

1 次の英文を読んで、設問に答えなさい。

Today, rap music accounts for around 26% of the global music market. Nowadays, mainstream, popular forms of rap are not confrontational*¹, use safe language, and offer diverse lyrical*² themes. Under the control of major record labels, artists must not offend, create controversy, or cause problems. We could probably designate this style as safe rap, which is performed by people from all countries, can be played on the radio, and is listened to by all. However, rap's journey to this era of safety and industry control has been
(1) happening since the genre became popular over five decades ago. This short article will explore the origin of rap music, where and how it developed, and how the record industry took hold, changed, and sold rap, removing it from its cultural roots.

Rap's origins can (ア) the South Bronx, New York, in the early 1980s. Local DJ Kool Herc would host 'bloc parties' where members of the community would come together to listen to him mix records on two turntables. Although these communities were primarily African American, Herc drew on multiple musical genres to create the music he performed. In those early sets, he would use samples from funk and disco records but also utilized British rock, jazz classics, and even spoken word albums such as the boxer Muhammad Ali's, *I Am the Greatest*. However, one of the most important elements of this scene was probably the coming of rap. As a DJ was mixing, an MC (Master of Ceremonies) would begin to speak, or "rap," over the beats and rhythms. Often, the lyrical focus would surround social issues in specific communities, such as economic hardship, lack of opportunity, racism, or inequality. The introduction of rapping was crucial as it provided social commentary to a DJ's rhythmic creations.

Rapidly spreading across America, rap became a musical phenomenon during the latter part of the 1970s, and it was only a matter of time before it

was given wider attention. In 1979, New Jersey band The Sugarhill Gang released the song *Rapper's Delight*, which achieved worldwide success and brought rap into mainstream popular culture. Although many early rap songs were politically neutral, in opposition to this more commercial sound, there existed rap groups who were extremely confrontational. In the mid-1980s, New York's Public Enemy found an audience that connected with their lyrics^{*3}, which promoted Black Power and expressed dissatisfaction with authority. A little later, on the West Coast, bands such as NWA expressed similar sentiment; however, in this case, the lyrical delivery was often deeply controversial and extremely confrontational. Despite the politicised lyrics, both bands had great success in the American charts. Rap had become a big business, and upon seeing it become more popular, major record labels began to take notice, signing bands and putting strategies in place to make money on its success.

As already discussed, rap was a primarily African American genre that emerged from hardship and social struggle. The music industry's challenge was making it acceptable for a younger, wider audience. This was achieved by⁽³⁾ weakening the original message, eliminating the protest element, and offering lyrics which were positive and non-offensive. This can be observed through the promotion and success of artists such as MC Hammer, and Vanilla Ice. The music industry began to take control, and the genre was regulated, owned, and governed by profit-driven record companies. Music scholar, Amy Coddington notes, this "meant that anyone, regardless of race, could profit from the genre, as the culture was quickly absorbed by the mostly white-owned, business minded media industries." There were still many rap artists who continued to use rap as a form of protest, but over time, this original element of rap disappeared, as record companies released a huge number of meaningless records by questionable talent.

Today, rap remains a hugely popular and profitable genre of music and

DJs and rappers have become ever more creative. The genre has given birth to many sub-genres, and is sung in many different countries and languages. However, the original, cultural message of rap has been lost as companies attempt to make money on the success of the genre. It is also interesting to note that, even though this form of art was born out of (イ), it has gone on to be one of the most successful, well-known, and widely appreciated music genres in the world, and has made many in the music industry extremely wealthy.

*¹confrontational : 「対立的な」を表す

*²lyrical : この文脈では「歌詞の」を表す

*³lyric : 「歌詞」を表す

問 1 下線部(1)を日本語に訳しなさい。

問 2 空欄(ア)に入る最も適切な語句を次から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) be traced back to
- (B) be taken place in
- (C) be detached from
- (D) be derived from

問 3 下線部(2)が意味する内容として最も適切なものを次から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) confidence in politics
- (B) racial anger
- (C) lack of self-esteem
- (D) obedience to power

問 4 下線部③を、文頭の This が表す内容を明示して、日本語に訳しなさい。

問 5 空欄(イ)に入る最も適切な語を次から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) fear
- (B) creativity
- (C) poverty
- (D) tradition

問 6 本文の内容と一致するものを次の(A)~(F)から2つ選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) Rap began at around the same time in several communities, with active local hosts.
- (B) DJ Kool Herc mixed different types of music, and he did not stick to the purity of combining only American records.
- (C) Rap has become extremely creative to this day, but commercial music has caused the genre to lose its diversity.
- (D) Rap with aggressive lyrics was commercially successful, but political rap did not become popular in America.
- (E) Rap was originally developed mainly by African Americans, but it was commercialized by others.
- (F) The music industry found it easy to popularize rap among the younger generation, but it struggled with the middle-aged audience.

2 次の英文を読んで、設問に答えなさい。

During my time living in Thailand, one experience made a particularly lasting impression on me. It was an encounter that taught me something important about the many ways people experience the present moment. One of the professors at the local university where I was teaching invited me to visit a monastery*¹ in a nearby town. When we arrived, the atmosphere was serene, and there was a feeling that the passing of time had somehow slowed to a crawl. We were invited to sit and share a meal with the monks. They sat cross-legged on a simple wooden platform, surrounded by bowls of food that had been offered to them by local villagers as part of a daily tradition. What struck me immediately was how they spent an equal amount of time on each bite as if that was in some way meaningful. Each monk took measured portions from each bowl, distributing the food equally and deliberately. They didn't comment on the taste, nor did they show preference or excitement over any particular dish. Regardless of what they were eating, they chewed slowly, in a calm, ritualistic way.

Later, I discussed what I had observed with the professor. He explained that the monks practiced this style of eating in order to avoid becoming attached to either positive or negative feelings. Their goal was not to seek pleasure or avoid discomfort but to remain fully aware of each moment, without letting thoughts or emotions interfere. The idea was to train the mind to observe without clinging to thoughts and therefore to focus simply on eating without distraction. It occurred to me at the time that there was a very important lesson to be learned from this approach to everyday life.

This experience seemed to sharply contrast with a Christmas dinner I had with my sister's family in the UK that same year. My sister, who is an incredible cook, had prepared a meal using traditional British ingredients. Roast meats, stuffing, vegetables, sauces, and desserts covered the table. Her

children, four sons and three daughters, along with their partners, filled the house with energy and laughter. There was a (ア) to the evening, with people talking over one another, teasing, joking, and warmly praising my sister for her cooking. There was no holding back of emotion, with each bite seemingly bringing joy and a sense of communal celebration.

It is possible to view these as two opposite experiences in some ways. The first seemed to focus on the importance of detachment, (イ) the second focused on active connection. However, (ウ) their obvious differences, both the monks and my family shared the extremely important characteristic of being present or in the moment. It's also worth mentioning that both experiences are recognized as being beneficial to people's mental health. Detachment from following your thoughts, as practiced by those monks, has been widely studied and is known to reduce stress and anxiety. This practice has become mainstream in the West through certain types of meditation, which are accessible to people of any background.⁽³⁾ On the other hand, strong social bonds, the ability to openly express emotions, and shared rituals have also been linked to better mental health, increased happiness, and even a longer life.

At first glance, these two meals could hardly seem more different, with one focusing on calmness and restraint, the other excitement and noise. Yet what struck me was not their contrast, but their common ground: a deep sense of presence while in the company of others. In the quiet concentration of the monks and the lively exchanges around my sister's table, there was the same underlying commitment to being fully engaged in the moment. In today's world, where conversations are often interrupted by phone screens and attention is split between countless digital distractions, these moments felt like rare examples of true connection. Whether through calm focus or joyful togetherness, both experiences offered a reminder of how valuable it is to truly be there for the people and the moments that matter.

*¹monastery : 僧院(出家者が修行や共同生活をする場所)

問 1 下線部(1)を日本語に訳しなさい。

問 2 下線部(2)が意味する内容として最も適切なものを次から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) dining quietly in a systematic way
- (B) using simple, plant-derived dishes to serve food
- (C) eating the same amount of food as the day before
- (D) sharing food with local residents

問 3 空欄(ア)に入る最も適切な表現を次から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) sacred calmness
- (B) solitary moment
- (C) joyful chaos
- (D) structured routine

問 4 空欄(イ)と(ウ)に入る語、もしくは語句の組み合わせとして最も適切なものを次から選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) イ : however ウ : according to
- (B) イ : while ウ : despite
- (C) イ : meanwhile ウ : due to
- (D) イ : whereas ウ : though

問 5 下線部(3)を、文頭の This が表す内容を明示して、日本語に訳しなさい。

問 6 本文の内容と一致しないものを次の(A)~(F)から 2 つ選び、記号で答えなさい。

- (A) The Thai monks changed their eating speed depending on the type of food they ate.
- (B) After the conversation with the professor, the author gained valuable insights.
- (C) The author's sister's cooking skill was highly appreciated by the author and other attendees of the party.
- (D) The monks did not exhibit any opinions about what they ate while they were eating.
- (E) The author believes that, compared to the Christmas dinner experience, the meditative activities in Thailand were more beneficial in improving mental health.
- (F) Both dining styles the author experienced share the characteristic of allowing a deep sense of connection with others.

3

Read the following passage.

There is a concept called “noodle harassment,” which refers to the idea that the sound of slurping*¹ noodles causes discomfort and mental distress to others. In particular, in Western countries, slurping noodles while eating is considered bad manners and is said to be the equivalent to harassment. The term is believed to have originated in 2016 when a social media user pointed out that “noodle harassment exists in Japan,” which led to this expression being picked up by various media outlets.

One Japanese TV show featured this noodle harassment. When the program staff showed foreign tourists a video of people eating ramen, the tourists described their behavior as “bad manners,” or made other negative comments. However, a commentator on the TV show noted that slurping noodles is simply a part of Japanese food culture, and it is not necessary to be considerate towards foreigners. In fact, the culture of slurping noodles has existed in Japan for many years, with some saying that it can be traced back to the Edo period. For example, in classic Japanese rakugo, there is a story that depicts the act of slurping hot soba noodles using a folding fan in the same way that people use chopsticks. It is said that the best thing is to express the slurping sound as realistically as possible. This suggests that in Japanese culture, eating in this way can be positively valued.

Beyond its cultural significance, slurping noodles also offers several practical benefits. When noodles are slurped, air flows through both the mouth and nose, allowing one to be able to experience the food’s aroma more effectively. This then contributes significantly to flavor perception, and enhances the taste, making it similar to the practice of adding oxygen to wine when tasting it. In addition, slurping noodles helps to manage temperature. As noodles pass through the air before entering the mouth, they cool slightly, reducing the risk of burns and making the food easier and safer to eat. This is

especially beneficial for hot dishes like ramen. Moreover, slurping can also enhance engagement in the meal. The sound of the physical rhythm of slurping may increase concentration and satisfaction, making the dining experience more enjoyable.

In recent years, a huge number of foreign tourists have been visiting Japan. In some very famous tourist spots, there are probably more foreign than Japanese tourists. In such a place, it is worth considering what the act of slurping noodles means.

*¹slurping : (麺類などを)すすること

Answer questions A to C **in English**. You may use words and ideas from the text, but **must not** copy complete sentences.

Question A

Complete the following sentences.

In the second paragraph, a commentator on the Japanese TV show expressed a _____ of the foreign visitor's reaction, because _____.

Furthermore, it is related to one of the Japanese traditional performing arts.

Question B

Complete the following sentence.

According to the third paragraph, slurping noodles has practical benefits such as _____, _____, and increasing engagement in the dining experience.

Question C

Considering the article you have read, at noodle restaurants in Japan (e.g. ramen shops, soba shops, udon shops), do you think it is problematic or not to slurp your noodles when eating them next to a foreigner? Write a 70-100 word paragraph to explain your thoughts.

4

Read the following transcript [I] of a conversation between friends, Yuki and Sakura. Then, read the summary of the transcript [II]. The summary contains 12 blanks. For each blank, choose the most appropriate option from the list. Each option can be used only once. On your answer sheet, write the letter (A, B, C, etc.) that corresponds to your choice.

[I : Conversation]

Yuki: Hey Sakura, have you noticed how many electric cars are on the road lately? There also seem to be more parking lots now with chargers.

Sakura: Yeah, I've seen that too! There are ads everywhere — on billboards, in the subway. They're definitely getting more popular.

Yuki: Yeah, for sure. My uncle just bought one.

Sakura: Really? I mean I can kind of see the attraction, but I'm still not a hundred percent sure about them.

Yuki: Well, I think they're pretty cool. For starters, they don't produce any emissions like regular gasoline cars, so they're way better for air quality around cities, right?

Sakura: Hmm... that's difficult to deny, but a lot of the electricity that powers electric cars still comes from fossil fuels. In a country like Japan, where we rely so much on thermal power, can we really say electric cars are completely green?

Yuki: Not yet, but aren't we slowly getting there by shifting toward renewables?

Sakura: Hopefully, but progress could stop at any time.

Yuki: Not if we can start generating more electricity from solar and wind. Then, electric cars could become a truly clean way to get around. It'd just be a matter of time.

Sakura: That's what people are hoping, but, no one really knows how long that shift will take. And then there's the battery issue. You'd agree that mining for materials like lithium and cobalt seriously damages the environment, right? And then there are serious concerns about the workers being exploited.

Yuki: Yeah, I've heard about that. There's a big problem in parts of Africa, where kids are forced to mine cobalt under horrible conditions. It's heartbreaking. They definitely need to find a way to sort those problems out.

Sakura: Exactly! And even after the batteries are made, they only last about 8 to 10 years before they start to degrade. Replacing them isn't cheap, and we still don't have an acceptable method to recycle those batteries.

Yuki: Hmm... that's a good point. But I've heard recycling tech is getting better.

Sakura: In what way?

Yuki: Well, some places are finding ways to reuse old batteries for energy storage, which could really help with the environmental side of things.

Sakura: That would be awesome if it became more common. The problem is that from a car owner's point of view, there are still some hassles like charging that takes way longer than filling up with gas. Waiting for 30 minutes or longer would be a real pain for anyone.

Yuki: My uncle mentioned that too. Long road trips are tricky — you have to plan your route around charging stations. Having to stop for half an hour every couple of hundred kilometers is too much for most people.

Sakura: That's assuming you even find a fast charger. Good luck finding

one in a rural area! Another thing that worries me is resource supply. If the world keeps shifting to electric cars, will we even have enough lithium and cobalt? Some experts think we could run out, or at least have shortages in some countries.

Yuki: That's why a lot of companies are working on alternatives like solid-state batteries. They're supposed to be safer and more efficient, and on top of that they say they'll use fewer rare materials. And let's not forget hydrogen fuel cell cars — they're getting some attention too.

Sakura: Yeah, it really feels like we're still in a transition period. I don't think the perfect eco-friendly car exists yet.

Yuki: I totally agree. Electric cars are a great step forward, but they're not the final answer. What we need is ongoing innovation, strong policies, and a stronger shift to renewable energy.

Sakura: I think what really matters is finding a balance, both between environmental goals and what's practical and between technological progress and doing the right thing ethically.

Yuki: Exactly. This is bigger than a conversation about cars — it's about what kind of future we want to build.

Sakura: Yeah, talking to you about this really opened my eyes. It's not a simple "for or against" issue. It's about seeing the whole picture.

[II : Summary]

Yuki and Sakura are having a conversation about the growing presence of electric cars. Yuki is (1) that more people are driving electric cars and that many parking lots now have charging stations. His uncle has even bought an electric car recently. Although Sakura agrees that electric cars are becoming more popular, she says she is still (2) about their overall impact.

Yuki explains that electric cars are environmentally friendly because they do not (3) harmful emissions like traditional gasoline cars, which benefits urban air quality. However, Sakura points out that most electricity used to power electric cars is still generated from fossil fuels, especially in countries like Japan that (4) heavily on thermal power. She questions whether electric cars can be considered entirely green and sustainable.

Yuki acknowledges this concern but argues that the world is moving toward renewable energy. If electricity can be generated from clean sources like solar and wind power, electric cars could become a truly green transportation option. Sakura agrees in (5), but she is worried about how long the transition will take. She also highlights environmental problems related to battery production, such as the harmful impact of mining rare metals and the (6) treatment of workers in some regions.

Yuki agrees that these issues must be addressed. Sakura further points out that electric car batteries (7) last only 8 to 10 years and that replacement costs are high. Moreover, there is no fully established system for recycling used batteries yet.

Yuki responds that such technology is advancing rapidly, with some companies trying to reuse old batteries for energy storage purposes. Sakura says she would like to see such practices become more widespread but mentions that consumers still face practical (8).

Yuki adds that long-distance travel in an electric car requires careful planning because charging stations, especially fast chargers, are still (9) in many areas. Sakura also worries about the global supply of rare metals like lithium and cobalt as electric car demand (10).

To address these challenges, Yuki says that companies are investing in innovative technologies, such as solid-state batteries and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.

Both agree that the automobile industry is still in a transitional phase.

Yuki emphasizes that while electric cars are an important step forward, they are not the final solution. Sakura concludes that finding the right (11) between environmental goals and practical realities, as well as between technological progress and ethical responsibility, is essential. After their discussion, she realizes that understanding the full picture of electric cars is more (12) than simply being for or against them.

(A) advantages	(B) affect	(C) aware
(D) balance	(E) complex	(F) consistency
(G) decreases	(H) destroy	(J) detail
(K) discord	(L) doubtful	(M) generally
(N) generous	(O) inconveniences	(P) increases
(Q) indifferent	(R) observant	(S) plentiful
(T) principle	(U) produce	(W) rarely
(X) rely	(Y) scarce	(Z) unethical

注) 選択肢(I)と(V)は設定していない