



Writing a Comment

Exercise 6

Comment on the following extract.

Is there necessarily a limit to human aging? The wish to extend the human lifespan has a long tradition in many cultures. Optimistic views of the possibility of achieving this goal through the latest developments in medicine feature increasingly in serious scientific and philosophical discussion. Focusing on interventions in biological ageing, one can distinguish between research that is first and foremost aimed at prolonging life by slowing or even arresting ageing processes and research that is directed at combating the diseases that seem to be intrinsically connected with biological ageing.

The papers nowadays don't argue that human lifespan is limitless. But they note that it's premature to accept that a maximum lifespan for humans exists. It's equally possible, they say, that humans will continue to live longer, and therefore might survive beyond 115 years. It was reasonable that when everybody lived to 50 that the very long lived, for whatever reason—genetics or luck—would make it to 80. If people live on average to 80 or 90, like they do now, then the very long lived make it to 110 or 120. So, if the average lifespan keeps expanding, that would mean the long-lived would live even longer, beyond 115 years. But what happens if we all live to 100, 110, 120 or beyond? Society will obviously look very different and life may seem not too enjoyable.

