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First of Isaac Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics:  
A robot may not injure a human being, or, through  
inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.

Isaac Asimov

### Before you read

A. Tick [✓] your answers.

1. Robots can \_\_\_\_\_.

work in factories

guide patients

eat food

greet

think

smile

### Reading Skill

1. Skim paragraph 1 and write two tasks for the Robots in the hospital.

task 1	.....
task 2	.....

2. Skim paragraph 3 and write two tasks for the Robots in the factory.

task 1	.....
task 2	.....

3. Skim paragraph 4 and complete the following sentences.

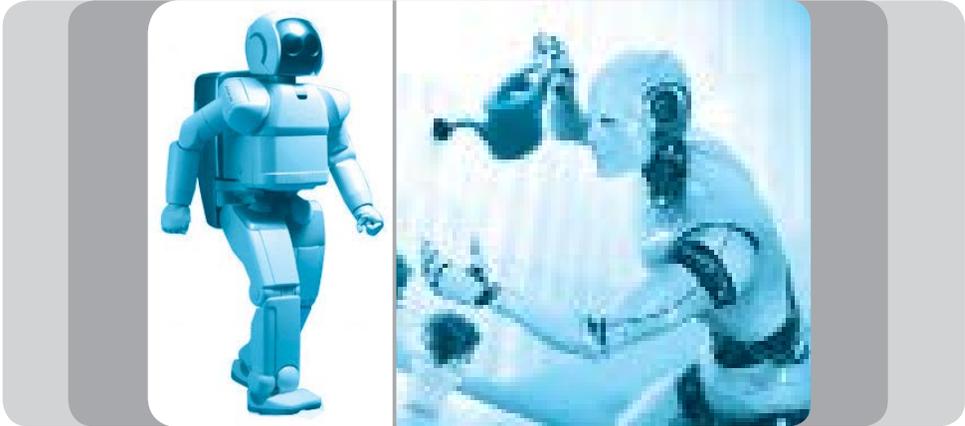
Kansei's face includes \_\_\_ movable parts.

Kansei can form up to \_\_\_ facial expressions.

Kansei quivers in fear at the word \_\_\_\_\_.

Kansei breaks into a smile when it hears the word \_\_\_\_\_.

## Almost Human?



### Robots become more and more like people.

At a hospital in Japan, **employees**<sup>1</sup> greet newcomers, guide patients to and from the surgery area, and print out maps of the hospital for **confused**<sup>2</sup> visitors. They don't take lunch breaks or even get paid. Why? They're robots!

A robot is a machine that can **complete**<sup>3</sup> complex tasks without human control. The child-sized machines at the hospital are just a few of the thousands of robots that help people around the world.

Robots have long worked in factories, helping to build cars and electronic **appliances**<sup>4</sup>. But today's robots are a far cry from the **clunky**<sup>5</sup> machines of the past. They don't just do the jobs of people—they actually look and act a lot like people.

### Robo-People

Kansei, a robot from Japan, has a silicon face covering 19 movable parts.

1. /ɪm'plɔɪiː/ **n.** a person who is paid to work for sb; staff
2. /kən'fjuːzɪd/ **adj.** perplexed
3. /kəm'pliːt/ **v.** to finish making or doing sth
4. /ə'plaɪəns/ **n.** a machine designed to do a particular thing
5. /'klʌŋki/ **adj.** heavy and awkward

The robot can form up to 36 facial expressions in response to different words. Kansei **quivers**<sup>6</sup> in fear at the word war and breaks into a smile when it hears the word sushi.

Researchers in Europe are going one step further with iCub, a “baby” robot. They are teaching it to speak and hold conversations.

The ability to interact is **crucial**<sup>7</sup>, or necessary, for robots that will one day work closely with humans. “It is important for robots and all machines that interact with people to understand what you say and how you are feeling and respond with **appropriate**<sup>8</sup> emotions.

A Japanese scientist is building a robot called CB2 that acts like a real **toddler**<sup>9</sup>. “Right now, it only goes, ‘Ah, ah’. But as we develop its learning function, we hope it can start saying more complex sentences and moving on its own **will**<sup>10</sup>. Next-**generation**<sup>11</sup> robots need to be able to learn and develop themselves.

### Helping Humans

Robot communication will allow the machines to help people more in the future, as the number of human workers **declines**<sup>12</sup> in some countries. “We are going to have so many more old people and not enough young people to take care of them. Technology can help the old people live at home longer, instead of going to nursing homes.

That would be a big help in Japan, which has an aging population. Already, more than 370,000 robots work in Japanese factories. Other robots **perform**<sup>13</sup> tasks such as planting rice and tending the country’s rice paddies. Japanese officials **estimate**<sup>14</sup> that one robot can do the work of 10 human employees.

6. /'kwɪvə(r)/ v. to shake slightly

7. /'kruːʃl/ **adj.** critical; essential

8. /ə'prəʊpriət/ **adj.** suitable; acceptable

9. /'tɒdlə(r)//'tɑːdlər/ **n.** a child who has only recently learnt to walk; infant

10. /wɪl/ **n.** determination

11. /,dʒenə'reɪʃn/ **n.** all the people who were born at about the same time

12. /dɪ'klaɪn/ **v.** to become smaller; weaken

13. /pə'fɔːm//pər'fɔːrm/ **v.** do; carry sth out

14. /'estɪmeɪt/ **v.** calculate

## Comprehension Exercises

### A. Select the best options.

**1. To work closely with human, which ability is more important?**

- a. To build cars
- b. To have facial expression
- c. To Take care of old people
- d. To interact with people

**2. The author hopes that in the future robots can \_\_\_\_\_ .**

- a. hear your words
- b. move on their own will
- c. quiver in fear
- d. form up some expressions

**3. According to the passage, one robot can do the work of how many human employees?**

- a. Two
- b. Seven
- c. Ten
- d. Twelve

**4. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.**

\_\_\_\_\_ robots have long worked in factories, today's robots are a far cry from the clunky machines of the past.

- a. However
- b. While
- c. Yet
- d. In contrast

**5. What is another good title for this passage?**

- a. Robots: A Help or a Hindrance?
- b. Robots: Past, Present, and Future
- c. A History of Robots in the Workplace
- d. The Robot Employee

### B. Discuss the answers of the following questions with a partner. Then complete the answers.

**1. What do robots do in the hospital?**

*They greet new comers, ... .*

**2. What is a robot?**

*A robot is a machine that ... .*

**3. How is Kansei's reaction to the words "war" and "sushi"?**

*Kansei quivers... .*

**4. Why might a patient prefer to interact with a person instead of a robot?**

*(Use evidence from paragraph three of the text to support your answer.)*

*A patient might prefer to ... .*

## Vocabulary

A. For each group, circle the word that does not belong. The words in *italic* are vocabulary items from the reading.

1. boss	<i>employee</i>	worker	personnel
2. important	<i>crucial</i>	simple	essential
3. suitable	<i>appropriate</i>	necessary	proper
4. reply	<i>response</i>	answer	ask
5. inhabitants	<i>population</i>	group	people
6. feeling	<i>emotion</i>	sensation	surprise
7. weaken	<i>decline</i>	fail	grow

B. Complete the sentences below using the *italic* vocabulary from A.

1. He was not getting the desired \_\_\_\_\_ from the audience.
2. You could read his \_\_\_\_\_ by looking into his eyes.
3. This bank has just one full-time \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The textbooks you use should be \_\_\_\_\_ to the level of the students.
5. The rapid growth of \_\_\_\_\_ led to a serious shortage of housing.
6. The cloth trade went into gradual \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Winning this race is \_\_\_\_\_ to our long term success.

## Critical Thinking and Writing

1. Have you thought about a robot? Choose among the tasks that your robot is going to do for you.

I like my robot to \_\_\_\_\_.

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> smile at me   | <input type="checkbox"/> greet my guest            | <input type="checkbox"/> do my homework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> speak with me | <input type="checkbox"/> work in the factory       | <input type="checkbox"/> plant rice     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> understand me | <input type="checkbox"/> nurse my old grandparents |   |

**2. With the use of above key phrases write a paragraph about your ideal robot. Think about other jobs that your robot should do. Write not more than 80 words.**

*I like to have a robot which has .....*  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

### Scientific Fact

Robot comes from the Czech word 'robota' which means 'forced work or labor'.

## Modal Verbs

The **modal verbs** include **can, must, may, might, will, would, should**. They are used with other verbs to express *ability, obligation, possibility*, and so on. Below is a table showing the most useful modals and their most common meanings.

Modal	Meaning	Example
<b>can</b>	to express ability	I <b>can</b> speak a little Russian.
<b>can</b>	to request permission	<b>Can</b> I open the window?
<b>may</b>	to express possibility	I <b>may</b> be home late.
<b>may</b>	to request permission	<b>May</b> I sit down, please?
<b>must</b>	to express obligation	I <b>must</b> go now.
<b>must</b>	to express strong belief	She <b>must</b> be over 90 years old.
<b>should</b>	to give advice	You <b>should</b> stop smoking.
<b>would</b>	to request or offer	<b>Would</b> you like a cup of tea?
<b>would</b>	in if-sentences	If I were you, I <b>would</b> say sorry.

Modals are **auxiliary verbs**. They do not need an additional auxiliary in negatives or questions.

**Question form:** **Should** he come?

**Negative form:** He **shouldn't** come.

## Grammar Exercises

### A. Select the right form given in parentheses.

1. I'm afraid I \_\_\_\_\_ play tennis tomorrow. I've got a dentist appointment.  
(should – can't)
2. I'm so hungry. I \_\_\_\_\_ eat a horse! (can – must)
3. I was using my pencil a minute ago. It \_\_\_\_\_ be here somewhere!  
(can – must)
4. I \_\_\_\_\_ talk already before I was two years old. (might – could)
5. It \_\_\_\_\_ be cold outside. That man in the street is wearing a coat.  
(must – can)
6. You \_\_\_\_\_ stop smoking. (might – should)

### B. Select the best options.

1. I didn't feel very well yesterday. I \_\_\_\_\_ eat anything.  
a. may not      b. mustn't      c. couldn't      d. could
2. Already as a child Mozart \_\_\_\_\_ play the piano beautifully.  
a. can      b. could      c. must      d. should
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ be able to help you, but I'm not sure yet.  
a. might      b. must      c. would      d. should
4. I really \_\_\_\_\_ try to get fit.  
a. might      b. must      c. would      d. should
5. A: "Whose bag is this?" B: "I don't know, but it \_\_\_\_\_ belong to David."  
a. must      b. should      c. would      d. might
6. I \_\_\_\_\_ move the table. It was too heavy.  
a. could      b. couldn't      c. might      d. should
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I take a photograph of you?  
a. Should      b. May      c. Must      d. Might