

2025

後

入学試験問題

小論文

注意事項

○問題について

1. 試験開始の合図があるまでは、この問題冊子の内容を見てはいけません。
2. 問題は全部で13ページです。とじ間違いや、印刷不鮮明の箇所があれば申し出なさい。

○解答について

1. 解答用紙は3枚です。
2. 全ての解答用紙に受験番号を記入しなさい。
3. 解答は、解答用紙の指定された欄に枠からはみ出さないように記入しなさい。
4. 解答は、黒鉛筆(シャープペンシル可)を使用し、横書きで記入しなさい。
5. 解答欄がマス目になっている設問では、1マスに1文字ずつ記入しなさい。句読点・記号も1文字と数えること。ただし、アラビア数字・アルファベットは1マスに2文字ずつとする。

○その他

1. 質問など、何か用事があるときは、手をあげて知らせなさい。
2. 解答が終わっても、途中退出は出来ません。ただし、トイレに行きたい場合や気分が悪くなったときは、手をあげて知らせなさい。
3. 不正行為を行った場合や、試験監督の指示に従わない場合には採点しません。
4. この問題冊子は持ち帰りなさい。

次の文章は、最近大学を卒業したある若者がウェブ上で発表した文章です。これを最後まで読み、後ろの設問1～4に答えなさい。なお、解答は、日本語かつ指定された字数内で所定の解答欄に書くこと。

WHACK! A shoe struck my head. Had a fight broken out? I looked around. Nothing was out of the ordinary. Everyone was going about their day, rushing to catch the next class after recess. Everyone, that is, except for this one eight-year-old boy — my age at the time — standing a little distance away. He had a frown on his face, yelling, his sharp words blending in with background noise.

I couldn't catch what he was saying — I didn't know enough Japanese at the time. But there was no way I could mistake his body language and facial expression for anything other than aggression.

I stood there awkwardly. I had no idea how to even ask for help. Surely other students must have seen it? But no. Everybody carried on, as if nothing had happened.

This was not how I imagined Tokyo would be.

I. Winter

As an eight-year-old kid, I had no idea that my life was heading toward winter. Since I was born, I had lived in warm, summery Southeast Asia. I was raised by a Filipino mother and titas*, while my Japanese father lived in Japan. It wasn't until in the third grade that I began to live in cold, snowy Tokyo. Little did I know that my whole life back then would be heading toward winter.

I was excited. I didn't speak a word of Japanese, but I couldn't wait for school to begin.

I had a great first day of school — a lot of kids talked to me, and there wasn't a single moment I felt lonely. I was the new kid from abroad. I was interesting that way. Like Christmas songs playing over and over again at the malls in those months, I kept repeating a well-rehearsed introduction of myself: "I'm Reina! I'm

from Hong Kong but I was born in the Philippines! My mother is Filipino! My father is Japanese! I just moved to Tokyo! Please be kind to me!” Like a child at the malls on Christmas, I didn’t want to leave the crowd despite how the songs were playing on a loop.

But just as Christmas eventually ends, so too did the excitement and expectation of any new kid from abroad. The language barrier showed itself for what it was: A large wall separating me and the rest of society. At the time, I thought this barrier was made of ice. I had to melt the ice — I was the only person capable of melting the ice to get to the other side. If I could get to the other side, I believed, everyone was waiting for me. If I could get to the other side, my father would be proud of me.

So I got to work breaking that ice. I took private Japanese lessons twice a week. While my classmates had regular lessons, I left the classroom for a separate room, where I was taught Japanese grammar and rules. It was a language support service provided by the city to kids who were not able to speak Japanese, and my teacher was one of their volunteers. I got to work, and I worked hard.

In my fourth grade, I graduated from the lessons. The ice had completely melted.

I learned that it didn’t make that much of a difference.

“Hafu!” other kids called me.

“Gaijin!”

“Kikokushijo!”

The giggles. The stares. The finger-pointings. The not-wanting-to-be-pairs-with-yous. The sighs. The language ice wall had completely melted, but it doesn’t take to know a language to realise that you don’t fit in a community.

The wall wasn’t made of ice. It seems, then, that it was made of mud — mud that was integral* to who I was. But what was it, exactly?

Was it my name? Most of my classmates did not have a name written in katakana — Japanese characters used to express borrowed or foreign words — but my mother had given me the name ‘Cristine’. So I hid that and went by ‘Reina Kudo’. No one taught me how to play this card but I learned it somehow.

Was it my mother tongue? Deliberately, I unlearned Tagalog and Bisaya, languages my mother and families in the Philippines spoke.

Was it my accent? Fine. I would stay mute unless absolutely necessary.

Was it my darker skin tone? As a child, I saw my half-sister washing her entire body with body scrub and commercials promoting products that claimed to bleach darker skin. In the Philippines, I was complimented for my lighter complexion*. My mother was praised by other mothers at the hospital as they complimented snow white baby Reina. When I grew older, Filipino folks often mistook her as our family’s domestic helper because I do not share the morena* skin of hers. People thought I was a Chinese-Filipino, but my mum would tell them her daughter is Japanese.

But I wasn’t Japanese. I’d managed to obtain a Japanese nationality, that was true. I was secured in Japan, with safe and clean water, food on the table, and a roof above my head. I have all the choices and opportunities other Japanese citizens have. My mum was right when she told me how lucky I was, having all of the things she couldn’t have as a child.

I’d gotten over the obsession with skin tone, but getting over the standard of being Japanese set by other Japanese children was another thing entirely. The wall of ice had melted, but the wall of mud was as strong as ever.

II. Spring

As the ice melted and the winter of my childhood years began to subside, flowers of hope began to bloom. Seeds were planted early by my Japanese teacher in junior high.

“You know, being half Japanese and half Filipino can be a privilege!” he said.
(1)

I smiled and nodded. I didn’t believe it at the time. He wouldn’t understand.

“It means you’re fortunate enough to have a heritage in multiple cultures. Culturally speaking, you’re twice as rich as the rest of us!”

I furrowed my brows. I never really thought about it that way. “You think so?”

“Yes, definitely! I think people like you will have amazing careers bridging both nations.”

“Thank you.” I smiled again. This time, I realised I wanted to believe those words.

That was the first time I ever felt a surge of pride and determination in myself. People had always been laughing at me. But maybe I could prove them wrong. Maybe I could actually succeed in life. Wouldn’t that be the best revenge?

From then on, I devoted myself to my studies. My name began to rise to the upper echelons of high-achieving students. This was my spring — a pivotal* moment that bolstered* my confidence. Through the words and guidance of my teacher at that time, I was put on a track that would, I believe, allow me to bloom and take me higher in life.

“You’re still not good enough, Reina!” My friend laughed. With the entrance exams for high schools a year away from us, we were discussing our GPAs.

“What do you mean?” I asked.

“Because you’re a *hafu!*”

She meant it as a joke, of course. But it hurt, especially coming from someone I cared about. She was reducing everything back to my identity again and disregarding all of the efforts I’d made until that point. Obviously, I had some setbacks. But I don’t take too kindly to that kind of joke anymore.

I cut her off afterwards. Looking back, the determination I had was really

something. If this had been me in elementary school, I would have laughed along and internalised* the shame once again. But teenage Reina wouldn't have that.

Perhaps it was a harsh decision. But it was also a realisation* that served as an anchor for my journey of self-growth.

By the time I reached my late teens, I was convinced I'd found my calling: To help children in poverty in the Philippines. Like every other ambition, this dream of mine was influenced by two things. First was the vision of my teacher, who saw potential in me. Second was teenage Reina's thirst for vengeance, for proving everyone wrong. I was relentlessly* driven — I could be a hero from Japan!

My privilege⁽²⁾ of being Japanese aided me in forming such a conflicted dream. To achieve this dream, I had to resume my studies at a university and learn about the Philippines.

According to statistics, merely 10% of youths with Filipino heritage in Japan manage to attend higher education. Despite the odds, I managed to get into a university which provided a Filipino Studies programme. I immersed myself in the joy of learning about the heritage I once tried to get rid of.

In the classroom, I felt a strange sense of equal parts familiarity and loss. All my classmates were eager learners of the language and history of the Philippines. I was surrounded with people who did not look down on Filipino culture. I felt safe. On the other hand, my knowledge of the Philippines was just a tip of the iceberg. There was so much I didn't know. Sometimes, I thought, my best friend in the programme knew more than I did. How come I didn't?

I was defeated and discouraged. The heat of my own ambitions had sapped me. Instead of facing the uncanny feelings, I ran away.

III. Summer

When I ran, I ran far. In January 2022, I got into a student exchange programme and left Japan for Vancouver, Canada.

Settling in was relatively easy. Nobody questioned my upbringing. People

were less interested in who I was. Fewer guessing games were done by my peers, and there was less pressure to conform to specific expectations from my surroundings. I was just another piece to their mosaic. People saw me just for me, and I kept myself as a blank space waiting to be drawn with memories and experiences.

It was July 2022 when I heard the news. A text message from my mum.

"Your dad is ill," she said. I frowned. I texted her back to find out more.

"Oesophagus Cancer. Stage 3."

My knees felt weak. I sank into my bed. The phone felt heavy and cold. I dialled my mum and spent the next hour in tears, emptiness welling up inside my chest.

I was alone in a foreign country with nothing but a smartphone connecting me to my family. I had no one I could lean on. My close friend had recently moved out. Classes had stopped for the summer, which meant that I had no distractions.

I had never felt so lost before in my life.

My dad was too weak to respond to my text messages then. However, my mum would set up a group call every other day. On days he felt better, we had our cameras on. From Spain, my sister joined the call, and from Hong Kong my half-siblings did. I was worried and scared but seeing their faces reminded me that I was not alone.

"How many more months till you come home?"

My mum asked us one by one even though she knew the answer. My dad told me not to worry and to focus on my studies. Our call would go on for hours until the time differences separated us again. Words are equivalent to a hug, I thought. *I'll be home soon.*

My parents were right. This was no time to give up. Vancouver summers were pleasant, and despite such gloomy news, I tried to take every opportunity I had to turn things around.

Around the same time, I began working as a server at a ramen shop in Kerrisdale. The fast-paced environment seemed healthy for me as time went by so quickly.

On one busy day, there sat a couple on the table I was in charge of. I took their orders, served them their ramen, and gave them their check. Then came the questions.

“Where are you from?” said the customer.

“I’m from Japan,” I said.

“Your English is really good.”

“I think that’s because I’ve been studying it for years now.”

They looked at each other, seeming unsatisfied with my answer.

“Do you happen to be mixed?” asked the woman.

“Oh, yeah,” I said.

“Which one?”

“My mum’s Filipino, and my dad’s Japanese.”

“I told you so,” she said to her friend, finally looking satisfied.

I flinched. Another guessing game. The woman proceeded to explain they were placing a bet; whoever guessed my ethnicity incorrectly would get the bill.

It didn’t matter at all who won or lost. What matters is how unseriously we’re taken, how little our self-identification matters.

I’d gotten over my internalised shame. Yet that uneasy feeling remains — that frustrating second-hand embarrassment for how such ignorance continues.

IV. Fall

I can't quite remember what the man called me — a racial slur in the middle of the day in Robson Square while I was volunteering. I recalled the shivers and the feeling of being a target of a predator once again. It was 2022, about two years since the outbreak of the global pandemic and hate crime towards Asians were skyrocketing.

Just like my young self, I stood there blankly first, but proceeded to make distance with the man. This time, however, my fellow volunteer stood up for me. They shooed the man away. I wasn't completely alone.

I was reminded that my appearance as an Asian could make me vulnerable*. And that Asians in Canada are treated as a monolith* with little attention paid to intraracial diversity.

I was also reminded of how my mum raised me to believe that the outside world was as dangerous as the breaking news. Kidnappers kidnapping foreign children in Metro Manila made headlines around the 1990s, as I was told.

But I was reminded a little too late as I had already stepped into a dark alley on my way back home. A nameless feeling crept over me, a blend of apprehension* and curiosity. My mum's warning echoed in my head while the darkness seemed to possess its gravity, slowly and surely pulling me deeper into its depths.

I was struck by memories. I thought about the things I have been holding onto: Your simper, your words, your accusations, deadlines, my thesis paper. But most prominently: My dad's first major surgery in October.

My heart broke once more. It forced me to think about worst-case scenarios. The questions were not just emotional — they were bureaucratic: Who would be the sponsor for my mum? If, god forbid, my dad couldn't make it, who would ensure my mum could stay in Japan with me?

The dark alley didn't swallow me, but a shadow followed me around in the days after. As dry leaves started falling around me, I began to realise my own ignorance of my mum's personal history. People around me have always measured

our race relations in terms of one being more superior than another, and I have inherited it without questioning.

My heritage is one that has been accompanying me. And so has my gender identity. Being both a Filipino and a Japanese, and a woman, I've always been afraid of being associated with the history of 'entertainers'*. It's not that I view this occupation as shameful, but rather the lingering gaze of my past male superiors that has left me feeling disgustingly exposed.

It scares me that I used to think practising Filipino culture would set me behind. Child Reina was always unconsciously balancing the ethnic scale within her: *Am I Japanese enough or am I too Filipino? Am I like my classmate sitting next to me? Act like them. Be good. Don't cry in school...*

Being Japanese ensured my transparency. I could go about my life like any other Japanese person. I could get away from not being directly involved in matters in the Philippines and live a convenient life. Even so, I could weigh as a guilty Filipino who walked away. If I had such assets, wouldn't it be reasonable to use them to help the underprivileged? I tried to understand where my guilt was coming from but invariably found myself pondering why my roots continued to haunt me no matter how old and where I was.

Like dry leaves from a tree, most of the internalised shame I had been brought up with have been shaken off. I look back at them now, vestiges of my old life crunching beneath my feet. But the trees are still there: The bigoted branches that have shaped my experiences, the rotting fruits of shame that drove my desire to fit in — their roots, sadly, stretch as far as the eye can see.

V. Rise

I moved back to Tokyo in January 2023 after finishing the exchange programme.

The announcement made by the pilot had me reminiscing about the time I landed in Tokyo fourteen years ago. I was excited. The chime of the aircraft reassured me it was going to be a warm winter this time. At the immigration,

visitors were sorted out by their legal status. I, a Japanese passport-holder, skipped the long queue and made my way out.

My heart skipped a beat when I saw my family again. We hugged each other, longer and tighter, as though making up for lost time. In that very moment, time never felt so evergreen just like the vibrant hues of a rainbow emerging after a storm.

The Narita Airport welcomed the inbound guests with banners celebrating the Tokyo Olympics, which ironically did not achieve much of its usage in 2020. Although held exceptionally, the Olympics was a resurgence* of multiculturalism. However, the discussion circulates between those who are either Japanese or a foreigner, leaving individuals with mixed-heritage out of policy-making.

To this day, more and more words which refer to individuals with mixed parentage have surged, with *hafu* and *daburu* being the prevalent* ones used. Each carries different politics. *Daburu* was coined as resilience to the term *hafu*, which, at times, connotes the inferiority complex of a measured race.

I pass as a Japanese. On the other hand, there are members of the mixed-race in Japan who do not, thus, experience microaggression almost every other day. Some are asked *where-are-you-from* questions persistently and reminded of the 'racial divide'. Others are stopped by the police and asked to show their IDs, to prove they *belong* to Japan.

I pass as a Japanese — not too many would know unless I reveal who I am. If I choose not to, no one should know. Because being of mixed-heritage means to have indicators that tell the world that you are one of them.

No one is going to know that some of us struggle to sort documents to show the immigration office, to find scholarships that understand the complexities of our trajectories, the unsettling* feeling that makes your heart race when applying for a job or a school.

Families of mixed heritage face unique and oftentimes suffocating* lives. Some of us have started working from a young age to support the family. Who

can ensure our rights to remain as a whole family? Who can ensure opportunities to learn about our multi-heritage background? Are children with multicultural backgrounds safe to remain in classrooms? The list of questions goes on.

I'm attending grad school to deepen my understanding of individuals with mixed heritage while working as a part-time English teacher at a high school.

There are plenty who grew up like I did: Uncertain of where they belong, not knowing how to deal with the racism of people who love and care about them. If they decide to question the comfortable silence and people surrounding them choose not to hear, do they make a sound? Are mixed-heritage folks too nebulous* to discuss? Are mixed-heritage individuals just background noise to multiculturalism in Japan?

I look at the ice wall of language I'd successfully melted. I look at what I thought was mud, but turns out to be fertile soil for me to bloom like the wonderful flowers my teacher saw in me. I look at the scorching summer of my ambitions that sometimes burned me out, but mostly kept me going as I maintained the warmth and connections of my family and friends. I look at the dry leaves of the shame and bigotry used to unquestioningly inherit from society, all but dead now as I shake them off. I look at all of these, each forming a part of the treasure trove I call my identity. I am, and I have always been a little bit of my parents, siblings, friends, a little bit of all the cities I've lived in, a little bit of the people I've loved and cared about.

As I make my way to the classroom where students await, I try to listen to the messages whispered by the corridors, vaguely wondering if anybody here is as vigilant as I used to be about flying shoes — I sure hope not.

I pass by a large window. The sun casts its rays in a different way now. Its warmth dances on my face, paints patterns on the floor as I take every step. Each step feels purposeful. I take a deep breath, allowing myself to embrace all the moments I've overcome.

I see it now: That possibility of a new sense of belonging. To build homes

within people and spaces instead of settling down in physical ones. To form kinships that are constantly evolving*, self-updated. To break free from the constraints* of expectations of a racial or ethnic performance.

I see it now: This gorgeous kaleidoscope* of knowledge and experiences I've gathered throughout my inner battle of being a mixed heritage individual.

I step into the classroom and greet every student with a smile. Their individual stories, backgrounds, and experiences weave a rich tapestry of perspectives.

注(*がついている単語)

| | |
|---------------|---|
| titas: | aunts |
| integral: | necessary and important for something to work |
| complexion: | the colour, texture, and appearance of a person's skin |
| morena: | (of female skin) brown, dark-coloured |
| pivotal: | very important for something to succeed |
| bolster: | make stronger |
| internalise: | make a belief part of yourself, often without knowing |
| realisation: | understanding something clearly |
| relentlessly: | not stopping; continuing firmly |
| vulnerable: | open to being hurt or attacked |
| monolith: | a group of people who are thought of as being all the same |
| apprehension: | worry or fear about what will happen |
| entertainers: | migrant women with nightlife jobs in Japan |
| resurgence: | a comeback or increase after a decline |
| prevalent: | common or widely seen |
| unsettling: | causing worry or discomfort |
| suffocating: | making it hard to breathe or feel free |
| nebulous: | not clear; confusing or vague |
| evolve: | change or develop over time |
| constraints: | limits or obstacles that may prevent you from doing something |
| kaleidoscope: | a pattern that changes and moves, like colors in a tube |

出典：

Kudo, Reina Cristine. "A Little Bit Yours," *New Naratif*, June 11, 2024,

<<https://newnaratif.com/a-little-bit-yours/>>

(出題の関係上、文章の体裁を一部を改編した。)

設問 1 二重下線の引かれた語句(ice, mud, dry leaves, fertile soil)について、それぞれ筆者が意図している内容を解答用紙の枠内で明確に下さい。

設問 2 下線部(1)と(2)では、同じ単語が異なる意味で用いられています。その違いが分かるように、それぞれの意味について 30 字から 50 字以内で説明下さい。

設問 3 この文章は、筆者および筆者と同様の社会的立場に置かれた人たちが経験する多くの困難に言及しています。そうした困難の構造的あるいは社会的な背景のなかから、3つを特定しそれぞれ 60 字から 80 字以内で説明下さい。

設問 4 設問 3 で特定した理由や背景の少なくとも 1 つを選び、その解決となりうる長続きする変化を、どうしたら、他の人たちを巻き込みながら社会的に達成できるかについて、①日本社会が多様化していることを前提に、また②あなた自身を中心となって活動すると仮定して、380 字から 400 字以内で論じ下さい。