

NEWS ENGLISH LESSONS.com

Robot baby to increase Japanese birthrate

MANY FLASH AND ONLINE ACTIVITIES FOR THIS LESSON, PLUS A LISTENING, AT:
<http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

IN THIS LESSON:

The Reading / Tapescript	2
Phrase Match	3
Listening Gap Fill	4
Multiple Choice	5
Spelling	6
Put the Text Back Together	7
Scrambled Sentences	8
Discussion	9
Writing	10
Homework	11

ALL ANSWERS ARE IN THE TEXT ON PAGE 2.

23rd March, 2010

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

Japanese students have created a robot that looks like a baby to get couples to have children. The birthrate in Japan is falling. The population may shrink by a third over the next 50 years. The students hope their new robot baby will reverse this trend. The baby is called Yotara. It really looks and acts like a real baby. It giggles, wakes up when it hears a rattle and smiles when someone rubs its tummy. Project leader Hiroki Kunimara said: "We wanted to create a new type of robot that is soft, cuddly and cute."

It's amazing what they are doing with robots these days. The Yotara robot looks like a really good idea. Japan needs all the help it can get to increase its birthrate. If the population falls by thirty per cent, the country will have serious problems. It seems to make sense – people get to see and interact with the robot and that might encourage them to start a family or have more children. Maybe the robot has other purposes, such as in hospitals or schools. Many young Japanese people rarely get to hold a real baby these days.

PHRASE MATCH

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

Match the following phrases from the article.

Paragraph 1

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. a robot that looks | a. this trend |
| 2. The population may shrink | b. like a baby |
| 3. reverse | c. and cute |
| 4. wakes up when it | d. of robot |
| 5. create a new type | e. by a third |
| 6. soft, cuddly | f. hears a rattle |

Paragraph 2

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. It's amazing what they are | a. get to hold a real baby |
| 2. Japan needs all the help | b. to start a family |
| 3. If the population falls | c. doing with robots |
| 4. encourage them | d. by thirty per cent |
| 5. the robot has | e. it can get |
| 6. young Japanese people rarely | f. other purposes |

LISTENING GAP FILL

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

Japanese students have created a robot _____ baby to get couples to have children. The birthrate in Japan is falling. The population may shrink _____ next 50 years. The students hope their new robot baby _____. The baby is called Yotara. It really looks and acts like a real baby. It giggles, wakes _____ a rattle and smiles when someone rubs its tummy. Project leader Hiroki Kunimara said: "We wanted _____ of robot that is soft, cuddly and cute."

It's amazing what _____ robots these days. The Yotara robot looks like a really good idea. Japan needs all the _____ increase its birthrate. If the population falls by thirty per cent, the country _____. It seems to make sense - people get _____ with the robot and that might encourage them to start a family or have more children. Maybe the robot _____, such as in hospitals or schools. Many young Japanese people _____ real baby these days.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

Japanese students have (1) _____ a robot that looks like a baby to get couples to have children. The birthrate in Japan is (2) _____. The population may shrink by a (3) _____ over the next 50 years. The students hope their new robot baby will reverse this trend. The baby is called Yotara. It really looks and acts (4) _____ a real baby. It giggles, wakes up when it hears a rattle and smiles when someone rubs its tummy. Project leader Hiroki Kunimara said: "We wanted to create a new type (5) _____ robot that is soft, cuddly and cute."

It's amazing what they are doing with robots these (6) _____. The Yotara robot looks like a really good idea. Japan needs all the help it can get to increase its birthrate. If the population (7) _____ by thirty per cent, the country will have serious problems. It seems to make (8) _____ – people get to see and interact with the robot and that might encourage them to (9) _____ a family or have more children. Maybe the robot has other purposes, such as in hospitals or schools. Many young Japanese people rarely (10) _____ to hold a real baby these days.

Put the correct words from this table into the article.

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | (a) create | (b) created | (c) creation |
| 2. | (a) falling | (b) fell | (c) falls |
| 3. | (a) thirty | (b) thirds | (c) third |
| 4. | (a) so | (b) like | (c) as |
| 5. | (a) of | (b) for | (c) on |
| 6. | (a) daily | (b) day | (c) days |
| 7. | (a) fallen | (b) falls | (c) falling |
| 8. | (a) cents | (b) sense | (c) senses |
| 9. | (a) go | (b) launch | (c) start |
| 10. | (a) get | (b) take | (c) have |

SPELLING

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

Spell the jumbled words (from the text) correctly.

Paragraph 1

1. students have eetdrca a robot
2. eopcsul to have children
3. sreever this trend
4. someone rubs its muytm
5. tjcerop leader
6. ldyduc and cute

Paragraph 2

7. It's igazmna
8. ecearnsi its birthrate
9. ruseois problems
10. that might nrocueage them
11. other osspuepr
12. eyrlar get to hold a real baby

PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

Number these lines in the correct order.

- () interact with the robot and that might encourage them to start a family or have more children. Maybe the robot has other
- (**1**) Japanese students have created a robot that looks like a baby to get couples to have children. The birthrate
- () idea. Japan needs all the help it can get to increase its birthrate. If the population falls by thirty
- () robot baby will reverse this trend. The baby is called Yotara. It really looks and acts like a real baby. It giggles,
- () purposes, such as in hospitals or schools. Many young Japanese people rarely get to hold a real baby these days.
- () in Japan is falling. The population may shrink by a third over the next 50 years. The students hope their new
- () per cent, the country will have serious problems. It seems to make sense – people get to see and
- () It's amazing what they are doing with robots these days. The Yotara robot looks like a really good
- () wakes up when it hears a rattle and smiles when someone rubs its tummy. Project
- () leader Hiroki Kunimara said: "We wanted to create a new type of robot that is soft, cuddly and cute."

THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

With a partner, put the words back into the correct order.

1. looks like a baby Students have created a robot that.

2. is birthrate Japan falling The in.

3. a third The . population may shrink by

4. real It and a looks like baby really acts.

5. robot wanted a of We create type to new.

6. what are amazing they doing It's.

7. a idea Yotara like good The looks really robot.

8. all get the help Japan it needs can.

9. family them to That start might a encourage.

10. to hold a real baby these days People rarely get.

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Copyright © www.NewsEnglishLessons.com

DISCUSSION (Write your own questions)

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

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

WRITING

From: <http://www.NewsEnglishLessons.com/1003/100323-birthrate.html>

Write about robot babies for 10 minutes. Show your partner your paper. Correct each other's work.

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 more information about the Japanese robot baby. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. MAGAZINE ARTICLE: Write a magazine article about the robot baby. Include imaginary interviews with two people who think this is a good idea and a bad idea. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

4. 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.

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the creator of Yotara. Ask him/her three questions about robot babies. Give him/her three of your opinions on Yotara. Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Your partner will answer the questions you asked.