Reflections on Justice: Empowering ELLs Through Political Philosophy

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Abstract

In today's polarized political climate, language education that includes more critical thinking, develops argumentative skills, and fosters conflict resolution is vital to functioning democracies with increasingly diverse societies. To address this need, the popular Justice course taught by Harvard professor Michael Sandel was adapted for English language learners in the context of an English for Academic Purposes program at a Japanese university. The author describes the experience of adapting this course to the context including a discussion on why the topic is relevant, ideas for how materials can be adapted for English language learners in different settings, how to use case-study examples to help learners understand different perspectives of justice, and how to scaffold students toward more effective argumentation skills. The author concludes by discussing some of the challenges and limitation encountered and why the course content is increasingly relevant in Japan and other contexts around the world.

Reflections on Justice: Empowering ELLs Through Political Philosophy

Introduction

In this age of extremely divided political rhetoric, the need for education that helps learners identify facts, understand differing philosophical perspectives, and equip them with the tools for argumentation and conflict resolution is increasingly more important in a functioning democracy. English language learners (ELLs) are no exception, and considering the lack of political power many ELL groups have in some societies, these skills are even more necessary for members to flourish in these contexts. Michael Sandel, a professor of political philosophy at Harvard University, understands these needs which is why he made his Justice course available for free online, wrote a bestselling companion book (Sandel, 2009), and has been discussing this topic on television and in lectures halls around the world. His writings on justice, ethics, and democracy have been translated into 27 languages and he has appeared on the BBC in England and NHK in Japan (Harvard University's Justice, 2023). The popularity of his writings and his talks are especially remarkable, considering the content derives from ancient and historical texts on ethics and political philosophy. Clearly, Sandel is tapping into something that is of universal interest to people around the world. In this paper, I will discuss the appeal of the Justice course, why it belongs in the ELL curriculum, important aspects of the course, how I adapted the course for English language learners at a university in Japan, the challenges I encountered in the process of implementing the content, the strategies I used, and the increasing importance of the skills taught in this course for ELLs in Japan and around the world.

Why Justice?

It seems that in today's world, everyone has an intuitive sense of justice. In particular, the growing social awareness of inequality and discrimination has heightened sensitivity towards injustice. This sense of injustice can be found in daily experiences, such as a student who receives a poor grade on an assignment and feels it was undeserved. Or it can be found in world events, when people feel outrage at stories in the news of injustice ranging from the death of innocent children in war-torn regions to the negative effects of climate change on the habitat of living things around the world. Justice is also evident in popular entertainment. Superhero movies, such as *Batman*, often portray their characters as arbiters of justice in an unjust world. Finally, people are often faced with challenging situations in their personal and professional lives where they are forced to grapple with the question that Sandel poses as a subtitle to his "Justice" book: "What's the right thing to do?". For these reasons and more, justice taps into something universal that people feel on an emotional level. However, disputes about justice tend to devolve into emotionally charged debates, largely because many lack the background knowledge and analytical tools for considering justice issues from different points of view. When people are compelled to comprehend issues from alternative perspectives, it prompts them to re-examine and question their own deeply ingrained beliefs in ways they may not have previously considered. Sandel's Justice course, by offering a disciplined and informed approach, equips learners with the necessary tools to navigate this transformative process.

Why Justice for ELLs?

Language educators and learners who subscribe to the view of instrumentalism in language learning argue that the focus of the language classroom should be on improving linguistic skills (Gadd, 1998). This view has been met with criticism, particularly by Friere (2005

and Macedo (1994), who argue that language learning curriculum should go beyond instrumentalism and not be limited to acquiring linguistic forms, but also include important skills such as critical thinking. Controversy is one way of developing critical thinking skills in the L2 classroom. The draw of controversy is that it invites students into discussions not merely as evaluators of logical propositions or political philosophies, but as moral agents who are themselves continually testing the fit between ethical principals and individual or collective policy decisions. Tensions naturally arise, particularly when values and interests stand in contrast with learner's own. Having language learners engage in controversial issues is one way of developing critical thinking skills and can lead to what Brown (2009) called "intrinsically motivating content-based language learning" (p. 267). Many modern language curricula incorporate content, and controversial issues provide real and engaging content for the language classroom. Introducing controversial content to the language classroom is an opportunity to engage in civil discourse, conflict resolution, and help learners to develop what Medley (2016) calls "interpretive flexibility", which helps learners recognize and respect diverse perspectives on issues. As Medley writes, "language learning itself is an activity that gives us access to people and viewpoints that may not be represented in our culture" (p. 58). Examples of issues related to justice are abound in L2 education, and include courses that emphasize environmental issues (Hauschild et al., 2012; Hronopolous, 2004, as cited in Royal, 2016), service learning (Poteau, 2016), and human rights (Pessoa et al., 2016). Similarly, focusing on issues related to justice provides content that not only engages learners, but also increases opportunities to use the language they are studying in a meaningful way.

Perspectives of Justice

Sandel's Justice course essentially revolves around three major perspectives of justice: utilitarianism, libertarianism, and virtue ethics. Utilitarianism, a philosophy developed by the English philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748 – 1832), is summed up as an ethical doctrine that aims to provide the greatest good for the greatest number of people. The basic goal is to maximize happiness and well-being for the most people in society. However, one of the key weaknesses of this philosophy is the tyranny of the majority, which can result in the trampling of minority rights.

The second perspective, libertarianism, is based on philosopher John Locke's (1632 – 1704) belief that all people are born with the natural rights of life, liberty, and property, which presupposes government. Essentially, libertarians believe people should be free to do what they want to do as long as they respect the rights of others. Sandel uses issues, such as opposition to motorcycle helmet laws, support for the legalization of drugs, and prostitution as examples of libertarianism in practice. It is a principled approach that emphasizes the free market and the belief that people own themselves and their bodies, but when taken to the extreme can also lead to issues that some deem detrimental to society. Examples include allowing people to sell their organs or babies for profit on the free market.

The third major perspective of justice is virtue ethics, which was developed by Aristotle (384 – 322 BCE) in his writings known as the *Nicomachean Ethics,* written around 353 BCE. Rather than defining a principle or a set of rules of how people should act in different situations, the teachings of virtue ethics focus on helping people determine what kind of person they should strive to become and developing *eudaimonia*, or "human flourishing". Therefore, the goal of virtue ethics is to cultivate virtues, or good character traits such as wisdom, justice, gratitude, and hard work. Some of the weaknesses of this perspective of justice is that specific virtues are

difficult to define concretely, as are ideas of what leads to "human flourishing". Furthermore, there are no specific guidelines or rules that help one determine what to do in any given situation, with virtues potentially conflicting with each other.

Justice Course Context: Japan

I teach English at a university in Japan, a country that is often characterized through its concept of *wa*, or "harmony", which is represented in the cultural beliefs of the spirit of cooperation and unity in Japanese society. The more specific context where I taught the Justice course was in a coordinated English language program at a prestigious university in Western Japan. This was a four-semester English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program with students who were majoring in policy studies. Each semester consisted of 14 weeks with the first two semesters of the program dedicated to courses on academic skills such as reading, writing, discussion, and presentation. During the third and fourth semesters, students were given the opportunity to choose from a selection of content-based "special topics" courses. The course themes were chosen by individual instructors based on their expertise or research interests and included topics such as "International Relations", "Creative Writing", and "Canadian History". Special topics courses were designed to recycle the language and skills learned in the academic skills courses with a greater emphasis on content. I chose to adapt Sandel's Justice course for this purpose. However, Sandel's course was originally designed for Harvard students learning in their first language. Therefore, it required careful thought and effort in order to adapt it for English language learners in this context.

Adaptation Strategies

In addition to some of the contextual challenges, there were several other challenges I encountered while teaching the Justice course in Japan that required adjustments during the course and upon revising it for a new academic year. In this section, I will discuss some of the strategies I used to overcome these challenges, which might also be valuable for other language teachers approaching this subject.

The first issue concerned materials. Many of the authentic texts related to the original course, including both texts Sandel refers to as well as his own book, were challenging for many of my students. Rather than having students spend time decoding authentic texts, I wrote original introductory texts for each of the three perspectives introduced in Sandel's book. The texts were short (approximately 1-2 pages) and accessible, distilling each philosophical perspective to the basics, including easy to understand examples as well as comprehension and critical thinking questions (see Appendix 1). Furthermore, texts that were taken from authentic English news sources were not only shortened to a similar length but were also analyzed for vocabulary level using Tom Cobb's Compleat Lexical Tutor (Lextutor) website (Cobb, n.d.). This allowed for control over the vocabulary level, focusing on keeping it within 95% coverage necessary for understanding the three thousand most frequent words (Laufer, 1989), which is well within the average estimates of Japanese university student's levels (McLean, Hogg & Kramer, 2014). Therefore, a combination of the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American (COCA) English corpora was used to replace or gloss words that were above the frequency threshold. For words that could not be replaced or glossed, a list of essential vocabulary words was provided for each unit and were later tested as part of the unit quiz (see

Appendix 2). A linked skills approach, recommended by Nation (Newton & Nation, 2020) was utilized by recycling newly introduced content into multimodal forms such as readings, lectures, videos, discussions, and writing tasks throughout each unit. This allowed learners adequate repetition to encounter and use relevant words and concepts several times, increasing the chance of deeper learning.

Another issue I encountered is that most of the learners I taught were second year university students and had limited life experience and/or background knowledge to be able to connect with many of the current social issues that are used to illustrate the key concepts from the Justice course. In order to address the lack of connection to many of the social issues addressed in the Justice course, I focused initially on personalizing situations in order to create empathy and understanding. I would often begin a class by posing ethical dilemmas in the form of "what would you do if…" questions. For example, students would have to decide what they would do if they saw a friend steal something from a convenience store or how they would respond if someone gave them a gift they loved and they found out it was purchased with stolen money. Placing the learner at the center of more personal and relatable contexts can help them to understand the challenge of the decision-making process, especially when it involves placing themselves at the center of the issue.

Some of the concepts of Justice are conceptually challenging, especially to learners with little experience in learning about political philosophy. In order to recycle the main ideas and consolidate knowledge, the key concepts of the course were recycled in each unit. The first unit focused on utilitarianism, but utilitarianism was revisited in the following units as a reference of comparison. For example, in the second unit on libertarianism, the issue of face mask requirements during the COVID-19 pandemic were analyzed from both a libertarian perspective

(freedom of choice for individuals) and a utilitarian perspective (ensuring the protection of the public). This same issue was discussed in the third unit on virtue ethics, where utilitarianism and libertarianism were once again compared in addition to virtue (being a virtuous person). Constantly revisiting and practicing applying these three perspectives to different case studies helped students not only practice looking at issues from multiple perspectives, but also strengthen their knowledge and understanding of the key concepts.

For language learners, classroom discussions about justice can be challenging because of it requires simultaneously making decisions about what they think and how to express it in their second language. The conception of this course took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when the university where I taught this course was not allowing face-to-face classes. Therefore, asynchronous online discussions were used in lieu of face-to-face discussions. However, as we moved back into the classroom, I decided to keep asynchronous discussions in the course as a preliminary activity for scaffolding toward face-to-face discussions. This allowed learners the time necessary to fully understand the discussion questions, formulate and organize their responses and supporting reasons, look up any necessary vocabulary or expressions, compose a response, and revise it before submitting. Van Patten (1990, 1996) has suggested that this kind of pre-task planning increases accuracy by freeing up attentional resources and allowing L2 learners to focus on form. Furthermore, a study by Skehan and Foster (1999) demonstrated that pre-task planning can also lead to more complex language as well as improved fluency. Given the difficulty of the course content and discussion tasks for the learners in my classes, as well as the affective factors, this arguably expedited interaction in the face-to-face discussions and made it a more fruitful classroom activity by forcing learners to prepare beforehand.

Naturally, many of the examples Sandel uses in his book are focused on issues that are based primarily within an American cultural context. For example, the issue of abortion and the controversy surrounding the US Supreme Court case *Roe v. Wade* are almost universally familiar to university students at Harvard. However, there is little to no public discussion regarding this issue, as well as other issues Sandel cites, in Japanese society. A study conducted by Sheridan, et al. (2019) showed evidence that culturally familiar materials helped Japanese learners of English improve vocabulary recall, comprehension scores, and increase overall interest. Therefore, to increase interest and relevance, I collated a series of national news stories from Japanese media sources. One example was from the lead up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics (see Appendix 3). The government billed the event as the "Recovery Olympics" in reference to the recovery of the Tohoku region that was devastated by an earthquake and tsunami in March of 2011. Despite the fact that the region has yet to recover from the disaster, the Japanese government ended financial support for victims in 2017 while spending 12.6 billion dollars on the construction of event sites for the Olympics. At the time of the course, many students were excited to watch the Olympics, but were unaware of the fact that people in Tohoku were still suffering. Because students were familiar with both the 2011 disaster and the 2020 Olympics, there was a greater level of relevancy and interest in activities related to this issue.

Finally, it can be challenging for all learners to understand arguments or perspectives that are different from their own. To facilitate the ability to understand differing perspectives, learners used tables to reframe arguments made by different sides of an issue. A study by Uesaka, et al. (2016) concluded that students in groups that were encouraged to use tables to organize information were able to construct oral arguments that included multiple perspectives compared to a group that was not. Another study by Nussbaum (2008) showed the use of argument vee

diagrams (AVDs) were effective for enhancing argument and counterargument integration in opinion essays. Similarly, I used tables in the Justice course to help learners identify opposing arguments surrounding issues, such as in the previous example of the Tokyo Olympics. The following is an example of thematic reframing of arguments from different perspectives regarding the issues in the Tokyo Olympic case study.

	Japanese Government	People of Tohoku
Current situation in the region		
"Recovery" Olympics		
Use of government money		

The far-left column of the table has some of the themes related to the issue. The second and third columns are designed to help learners identify how different parties perceive these themes as well as the arguments they are making. Reframing arguments helps learners to identify, organize, and convert ideas into coherent statements for consideration and evaluation.

Justice Scenarios

During the course, it was helpful to use different scenarios to illustrate and isolate the principles of Justice. I essentially used three types of scenarios throughout the course: personal ethical dilemmas, hypothetical ethical dilemmas, and case studies. Personal ethical dilemmas consist of scenarios in which individuals are faced ethical choices that involve reflection and decision-making based on one's values and ethics. For example, students would have to decide if

they would withhold a terminal diagnosis from an elderly parent. This forced students to choose between the virtues of honesty (telling the parent the truth) and compassion (sparing the parent the harsh reality). Placing the learner at the center of a potentially real-life situation can help them to understand the challenge of the decision-making process, especially when it involves making ethical decisions relating to their personal life and relationships.

Hypothetical ethical dilemmas are situations that most likely nobody would ever be forced to confront but help isolate the moral principles at stake. The classic "trolley problem" is a well-known example of this, in which a person is confronted with the choice between allowing a runaway trolley to kill several workers on one track or using a switch to direct the trolley to an alternate track that will result in the death of only one worker. While a utilitarian might favor using the switch to save more lives, a libertarian and virtue ethicist would most likely favor the former for differing reasons.

The most important of the three scenarios were case studies, which were introduced regularly throughout the course. Case studies encompass a broader scope that includes organizational, societal, or global contexts and considers various stakeholders and their perspectives. Case studies provide situations that are real, relevant, messy, and often involve multiple variables. The controversy over the Tokyo Olympics is an example of such a case study. The point is not to "solve" the problem per se, but to identify arguments from conflicting perspectives, understand the complexity of issues in the real world, to get better at ethical reasoning through discussion, and to try to decide collectively on the best course of action for the society as a whole.

Case Study Example

Case studies were used throughout the course to apply the principles of justice to real, current, and relevant situations. An example case used in this course involved a Japanese high school student in Osaka, Japan who was told to change her natural brown hair to black to conform to the school rule that students are not allowed to color their hair. The school did not believe her natural hair color was brown, and she tried to dye it to conform to the rule but developed a rash as a result and eventually stopped going to school and filed a lawsuit against the city.

I used the following procedure to lead students through each case. First, I would begin with warm-up questions such as "what is the goal of a high school education?" and "what are some high school rules that are reasonable and necessary?", which were designed to activate schema and get students thinking about the context of the situation. The students were then asked to read a short article about the case in English. Following that, they had to complete a table where they identified the facts of the case as well as the importance and/or relevance of each fact to the case. Students were then asked to write a short summary of the case in 3-5 sentences using only the facts and anything they could recall from the reading. Next, students had to reframe the arguments on each side, in this case the arguments made by the high school administration and the arguments made by the student. Students were asked to analyze the case from the three perspectives of justice (utilitarianism, libertarianism, virtue ethics) and then decide in their own view, the right thing to do in this case. Finally, students were put into groups of 3-4 to discuss the case and to agree on an appropriate resolution.

Practicing analyzing multiple cases that I had provided them culminated in the final project for the course. Students were tasked with conducting their own case study research and analysis by finding a current news story that involved some kind of controversy with differing

perspectives and creating a video presentation of the case. Similar to the procedure used for case studies I introduced during the course, students were required to summarize the issue, identify the facts, and report the opposing arguments in the presentation. Next, they applied the three perspectives of justice to the case and decided in their view the right thing to do. Students created slideshow presentations and video recorded their presentations. Videos were shared via a Learning Management System where classmates were able to watch and provide written comments on each case presentation.

Limitations and Challenges

Throughout the development and adaptation of the Justice course, there were several issues that proved constraining. First, the students had little to no background in political philosophy. As this was potentially the first time for many of them to wrestle with the course concepts, there was often what appeared to be a lack of intellectual maturity that instructors might otherwise expect from university students. This was compounded by what seemed to be a general lack of interest in history and current events, which meant that students lacked a corpus of examples to draw upon to relate concepts to the real world. One way of addressing this was to draw upon commonly known current events within the Japanese context, such as the Tokyo Olympics and issues surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, some ideas taught in the original iteration of the course were too challenging for students. For example, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant's concept of the Categorical Imperative proved to be too complex and abstract for students, particularly in a foreign language and was therefore abandoned altogether during the second iteration of the course. Other concepts and associated vocabulary were also challenging for the students I taught. For example, "utilitarianism" is a word that has

no direct translation in Japanese, is a low frequency word in English, and has no easier synonym. Therefore, one strategy employed in order to assist students in their comprehension of this rather difficult and unusual word was to continue to repeat it in the course materials and return to it in discussions and related activities. This allowed students to become familiar with the concept through direct learning by using context, usage, and association. Another issue was that the classes were not streamed by proficiency. As a result, some activities such as discussions between students of varying proficiency levels were challenging because some students were unable to express their ideas fluently and effectively or respond to others' ideas. Moreover, debate-style disagreements were a major challenge because of the gap in proficiency. One idea that has the potential to help students prepare for discussions would be to have them submit audio recordings of their reactions and opinions to discussion topics prior to live discussions, thus providing a form of speaking practice.

As mentioned previously, Japan is known as a society that values harmony and unity among its people, and this was often evident in the classroom, particularly during discussions of controversial issues. The result was that it was often challenging to get students to provide opposing perspectives and disagree with each other, with many students falling back on culturally safe positions. Unfortunately, this behavior is the very antithesis of the type of reasoning they were supposed to practice through the course. A potential solution to this problem is to preassign opposing positions prior to discussions, forcing students to practice the art of disagreement. Finally, it was challenging balancing teaching the content, the language, as well as the analytical and argumentative skills required to successfully engage with the course materials. This course was taught in a coordinated EAP program that aimed to provide lots of practice in academic discussions with a focus on using discussion strategies common to the genre

(see Appendix 4 for an overview of the discussion strategies taught in the program). Even with the practice and recycling, for some students three semesters proved an inadequate amount of training to reach a level of mastery required for discussions in a content-based course. Even though some students had not yet reached this level of mastery, most of them were motivated and interested in the content because they selected this course among other options available to them. Despite these challenges, the need for teaching concepts of justice to students in Japan is becoming more important because of the challenges and changes facing the country.

The Case for Justice in Japan and Beyond

Japan has typically been portrayed both from an insider and outsider perspective as a kind of homogenous society and a monoethnic culture. At first glance to most outsiders, throngs of Japanese salarymen clad in black suits with briefcases in hand crowding business districts and trains during rush hour certainly gives off this impression. Although recent census data indicated that the population consists of 97.8% Japanese nationals (News Bulletin December 28, 2021), the statistic overshadows the existence of minority communities such as the Ainu natives of Hokkaido, the Ryukyuan people of Okinawa, and ethnic members of the Burakumin, who descend from the lowest caste during Japan's feudal era (1185 – 1603). Moreover, there are groups of ethnic minorities who aren't considered Japanese citizens but maintain permanent residency such as the *Zainichi* Koreans, who were brought to Japan during the occupation of Korea (1910-1945) but are unable to naturalize without Japanese lineage. There are also a growing number of dual national citizens, colloquially referred to as "hafu", meaning half Japanese. These are children born with a Japanese and foreign parent and recent estimates suggest there are potentially over one million dual nationals with Japanese passports (Japan

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Times, 2023). Furthermore, Japan is undergoing major demographic shifts toward and aging society with nearly thirty percent of the population over 65 years old. The government's response to the dwindling number of working age citizens is to increase participation in the labor force of Japanese women and immigrants. The results have led to an all-time high of female participation in the workforce and a quadrupling of the number of foreign workers since 2008.

Taken together, all these trends point toward what appears to be a diversifying society in Japan, which mirrors what is happening globally through changes in demographics, migration, technology, and urbanization . Diverse societies are often characterized by multiple identities, diverse values, differing religious beliefs and practices, multiple languages, and different ways of thinking. Moreover, a diverse society requires an understanding of these differences, learning about inclusiveness, developing argumentative and conflict resolution skills, and the ability to overcome differences to achieve common goals. Japan is a country that has traditionally been characterized as a homogenous society that values harmony, cooperation, and unity. However, the growing diversity that has become an economic necessity poses new challenges to this traditional belief of Japan's image and the fabric of the society. This is why a course like Justice is even more important in the new age of an internationalized Japan.

The Justice course provides the background knowledge, the analytical tools, and the skills to achieve a cooperative society where disagreement and resolving differences is more of a norm. The Justice course helps foster critical thinking skills by allowing learners to understand differing perspectives and forcing learners to re-examine their own beliefs. It promotes civic skills and engagement by providing opportunities for debating the merits of different approaches. The emphasis in this course is that engaging in these types of civic activities is not exclusive to professional politicians, but provides a way for all citizens to participate in the political process

and fulfill their civic duty. Furthermore, the course provides an opportunity for students to understand some of the main philosophical underpinnings underlying many of the current debates in society. Utilitarianism, libertarianism, and virtue ethics are a limited selection of approaches to political philosophy, but they are some of the most influential and can be easily applied to most controversial topics in the headlines. By incorporating real-life case study examples, my aim was to provide students with a deeper understanding of the moral implications of political decisions and actions, such as in the case of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Furthermore, the course allows learners to practice conflict resolution by finding peaceful solutions to political and social disputes by looking at differing perspectives in a social group and ultimately deciding together the right thing to do. Finally, the Justice course helps students grow a sense of global awareness by understanding that justice extends beyond borders and can be applied to issues facing human civilization such as war, climate change and global pandemics.

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Appendix 1

Homework Reading - Libertarianism
リ バ タ リ ア ニ ズ ム

Whereas a utilitarian believes in the most good for the most people, those who believe in libertarianism want to maximize personal freedom. Libertarians believe that the government should never violate personal freedom—even if doing so would increase overall happiness. The word libertarianism comes from the word "liberty", which means the freedom to make your own choices in life. Libertarians feel that the government should have a very limited role in the choices people make. Libertarianism was influenced by the ideas of John Locke which were written and published in the book "Two Treatises of Government" in 1689. In this book, Locke argued that individual rights existed before government, the main role of government is to protect people's property and personal rights, and that governments that did not respect these rights should be removed.

Libertarianism today is often divided into two categories: social and economic. Social libertarianism rejects rules or laws that governments use to control people's behaviors. These laws are designed to protect people from harming themselves. For example, some libertarians believe the government should not make seat belt or helmet laws because it takes away the individual freedom to choose risks that are harmful to only oneself. Social libertarians also reject moral laws that are designed to discourage people from making choices the majority of people in the society believe are wrong. For example, libertarians are against laws that punish people for paying for sex or using drugs. These behaviors might be considered wrong by many people, but that does not mean people who do these things should be punished. Libertarians feel that the government should not decide what is right or wrong for adults as long as they are not harming any other people.

On the other hand, economic libertarians believe that there should be no laws that force people how to use their money. One example of this is are tax laws that tax wealthy people and use the money to help poor people. For a libertarian, this is like stealing—being forced to give the money you earned to other people. Furthermore, economic libertarians believe in a free-market economy. A free-market economy is an economy in which is generally free from laws and rules. For example, economic libertarians believe that there should be no minimum wage laws and that payment for work should be decided between workers and employers. The central argument for economic libertarianism is that people should have the right to do whatever they want with the things they own, including money and property. The only role of the government is to protect this right for people.

Generally, libertarians see government as the most dangerous threat to individual rights and personal freedom. However, there are disagreements between libertarians as to how much, if any, of a role the government should have in society. Some libertarians believe that a limited government is the best. In this case, the government has a very limited role in individual lives which include protecting people from criminals, protecting individual property, and enforcing contracts and agreements between people. Essentially, the main purpose of a government is to protect individual rights and liberty in society.

However, there are some libertarians who believe that there should be no government at all. These libertarians believe that people can peacefully exist and cooperate in a society without being forced by the government.

Libertarianism – Comprehension

1. Who developed the idea of libertarianism? Which book made it popular? When?

2. According to the book's author, what is the main role of the government?

3. What is liberty?

4. What are the two types of libertarians? What is the difference between them?

5. What do libertarians disagree about?

Libertarianism – Critical Thinking

Try to use libertarian principles to answer these ethical dilemmas.

1. Is it wrong for the government to require people to wear seat belts and helmets if they are not hurting anybody else? Even if we know more people will die without these laws?

2. Should the government allow people to use drugs privately, as long as it is done in the privacy of their home?

3. Is it OK for the government to tax the rich to help the poor? Should the government tax wealthy people and give use the money to help people who are homeless, unemployed, or single mothers?

4. There are many people who need a kidney transplant to continue to live. Also, there are many poor people who are willing to sell a kidney to help support their family. Should people be allowed to sell their organs to people who need them to live? Or should the government stop people from selling their organs?

Appendix 2

Unit 2 Vocabulary

Use your dictionary to define the word, identify the part of speech (PoS) and write a Japanese translation. Then write your own example sentences.

Liberty		PoS	noun	日本語	自由
Definition	The state of being free within society from rules created by an authority				
Example	Individuals should enjoy the **liberty** to pursue their own interests and preferences.				
Coercion		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Paternalism		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Rights		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Property		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Tax		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Free market		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Violate		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Redistribution		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Consent		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Labor		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					
Slavery		PoS		日本語	

Definition	
Example	

Theft		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					

Legitimate		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					

Limit		PoS		日本語	
Definition					
Example					

Appendix 3

Discontent over Fukushima nuclear disaster response casts shadow over Tokyo Olympics
By Catherine Thorbecke and Anthony Trotter
26 July 2021

Some 150 miles from Tokyo's Olympic venues, calendars on the walls of empty classrooms remain frozen on a date more than a decade in the past: March 11, 2011. Images from an abandoned elementary school in Futaba, Japan, are a strange reminder of the slow recovery efforts 10 years after a 9.0-magnitude earthquake triggered a tragic tsunami and caused Japan's worst nuclear disaster. About 164,000 people were forced to evacuate after the explosion of the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant. Many never returned home.

As the Japanese government goes ahead with the Olympic Games, some critics say that the government's promises that the situation in Fukushima is "under control" are false. Some also say the "Recovery Olympics" branding is unfair to residents who feel forgotten, and cleanup of the Dai-ichi power plant will take decades longer than government estimates.

Japanese officials insist radiation levels in reopened parts of Fukushima prefecture -- which is set to host baseball and softball for the Summer Games -- are safe for visitors, and many independent monitors agree. However, many say information about the situation from the government is unclear which has led to decreasing public trust. Furthermore, debate continues over what to do with the more than 1 million tons of "treated" radioactive wastewater piling up in storage tanks at the damaged nuclear power plant.

Kiyoshi Kurokawa, the chairman of the Fukushima Nuclear Accident Independent Investigation Commission, told ABC News that recovery efforts are far from complete and a permanent plan for how to dispose of contaminated waste is not in place. "It has a long way to go," Kurokawa told ABC News of Fukushima's recovery. "It's a very tragic thing -- and there are just certain people that cannot go back." While TEPCO has suggested a 30- to 40-year timeline for closing the nuclear power plant safely, Kurokawa said some research estimates it could take at least "100 years."

Before the COVID-19 pandemic became a global problem, the Japanese government originally promoted the 2020 Olympic Games as the "Recovery Olympics," meant to show how the nation rebuilt in the decade following the terrible disaster of 2011. For some residents or evacuees of Fukushima, however, hosting the Olympics at a cost of some $12.6 billion is a painful reminder of government-spending priorities.

"Some people feel abandoned not only by the government but also by the nation," Kazuya Hirano, a professor at the University of California, Los Angeles, told ABC News. "They also feel used for the promotion of the government slogan, the 'Recovery Olympics." Hirano said that the government ended financial support for evacuees in 2017, but most have not returned home.

Safecast's Brown said that he feels some people in the region take pride in hosting Olympic events, as it provides something to be optimistic about. "But for them to try to use this as a way to showcase recovery, it was a sketchy idea from the beginning and I think now it's probably certainly backfired," he said. "Instead, it will only highlight the problems and the lack of recovery."

"We spend a lot of time with people in communities we help," Brown said. "They're all totally skeptical of these big-picture things, like to spend millions and millions on Olympics. They are saying we need more support for concrete things -- actual support for small businesses, actual support for single parents."

With "real, concrete things" still not adequately taken care of in Fukushima, Brown said many residents view the billions of dollars pumped into the Olympics as "just misspent funds."

In his 2013 speech promoting Tokyo as a host city, then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe told members of the International Olympic Committee that the situation in Fukushima is "under control" and "has never done and will never do any damage to Tokyo." His words have made Fukushima residents angry for years.

In July 2020, Katsunobu Sakurai -- who was mayor of Minamiosama, Fukushima, at the time of the disaster criticized the "Recovery Olympics" branding in an interview with the one of the country's biggest newspapers. "No matter how much you tout the games as a sign of recovery, the overall picture of only Tokyo prospering while the recovery of the disaster-hit areas in the Tohoku region remains undone will not change," he told the Mainichi newspaper, referring to the region that is home to Fukushima. "I've been to Tokyo many times, and saw that there were more crane trucks at the construction site of the athletes' village than in the disaster-hit areas." "It was obvious at a glance where the national government was placing its resources," he added.

"The Japanese government has prepared for the Olympics while upholding the 'disaster recovery' label, even though a recovery is far from reality," Sakurai said to the Mainichi newspaper in July 2020. "It is superficial to declare a recovery with no actual progress."

Adapted from:
https://abcnews.go.com/International/discontent-fukushima-nuclear-disaster-response-casts-shadow-tokyo/story?id=78821471

Facts

Identify at least five facts from the article and explain why it is important.

	Fact	Importance
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

Opposing Arguments

The article discusses the perspective of the government and the perspective of the people of the Tohoku region. What are the arguments on each side?

	Japanese Government	People of Tohoku
Current situation in the region		
"Recovery" Olympics		
Use of government money		

Discussion Questions

The Japanese government spent $12.6 billion to host the Olympics. This is the most that has ever been spent on the Olympics. Millions of people from around the world watched the competitions and it brought a great amount of happiness. However, people from the Tohoku region are still suffering from the 2011 disaster and the money could have been used to help people in the region recover.

1. From a utilitarian perspective, what is the right thing for the government to do?

2. If you were to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of using the money for the Olympics or using it for people recovering from the Tohoku disaster, which choice do you think would have the most benefit?

3. What would John Stuart Mill say about this?

Your Discussion Questions

    1.

    2.

Your Answers to Your Discussion Questions

    1.

    2.

Group Discussion Reflection (Complete <u>after</u> the group discussion)

1. What were some interesting or surprising things you discussed in your group discussions?

2. Which discussion question did you find most interesting and why?

3. What is something new you learned about this topic after discussing it with your classmates?

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Appendix 4

Discussion Strategies & Language	
Strategy	**Language**
Introducing a topic	Let's talk about…
Asking discussion questions	What do you think about…? What are the main causes of…? What are the effects of…? What are the main benefits of…? What are the main problems with…?
Reacting/Commenting	I see/understand. That's interesting.
Evaluating ideas	I think that's a (great/good/bad/very bad) idea because… That idea/argument is…
Asking follow-up questions	Who/what/where/when/why/how/do/will/can … Are/do/can/have/would you…? Why do you think so? Can you give me an example?
Asking for more information	Tell me about that/it.
Agreeing/disagreeing with reasons and extra information	I agree/disagree… I think so too because…/I don't think so because… I'm not sure I agree… That's a good point because …
Giving opinions/answers with reasons and examples	In my opinion… I think… …because…for example
Discussing benefits	The main benefit of… The advantage of…
Attributing ideas	According to…