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**Level 1 – 25th February, 2021**

## **Japan government creates a minister of loneliness**

**FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:**

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210225-minister-of-loneliness-1.html>

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**Please try Levels 0, 2 and 3. They are (a little) harder.**

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210225-minister-of-loneliness-1.html>

Japan has a "minister of loneliness". Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga created the role in February. Mr Suga wanted to stop the rise in suicide cases. More people are taking their own lives in the pandemic. Japan's police said 20,919 people died by suicide in 2020. This is 750 more than the year before. The minister told reporters: "I hope to promote activities that prevent loneliness and social isolation and to improve the ties between people."

The police said there was a bigger rise in suicide among women. More women are lonely because of the coronavirus pandemic. He told reporters: "Women are suffering from isolation more than men are." There has been a 70 per cent increase in the number of women taking their own lives. A 23-year-old designer said she misses not seeing people smile behind their mask. It makes her feel sad and lonely. She said: "I want to see happy faces."

Sources: <https://thehill.com/policy/international/asia-pacific/539917-japanese-prime-minister-appoints-minister-of-loneliness-to>  
<https://nypost.com/2021/02/22/japan-creates-minister-of-loneliness-to-fight-covid-suicides/>  
<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2021/02/12/national/loneliness-isolation-minister/>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210225-minister-of-loneliness-1.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                              |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Suga created the role     | a. by suicide in 2020 |
| 2. Mr Suga wanted            | b. people             |
| 3. suicide                   | c. year before        |
| 4. 20,919 people died        | d. to stop the rise   |
| 5. This is 750 more than the | e. isolation          |
| 6. promote activities that   | f. cases              |
| 7. social                    | g. in February        |
| 8. improve the ties between  | h. prevent loneliness |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                                 |                   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. a bigger rise in suicide     | a. pandemic       |
| 2. More women are               | b. and lonely     |
| 3. because of the coronavirus   | c. own lives      |
| 4. Women are suffering          | d. faces          |
| 5. taking their                 | e. among women    |
| 6. she misses not seeing people | f. from isolation |
| 7. It makes her feel sad        | g. smile          |
| 8. I want to see happy          | h. lonely         |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210225-minister-of-loneliness-1.html>

Japan has a "minister of loneliness". Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga (1) \_\_\_\_\_ in February. Mr Suga wanted to (2) \_\_\_\_\_ in suicide cases. More people are (3) \_\_\_\_\_ lives in the pandemic. Japan's police said 20,919 people (4) \_\_\_\_\_ in 2020. This is 750 more than the year before. The minister told reporters: "I (5) \_\_\_\_\_ activities that prevent loneliness and social isolation and to (6) \_\_\_\_\_ between people."

The police said there was a (7) \_\_\_\_\_ suicide among women. More women (8) \_\_\_\_\_ of the coronavirus pandemic. He told reporters: "Women are suffering (9) \_\_\_\_\_ than men are." There has been a 70 per cent increase in the number of women (10) \_\_\_\_\_ lives. A 23-year-old designer said she (11) \_\_\_\_\_ people smile behind their mask. It makes her feel sad and lonely. She said: "I want (12) \_\_\_\_\_ faces."

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210225-minister-of-loneliness-1.html>

Japan has a "minister of loneliness". Japan's Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga created the role in February. Mr Suga wanted to stop the rise in suicide cases. More people are taking their own lives in the pandemic. Japan's police said 20,919 people died by suicide in 2020. This is 750 more than they were before. The minister told reporters: "I hope to promote activities that prevent loneliness and social isolation and to improve the ties between people." The police said there was a big rise in suicide among women. More women are lonely because of the coronavirus pandemic. He told reporters: "Women are suffering from isolation more than men are." There has been a 70 percent increase in the number of women taking their own lives. A 23-year-old designer said she misses not seeing people smile behind their mask. It makes her feel sad and lonely. She said: "I want to see happy faces."

# LONELINESS SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2102/210225-minister-of-loneliness-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about loneliness in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

*Japan government creates a minister of loneliness – 25th February, 2021*  
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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

