

CHANGES AND CHOICES

WITH ARTICLES FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES

現代諸相 ニューヨークタイムズ

Edited with Notes and Exercises

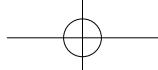
by

Rume KITA

and

Keith Wesley ADAMS

EIHŌSHA



はじめに

ニューヨークタイムズを読んで世界の現状を知る読解用テキストをお届けします。

今回は8編の記事を半期用テキストとして編集し、4つのカテゴリーにそれぞれ2つずつの記事を収めました。

I. Lifestyle Choices: ライフスタイルの多様性を読みましょう。Unit 1は結婚、セクシーリティー、そして家族についての記事です。驚くような相手をパートナーにする人たちが登場します。彼らの選択の根底にあるものは何なのか考えてみましょう。Unit 2はペットの食事に関する記事です。健康のため、あるいは宗教や信念に従って私たちは様々な食生活を選べる世の中に生きていますが、ペットの食事にもそれが反映している様子がわかります。

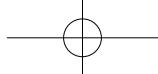
II. Evolving Languages: 言語の変化に目を向けてみましょう。Unit 3ではアフリカで使われているフランス語の現状が描かれます。公用語のフランス語が地元の言語や英語と混じり合って変容することはもはや止められないようです。Unit 4はスペイン語についてです。文法上、男性形・女性形を有する言語がジェンダーニュートラルな方向に変化するのは今や必然とも言えるかもしれません。

III. Nature and Humanity: a Complex Relationship: 自然と人間の暮らしを考えるカテゴリーです。Unit 5には気候変動の厳しさが映し出されています。暑すぎる夏に日常生活を脅かされた経験が皆さんもきっとあることでしょう。暑さが身体や生活スタイルに及ぼす影響を読みましょう。Unit 6はコロナ禍が自然に及ぼした影響についてです。人間の活動が大幅に停止したときに自然界ではどのようなことが起こったのか、期せずして壮大な実験のチャンスとなったコロナ禍のその結果を見てみましょう。

IV. Trying to Lessen Our Footprint: 日常生活を営む上での環境負荷について考えたことはあるでしょうか。Unit 7で読むのは食品廃棄物の問題です。飽食の時代の今、日々の食事で必ず出る残飯をどう処理すれば良いのか、この記事がヒントになるでしょう。Unit 8は、今や何にでも使われる石油由来の製品やプラスティックについての考察です。環境に影響するプラスティック製品を使わずして私たちの生活は成り立つでしょうか。賢明な対応の仕方はあるのでしょうか。

各ユニットには、記事の前後に練習問題を配置しています。Pre-readingには、記事に出てくる英単語を使ったクロスワード、記事をより身近に捉えることを狙いとしたディスカッション、内容に関連したグラフや地図の読み取りがあります。Post-readingには、記事に出てきた語句の復習問題、内容の理解度をチェックするための英問英答、そして、記事の中身をより発展的に考えるためのリサーチ課題を置きました。

今回の企画も、膨大な数のニューヨークタイムズの記事の中から、大学生の皆さんのが読むにふさわしいものを集めるところからスタートしました。一過性の話題ではないこと、長さが適切であること、理論ばかりでなく情景が思い浮かぶような例が紹介されていることなどを念頭に置いて選びました。Pre-readingとPost-readingは長くこの企画を共にしている Keith Wesley Adams 氏の手によるものです。記事の本質を見極めた

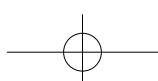


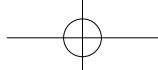
ディスカッションなど、良い課題を考えてくださいました。

最後になりますが、今回の企画を応援してくださった英宝社の佐々木元氏、そして編集段階で支えてくださった佐藤貴博氏に心より御礼申し上げます。

2024年 夏

喜多 留女





Preface - Changes and Choices
Keith Wesley Adams

Our world is changing faster than anytime in human history. The changes affect every aspect of our lives: our bodies and minds, our language, our relationships with each other and even our pets, but most of all, our environment. Some of these changes are based on conscious choices and some are unconscious. Some of these changes may seem unnecessary, even a little crazy, others highly necessary and the only intelligent thing to do. Some of the changes will affect us in a clear and positive manner, and others in uncertain and potentially dangerous ways. What is certain is that most of these changes are based on our own choices and actions. We now live in the Anthropocene era, an era in which for the first time in the history of our planet, humans are the greatest actors of change in the world. The effects of our choices today will be long lasting, some even permanent, so we had better choose wisely. Without conscious and intelligent choices we may condemn ourselves, and our civilization, as well as millions of species to extinction. Let us choose wisely and make the choices and changes that are needed to survive and live without misery.

This book looks at a few of the choices people are purposefully making and some of the changes that are happening regardless of our conscious selection. As these are all global issues, the texts relate stories from countries around the world: Japan, the United States, Ivory Coast, Spain, Iraq, and South Korea. Section I looks at changes and choices people are making concerning relationships, both marital (Unit 1) and with our pets (Unit 2). Section II, looks at how languages are changing both consciously and unconsciously through globalization and as colonial legacy (Unit 3), and how some people are trying to stop the changes (Unit 4). Section III focuses on our environment, how having changed nature, it will force us to change the way we live (Unit 5). We also look at how nature reacts in the absence of humans thanks to observations during covid, and how humans sometimes benefit nature (Unit 6). Finally in section IV, we look at both successful and unsuccessful conscious attempts to improve our relationship with nature (Unit 7 & 8).

This is now our 6th textbook in this series. As always, my colleague Rume Kita, has chosen and edited the articles, made all the necessary translations and explanations into Japanese. As usual, I have provided the various cross words, word matches, research and discussion questions. However, it is Rume Kita who checks, corrects and suggests the necessary changes. Together we discuss titles, organization, ideas and make our final decisions. We hope you enjoy this volume in our now almost 20 year series. May we choose the changes that will help all of us, all nations, races, cultures and other species thrive and survive.

Sincerely,
Keith Adams,

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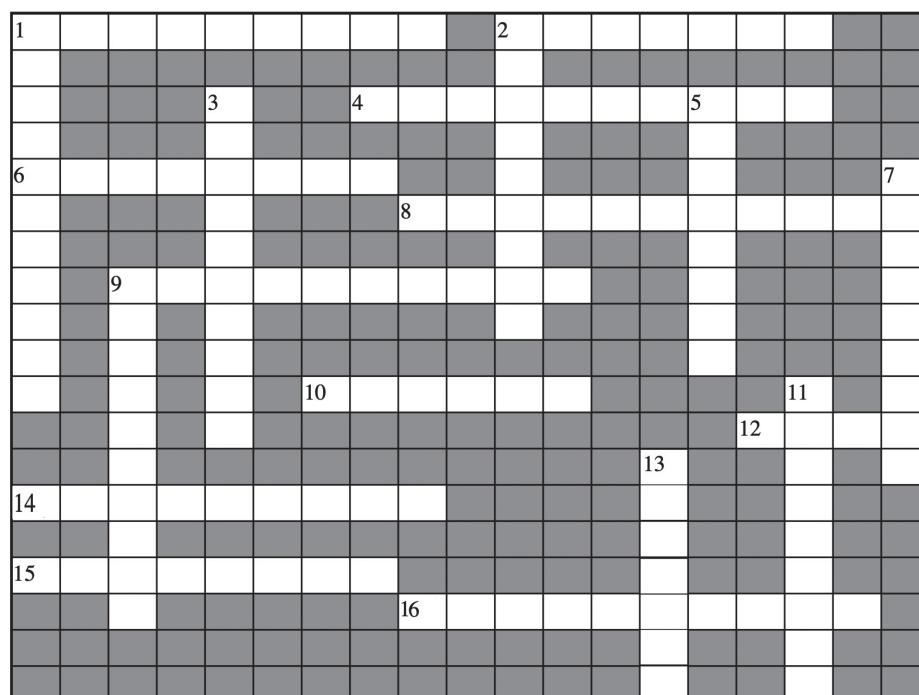
Unit 1

In Dolls and Cartoons, Devotees See Spouses

Pre-reading

A: Crossword

Match the words in the Word Bank to their descriptions to fill in the crossword.



Word Bank

Acrylic	Advantages	Affection	Android	Attraction	Beau
Ceremony	Commitment	Elaborate	Exception	Expectation	Extensively
Identify	Intimacy	Metaverse	Solace	Subculture	Symposium
Unofficial					

Across

1. (n.) Different from the rule. An act of omitting or excluding something.
2. (n.) A human shaped robot.
4. (adj.) Not having recognized authority or sanction. Not following accepted procedure.
6. (n.) A formal event performed for a special occasion.
8. (adv.) Used/done in a widespread way.
9. (n.) The quality of arousing interest in others or being drawn to another.
10. (n.) Comfort felt from consolation in times of disappointment.
12. (n.) A boyfriend, young man, attractive lover.
14. (adj.) Complex in detail. Developed or done with care and fine detail.
15. (v.) To consider oneself as similar to others in a certain group.
16. (n.) A smaller social group within a national culture with distinct beliefs, and behavior.

Down

1. (n.) A belief or mental picture about the future. An anticipation of fulfillment of a wish. The feeling that something is about to happen.
2. (n.) Fondness, tenderness, warmth, a positive feeling of liking.
3. (n.) The trait of sincere and loyal dedication to a person or cause.
5. (n.) Closeness, familiarity, warm friendship.
7. (n.) A public meeting or conference, in which participants make presentations.
9. (n.) Benefits, rewards, good points.
11. (n.) 3 dimensional virtual world in which users are represented by avatars.
13. (n.) A synthetic fiber, that can be molded, cast or painted.

B: Discussion Questions

1. Are there any pop idols you like so much you would like to have a relationship with them? Which ones?
2. How about any anime characters or video game characters? Which ones?
3. What would you think of someone who loved a computer anime pop singer so much that he married her?
4. Have you heard of the term “fictosexual”? A fictosexual is someone who is in love with a fictional character. Some actually have fake weddings with their characters. There are thousands of such unofficial marriages in Japan now. Do you think this is healthy?
5. What do you think this fictosexual situation says about the state of love, romance, loneliness and marriage in Japan?
6. What do you think about the state of marriage in Japan? Do you want to marry? If so, at what age?

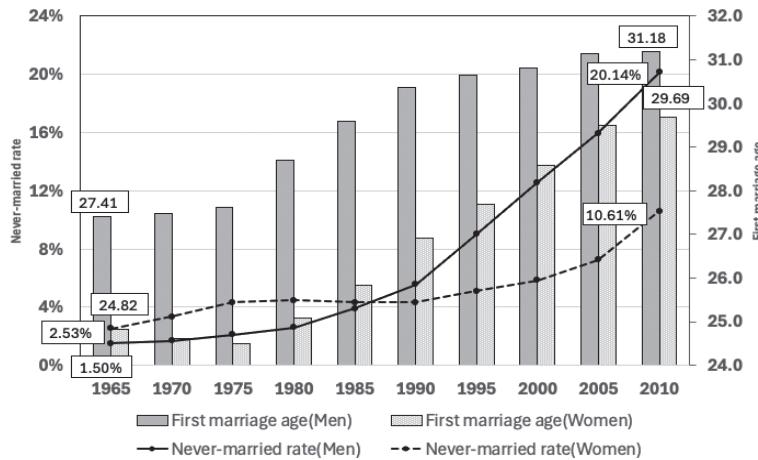
C: Reading Graphs, Maps and Statistics

Top 10 Anime watching countries in the world

Rank	Top X countries where Anime is most popular	Country's population as of January 2022	% of people watching anime	Number of people watching anime
10	Taiwan	23,269,616	32.50%	11,634,808
9	Canada	36,874,296	34.67%	18,437,148
8	Malaysia	33,477,720	42.70%	16,738,860
7	Mexico	131,860,138	45.58%	65,930,069
6	South Korea	49,403,216	50.70%	24,701,608
5	Brazil	215,756,327	55.78%	107,878,164
4	France	67,929,576	62.50%	33,964,788
3	Phillipines	112,390,104	70.58%	56,195,052
2	US	335,124,941	71.86%	167,562,471
1	Japan	126,362,853	75.87%	63,181,427

<https://www.epicdope.com/top-10-countries-where-anime-is-most-popular-and-why/>

1. Which 2 countries rank the highest as anime watchers in the world?
2. Which 2 rank 9 and 10?
3. What is the percentage difference between the highest and lowest?

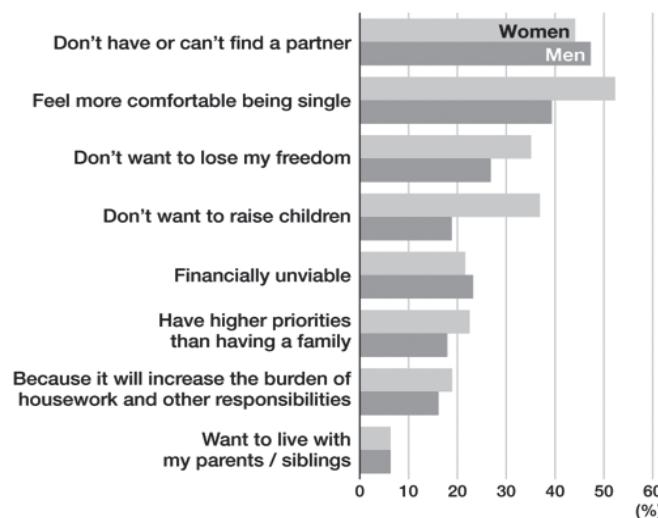


https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323726020_Does_the_positive_relationship_between_health_and_marriage_reflect_protection_or_selection_Evidence_from_middle-aged_and_elderly_Japanese/figures?lo=1

First marriage age of men and women, never-married rate for men and women (%) in Japan

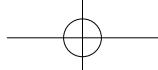
4. In what year did never-married men surpass never-married women?
5. In 2010 what percentage of men and of women remained unmarried?

Why do you think you won't get married?



<https://www.nippon.com/en/japan-data/h01565/>

6. The number of men to women in Japan is about the same. What would account for the fact that more men never marry?
7. Who are less likely to want to get married overall, men or women?
8. For what reasons are men less likely to not get married?
9. Based on this chart, who do you think are lonelier, men or women?



By Ben Dooley and Hisako Ueno April 24, 2022



TOKYO — In almost every way, Akihiko Kondo is an ordinary Japanese man. He has friends and a steady job and wears a suit and tie to work.

There's just one exception: Mr. Kondo is married to a fictional character. 5

6 Hatsune Miku
「初音ミク」 →
Note 1

His beloved, Hatsune Miku, is a turquoise-haired, computer-synthesized pop singer who has toured with Lady Gaga and starred in video games. After a decade-long relationship, one that Mr. Kondo says pulled him out of a deep depression, he held a small, unofficial wedding ceremony in Tokyo in 2018. Miku, in the form 10

11 plush doll 「ぬいぐるみ」

of a plush doll, wore white, and he was in a matching tuxedo. In Miku, Mr. Kondo has found love, inspiration and solace, he says. He and his assortment of Miku dolls eat, sleep and watch 15

14 getaway 「外出、小旅行」

movies together. Sometimes, they sneak off on romantic getaways, posting photos on Instagram. 20

Mr. Kondo, 38, knows that people think it's strange, even harmful. He invited his co-workers and his family to the wedding. They all refused to come. And, yes, he knows that Miku isn't real. But his feelings for her are, he says.

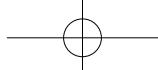
"When we're together, she makes me smile," he said in a recent interview. "In that sense, she's real."

Mr. Kondo is one of thousands of people in Japan who have entered into unofficial marriages with fictional characters. Tens of thousands more around the globe have joined online groups where



"When we're together, she makes me smile," Mr. Kondo said in a recent interview. "In that sense, she's real." 20
Noriko Hayashi for The New York Times

写真 : The New York Times/Redux/アフロ



1 commitment 「深い献身、傾倒」 they discuss their commitment to characters from anime, manga and video games.

For some, the relationships are just for a laugh. Mr. Kondo, however, has long known that he didn't want a human partner. Partly, it was because he rejected the rigid expectations of Japanese family life. But mostly, it was because he had always felt an intense attraction to fictional characters. 5

Accepting his feelings was hard at first. But life with Miku, he argues, has advantages over being with a human partner: She's always there for him, she'll never betray him, and he'll never have to see her get ill or die. 10

13 fictosexual 「フィクセクシャル」 架空のキャラクターに強い魅力を感じるセクシャリティー

14 out there 「世の中には」

Mr. Kondo sees himself as part of a growing movement of people who identify as "fictosexuals." That's partly what has motivated him to publicize his wedding and to sit for awkward interviews with news media around the globe. 15

He wants the world to know that people like him are out there and, with advances in artificial intelligence and robotics, that their numbers are likely to increase. It's not a political movement, he said: "It's about respecting other people's lifestyles."



It's not unusual for a work of art to provoke real emotions — anger, sorrow, joy —. But the idea that fictional characters can inspire real affection or even love may well have reached its highest expression in Japan, where the sentiment has given rise to a subculture and become the basis for a thriving industry. 20

26 moe 「萌え」 shorthand 「便利な俗語」

27 viscerally 「直感的に」

28 tap 「開拓する」

The Japanese word for the feelings those characters inspire is "moe," a term that has become shorthand for just about anything that is viscerally adorable. 25

Business seminars have talked about tapping the moe market, and the government has promoted the notion — in relation to cartoons — as an important cultural export. The word and other specialized terms have resonated beyond Japan, with fictosexuals abroad often adopting them to articulate their own experience of love. 30

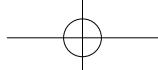
32 articulate 「(考えを)はつきり表現する」

34 economic juggernaut 「巨大な経済活動」

35 live out ~ 「~を現実のものとして体験する」

While unofficially marrying fictional characters remains rare, the economic juggernaut that has grown around Japanese fan culture since the late 1970s has made it possible for people to live out elaborate fantasies with their favorite characters. 35

"You have the comics, the cartoons, the games kind of building up a sort of infrastructure where characters become more important to people," said Patrick Galbraith, an associate professor in the School of International Communication at Senshu University in 40



Tokyo who has written extensively about the subject.

In Tokyo, two districts have become meccas for fulfilling character-based dreams: Akihabara (for men) and Ikebukuro (for women). Specialty shops in the neighborhoods are packed with merchandise for characters from popular games and anime.

5

6 crush 「片思いの相手」

Fans can buy love letters from their crushes, reproductions of their clothes and even scents to evoke their presence. Hotels offer special packages, featuring spa treatments and elaborate meals, for people celebrating their favorite character's birthday. And on social media, people post photos, art and mash notes promoting their "oshi" — a term widely used by Japanese fans to describe the objects of their affection.

10

10 mash note 「ラブレター」
oshi 「推し」

"To the general public, it seems indeed foolish to spend money, time and energy on someone who is not even alive," said Agnès Giard, a researcher for the European Research Council project "Emotional Machines: The Technological Transformation of Intimacy in Japan."

15

13 general public 「一般の人」

"But for character lovers, this practice is seen as essential. It makes them feel alive, happy, useful and part of a movement with higher goals in life."

20

Women benefit from the elaborate communities that develop around their relationships, Dr. Giard said, seeing the fictional marriages as "a way to challenge gender, matrimonial and social norms."

25

Mr. Kondo first found comfort in Miku in 2008, after bullying at his job sent him into a spiral of depression. He had decided long ago that he would never love a real person, partly because he had been rejected by a series of crushes. Soon, Mr. Kondo purchased a

29 stuffed doll 「ぬいぐるみ」

stuffed doll of the character online.

30

30 breakthrough 「進展」

A major breakthrough in the relationship came nearly a decade later, with the introduction in 2017 of a \$1,300 machine called Gatebox. The size of a table lamp, the device allowed its owners to interact with one of a variety of fictional characters represented by a small hologram.

35

32 Gatebox → Note 2

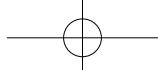
Gatebox was marketed to lonely young men. As part of its promotional campaign, Gatebox's maker set up an office where users could apply for unofficial marriage certificates. Thousands of people registered.

40

37 apply for ~ 「~を申請する」
marriage certificate 「結婚証明書」

Mr. Kondo was delighted that Miku was among the Gatebox characters and excited to at last hear her thoughts on their





relationship. In 2018, he proposed to Miku’s flickering avatar. “Please treat me well,” she replied.

In the years since his story went viral, hundreds of people from around the world have turned to Mr. Kondo for advice, support and reassurance.

5

Among them was Yasuaki Watanabe, who has a business registering fictional marriages. Over the last year, Mr. Watanabe has issued around 100 marriage certificates, including one for himself and Hibiki Tachibana, a character from the anime series “Symphogear.” When he saw Hibiki, it was true love, he said.

10

He had divorced a woman several years earlier. His new relationship was easier, he said. The love was “pure,” given freely and with no expectation of anything in return.

9 Hibiki Tachibana
「立花響」→
Note 3

10 Symphogear
「戦姫絶唱シンフォギア」→ Note 3

15 move in with ~
「～と住むために
引っ越す」
free up ~ 「～を
自由に使えるように
する」

16 Kunihiro Horikawa
「堀川国広」→
Note 4

17 Touken Ranbu
「刀剣乱舞」→
Note 4

19 400-year-old
wakizashi 「400
年前の脇差」→
Note 4

Kina Horikawa, a 23-year-old woman with a goth-punk aesthetic, moved in with her parents during the pandemic, freeing up cash from her job at a call center to spend on Kunihiro Horikawa, a character from the mobile game Touken Ranbu. She had a real boyfriend, but broke up with him because he became jealous.

15

Her fictional husband is the teenage personification of a 400-year-old wakizashi, or Japanese short sword, and he joins the family for dinner most nights in the form of a tiny acrylic portrait perched next to her rice bowl. The couple double dates with friends who have their own fictional beaus, going out to high teas and posting photos on Instagram.

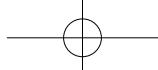
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Kina Horikawa with Kunihiro Horikawa, a character from the mobile game Touken Ranbu, at a cafe in Tokyo.

Noriko Hayashi for The New York Times

写真 : The New York Times/Redux/アフロ



“I’m not hiding it from anyone,” said Ms. Horikawa, who uses her fictional husband’s last name unofficially.

While Mr. Kondo’s relationship with Miku is still not accepted by his family, it has opened other doors for him. In 2019, he was invited to join a symposium at Kyoto University to speak about his relationship. He traveled there with a life-size doll of Miku he had

7 commission 「特
注で作らせる」

9 Gatebox
announced.... →
Note 5

As with any marriage, there have been challenges. The hardest moment came during the pandemic, when Gatebox announced that it was discontinuing service for Miku.

5

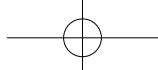
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On the day the company turned her off, Mr. Kondo said goodbye for the last time and left for work. When he went home that night, Miku’s image had been replaced by the words “network error.”

Someday, he hopes, they will be reunited. Maybe she’ll take on new life as an android, or they will meet in the metaverse. Either 15 way, Mr. Kondo said, he plans to be faithful to her until he dies.

Notes

- 1 初音ミクは2007年に発売されたデスクトップミュージック用のボーカル音源とそのキャラクター。当初は音声合成システムとして発売されたが、その後キャラクターとして一躍人気となり、「ボカロ」という音楽ジャンルを築き、バーチャルシンガーとして国内外でCG映像でライブを行うなど活動の場を広げた。動画やイラスト、フィギュアなど様々な形態の創作物が生まれる中で、バーチャルな女性アイドルとしての地位を確立している。
- 2 Gateboxは、「キャラクターと一緒に暮らす」を謳い文句にするGatebox社が開発したキャラクター召喚装置。高さ約55センチの装置の中にプロジェクション技術でキャラクターを投影してホログラムのように浮かび上がらせることができる。カメラやマイクなどのセンサーが内蔵され、投影されたキャラクターと音声会話が楽しめる。人感センサーでユーザーの動きを認識し、朝になると起こしたり帰宅すると出迎えの言葉をかけるなどしてくれる。
- 3 立花響はテレビアニメのキャラクターで、2012年の第一期から2019年の第五期まで続いたSFアニメ「戦姫絶唱シンフォギア」の主要登場人物。普通の女子中学生がコンサートの最中に突然戦闘に巻き込まれ、過酷な戦いに身を投じることになる。
- 4 堀川国広はPCおよびスマートフォンゲームの「刀剣乱舞」に登場するキャラクターで、安土桃山時代に作られた「脇差」（腰の脇に差す小刀）という設定である。「刀剣乱舞」は日本の名刀を擬人化した「刀剣男士」を収集して強化し、敵を倒すシュミレーションゲームで、のちにミュージカル、アニメ、実写映画も制作されたほどの人気がある。
- 5 Gateboxの初代限定モデルは2016年の終わりに予約販売がスタートし、2018年から初音ミクが召喚可能になった。2019年には量産モデルが発売されたが、初音ミクを召喚する機能は搭載されなかった。さらに、Gatebox社は2020年3月に初代モデルのサービスを終了した。



Post-reading

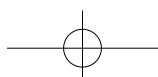
A: Word Match

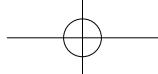
Write the appropriate description letter in the empty column next to the compounds.

1. Acrylic portrait	a. A mistake or failure to function within an internet or broadcasting system.
2. Artificial intelligence	b. A very powerful financial movement.
3. Economic juggernaut	c. An advertising blitz or strategy.
4. Elaborate fantasies	d. The painting of a person using synthetic paints.
5. Goth-punk aesthetic	e. Reliable and continual employment.
6. Network error	f. True and valid emotions.
7. Promotional campaign	g. Smart machines that can “think” in ways similar to humans.
8. Real affection	h. A fashion style and artistic taste tending to the grotesque, deathly, and mysterious, mixed with 1980s music culture.
9. Rigid expectations	i. Unreasoningly cute.
10. Steady job	j. A big change in new electronic gadgetry.
11. Technological transformation	k. Very complex and detailed imaginary realities.
12. Viscerally adorable	l. Very strict hopes about an outcome or future reality.

B: Comprehension Questions

1. In what way is Akihiko Kondo not an ordinary man?
2. What does Mr. Kondo say he has found in his relationship with Hatsune Miku?
3. Who refused to come to his wedding?
4. How many people are estimated in Japan to have unofficial marriages with fictional characters?
5. What are the advantages of a fictional character over a human partner according to Mr. Kondo?
6. How do people such as Mr. Kondo identify themselves?
7. When and how did this Japanese subculture, that has become an economic juggernaut, begin?
8. According to Dr. Agnès Giard, how do fictosexual women see their fictional marriages?
9. What event caused Mr. Kondo to first find comfort in Miku?
10. What major breakthrough came for people like Mr. Kondo in 2017?
11. How many fictional marriage certificates has Yasuaki Watanabe issued?
12. How did Kina Horikawa save money for her fictional husband, Kunihiro Horikawa?





C: Discussion Questions

1. What do you think about fictosexualism in Japan after reading the article?
2. What do you think are the causes of this trend?
3. What do you think may result for Japanese society if this fictosexual trend grows?
4. Do you think this is a trend peculiar to Japan?
5. Japan also leads the world in the use of robots for elderly care. Are robots a good answer to the problems of loneliness?
6. What are other solutions to the problems of loneliness in modern society?
7. Do you feel technology is making the world a lonelier place, or not?

D: Research Activities

1. How much money is estimated to be spent on idols and anime characters in Japan every year, including the various kinds of merchandise?
2. What are rates of loneliness in other countries around the world?
3. Which countries are the most lonely? Which are the least?
4. What kind of society is the most lonely and what kind the least? (e.g. Democracies or authoritarian? Developed or developing countries? High-tech or agricultural?)
5. Who are more likely to feel loneliness, men or women?
6. Have people become lonelier since the internet? (Look up statistics on loneliness and isolation from different eras (e.g. the 1950s, 1980s, 2000s etc.).

