

# Doors to Knowledge

豊かな生活を読み解く

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**S SEIBIDO**

# Preface

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*Doors to Knowledge* is the fourth in a series of books aiming to provide interesting, topical and stimulating content. As with our previous books, various trends and topics have been chosen which are having, or will have, a significant impact on our world. At the same time, the text seeks to improve English language skills primarily through the readings, which are accompanied by a range of exercises and tasks.

The resulting essays that we have produced deal with a number of topics that range from culture and environment, looking at the phenomenon Susan Boyle, to lifestyle and health, where marriage and pet ownership is discussed. These are accompanied by further essays in the areas of business and economics, science and technology and politics and international relations, which address a wide range of issues such as synthetic life, microfinance and human rights. We hope the topics interest the reader, lead to some interesting discussions and motivate further research and debate.

Each chapter in the book contains pre-reading work on vocabulary development with the Useful Words section. Each essay is followed by notes on the essay in Japanese. Post-reading exercises are presented to test comprehension and finally, there is a Guided Writing section which summarizes the main essay.

It has been a pleasure to work with Mr. Anthony Sellick and Professor Norio Shimamura on this project, which has been stimulating as well as fun. We would also like to acknowledge the help we have received from the publishing company, Seibido, during the course of the project.

Finally, while we have tried to ensure that the material in this book is up-to-date, due to the fast-changing nature of some of the topics, it is inevitable that by the time the book is published, some things may have changed.

We hope you enjoy the book.

John Barton

## はしがき

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今年は東北3県を中心に1,000年に一度という未曾有の大震災を被りました。幾多の困難を乗り越え、必ずや国土再興の道が開かれることを信じて疑いませんが、昨今の日本を取り巻く情勢には非常に厳しいものがあり、しばらく多難な時代が続くのを覚悟せねばなりません。

昨年は上場企業のいくつかが、社内公用（共通）語として英語を採用すると宣言し、また新規採用予定者の8割を海外で採用するという大手家電メーカーも出てきました。今年は国内需要の極度の落ち込みと未曾有の円高に見切りをつけて、中小企業までもが国外への転出を真剣に模索しています。いわゆる産業の空洞化の問題が顕著になりました。

こうした種々の動きは、昨今の国内の経済動向と密接に連動しており、今後この傾向は加速されることはあっても、ブレーキがかかることはないでしょう。産業の空洞化は技術大国を自認してきた国内産業の衰退を意味しますが、学生諸君の身近な問題として懸念されるのは、新規採用などの雇用調整が行われ、益々労働市場が狭まることでしょう。国内で小さなパイを分かち合うのに限界がある以上、何語であれ、外国語を習得して外へ向かわざるを得ない時代がそこまで来ていることを意識せねばならないでしょう。

日本の20年後、30年後の国家の在り方を考える場合、海外へ留学したい若者に国家戦略の一環として積極的に先行投資をすべき時期に来ているのだと思います。驚くべき数字があります。最近、某新聞の記事で知ったのですが、325億円と25億円という2種類の予算に関わる数字があります。前者は外国人留学生の受け入れ予算、後者が日本人学生の留学推進のための予算です。外国人の支援対象が国費・私費併せて約2万3,000人に対し、日本人学生の長期派遣は100人という少なさです。このデータは某社団法人で「知日派」の国際人になるべく研鑽を積む学生有志の報告に基づくものですが、彼らが1,000人の大学生に行ったアンケートによれば、留学の意志がありながらそれを阻む理由の第一に「資金」が挙げられているのは、現在の日本の経済状況を考えれば当然と言うべきでしょう。近ごろの若者を「縮み思考の世代」あるいは「内向きの世代」と呼ぶらしいのですが、今こそ国はそうした生き方を助長するような予算ではなく、若者に多くの予算を割り、彼らが世界に羽ばたく社会的仕組みや環境作りに大胆に踏み出して欲しいと思います。

学生諸君には海外に出るときに備えて、外国語の習得に勤しんで欲しいと願っています。「*Knowledge* シリーズ」の一環として本書を作成するに当たり、John Barton、Anthony Sellick 両氏の日本の英語教育への深い洞察とエスプリに富んだエッセイに改めて敬意を表する次第です。本書の特色は、多彩なテーマについて深い洞察を行った点にあります。良質の英文を通して、読解力と論理的な思考力、さらには自らが身を置いている世界への理解が深まることで、「使える英語」に自信を持って移行する端緒が開かれることを、切に祈っています。

2011年9月 中秋の名月を愛でつつ

編著者

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# You've Never Had It So Good

## Chapter

# 1


### USEFUL WORDS

Choose a word or phrase from the list below to complete each sentence.

1. It is important for parents to follow their children's \_\_\_\_\_ schedule in order to protect their health.
2. Due to low sales, we will be \_\_\_\_\_ our XP9 series of computers over the next year.
3. Throughout his travels, his mobile phone operated \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Fascinated by the coral, he failed to notice the \_\_\_\_\_ of air in his tank.
5. If an asteroid hit a city, it would completely \_\_\_\_\_ it.

depletion    reliably    obliterate    vaccination    phasing out

### READING

1 - 2-9 

**1** <sup>CD 1-02</sup> The character Pangloss was the central figure of fun in Voltaire's *Candide*. He constantly said, no matter how terrible the situation, that "all is for the best in the best of *all* possible worlds." His unfailing optimism was laughed at because it meant the acceptance of evils such as disease, famine, torture and war without criticism. As a result, he did not encourage any attempts to improve things. 5

**2** <sup>CD 1-03</sup> By contrast, today it is common to hear people saying how everything is getting worse year by year. It should not surprise us that this attitude is nothing new: even the ancient Greeks, at the height of their civilization, complained that they were living in the era *after* the Golden Age of mankind. With the human 10

race facing problems  
like global warming,  
it might be that the  
pessimists are right. So  
5 should we be optimistic  
or pessimistic about the  
state of the world today?  
Let's investigate whether  
things really are getting  
10 better or worse before we  
make up our minds.

**3** <sup>CD</sup>  
1-04

*Crime* – We

read about crime in the  
newspapers, listen to



The lucky generation? These British children will live longer,  
healthier and richer lives than any previous generation.

15 politicians argue about it, see it on television, in the movies, and even listen to  
songs about it. It seems natural that we should fear violent crime, but should we  
really be worried? Records of violent crime have only been kept for about 200  
years, but it seems that violent crime today is only about one tenth what it was  
in the 18th century. In Japan, violent crime has dropped even further, with the  
20 murder rate having decreased by 80 percent since the 1950s. It is ironic that  
crime reporting is increasing when crime itself is actually falling.

**4** <sup>CD</sup>  
1-05

*War* – Few people would dispute that war is evil. By the middle of the  
20th century, there had been two world wars. Furthermore, several countries  
had developed weapons that could obliterate whole nations. However, by the  
25 end of the 20th century the danger of a third world war had been greatly  
reduced. International institutions like the United Nations continue to work  
hard to make sure that global wars do not happen again. The United Nations  
also encourages countries to give up their most deadly weapons and to protect  
civilians during conflicts. Although wars still happen around the world, the  
30 work of the United Nations has helped to reduce their frequency.

**5** <sup>CD</sup>  
1-06

*Disease & Health* – Malaria kills about one million people every year.  
HIV has killed about 40 million people since the 1980s. However, smallpox,  
which killed nearly 500 million people in the first half of the 20th century, has  
been completely eliminated. In addition, vaccinations now control dangerous

diseases such as diphtheria, rubella and polio which killed large numbers of children. Advances in modern medicine mean that we are now living longer and healthier lives than ever before. Furthermore, many old people are fit and healthy. Fewer than 3 percent of elderly Japanese people live in residential homes for example. In fact, Japan has the highest life expectancy in the world. 5  
The fact that the majority of us can look forward to a long and healthy life is something to be very optimistic about.

**6** <sup>CD</sup><sub>1-07</sub> *The environment* – There are many threats to the environment, including global warming, the depletion of fisheries, and deforestation. Our planet has survived similar problems in the past, and life has continued to thrive. 10  
However, these threats could destroy our civilization, or even put an end to the human race. Fortunately, humanity has sufficient ingenuity and technology to solve many of these problems. We have already solved some of them. In the 1980s, countries across the world worked together to reduce emissions of sulphur dioxide in order to reduce the problems of acid rain. Another example 15  
is the phasing out of the use of chlorofluorocarbons from 1994 in order to seal the hole in the ozone layer.

**7** <sup>CD</sup><sub>1-08</sub> *Freedom* – For all its problems, democracy is generally considered to be the best political system. The two fundamental ideas of democracy, that people are equal before the law and also have equal access to power, seem to be the 20  
best way to ensure that people remain free from tyranny. While there are still many regimes that deny their citizens freedom and commit serious human rights abuses, today half of the world's population live in democracies, more than ever before.

**8** <sup>CD</sup><sub>1-09</sub> While we face many problems today it is also true that, with sufficient 25  
dedication, we can solve many of them. While we may not be living in the best of *all* possible worlds, we may be living in the one described by Edward Gibbon, where “every age of the world has increased, and still increases, the real wealth, the happiness, the knowledge, and perhaps the virtue, of the human race.”



## NOTES

**Pangloss** 「パンダロス」 ヴォルテールの風刺小説『カンディド』の過保護な主人公（カンディド）の助言者の名前だが、一般に「事情のいかんにかかわらず楽天的である人物」のことを指している。**Voltaire** 「ヴォルテール（1694-1778）」フランスの作家でフランス啓蒙期の代表的思想家。英国滞在後、英国の経験論をフランスに導入。百科全書派の運動を支持し、フランス革命（1789）の精神的基盤を準備した。**Candide** 『カンディド（1759）』 ヴォルテールの哲学小説。“**all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.**” 「最高に素晴らしい場所で神様のなさることに悪いことはない」 “All is for the best.” は「天は慈悲深くて、人を見放すことはない」という意味のことわざ。“the best of all possible worlds” は「考えられる最もよい世界」の意。**Golden Age** 「黄金時代」ギリシャ神話におけるクロノス（Cronos）の支配した時代で、労働をせずに産物に恵まれ、不正と悪のない人類の至福の時代。**violent crime** 「（殺人・傷害などの）暴力[的]犯罪」**fit and healthy** 「体が丈夫な」 fit は「（肉体的・精神的に）健康で、体調がよい」の意。**residential homes** 「老人ホーム」**life expectancy** 「平均余命」ある年齢の集団が今後生存すると予想される平均年数。特に0歳時平均余命を平均寿命という。**sulphur dioxide** 「二酸化硫黄」**acid rain** 「酸性雨」**chlorofluorocarbons** 「フロン（ガス）」冷媒、噴霧剤、発泡剤として利用されたが、大気中で分解しにくいためオゾン層を破壊する物質と見なされ生産禁止の方向に向かっている。**human rights abuses** 「人権侵害、人権蹂躪」**Edward Gibbon** 「エドワード・ギボン（1737-94）」英国の歴史家。『ローマ帝国衰亡史（*The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 7 vols. 1776-88）』の著者として有名。本文の引用は同書、38章の最後の文章から。

**COMPREHENSION**

*Look at the following statements. Write T if the statement is true and F if it is false. Write the number of the paragraph where you find the answer in the parenthesis.*

1. \_\_\_\_ The passage implies that our attitudes should be influenced by the facts. ( # )
2. \_\_\_\_ The passage indicates that our fears of violent crime are often unrealistic. ( # )
3. \_\_\_\_ The passage indicates that the risk of a third world war is higher than ever before. ( # )
4. \_\_\_\_ The passage indicates that no one knows how to solve any of our environmental problems. ( # )
5. \_\_\_\_ The passage implies that democracy needs to be spread further around the world. ( # )

**GUIDED WRITING**1 - 10 

*Fill each space with the best word from the list below.*

terrible	investigate	dangerous	seal	emissions	deny
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Some people seem to 1)\_\_\_\_\_ themselves behind a barrier of optimism or pessimism. This might be because they don't want to accept that their country creates and sometimes uses 2)\_\_\_\_\_ weapons in war. For others it might be an inability to accept that 3)\_\_\_\_\_ caused by humans are warming the planet. However, forming these kinds of fixed opinions can be 4)\_\_\_\_\_ because they prevent us from seeking solutions. Rather than 5)\_\_\_\_\_ the existence of these problems, or of their solutions, we should 6)\_\_\_\_\_ them and base our attitudes towards life on the facts we uncover.