

Japan has a new emperor

1st May, 2019



A Japanese emperor has abdicated for the first time in more than 200 years. Emperor Akihito stepped down from the Chrysanthemum Throne on April 30 after 30 years of being the Japanese monarch. He made way for his son Crown

Prince Naruhito to become the new emperor. Akihito decided to step down because of his health. At the age of 85, he has been visibly slowing down for the past few years. He has also had a couple of health scares. He believes his son is now better able to carry out the duties of emperor. Emperor Akihito will be remembered for using a personal touch to bring his people together after many national disasters. He continually visited people after earthquakes, tsunami and other tragedies.

The new Emperor Naruhito became the 126th emperor to ascend the throne of the world's oldest monarchy. Naruhito, 59, spent two years studying at Oxford University. His wife, the new Empress Masako, studied at Harvard University and worked as a diplomat. A traditional ceremony took place as part of the historic handover. In the ceremony, Naruhito received a sacred sword, a jewel and official seals that date back thousands of years. The ceremony took place in the middle of a ten-day Japanese holiday. The traditional Golden Week holiday was extended to allow people to celebrate the new emperor. Millions of Japanese were glued to their TVs and smartphones watching the historic event.

Sources: japantimes.co.jp / scmp.com / nytimes.com

Writing

It is very important for a country to have a monarch. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

emperor / 200 years / monarch / duties / personal touch / tsunami / earthquake / throne / university / diplomat / ceremony / sword / jewel / holiday / glued / event

True / False

- The last time a Japanese emperor abdicated was over 200 years ago. T / F
- Emperor Akihito was monarch for 30 years. T / F
- Emperor Akihito has had a few health problems in the past few years. T / F
- Emperor Akihito rarely visited people after natural disasters. T / F
- The new emperor is Japan's 126th monarch. T / F
- Emperor Naruhito's wife studied at Oxford University. T / F
- Emperor Naruhito received a sacred book in a special ceremony. T / F
- Many Japanese people got stuck to their desks. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. abdicated | a. noticeably |
| 2. monarch | b. happened |
| 3. visibly | c. occasion |
| 4. scares | d. disasters |
| 5. tragedies | e. lengthened |
| 6. sacred | f. stepped down |
| 7. took place | g. holy |
| 8. extended | h. frights |
| 9. glued | i. ruler |
| 10. event | j. fixed |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you know about the Japanese monarchy?
- What do you think of monarchies?
- Would you like to be a monarch?
- Should there be an age limit for monarchs?
- What do you think a younger monarch can do?
- What should a monarch do for the people?
- Should people vote for a new monarch?
- How can a monarch help his or her people?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. for the first time | a. the throne |
| 2. he has been visibly | b. thousands of years |
| 3. He has also had a couple | c. other tragedies |
| 4. remembered for using a personal | d. glued to their TVs |
| 5. earthquakes, tsunami and | e. slowing down |
| 6. the 126th emperor to ascend | f. a diplomat |
| 7. worked as | g. of health scares |
| 8. as part of the historic | h. in more than 200 years |
| 9. official seals that date back | i. handover |
| 10. Millions of Japanese were | j. touch |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you know about Emperor Akihito?
- What would it be like to be a monarch?
- What do you think the new emperor will be like?
- What do you know about Japan of a thousand years ago?
- How should Japanese people celebrate?
- When are you glued to your television?
- What questions would you like to ask the new emperor?

Spelling

- atibacdde for the first time
- being the Japanese mrnaoch
- he has been yvilbsi slowing down
- health seacsr
- many national drsasties
- tsunami and other airedsteg
- sncdae the throne
- worked as a paloitdm
- The reyocnm took place
- The rdlaaotinit Golden Week holiday
- allow people to tercleaeb
- watching the ohitcris event

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. a	4. h	5. d
6. g	7. b	8. e	9. j	10. c

Role Play

Role A – Sushi

You think sushi is the best thing about Japan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): manga, tea or bonsai.

Role B – Manga

You think manga is the best thing about Japan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): sushi, tea or bonsai.

Role C – Tea

You think tea is the best thing about Japan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): manga, sushi or bonsai.

Role D – Bonsai

You think bonsai is the best thing about Japan. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as good. Also, tell the others which is the least interesting of these (and why): manga, tea or sushi.

Speaking – Japan

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things about Japan at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| • people | • sushi |
| • tea | • cherry blossoms |
| • origami | • manga |
| • bonsai | • history |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	T	d	F	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.