

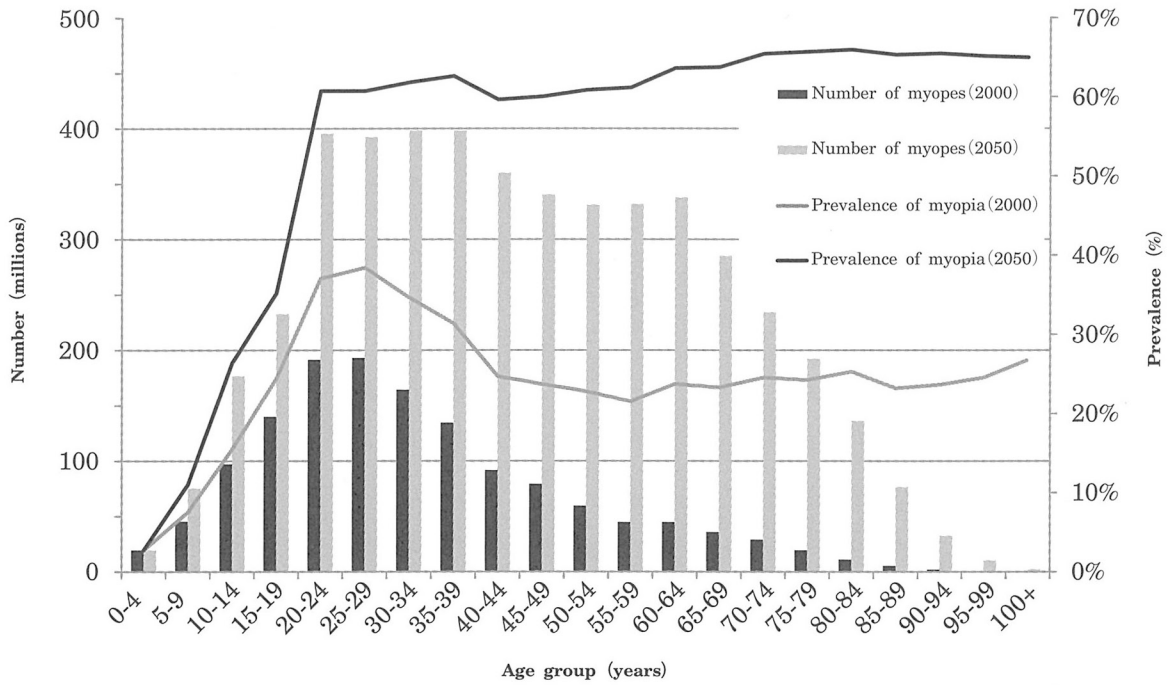
ALL answers must be written clearly within the boxes provided on the ANSWER SHEET.

I Answer the following questions in ENGLISH.

Do you think it would be better to be 20 years old and have very little money, or to be 60 years old and be financially very well off? Why or why not?

II Answer the following question in ENGLISH.

In your opinion, what are the most important facts or trends illustrated by the graph below? Discuss at least two, justifying your position.



A graph showing the distribution of people with myopia (short-sightedness) across age groups in 2000 (recorded) and 2050 (projected).

[Taken from Brien A. Holden, et al., "Global Prevalence of Myopia and High Myopia and Temporal Trends from 2000 through 2050," *American Academy of Ophthalmology*, 2016.]

III Read the following passage and briefly summarize it in JAPANESE.

Michael Sandel, in his book *The Tyranny of Merit: What's Become of the Common Good?* launches a direct attack on the philosophical underpinnings of meritocracy. Meritocracy, he argues, is obviously imperfect in its current form; it approximates true equality of opportunity only roughly. But even if equality of opportunity *were* attainable, which Sandel doubts, he thinks meritocracy would be neither desirable nor sustainable: even a perfect meritocracy has multiple flaws that make it unjust. The biggest problem is that meritocracy demands equality of opportunity at the *starting line*, but legitimates whatever inequalities *follow* as natural products of innate differences in talent and virtue: hardworkingness, intelligence, perseverance.

Sandel worries that such meritocratically sanctioned inequalities of outcome cultivate insidious self-satisfaction among the “winners,” who believe they’ve fully *earned* the fruit of their hard work, without appreciating the luck, circumstances, and public goods that allow intelligence and hard work to blossom fully. The failure to see that many events are random, such as having to drop out of high school, can lead “winners” to strip dignity, pride, and honor from work that doesn’t require higher-educational credentials. “A perfect meritocracy banishes all sense of gift or grace,” Sandel writes. “It diminishes our capacity to see ourselves as sharing a common fate. It leaves little room for the solidarity that can arise when we reflect on the contingency of our talents and fortunes.”

Many people believe that making college admissions as fair as possible will distribute power more fairly: that educational meritocracy remedies inequality. Sandel doubts that’s the case. He cites research showing that the more money your family has, the more likely you are to go to college. That’s true even at moderately selective institutions that do create strong upward mobility, and drastically more noticeable at the most selective schools. To take just one statistic from the research: “At Ivy League colleges, Stanford, Duke, and other prestigious places, there are more students from the wealthiest 1% of families than from the entire bottom half of the country.”

But competition for a fixed number of spots at selective universities makes acceptance feel intensely *earned* to those who’ve fought for them—and this, Sandel worries, is where meritocracy causes its true moral corrosion. No one *deserves* admission to Harvard, or anywhere else. But Sandel reports anecdotally that through the decades, students of every political persuasion and background in his classes *have* grown more ardent in the belief that they earned their place. Making university admissions random above a basic minimum threshold, he proposes, would inculcate a healthy humility in students. It would at least help to rid applicants, successful and unsuccessful, of the illusion that admission decisions measure their personal worth.

[Adapted from S.L. Lenfield, “No One Deserves a Spot at Harvard,”
Harvard Magazine, September-October 2020.]

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