marrying commoners. Polls show a majority of the public supports allowing women or their male children to become emperor, but there is strong opposition among conservatives, and the issue lost its urgency in 2006 with the birth of Hisahito. "He must be watching this with considerable curiosity," Ruoff said of the controversy surrounding Mako's marriage, noting that Hisahito would also have to marry a commoner for lack of any other options. "This whole recent drama with his older sister is probably not going to help that process," Ruoff said.

On Tuesday, Mako carried a bouquet of flowers as she stepped out of her family's imperial residence, followed by her parents and Kako, 26. (Hisahito did not appear.) In front of a crowd of journalists, the family bowed goodbye to each other, with Mako's sister pulling her into an embrace before the bride got into a car without them and left for the marriage office.

In a statement, Fumihito, better known as Akishino, said he approved of his daughter's "unprecedented marriage" partly because she and Komuro had "never wavered" in their plans despite the opposition.

At a press conference later, the newly-wed couple thanked the family's supporters and apologized to anyone who was "inconvenienced" by the marriage. "I love Mako," Komuro said, "and I want to spend my one and only life with the person I love." Mako said Komuro was "invaluable" to her, and that their marriage "was a necessary choice in order to live while carefully protecting our own hearts."

This is not the first time the princess has gone her own way. Rather than study at Tokyo's prestigious Gakushuin University, favored by the imperial family and other Japanese elite, she chose the International Christian University in Tokyo. It was there that she met Komuro in 2012, at an event for students interested in studying abroad.

(Mako was an exchange student in Scotland and later earned a master's degree in art museum and gallery studies at the University of Leicester in England.)

Their engagement was announced in September 2017, with the wedding set to take place the following year. But then reports emerged of a dispute between Komuro's mother and her former fiancé, who claimed that she owed him more than \$35,000. Critics questioned whether Komuro, whose mother raised him on her own, was fit to marry a princess, and the wedding was postponed.

In August 2018, Komuro left for law school at Fordham University in New York. Last month, he returned to Japan for the first time in more than three years, quarantining for two weeks under the country's pandemic border rules before he and Mako could reunite.

There was further uproar when he arrived in Japan sporting long hair tied in a ponytail, which critics said was inappropriate for the husband-to-be of a princess. His hairstyle was dissected on the front page of newspapers, photographed from multiple angles.

By Oct. 18, when Komuro met with Mako's parents, Fumihito and Crown Princess Kiko, at their imperial residence, the ponytail was gone. But public questions persist about the financial dispute, even after Komuro released a 28-page statement in April explaining that his mother had thought the money was a gift and that he would pay to settle it himself.

1. According to the text,

- a) Princess Mako received \$1.3 million for marrying a commoner.
- b) Kei Komuro is loved by everybody in Japan.
- c) Princess Mako's love story can be likened to that of Prince Harry.

2. Why is Japan's monarchy in jeopardy?

- a) Because it is dictatorial.
- b) Because there are very few claimants to the throne.
- c) Because Prince Hisahito is too young.

3. How did Mako and Komuro meet?

- a) While studying in Scotland.
- b) On a trip to New York.
- c) At a student mobility event.

B) Use of English. Choose the correct answer. You must choose and answer only 8 out of the 11 questions below (0,4 points each).

4) _____ is a great sport. I really enjoy it.

- a) Swim
- b) Swimming
- c) Swiming

5. Which word means the same as currently?

- a) commonly
- b) often
- c) nowadays

6. _____ was ready when I arrived.

- a) Everything
- b) Anything
- c) Every thing

7. My personal life is _____ business.

- a) nobody's
- b) nobody
- c) somebody

8. _____ doctor would say she didn't know what she was doing.

- a) Any
- b) Some
- c) Few

9. I took _____ my shoes before I entered the room.

- a) of b) off c) over

10. I loved my grandfather. He was an amiable, _____ man.

- a) amuse b) amused c) amusing

11. Choose the right answer: "I can swim really fast", he said.

- a) He said that he could swim really fast.
b) He told that he could swim really fast.
c) He said me that he could swim really fast.

12. Of all his children, she was the one most _____ him.

- a) like b) as c) than

13. I blame _____ for not paying attention to what the teacher was saying.

- a) I b) me c) myself

14. If you _____ any question, I _____ my best to answer them.

- a) have / will do b) will have / do c) would have / would do

Part II. Write an essay of 150-180 words on ONE of the following subjects (6 points):

A- Do you think selfishness is sometimes a good thing? Explain your view and give examples from your own experience of life.

Who hasn't been taught to share since the first visit to the playground? The reason is simple: selfishness is generally perceived as one of the most undesirable traits in a person, but could it be considered positive in some circumstances?

Undoubtedly, true selfless generosity is unique and admirable, and, yet, most people lack it. If you take a look at any toddler, you will see that most of them are genuinely egoistic. However, little by little we learn to offer our things for others to enjoy. That is part of our human nature; we learn to take part in a community, and for that, we have to restrain some of the impulses that are not beneficial for the group.

That being said, another common situation is that our individual self may be diminished within the group. In other words, our herd instinct sometimes leads us to end up doing things that are detrimental for our own individual interests or values. I will never forget the day when I agreed to pay for a taxi because my then-boyfriend didn't feel like taking the bus while I was struggling to meet ends. That is just one of the many examples in which a person should probably be more selfish, or at least, do not put others' necessities over their own.

In a nutshell, even though no-one wants to be described as ungenerous, in pursue of being better persons we may forget to protect ourselves. Being kind and generous should not conflict with safeguarding our needs.

B- It is always better to tell the truth than to lie. Explain your view. Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.

Most of us would never like to be lied to by a relative or friend because lying is generally perceived as negative, but is it always worse to lie than to tell the truth?

In the eighteenth-century Immanuel Kant stated his famous categorical imperative: "Act according to the maxim that it would become a universal law". That is to say, to decide if an action is morally good or bad, we have to analyze what would happen if everyone did the same. In terms of honesty, under no circumstances should we ever lie according to him.

Nevertheless, there are some instances of the mistake we may commit when we decide to tell the truth rather than lie. For example, let's imagine an unlikely situation in which a man enters the room we are in and hides in the wardrobe because a killer is trying to find him,

would it be right to tell the killer where he is when he or she asked us? According to Kant, yes, it would.

In a nutshell, the problem with Kant's view is that it does not take into account the predictable consequences of our acts. Therefore, even though telling the truth is more recommendable most times, we should always consider the effects of what we are about to say before deciding to tell the truth over a lie.

