

Leibniz Universität Hannover

Niedersächsisches Studienkolleg für ausländische Studienbewerber

Kurs G, Englisch, Obersemester 2015/16

Englischklausur. (90 Minuten)

Name: _____

The Okinawa Way: The Grandparents Live Past 100, but after Too Many Burgers, the Islands' Next Generation May Not Make It to Middle Age

Newsweek

[Newsweek](#), January 13, 2003, [Copyright](#)

By Hideko Takayama

Every morning Seiryu Toguchi rises at 6, washes his face and exercises in the lush front yard of his home in Okinawa. He prepares a breakfast of rice and miso soup with spinach and egg. Then he tends his nearby farm, where he grows carrots, cabbage and other vegetables. At 5 p.m., he takes a hot bath and cooks homegrown radish with pork for supper. His wife died a few years ago and his children live in other cities, but he is self-sufficient. He reads newspapers and magazines, does his own laundry and sewing, and when he gets cravings for traditional brown-sugar doughnuts, he takes a bus to the nearest town to buy them. It's nothing out of the ordinary--until you consider that Toguchi is nearly 102 years old.

Lean and fit, Toguchi jokes that the key to his long life is a special drink he takes before bed: a mixture of garlic, honey, turmeric and aloe poured into awamori, the local distilled liquor. His sharp mind and high energy may be rare among the elderly in other regions of the world, but he is not so unusual in this part of Japan. Indeed, Okinawa has the highest proportion of centenarians in the world: 39.5 for every 100,000 people.

What's the secret? In 2001, three specialists published a study of the locals' longevity in a book called *The Okinawa Program*. The authors found that elderly Okinawans had remarkably clean arteries and low cholesterol. Heart disease, breast cancer, and prostate cancer were rare, which they attributed to the consumption of locally grown vegetables, tofu, and seaweed, accompanied by rigorous activity and a low-stress life.

But increasingly, Okinawans are living more like Americans. That means less bean curd and walking, more burgers and stress. Only recently did Okinawans begin to recognize how the changes in diet and lifestyle were endangering their health. And it now seems unlikely that the island's children will live as long as their grandparents.

Doctors and government officials are urging Okinawans to return to their roots. *Ryukyu Shimpo*, the local daily newspaper, has begun a series of articles on longevity. "We want to give a warning to our people," says editor Takenori Miyara. "We will cover every area concerning our health situation, from history to culture, and from produce to what measures we should take."

One approach is to target the island's schoolchildren. At Johoku Junior High School in Naha, the lunches often include local dishes. "I like Big Macs, but I would rather eat more Okinawan food to stay healthy and live long," says Masatsugu Uemura, 15. The principal, Yayoko Ishikawa, says that Okinawans believed for decades that their lifestyle was scorned by the rest of Japan. "It has taken such a long time to realize what we had was a treasure for longevity," Ishikawa says. "We should start teaching our children about traditional foods and how the people lived." After all, few people know how to age well better than Okinawa's old folks.

Exercises: Answer the following questions in written form.

1. The text "The Okinawa Way" consists of six paragraphs. Do summarize each paragraph in one sentence
2. What actually leads to, according to the text, to a longevity of Okinawans? Gives examples.
3. What threatens longevity, and which counter measures have been taken?
4. What could be advantages and disadvantages of becoming very old? Can you draw on any experiences in your family, or do you know anyone who is or has become very old?

