Aging Across Borders

Compare how two countries respond to an aging population

SS24.CWI.9c "Compare ways in which different countries address individual needs, national economic problems, and social issues."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline Germany's responses and circle Japan's responses, then label each marked response 1 for individual needs, 2 for economic problems, or 3 for social issues.

Two Countries, Shared Challenges

1 In Germany and Japan, a growing share of residents are older adults. Many need help bathing, cooking, or getting to appointments, but the two countries organize support differently. Germany's required long-term care insurance can pay a cash allowance to a person receiving care at home, often from relatives. Families can decide how to use that money toward daily care. Japan's required long-term care insurance mainly covers approved services, such as home helpers and adult day care, rather than routinely paying relatives. Both systems share costs across society, yet they give families different kinds of support.

2 Aging also affects each country's economy: employers need workers while more people retire. Germany uses apprenticeships that combine classroom learning with paid work to train workers, including people entering care jobs. It also recruits skilled workers from abroad. Japan has encouraged older people to keep working and uses automation in some workplaces, including factories, to help with labor shortages. It also admits some foreign workers through specific visa programs. These choices cannot erase a worker shortage overnight. Training takes time, and machines cannot replace the attention a person needs during a difficult day.

3 Living alone can make old age isolating even when medical care is available. Germany supports multigenerational houses, community centers where people of different ages meet for activities and help one another. In parts of Japan, local groups run community salons where older adults gather to talk, exercise, or share a meal. Both approaches build social connections, but Germany's centers deliberately bring generations together, while Japan's salons focus on regular gatherings for older residents. Neither approach automatically reaches everyone: a person who cannot travel to a meeting place may still need home visits or transportation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How do Germany's and Japan's long-term care insurance programs differ in the support they provide?

2. How does each country address worker shortages? Give one approach from Germany and one from Japan.

3. What goal do Germany's multigenerational houses and Japan's community salons share, and how do they differ?

4. Compare one limit of Germany's worker-training approach with one limit of Japan's community salons.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a town with limited funds, a shortage of care workers, and older residents who live alone. In four sentences, propose a plan using one approach from Germany and one from Japan, explain how they address different problems, and identify one limit of your plan.

ANSWER KEY

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HIGH SCHOOL · SS24.CWI.9c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline Germany's responses and circle Japan's responses, then label each marked response 1 for individual needs, 2 for economic problems, or 3 for social issues. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How do Germany's and Japan's long-term care insurance programs differ in the support they provide?	**Germany's program can pay a cash allowance to someone receiving care at home, while Japan's mainly covers approved care services.**
2	How does each country address worker shortages? Give one approach from Germany and one from Japan.	**Germany trains workers through apprenticeships or recruits skilled workers from abroad. Japan encourages older people to keep working, uses automation in some workplaces, or admits workers through specific visas.**
3	What goal do Germany's multigenerational houses and Japan's community salons share, and how do they differ?	**Both build social connections. Germany's centers bring different generations together, while Japan's salons offer regular gatherings for older adults.**
4	Compare one limit of Germany's worker-training approach with one limit of Japan's community salons.	**Training workers takes time, while community salons may not reach older residents who cannot travel to them.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our town could partner with employers to offer German-style paid apprenticeships for future care workers. It could organize Japan-style community salons at a library for older residents who live alone. Apprenticeships would help ease the worker shortage, while the salons could reduce isolation without requiring a new building. Some residents cannot travel to the library, so volunteers may still need to visit them at home.

Accept any passage-supported comparison that identifies the approaches of both countries. For Your Turn, look for a feasible plan that applies one approach from each country to different problems and names a specific limit.