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## Level 6

### Japanese government to play matchmaker

17th March, 2015

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

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

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# THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Japan's government is going to play Cupid in an attempt to encourage more couples to have babies. The country has one of the lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are turning to novel methods to get people to add to the population. One of these methods is local authorities acting as matchmakers. Japan's national government will support any local government effort at speed dating, online matchmaking and other ways to coax couples to get together and start families. The draft recommendations call for intensive efforts over the next five years. The report says Japan faces a "critical situation" in which the dwindling number of children could cause serious social problems for the country.

One reason the government has found for Japan's falling birth rate is the rising cost of raising children. The government hopes to address this with a variety of measures. These include plans to improve access to free nursery care, special centres for people undergoing fertility treatment, and a target to increase the number of fathers taking paternity leave after their baby is born to 80 per cent by the year 2020. There are also plans to provide greater support for families with three or more children. By 2060, nearly 40 per cent of Japan's population will be aged over 65. The over-65s already constitute 25 per cent of the population. The birth rate has fallen steadily from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to just 1.42 in 2014.

Sources: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-31869981>  
<http://time.com/3744317/japan-birth-rate-matchmaking-paternity-leave/>  
<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2015/03/13/national/social-issues/government-to-support-matchmaking-mens-child-rearing-to-raise-birth-rate/#.VQRJo2ZX-0f>

# WARM-UPS

**1. MATCHMAKING:** Students walk around the class and talk to other students about matchmaking. 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?

*government / couples / birth rates / population / authorities / matchmakers / critical / raising children / variety / measures / fertility / paternity leave / steadily / mother*

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

**3. COUPLES:** What's the best way to meet a new partner? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners often and share what you wrote.

	Pros	Cons
Arranged meetings		
Online dating		
Singles' clubs		
Blinds dates		
Ask someone on a date		
Speed dating		

**4. ONLINE DATING:** Students A **strongly** believe online dating is great; Students B **strongly** believe it isn't. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. BIRTH RATE:** Rank these with your partner. Put the best ways to increase the birth rate at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- cash bonus per child
- education
- free nurseries
- better hospitals
- Internet campaign
- longer paternity leave
- free education for third child
- fertility treatment

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

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

## 1. TRUE / FALSE:

Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| a. Japan's government is putting on a play based on Cupid.                  | T / F |
| b. Japan's government is asking people to read novels to help birth rates.  | T / F |
| c. Japan's government will support speed dating.                            | T / F |
| d. There will be big efforts to increase Japan's population within 5 years. | T / F |
| e. The cost of raising children is a big reason for falling birth rates.    | T / F |
| f. More fathers will be able to take paternity leave.                       | T / F |
| g. By 2060, half of Japan's population will be over 65.                     | T / F |
| h. Japan's birthrate in 2014 was just 4.54.                                 | T / F |

## 2. SYNONYM MATCH:

Match the following synonyms from the article.

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. ways      | a. care        |
| 2. support   | b. repair      |
| 3. coax      | c. proposals   |
| 4. fix       | d. encourage   |
| 5. serious   | e. back        |
| 6. reason    | f. assist      |
| 7. treatment | g. methods     |
| 8. plans     | h. significant |
| 9. help      | i. dropped     |
| 10. fell     | j. cause       |

## 3. PHRASE MATCH:

(Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |  |                             |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Japan's government is going to play | a. methods                  |
| 2. one of the lowest birth             | b. of measures              |
| 3. politicians are turning to novel    | c. problems for the country |
| 4. the dwindling                       | d. leave                    |
| 5. cause serious social                | e. free nursery care        |
| 6. the rising cost of raising          | f. number of children       |
| 7. address this with a variety         | g. rates in the world       |
| 8. improve access to                   | h. steadily                 |
| 9. paternity                           | i. Cupid                    |
| 10. The birth rate has fallen          | j. children                 |

# GAP FILL

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Japan's government is going to (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Cupid in an attempt to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ more couples to have babies. The country has one of the lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are turning to (3) \_\_\_\_\_ methods to get people to add to the population. One of these methods is (4) \_\_\_\_\_ authorities acting as matchmakers. Japan's national government will support any local government (5) \_\_\_\_\_ at speed dating, online matchmaking and other ways to (6) \_\_\_\_\_ couples to get together and start families. The draft recommendations call for intensive efforts over the next five years. The report says Japan faces a "(7) \_\_\_\_\_ situation" in which the (8) \_\_\_\_\_ number of children could cause serious social problems for the country.

*novel*  
*effort*  
*encourage*  
*critical*  
*play*  
*coax*  
*dwindling*  
*local*

One reason the government has found for Japan's (9) \_\_\_\_\_ birth rate is the rising cost of raising children. The government hopes to address this with a (10) \_\_\_\_\_ of measures. These include plans to improve access to free nursery care, special centres for people (11) \_\_\_\_\_ fertility treatment, and a target to increase the number of fathers taking (12) \_\_\_\_\_ leave after their baby is born to 80 per cent by the year 2020. There are also plans to provide greater (13) \_\_\_\_\_ for families with three or more children. By 2060, nearly 40 per cent of Japan's population will be (14) \_\_\_\_\_ over 65. The over-65s already (15) \_\_\_\_\_ 25 per cent of the population. The birth rate has fallen (16) \_\_\_\_\_ from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to just 1.42 in 2014.

*undergoing*  
*aged*  
*variety*  
*support*  
*steadily*  
*falling*  
*constitute*  
*paternity*

# LISTENING – Guess the answers. Listen to check.

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

- 1) play Cupid in an attempt to encourage more \_\_\_\_\_ babies
  - a. couple to have
  - b. couplets to have
  - c. couples to have
  - d. cup palls to have
- 2) politicians are turning to novel methods to get people to \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. add too the population
  - b. add to the population
  - c. add two the population
  - d. add thru the population
- 3) One of these methods is local authorities \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. act in as matchmakers
  - b. act tin as matchmakers
  - c. acting as matchmakers
  - d. acting in as matchmakers
- 4) The draft recommendations call for \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. intensive efforts
  - b. extensive efforts
  - c. intense sieve efforts
  - d. extends sieve efforts
- 5) the dwindling number of children could cause \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. serious social problems
  - b. serious socially problems
  - c. serious so shall problems
  - d. serious sew shell problems
- 6) One reason the government has found for Japan's falling birth rate \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. is the raising cost
  - b. is the rising cost
  - c. is the rise in costs
  - d. is the rise in cost
- 7) The government hopes to address this with a \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. varied tea of measures
  - b. varieties of measures
  - c. verity of measures
  - d. variety of measures
- 8) a target to increase the number of fathers taking paternity leave after \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. their babies are born
  - b. their babe is born
  - c. their baby is born
  - d. their baby are born
- 9) plans to provide greater support for families with three \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. for more children
  - b. four more children
  - c. ore more children
  - d. or more children
- 10) The birth rate has fallen steadily from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. justly 1.42 in 2014
  - b. adjust 1.42 in 2014
  - c. justly 1.42 in 2014
  - d. just 1.42 in 2014

# LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Japan's government (1) \_\_\_\_\_ play Cupid in an attempt to encourage more couples to have babies. The country (2) \_\_\_\_\_ lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are turning to novel methods to get people (3) \_\_\_\_\_ population. One of these methods is local authorities acting as matchmakers. Japan's national government will support any local government effort at speed dating, online matchmaking and other (4) \_\_\_\_\_ couples to get together and start families. The draft recommendations call for intensive (5) \_\_\_\_\_ next five years. The report says Japan faces a "critical situation" in which the dwindling number of children (6) \_\_\_\_\_ social problems for the country.

One reason the government has found for Japan's falling birth rate is the rising (7) \_\_\_\_\_ children. The government hopes to address this with a (8) \_\_\_\_\_. These include plans to improve access to free nursery care, special centres for people undergoing fertility treatment, and (9) \_\_\_\_\_ the number of fathers taking paternity leave after their baby is born to 80 per cent by the year 2020. There are also (10) \_\_\_\_\_ greater support for families with three or more children. By 2060, nearly 40 per cent of Japan's population (11) \_\_\_\_\_ 65. The over-65s already constitute 25 per cent of the population. The birth rate (12) \_\_\_\_\_ from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to just 1.42 in 2014.

# COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

1. What character will Japan's government play as matchmaker?

---

2. What adjective was used to describe the methods Japan will use?

---

3. What will local governments act as?

---

4. How long will intensive efforts at increasing the population be?

---

5. What could cause serious problems for the country?

---

6. What is a major reason for the falling birth rate?

---

7. What does the government hope to provide to parents for free?

---

8. What extra benefits does the government plan to give to fathers?

---

9. When will almost 40% of Japan's population be over 65?

---

10. What was Japan's birth rate in 1947?

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# MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

1. What character will Japan's government play as matchmaker?
  - a) 007 (James Bond)
  - b) Hello Kitty
  - c) Popeye
  - d) Cupid
2. What adjective was used to describe the methods Japan will use?
  - a) smart
  - b) novel
  - c) forceful
  - d) inventive
3. What will local governments act as?
  - a) advisor
  - b) financier
  - c) matchmaker
  - d) record keeper
4. How long will intensive efforts at increasing the population be?
  - a) 5 years
  - b) 7 years
  - c) 8 years
  - d) 10 years
5. What could cause serious problems for the country?
  - a) high cost of weddings
  - b) high tax
  - c) the dwindling number of children
  - d) the roads
6. What is a major reason for the falling birth rate?
  - a) television
  - b) the cost of raising children
  - c) birth control methods
  - d) overworking
7. What does the government hope to provide to parents for free?
  - a) health care
  - b) housing
  - c) advice
  - d) nurseries
8. What extra benefits does the government plan to give to fathers?
  - a) paternity leave
  - b) free slippers
  - c) free healthcare
  - d) bus passes
9. When will almost 40% of Japan's population be over 65?
  - a) 2040
  - b) 2080
  - c) 2060
  - d) 2020
10. What was Japan's birth rate in 1947?
  - a) 1.42
  - b) 4.54
  - c) 2.41
  - d) 5.24

# ROLE PLAY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

## **Role A – Cash bonus per child**

You think a cash bonus per child is the best way to increase the birth rate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): free nurseries, longer paternity leave or free education for the third child.

## **Role B – Free nurseries**

You think free nurseries are the best way to increase the birth rate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): a cash bonus per child, longer paternity leave or free education for the third child.

## **Role C – Longer paternity leave**

You think longer paternity leave is the best way to increase the birth rate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): free nurseries, a cash bonus per child or free education for the third child.

## **Role D – Free education for third child**

You think free education for the third child is the best way to increase the birth rate. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): free nurseries, longer paternity leave or a cash bonus per child.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'birth' and 'rate'.

<b>birth</b>	<b>rate</b>
--------------	-------------

- 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>• attempt</li><li>• novel</li><li>• acting</li><li>• coax</li><li>• efforts</li><li>• cause</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• rising</li><li>• variety</li><li>• access</li><li>• leave</li><li>• three</li><li>• steadily</li></ul>
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# MATCHMAKING SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Write five GOOD questions about matchmaking 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.

# MATCHMAKING DISCUSSION

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

- 1) What did you think when you read the headline?
- 2) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'matchmaking'?
- 3) What is the best matchmaking method?
- 4) What do you think of online dating?
- 5) What do you think of Japan's government's efforts?
- 6) What is speed dating?
- 7) How can governments encourage people to have more children?
- 8) What do you know about Cupid?
- 9) What problems are there with falling birth rates?
- 10) Why aren't couples getting together and having children?

*Japanese government to play matchmaker – 17th March, 2015*  
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# MATCHMAKING DISCUSSION

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

- 11) Did you like reading this article? Why/not?
- 12) What makes raising children so expensive?
- 13) How important is free or low-cost nursery care?
- 14) What do you know about fertility treatment?
- 15) What is paternity leave like in your country?
- 16) How important is it for fathers to take paternity leave?
- 17) What's the best number of children to have?
- 18) What are the problems of an ageing population?
- 19) What do you think of blind dates?
- 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 <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Japan's government is going to play Cupid in an (1) \_\_\_\_\_ to encourage more couples to have babies. The country has one of the lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are turning to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ methods to get people to add to the population. One of these methods is local authorities acting (3) \_\_\_\_\_ matchmakers. Japan's national government will support any local government effort (4) \_\_\_\_\_ speed dating, online matchmaking and other ways to (5) \_\_\_\_\_ couples to get together and start families. The draft recommendations call for intensive efforts over the next five years. The report says Japan faces a "critical situation" in which the (6) \_\_\_\_\_ number of children could cause serious social problems for the country.

One reason the government has found for Japan's falling birth rate is the rising cost of raising children. The government hopes to (7) \_\_\_\_\_ this with a variety of measures. These include plans to improve (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to free nursery care, special centres for people undergoing fertility treatment, and a target to increase the number of fathers taking (9) \_\_\_\_\_ leave after their baby is born to 80 per cent by the year 2020. There are also plans to provide (10) \_\_\_\_\_ support for families with three or more children. By 2060, nearly 40 per cent of Japan's population will be (11) \_\_\_\_\_ over 65. The over-65s already constitute 25 per cent of the population. The birth rate has fallen (12) \_\_\_\_\_ from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to just 1.42 in 2014.

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

- |     |               |                |                |               |
|-----|---------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1.  | (a) attempted | (b) attempting | (c) attempts   | (d) attempt   |
| 2.  | (a) storied   | (b) literary   | (c) bookish    | (d) novel     |
| 3.  | (a) has       | (b) as         | (c) ease       | (d) was       |
| 4.  | (a) by        | (b) of         | (c) at         | (d) to        |
| 5.  | (a) coach     | (b) coast      | (c) coax       | (d) coaxial   |
| 6.  | (a) dwindling | (b) tingling   | (c) mingling   | (d) kindling  |
| 7.  | (a) envelope  | (b) address    | (c) stamp      | (d) post      |
| 8.  | (a) access    | (b) recess     | (c) excess     | (d) success   |
| 9.  | (a) eternity  | (b) paternity  | (c) fraternity | (d) maternity |
| 10. | (a) goodly    | (b) grate      | (c) greater    | (d) grated    |
| 11. | (a) ageing    | (b) ageless    | (c) aged       | (d) ages      |
| 12. | (a) steadies  | (b) steadied   | (c) steady     | (d) steadily  |

# SPELLING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

## Paragraph 1

1. an attempt to ecuaenrg more couples
2. local iherotatus
3. other ways to xoca couples
4. neivnties efforts
5. Japan faces a rciliat situation
6. the diwdgninl number of children

## Paragraph 2

7. Japan's falling tbhtaerir
8. a variety of euamrsse
9. people undergoing eriylift treatment
10. fathers taking itetyrnpa leave
11. esctonutit 25 per cent of the population
12. ... has fallen dylaeist



# PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Number these lines in the correct order.

( )	number of children could cause serious social problems for the country.
( )	access to free nursery care, special centres for people undergoing fertility treatment, and a target
( )	of raising children. The government hopes to address this with a variety of measures. These include plans to improve
( )	one of the lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are turning to novel methods to get people to add
( )	ways to coax couples to get together and start families. The draft recommendations call for intensive
( )	2020. There are also plans to provide greater support for families with three or more children. By 2060,
( )	government will support any local government effort at speed dating, online matchmaking and other
( <b>1</b> )	Japan's government is going to play Cupid in an attempt to encourage more couples to have babies. The country has
( )	to increase the number of fathers taking paternity leave after their baby is born to 80 per cent by the year
( )	the population. The birth rate has fallen steadily from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to just 1.42 in 2014.
( )	to the population. One of these methods is local authorities acting as matchmakers. Japan's national
( )	efforts over the next five years. The report says Japan faces a "critical situation" in which the dwindling
( )	nearly 40 per cent of Japan's population will be aged over 65. The over-65s already constitute 25 per cent of
( )	One reason the government has found for Japan's falling birth rate is the rising cost

# PUT THE WORDS IN THE RIGHT ORDER

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

1. play to going is government Japan's Cupid.

---

2. one lowest has the rates country of birth The.

---

3. to to turning methods people are novel get Politicians.

---

4. to ways get to together coax couples Other.

---

5. country the for problems social serious Cause.

---

6. raising One the of is cost children reason rising.

---

7. access to free nursery care These include plans to improve.

---

8. leave paternity taking fathers of number The.

---

9. families There are also plans to provide greater support for.

---

10. already 65s over- The population the of 25% constitute.

---

# CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORD (20 PAIRS)

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Japan's government is going to play Cupid in an attempt to *encouragement / encourage* more couples to have babies. The country has *one / two* of the lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are turning to *bookish / novel* methods to get people to *add / plus* to the population. One of these methods is local authorities acting *has / as* matchmakers. Japan's national government will support any local government effort at *speed / sped dating*, online matchmaking and other ways to *hoax / coax* couples to get together and start families. The *draft / drafty* recommendations call for intensive efforts over the next five years. The report says Japan *faces / facing* a "critical situation" in which the *dwindling / tingling* number of children could cause serious social problems for the country.

One reason the government has found for Japan's *failing / falling* birth rate is the *rising / risen* cost of raising children. The government hopes to address this with a *variety / various* of measures. These include plans to improve access to *freely / free* nursery care, special centres for people undergoing fertility treatment, and a target to increase the number of fathers taking *paternity / paternal* leave after their baby is born to 80 per cent by the year 2020. There are also plans to *provision / provide* greater support for families with three or *more / most* children. By 2060, nearly 40 per cent of Japan's population will be *ages / aged* over 65. The over-65s already *constitute / consider* 25 per cent of the population. The birth rate has fallen *steadily / steady* from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to just 1.42 in 2014.

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

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

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

J\_p\_n's g\_v\_rnm\_nt \_s g\_\_ng t\_ pl\_y C\_p\_d \_n \_n  
\_tt\_mpt t\_ \_nc\_r\_g\_m\_r\_c\_\_pl\_s t\_ h\_v\_b\_b\_\_s.  
Th\_ c\_\_ntry h\_s \_n\_ \_f th\_ l\_w\_st b\_rth r\_t\_s \_n th\_  
w\_rld \_nd p\_l\_t\_c\_\_ns \_r\_t\_rn\_ng t\_ n\_v\_l m\_th\_ds t\_  
g\_t p\_\_pl\_ t\_ \_dd t\_ th\_ p\_p\_l\_t\_\_n. \_n\_ \_f th\_s\_  
m\_th\_ds \_s l\_c\_l \_\_th\_r\_t\_\_s \_ct\_ng \_s m\_tchm\_k\_rs.  
J\_p\_n's n\_t\_\_n\_l g\_v\_rnm\_nt w\_ll s\_pp\_rt \_ny l\_c\_l  
g\_v\_rnm\_nt \_ff\_rt \_t sp\_\_d d\_t\_ng, \_n\_l\_n\_  
m\_tchm\_k\_ng \_nd \_th\_r w\_ys t\_ c\_\_x c\_\_pl\_s t\_ g\_t  
t\_g\_th\_r \_nd \_st\_rt \_f\_m\_l\_\_s. Th\_ \_dr\_ft  
r\_c\_mm\_nd\_t\_\_ns c\_ll \_f\_r \_nt\_ns v\_ \_ff\_rts \_v\_r th\_  
n\_xt f\_v\_ y\_\_rs. Th\_ r\_p\_rt\_s\_ys J\_p\_n f\_c\_s \_  
"cr\_t\_c\_l\_s\_t\_\_t\_\_n" \_n wh\_ch th\_ dw\_ndl\_ng n\_mb\_r  
\_f ch\_ldr\_n c\_\_ld c\_\_s\_s\_r\_\_s\_s\_c\_\_l pr\_bl\_ms f\_r  
th\_ c\_\_ntry.

\_n\_ r\_\_s\_n th\_ g\_v\_rnm\_nt h\_s f\_\_nd f\_r J\_p\_n's  
f\_ll\_ng b\_rth r\_t\_\_s th\_ r\_s\_ng c\_st \_f\_r\_s\_ng  
ch\_ldr\_n. Th\_ g\_v\_rnm\_nt h\_p\_s t\_ \_ddr\_ss th\_s w\_th \_  
v\_r\_\_ty \_f m\_\_s\_r\_s. Th\_s \_ncl\_d\_ pl\_ns t\_ \_mpr\_v\_  
\_cc\_ss t\_ fr\_\_n\_rs\_ry c\_r\_, sp\_c\_\_l c\_ntr\_s f\_r p\_\_pl\_  
\_nd rg\_\_ng f\_rt\_l\_ty tr\_\_tm\_nt, \_nd \_t\_rg\_t t\_  
\_ncr\_\_s th\_ n\_mb\_r \_f f\_th\_rs t\_k\_ng p\_t\_rn\_ty l\_\_v\_  
\_ft\_r th\_\_r b\_by \_s b\_rn t\_ 80 p\_r\_c\_nt by th\_ y\_\_r  
2020. Th\_r\_\_r\_\_ls\_ pl\_ns t\_ pr\_v\_d\_ gr\_\_t\_r\_s\_pp\_rt  
f\_r f\_m\_l\_\_s w\_th thr\_\_ \_r m\_r\_ ch\_ldr\_n. By 2060,  
n\_\_rly 40 p\_r\_c\_nt \_f J\_p\_n's p\_p\_l\_t\_\_n w\_ll b\_ \_g\_d  
\_v\_r 65. Th\_ \_v\_r-65s \_lr\_\_dy c\_nst\_t\_t\_ 25 p\_r\_c\_nt  
\_f th\_ p\_p\_l\_t\_\_n. Th\_ b\_rth r\_t\_ h\_s f\_ll\_n st\_\_d\_ly  
fr\_m 4.54 ch\_ldr\_n p\_r\_m\_th\_r \_n 1947 t\_ j\_st 1.42 \_n  
2014.

# PUNCTUATE THE TEXT AND ADD CAPITALS

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

japan's government is going to play cupid in an attempt to encourage more couples to have babies the country has one of the lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are turning to novel methods to get people to add to the population one of these methods is local authorities acting as matchmakers japan's national government will support any local government effort at speed dating online matchmaking and other ways to coax couples to get together and start families the draft recommendations call for intensive efforts over the next five years the report says japan faces a "critical situation" in which the dwindling number of children could cause serious social problems for the country

one reason the government has found for japan's falling birth rate is the rising cost of raising children the government hopes to address this with a variety of measures these include plans to improve access to free nursery care special centres for people undergoing fertility treatment and a target to increase the number of fathers taking paternity leave after their baby is born to 80 per cent by the year 2020 there are also plans to provide greater support for families with three or more children by 2060 nearly 40 per cent of japan's population will be aged over 65 the over-65s already constitute 25 per cent of the population the birth rate has fallen steadily from 454 children per mother in 1947 to just 142 in 2014

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1503/150317-matchmaking.html>

Japan's government is going to play Cupid in an attempt to encourage more couples to have babies. The country has one of the lowest birth rates in the world and politicians are returning to novel methods to get people to add to the population. One of these methods is local authorities acting as matchmakers. Japan's national government will support any local government effort at speeding dating, online matchmaking and other ways to coax couples to get together and start families. The draft recommendations call for an intensive effort over the next five years. The report says Japan faces a "critical situation" in which the dwindling number of children could cause serious social problems for the country. One reason the government has found for Japan's falling birth rate is the rising cost of raising children. The government hopes to address this with a variety of measures. These include plans to improve access to free nursery care, special centres for people undergoing fertility treatment, and a target to increase the number of fathers taking paternity leave after their baby is born to 80 percent by the year 2020. There are also plans to provide greater support for families with three or more children. By 2060, nearly 40 percent of Japan's population will be aged over 65. The over-65s already constitute 25 percent of the population. The birth rate has fallen steadily from 4.54 children per mother in 1947 to just 1.42 in 2014.







# 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 the Japanese government's matchmaking plans. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

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

**4. BIRTH RATE:** Write a magazine article about declining birth rates. Include imaginary interviews with people who think it's no problem and with people who think it is a big problem.

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 matchmaking. Ask him/her three questions about it. Give him/her three of your ideas on how to make it work better. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE (p.4)

a F    b F    c T    d T    e T    f T    g F    h F

## SYNONYM MATCH (p.4)

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. ways      | a. methods     |
| 2. support   | b. back        |
| 3. coax      | c. encourage   |
| 4. fix       | d. repair      |
| 5. serious   | e. significant |
| 6. reason    | f. cause       |
| 7. treatment | g. care        |
| 8. plans     | h. proposals   |
| 9. help      | i. assist      |
| 10. fell     | j. dropped     |

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (p.8)

1. cupid
2. novel
3. matchmaker
4. 5 years
5. the dwindling number of children
6. the cost of raising children
7. nurseries
8. paternity leave
9. 2060
10. 4.54

## MULTIPLE CHOICE - QUIZ (p.9)

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 ;-)