

BEFORE READING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- | | |
|--|-------|
| a. The retirement age may soon be extended for university majors. | T / F |
| b. Early retirement may one day be consigned to the history books. | T / F |
| c. We may be hanging up our boots when we are 85 instead of 65. | T / F |
| d. Modern economies are well able to cope with ageing societies. | T / F |
| e. Many people in the developed world could well live beyond 100. | T / F |
| f. Geneticists will lock the key to ageing. | T / F |
| g. Workers dream of spending their nest years with a golden egg. | T / F |
| h. We have doubled human lifespan in the past century. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|
| a. consigned | extended |
| b. hanging up our boots | abruptly |
| c. rudely | selecting |
| d. numerous | breakthroughs |
| e. opting | verge |
| f. advances | relegated |
| g. seismic | boundaries |
| h. elongated | enormous |
| i. brink | retiring |
| j. parameters | abundant |

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a. early retirement might be consigned | being able to extend human lifespan |
| b. we may be hanging up our | and realities of work |
| c. medical advances could increase | to the ageing gene |
| d. rudely reshaping our perceptions | to the history books |
| e. greater numbers of who are opting | boots at 85 instead of 65 |
| f. become centenarians because of | awakening for many workers |
| g. unlock the key | human longevity dramatically |
| h. He predicts a rude | with a nest-egg |
| i. spending one's golden years | to leave the workforce |
| j. we are on the brink of | advances in medicine |

THE ARTICLE

Retirement age may be extended to 85

Workers may soon experience major and unwelcome shifts in the lengths of their working lives, if an American consultant is to be believed. The age at which people look forward to early retirement might be consigned to the history books. Instead, we may be hanging up our boots at 85 instead of 65. Stanford University biologist Shripad Tuljapurkar told a science convention in the USA that medical advances could increase human longevity dramatically over the coming decades, rudely reshaping our perceptions and realities of work. Tuljapurkar predicts modern economies will not be able to support their increasingly numerous retirees, greater numbers of who are opting to leave the workforce at increasingly younger ages.

Professor Tuljapurkar forecasts that most people living in today's industrialized societies can expect to become centenarians because of advances in medicine and genetic science. He believes once geneticists unlock the key to the ageing gene, society will have to quickly undergo shifts of seismic magnitude. He predicts a rude awakening for many workers once they discover their insurance and pension companies have not catered for elongated life spans. Dreams of spending one's golden years with a nest egg may have to be put on hold for a decade or two. "Some people believe we are on the brink of being able to extend human lifespan significantly...We have doubled human lifespan in the last century", he said. As a result, accepted societal parameters will change considerably.

