

Modernisation and Westernisation discussion for practising Used to

Discuss the questions below in twos or threes:

How westernised would you say your country is?

How much is that a good and bad thing?

What aspects of life have become westernised?

Which of those things are good or bad changes?

Choose one of the aspects below and discuss how westernised your country has become related to that thing and how good or bad it is

- festivals and celebrations (e.g. Xmas, Halloween)
- furniture
- buildings (e.g. brick, skyscrapers)
- food and drink (e.g. knife and fork)
- music (e.g. discos, rock music, western classical music)
- education (e.g. coeducational schools)
- men's fashion (e.g. suit and tie)
- politics (e.g. parliamentary democracy)
- shopping (e.g. supermarkets, shopping malls)
- marriage (e.g. white weddings, love marriages)
- career women
- women's fashion (skirts, bikini, etc)
- public museums
- suburban life (e.g. commuting)
- weekends off
- families (e.g. nuclear family)
- teenagers (e.g. coming of age)
- old people's homes
- labour unions
- time (e.g. 1 January as new year)
- language (e.g. borrowed words and expressions like "Bye bye")
- arts (e.g. the use of perspective)
- sleeping (e.g. siesta)

Are any of those things just modernisation rather than westernisation?

Can you think of any traditional things in your country that have nearly or totally disappeared?

Do foreigners realise that is the case, or do they still have an outdated image of your country?

How much are these things about Japan still popular or outdated, do you think? What are your feelings about those changes?

Work for one company for their whole career

Want to work for a large Japanese company

Have respect for older people

Women leave their jobs when they get married

Women leave their jobs when they have their first child

See public servant as the most desirable job

Women worry about being over 25 and unmarried

Want a male child first

Law abiding

Influenced by bushido (the military philosophy of the samurai)

Hard working

Men dedicated to work more than family

Tea ceremony

Kowtowing (= bowing sitting down)

Seiza (= kneeling with your legs beneath you)

Wearing kimono for no special reason

Japanese-style breakfast

Belief in Shinto gods

Tatami (= rush mat flooring)

Sit on the floor

Futons (= fairly thin mattresses that are packed away during the day)

Compare your ideas with those of your teacher and/ or research what people are saying about those things on English language blogs.

Are there similarities to other countries you know about?