



Sustainable School Project Report

September 2016 - January 2019

Learning that Nurtures Human Existence



SDGs

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

GOALS



A report from 'Research on Curriculum, Learning, Teacher Education of Alternative Schools in Japan'(research chair, Atsuhiko YOSHIDA) by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science). Collaboration with Yokohama Steiner School.

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**Sustainable School Project Report
Yokohama Steiner School**

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Learning that Nurtures Human Existence

For Waldorf Education to Engage Public World in Collaboration with UNESCO

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In Japan, the number of schools becoming members of the UNESCO/ASPnet (UNESCO Associated Schools Network) rapidly increased as the United Nations and UNESCO promoted the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD; 2005-2014). During this time, alternative schools including Waldorf schools also joined the ASPnet and advocated ESD as well as global citizenship education.

The sustainable schools mentioned in this booklet were a part of a pilot project where 24 pilot schools in Japan with particularly excellent programs were chosen to exchange practices with public schools and learn from each other. I was involved in the planning and managing of the project with Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (APCCU). Yokohama Steiner School, which is the representative example of this booklet, collaborated with us in continuum at every workshop on sustainable schools as well as various activities of Japan Waldorf Schools Association (JWSA).

There are three significant points for the project:

First, Waldorf schools had opportunities to exchange insights with the wider members of public education and learn from each other beyond the community of alternative schools with unique world views.

Second, Waldorf education found a role to link the contemporary sig-

nificance of its curriculum, classroom practice, and building a school community to the urgent issue of establishing a global sustainable society, which has been passed on from ESD to SDGs.

Third, in promoting the project in collaboration with UNESCO, Waldorf education was able to prove, domestically and internationally, that its educational philosophy is highly compatible with that of UNESCO for the 21st century.

With the above three elements in mind, I conducted an action research to promote the project from 2016 to 2019 with the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. I am blessed to be able to publish the research outcomes in the form of an English booklet with the cooperation of Yokohama Steiner School, which will be shared internationally.

This English publication will be distributed and presented at several international conferences starting with the 5th Social Initiative Forum in December 2019 in Egypt.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Yokohama Steiner School, especially to Mr. Yoshihiro Yokoyama and Mr. Masashi Sato, who always gladly provided me all the support to complete my research.

Learning that Nurtures Human Existence

Yoshiyuki Nagata

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About 25 years ago, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century launched by UNESCO divided learning into four types or the “Four Pillars of Learning”: Learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together, and learning to be. The committee described these four pillars to be equally essential for us to live.

However, UNESCO recently started to emphasize the increased importance of “learning to live together” and “learning to be.” Indeed, considering the global educational scene where “development of global human resources” became the mantra, and prioritization on the acquisition of skills for problem-solving to survive the tide of globalization, it is natural that quite many people would agree on such statements.

What consists the education – “learning to live together” and “learning to be” – that is increasingly more critical in the 21st century?

“Learning to live together” is commonly described as “education for coexistence.” It encompasses various levels of learning from classmates collaborating to students from different countries and cultures who are working together to solve a problem.

“Learning to be,” on the other hand, although advocated for quite a while, has not been communicated well. This “learning to be” is literally translated in Japanese as “learning to live as a human,” but such translation has allowed a wide range of interpretation such as “education for children to bring their full potential as human beings” or “education to deepen the meaning of human existence.”

This book clearly illustrates the education aspired by the 21st century. Such education, in one word, is one that cultivates the foundation of human existence. Our modern society, where issues appear one after another,

such as disparity, climate change, and refugees, is described as “an era of uncertainty.” For the coming generations, every day is a series of scenes that evoke anxiety. However, the education at Yokohama Steiner School nurtures deep inside children's hearts, a feeling of unconditional trust that life is worth living even when times are hard, and the future seems pessimistic. Because this is an era for which prediction is difficult, it is all the more important to provide education that cultivates the existence of children themselves rather than one that trains children to have knowledge and skills to address risks at any rate. In this booklet, readers will find days at Yokohama Steiner School, where youth with the unshakeable wills and flexible senses that lead them to a sustainable future.

During the “UN Decade of ESD,” which started in 2005, and the following “Global Action Programme(GAP) on Education for Sustainable Development”(2015-2019), I was blessed to be UNESCO Headquarters' dedicated committee member* to evaluate educational practices around the world that aimed for a sustainable future. Based on my experiences there, even among the right methods around the world, it can be said that schools that practice “learning that nurtures human existence” are rare.

ESD is the restructuring of the way this world has been to create a sustainable future. Its good practices build up casually an image of a future form of education in our minds. As I read this booklet, I cannot help but think that practices at Yokohama Steiner School, which lives up to the designation as a UNESCO Associated School project and “ESD-Focus School”, are the pioneer of future education – and that this world is by no means hopeless.

* Member, Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group on ESD(2009-2014)/ International Jury, UNESCO/Japan ESD Prize (2015-2019)

About Sustainable School Report

Masashi Sato

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In 2016, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan publicly recruited sustainable schools(ESD focus school) as a pilot project to improve the quality of domestic ESD. As a member of UNESCO ASPnet who was already working on ESD, we joined this project with 24 other sustainable schools across Japan for 3 years. To conclude the project, this booklet summarizes the sustainability found in the education of Yokohama Steiner School.

The first year of the Sustainable School project was also the starting year of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs). Moving towards the 17 goals of SDGs, initiatives for the SDGs have spread in Japan in various fields, including government, NGOs, and corporates. Education was no exception. Considering that SDGs has a strong goal-oriented nature, I feel the need to reaffirm the essence of education, as education has become part of SDGs. Education is an end in itself, not a means to some other end. However its clear definition is often impaired by various social factors such as politics and economy. As SDGs is high-priority goal based on the agreement of the international community, I am keenly aware of the importance of a non-target oriented approach that doesn't disrupt the original purpose of education. I meant to present the possibility of, as it were, paradoxical approach in this booklet.

The first part of this booklet focused on the process of how children's learning becomes spontaneous. This is because spontaneity is the driving force of sustainability in education. Imagination and self-esteem support

internal motivation. I think we have indeed been able to make visible such efforts to nurture them using an active form of learning as an example. At the same time, I think I was able to describe the ideal way of educators, who are called “loving authority” in Waldorf education, and how the relationship between educators and children is being built.

In the second part, we did not take object-oriented approach. Rather, we described how the individual issues and facts integrate into the recognition of global issues. In fact, isn't “integration” the key for the achievement of the SDGs? Although the goals and targets of the SDGs are diverse, we all share a challenge that people's values change at the bottom of each individual issues. I think that the real goal of SDGs is to connect and integrate these common issues. To that end, I believe that Waldorf education will be of great help in cultivating the artistic techniques, belief in the power of stories and imagination, and insight into the anaphoric relationship between parts and the whole.

The third part is the report of our graduates. The motivation for learning, the ability to take actions, and the flexibility of ideas gained through such learning must be the requirements for solving global issues.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the many people who cooperated in the production of this booklet, translation team, teachers who supported us for the sustainable school activities, and Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU).



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Part 1

Building the Foundation for ESD The School Life of Lower Grades

Reporting/Writing: Masashi Sato

Editing: Yoshihiro Yokoyama/Noriaki Fukuda

Illustration: Ui Ota

Part 1 of this booklet is a collection of six stories that illustrate the days at Yokohama Steiner School. These stories about true events were compiled based on interviews with Yoshihiro Yokoyama, a teacher in charge of UNESCO Associated Schools Network (the names of the children in the stories are changed).

When reading Part 1, you may feel as if you are with the children and their teacher doing activities in the classroom or schoolyard. Professor Yoshiyuki Nagata of the University of the Sacred Heart, the leading figure of ESD research in Japan, calls the ESD that permeates into every corner of daily activities as “implicit ESD.” He introduces such ESD as an example that is beyond a whole-school approach in his essay, “What is Sustainable Educational Practices? – Beyond the Whole-school Approach –”^{*}.

The implicit ESD is a practice that is difficult to see. By describing it in the form of lively stories, this booklet aims to provide materials that help readers to understand the essence of ESD. We hope that more teachers involved in educational activities become “inspired” and feel that ESD is “feasible.”

^{*}“Creating a Sustainable Educational Society”(Seseragi Shuppan, 2006)

What's hiding inside an apple?

-Encountering laws of nature and its innate beauty- An example from first graders learning numbers

Laws of nature are embedded all around us, and often can appear in a beautiful manner. Encountering such natural laws can be an attractive path toward learning for children. How do first year students feel and absorb such encounters? Let's look at an example from a numbers class at the Yokohama Steiner School.

The students in Mr. Yokoyama's class are currently learning numbers. We started from 1 and are now up to 4.

It's a bright and refreshing early summer morning. The shadows cast by the trees outside danced on the white curtains covering the southeast window, as the children enter the classroom. One boy stops and quickly makes a discovery, something curious sitting on the seasonal table beside the chalkboard. It was a shiny red apple.

The boy remarks, "It's an apple!" and the other children gather, with sparkles of curiosity in each of their eyes. "It's so shiny!", "are we going to eat it?", and many other comments pop up in unison. Why is this apple here, and what is going to happen? A sense of excitement fills the room.

As the class starts and the children finish their morning movements, Mr. Yokoyama gives the children time to catch their breath and starts to speak: "do you all notice there is something different in the room today?" And the class, in unison, reply, "an apple!" Mr. Yokoyama picks up the apple in his hand and says, "yesterday, we learned 4. Today, we will learn 5 using this apple".

Mr. Yokoyama walks to a desk in the corner and lifts a silk cloth as he tells the children that it's a necessity for the day's lesson. Underneath the cloth was a cutting board and a kitchen knife. He brings it to the center and places the apple on the cutting board. The children have seen this at home before, and expectation builds as they watch Mr. Yokoyama prepares to cut the apple. "Here we go" he says, but pauses just as the blade touches the apple. The children hold their breath.

Mr. Yokoyama sees that he has the full attention of the class, and says, "I'm going to cut this a little differently from how it's done at home", turns the apple on its side, and cuts it in half. Then, holding the apple together so that the newly formed cross section could not be seen, he holds the apple in front of the children, onto which all eyes now lay. Mr. Yokoyama, takes a deep breath and builds the anticipation,

and at once shows the cross section to the children, as if revealing a magic trick. As the children's eyes move toward the apple seeds, they count the seeds that sit around the apple core, and in a mix of pure surprise and joy, the classroom fills with jubilant exclamation of the children who discover the number 5, hiding within the apple in the form of seeds.

As the buzz died down, Mr. Yokoyama says, "You found the 5! Now, I have some more apples; can you find them?" and sets the kids off on a treasure hunt of apples hiding in the classroom. Two children retrieve the apples hiding behind the curtain. Mr. Yokoyama collects the apples and asks the class, "there was a 5 hiding in the previous apple. Do you think this apple will hold a different number? What do you think?" After listening to the children's musings, he again cuts and shows the cross section to the kids. "I knew it's be 5 again!" explained one of the children with great excitement. "It could just be a coincidence" Mr. Yokoyama says, and continues with the third apple, whose core once again reveals a 5 seeded star radiating from the apple core.

Drawing a picture of the cross section on the blackboard, Mr. Yokoyama instructs





the children to do the same on their notebooks. The children, still brimming with excitement, carefully color the picture with their crayons. Mr. Yokoyama wraps up the class by suggesting that, should they find apples at home, they tell their mom and dad about what they learned today.

That evening, many apples cut sideways could be found on the dinner table. This was because the parents had already heard from Mr. Yokoyama to prepare an apple, and to cut it however their children asks. And many of those parents probably felt the same sense of childish wonder when they observed the curious pattern that the apples revealed to them. Seeing this must have made each one of those children's hearts filled with pride.

● **The highlights from this example:**

- * The flow and building of anticipation, from the initial question posed by the teacher, to the moment of discovery / Finding the same motif repeating itself / Preparing a follow-on experience at home, and recreating the sense of wonder.
- * Carefully drawing what they discovered in the last part of class allows the pupils to internalize the experience and retain the lesson.
- * The support from the parents who recreate the experience and reflect back the sense of wonder to the children, teaches them of the value of their learnings.

● **Relationship to ESD and SDGs:**

- * A foundation for creative problem solving for high school and beyond is fostered through a deep intellectual curiosity that strives to understand hidden “truths” like the hidden laws of nature that can be found all around us.
- * There is an intrinsic trust placed upon the teacher to provide them with moments of joyous discovery for the beauty that nature can provide. This creates a positive, pure learning environment for pupils and realizes a solid foundation for ESD.

Active learning builds confidence

-The right questions can lead to self-affirmation- A numbers lesson from the first grade

Let's have a peak into the true potential of the early-grade children, using an active form of learning as an example.



It is a morning, core curriculum class. The desks are cleared toward the edge of the room, and the chairs are laid out to make a circle, facing inward. The students and the teachers stand and form a ring. They have just completed a song and movement routine called “Raigen”^{*1} meant to experience the features of the season. Wide awake from having activated their bodies and hearts, the children move their chairs to form a semi-circle facing their teacher. This daily routine is completed efficiently, and soon the children sit to take in a lesson on numbers. The children's eyes sparkle and

follow their teacher's next moves with intent.

The teacher approaches the window-side desk with deliberate steps, and picks up a small wooden instrument called a tone block. Sitting down, the teacher taps the instrument and a warm, hollow sound fills the corners of the classroom.

“How many sounds did you hear?” asks the teacher.

The students reply, “One!”

“That's right. Okay, I'll try again. How many sounds will you hear this time?”, says the teacher. Taking in a breath of air, he pauses and taps it twice.

The students, who had held their breath in sync with their teacher, say “Two!” in unison. The teacher continues this routine, moving up from 3, to 4, and so on, all the while observing the students respond each time.

Some kids fall a bit behind or look confused at times, but as they start to get it, the teacher asks them to clapping their hands and match the number of taps on

^{*1} Raigen: an activity where the children form a ring and create a story out of the day's lessons via rhythmical movement. It is done at the start of the epoch lessons (the primary 100-minute lesson in the mornings) for the early grade students. By raising awake the body and heart, the children are able to deeply absorb the day's learnings.

the drum. Drum...drum...clap...clap.... “good,” the teacher says, “Now, I will pick just one of you to try it. Yuka, why don't you try”. Yuka says, “Two”, in response to the teacher's two taps of the drum. Earlier, the teacher noticed her falling a bit behind after 8, but with a small number, she was able to reply confidently. One by one, the teacher works with each student, steadily going up in numbers.

The children complete this exercise, and along with their confidence, the desire to do more grows, as well as their bond with their teacher. Next, the group decide to jump instead of clap. It is a bit more challenging now. Kento, perhaps his enthusiasm showing, exceeds the number by one jump. He laughs at his little mishaps, and soon the whole class joins. With confidence comes a comfort with correcting one's mistakes, and the children are able to find humor in situations like this.

The rhythmical jump is a way to move the heart. Through finding joy in the rhythmic movements, the experience of counting numbers soaks into the children's bodies as well as the mind. The jumping could be heard downstairs, in the office just below this classroom. The staff look up to the ceiling with a knowing expression of acknowledgement. And a new day begins at the Yokohama Steiner School.

● **The highlights from this example:**

- * Early-grade lessons always start with the class forming a ring. The ring allows the teacher to observe each of her pupils, and the class unites as a group.
 - * By pointing to each student to pose a question, the student feels the teacher's recognition. By considering the ability of the student and the degree of difficulty of the question, the teacher encourages the student's sense of curiosity and confidence.
- When this vibe envelops the entire class, they come to accept mistakes as a humorous happening. When one student points out another's mistake, they are often the next one to receive a tough question. This, too, is accepted with humor.

● **Relationship to ESD and SDGs:**

- * In earlier grades, exercises like this, rather than a discussion-based active learning exercise, can often help bring out a sense of initiative. By building such experience one by one, students develop a true and lasting ability to participate in active learning in later years.

A story-filled day

-The importance of stories to build a foundation- A story-filled day in the life of Yokohama Steiner school

Children love to listen to stories. Listening can often be perceived as a passive activity, but to the contrary, the minds of children are quite active and filled with vivid pictures from the stories. It is an excellent form of active learning - let's see how stories are used during a day at Yokohama Steiner school.

A morning tale

A new day begins. The children sit in chairs that form a circle. All eyes are on their teacher.

"Isn't it a lovely morning? Don't we find so many pretty things all around us on mornings like this? How many pretty things did you find on your way to school today?", the teacher asks, as he surveys the children.

"I saw a morning glory!" "I saw a sunflower!" The children chime in.

The teacher takes in the children's word, and says, "aren't they such beautiful summer flows? Did you see which way the flowers were facing? Yes, they were facing the sun, weren't they? Summer flowers just love the sun. Just as we all love the sun. The flowers are saying hello to the sun."

With this, the teacher lowers his gaze just ever so slightly, as if he were looking at something in the distance. The children also gaze ahead, and a mental image emerges of the pretty flowers they saw. The image is merged with their warm feeling they feel when sunshine touches their faces. By relating their internal emotions to the flowers, they form a communion with nature, and allows their minds to open up and learn about the unseen laws of nature.

The teacher, too, was filled with similar feelings as he walked to school that day. Like the flowers, the teacher faces outward, observing the small miracles that the four seasons bring, so that they can be shared with his students.

Story-time

This was our first day of learning about the alphabet. The teacher started the lesson by telling a story: "Once upon a time, a wise man lived in China. Some people even thought he was a god. At night, the wise man would make a fire. As

smoke rose from the fire, he could hear god's voice from the smoke."

The students appeared to be looking up at their teacher. In reality, it was a mental image of the smoke rising from the fire, that they were consuming their attention.

As the wise man observed the smoke, the voice of god spoke. "Wise man, I am the creator of all that you see in this world. It is now your task to create letters so that one can read and speak the names of all that I have created"

During the preparations for this lesson, the teacher had been imagining and recreating this scene over and over in his mind - the wise man standing in front of the alter and lighting the fire, the smoke rising toward the sky, the traditional Chinese costume, etc. As he spoke, the teacher recreated the scene in his mind, and with intention, positioned this imagery between himself and the students. Although the details are not explicitly stated, the children can see their teacher looking intently at this invisible image, and cannot help but be pulled into the scenery themselves.

"Eventually, the night sky behind the wise man turned to dawn, and as the sun rose, the wise man declared that the first character he will create, will represent the sun!"

The children, empathizing with the wise man, felt his excitement as they stared at the invisible sun rising over the horizon.

At the end of the class

Starting, and ending the lesson with a story. To wrap things up, a notebook will be made. During this time, the desks and chairs are arranged in a classroom format, and the children draw a stylized character of the rising sun, in the form of a circle with a dot in the middle (this pictorial characterization is a rough form of the Chinese character for the sun). This character was filled with multiple crayons, and the children poured all of their feelings from the story into the notebook, and the lesson was absorbed not only in their hearts, but also with their hands.

It was through this experience that an affinity was formed between the children and the letter for the sun. Unsurprisingly, the children continued to write this long after the class had finished - in the garden, and at home with their mothers.

The children seemed deeply satisfied with their newly discovered knowledge. As the teacher asks them to put away their notebooks, he sits, and observes the children begin to relax and settle from their glow. He then begins a story: "once

upon a time, in a faraway land, there lived a very poor but kind girl. She lived with her mother, but one day, they finally ran out of their dwindling supply of food.”

This is a famous take from the Grimm brothers called Sweet Porridge. The teacher observes his students, and quietly tells the story. During this time, the children are free to listen as they are - with their heads on their desks, laying down, etc. The relaxation helps absorb the story. Most children sat back, and watch their teacher as they listen. The teacher, without much dramatic flair, tells the story in a flat and peaceful manner. This helps avoid influencing the children's imaginations.

“Eventually, the kitchen was filled with porridge, then the house, and finally the whole road in front of their house. Yet, the pot continues to cook and the porridge continues flowing.”

The children chuckle at the funny scenes. This can be heard here, and there. For both the children and their teacher, it is a blessed moment to be shared.

Time to go home

A bit of time remains before their parents arrive to take them home. The chairs and desks have been put away, and the classroom is an open space. Suggests the teacher, “hey, why don't we all try laying down. Go on.”^{*1}

The wood paneled floor feels gentle to the skin, and the children love it. Some pick a spot to lay down, while others squat. The teacher, taking out a new book, begins to read quietly. It is a familiar book that he sometimes reads after lunch, called “The Children of the Loud Village”.

From story to story, the children never seem to tire. Each story brews up a new imagery, and the children react with their hearts to each. In this manner, they become experts in conjuring up their imagination. It is this ability to create imagery, that creates a lasting foundation, not only for the language arts, but for math, physics, chemistry, sociology, music, and logic.

^{*1} Please refer to the following section titled “waiting for the recital”. We value that each child and each moment has its appropriate environment, and suggestions such as lying down on the floor is an example that, while it is a school, traditional concepts of a classroom need not apply all the time.



● **The highlights from this example:**

- * Stories are a quality form of active learning. It is key that teachers use words that are clearly understood, as they imagine a vivid scene that helps the story relate to their students. This is effective with students of all ages.
- * For children who grown up with an ability to listen, they are equipped with an active ability to truly relate to others, and this ability serves as the foundation for independent, critical thinking. A quality learning environment is achieved when all students are equipped with this important skill. Thus, by storytelling, a true classroom environment can be created.
- * Storytelling can also help expand the children's vocabulary, which nurtures theirs ability to revive various imagery, and enhances their ability to socialize and communicate.

● **Relationship to ESD and SDGs:**

- * In an evolving, complex world, the ability to tie worldly events to daily life though imagination is a critical skill. The relationship with SDGs and ESD may not be apparent at first, but we urge our readers to consider the relationship and how essential it is to achieve SDGs.

Waiting for the Recital

-A way for the children to spend time- A real-life example

It is inevitable that in the course of a day, children find themselves waiting for one thing or another. Sometimes, a small fight or restlessness can emerge. Yet, if children can find a way to spend time in wait without feeling stress, surely the quality of their activities will see improvement. Here, we use an example of a recent recital to highlight that there is indeed a way to spend time in wait that resonates with the children.

Today is a day to commemorate the completion of the most recent trimester^{*1}. We have rented a large public auditorium, and all classes gather to present their daily learnings to their families, and celebrate how much they have grown. This time, the event takes place in March, and it coincides with the end of the school year.

The Yokohama Rapport Theater was new to Mr. Yokoyama, the second grade teacher. He decided to enter the venue well in advance of his class's rehearsal. On his mind was how best for his class to spend the long waiting time between the rehearsal and the presentation. After surveying the venue, he steps outside to discover a walking path beside the Tsurumi river. A perfect place to spend the time in wait!

After a little while, the children show and a 15 minute rehearsal is completed. It is the same circle time movements that they perform in class each day; yet, the nerves can be felt on the day of this special recital. Mr. Yokoyama ferries the students outside.

Despite the warm spring sunshine, the chilly winds of winter still linger, and helps to cool down the excitement the children had been feeling. They inhale the crisp air, and exhale all the nervousness that had been building up. As they walk up to a grassy field beside the river, Mr. Yokoyama says, "okay now - until I say let's gather, why don't we all play a game of tag?"

Without missing a beat, the fields are filled with the voices of the children running up and down and all around. After a little while, seeing the children had that satisfied look on their faces, he calls them to gather. The children naturally cue in rows of two, and head back to the venue.

However, when they return to the hall, they realize there is still quite some time

^{*1} The monthly festival was originally an event for the Waldorf school to present on its learnings to the local community, on a monthly basis. Although it is now held at the end of the semester and for family only, the name carries on.

until their presentation. Mr. Yokoyama calls for a bathroom break, and the children take sips from their water bottle. Then, instead of instructing them to sit in wait, he invites the children to the lobby hall on the second floor. The space is empty, and he soon spots a nice carpeted area in the corner. "Okay everyone, why don't you use this space to lay down?"

The children sit, lay down, and relax - a sense of giddiness fills the carpeted corner. Mr. Yokoyama finds a little spot in the center, sits, and pulls out a book. It is *The Adventures of Strong Vanya*, a book that they had been reading recently in the classroom.

They lay, listening to the story, some sitting up, and some dozing off. It was almost like a shepherd and his flock, sitting in a grassy field.

As their time approaches, the children once again form two rows, and with a relaxed expression, head to the stage.

*The monthly festival was originally an event for the Waldorf school to present on its learnings to the local community, on a monthly basis. Although it is now held at the end of the trimester and for family only, the name carries on.

● The highlights from this example:

- * As with this example, when the teacher is able to understand the needs of the children and prepare an environment that meets it, the children begin to trust unconsciously that the teacher's instructions will give them a deep sense of satisfaction. With that, they harbor a sense of respect and trust, and a bond between the teacher and his/her students is borne. Achieving this connectivity at an early grade has a deep impact on the learnings of the future.
- * The pendulum between tension and relaxation is a rhythm the children experience each day. The 100 minute core lessons at Yokohama Steiner school becomes possible, even at this early age, due to this oscillation. Seeing education from the eyes of the children allows one to break free from formal structure and achieve true learning.

● Relationship to ESD and SDGs:

- * Children who are raised in a safe environment build a sense of confidence that is difficult for others to disrupt. This trait allows children to overcome difficult challenges in adulthood.

Cleaning and Building house

-The teacher's preparation frees the childrens hearts- The second grader's cleaning time, and the third grader's class on carpentry

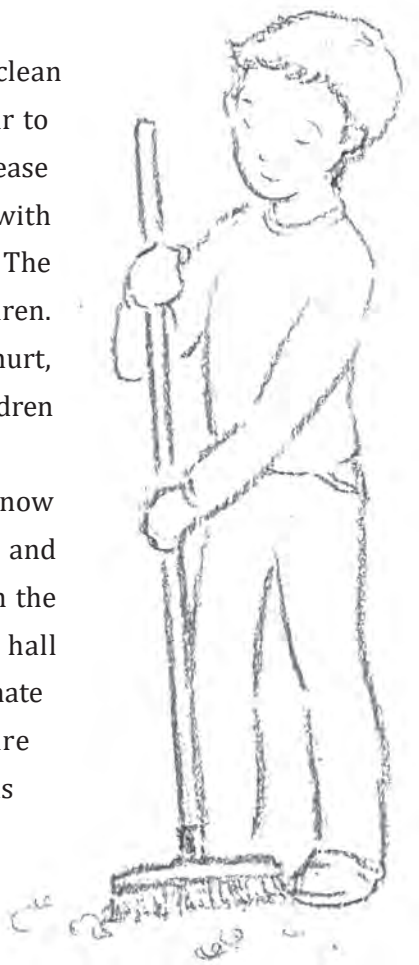
A stress-free platform for collaboration can be built, if the teacher anticipates the children's sequence of activities, and gives instruction in a way the children can understand. In such a structure, the children can find joy and freedom - even when doing chores like cleaning the classroom, or when participating in a carpentry class.

Cleaning time (2nd graders)

Lunch is done and It is cleaning time. The second graders look after their classroom on the second floor, and the small hallway that connects to three other classrooms. Two doors are situated on two of the walls, and an entrance to the boy's and girl's bathrooms are on the other walls. A warm light from a lightbulb illuminates the space.

The teacher gathers the children. "Now, let us all clean our school. Firstly, each one of you will take a chair to the front of the classroom, and in the same order, please move the desks to the front as well. I'll help you with the desks." With this, the children spring to action. The chairs go first to make it manageable for the children. He says to them, "let's make sure the chairs aren't hurt, and avoid bumping them into other things". The children look around and move the chairs carefully.

Once the furniture has been moved, he says, "okay, now let's break into two groups. One for the classroom, and another for the hall. If I call your name, you are on the classroom team. If not, you'll be working on the hall area. He split the groups based on his mental estimate of the workload required. While the children are staring at him and waiting for next order, he assigns roles to each of the children. One on the brooms, another on the dustpan – they run as if they are bouncing to the closet to get the equipment, and



cleaning time begins. "Here, and there, still some dusts!" "Okay, I will take care of it!" They communicate with each other and carry on with their chores gleefully.

Over in the hall area, the children move the furniture and sweep the dust toward the center. They then proceed to wipe down the floor with wet rags. Children from other classes come and go as they finish their lunches. The children focus on the task at hand, taking to heart the teacher's instructions.

In the classroom, the desks have been clustered and preparations for the next day has begun. In front of the classroom, two children diligently sweep up the dust into a dustpan. The two look quite proud at having done their work better than they expected. "Teacher, we have done!!" The children from the hall return to report the completion of their chores, with a look of satisfaction on each of the children's faces. They love cleaning their school.*1

Let's build a house for the school! (Third graders)

The third grade core lesson called Living and Working is one that consumes the children and the teacher's time. They spend quite a lot of time outdoors, making dumplings with the wormwood leaves, planting rice seedlings, and so on. They also learn from farmers and artisans on how to dehusk the harvested rice, use the dried rice straws for new years decorations, how to make tofu, and many other crafts. Even with so many exciting activities, most will point to the house-building project as the highlight of the third grade curriculum. Through this project, they actually build a small house that shelters its occupants from the wind and the rain. The materials are donated from the community, as well as with help from the mothers and fathers. They head to the nearby bamboo forest and cut down thick stalks of bamboo themselves. Autumn, when the bamboo is relatively dried and hardened, is the best time. On a sunny autumn day, equipped with helmets and gloves, the bamboos come down and are carried to the small truck all by children themselves, then delivered to the campus.

On this day, they are well into construction. In the morning, the teacher reviews the day's building activities, and the children break into their usual four groups. After much thought, the teacher settles on a square cottage. With 15 kids in the

*1 While the chores at school may be fun, it doesn't always mean they will enjoy it when at home. It is the sense of security embedded within the rhythms of the day, and the process overall, that teases at the sense of pride that comes with contributing to the school.

class, the children break into four groups of four, to take on tasks such as wall-making, and building pillars, etc. The groups are split at random, then small changes made by the teacher to ensure balance and productivity. After many days working together, the teamwork is apparent.

As they all proceed to the schoolyard, the pillars of the house can be seen. There are four thick pillars that have been driven into the holes they'd dug up. And to the side lay a pile of bamboo, covered in tarps, roughly 70 or so. The ones that won't be used right away have been put away so that space for working can be secured. Not only will it make the activity safer, but it won't get in the way of the children playing in the yard.

The teacher gathers the group in front of the house and reads a poem:

Here is where our house will be build
Here is to wishing many good things happen here
Here is to chasing away all bad things that try to enter
May the hearts of all who enter be filled with joy and blessings
Under this roof our hearts will be filled with peace
And we will speak softly
And we will give thanks to God for providing us
with the arms and legs that helped build this house

By reading a poem altogether, their mind also gets together for the work they are going to begin. The four groups gather, and start the day's activities – cutting the bamboo, splitting them to make walls, making precise measurements, and so on. Things are proceeding smoothly.

To square the bamboo for a but, each end of the bamboo is placed on a pile of three bricks, and the children sit on the bamboo, as if they were riding a witch's broomstick. One holds the saw, while another helps ensure the cut is perfectly straight. Each has a role, and not one person is dallying about. From the first grade, the learning process has been carefully crafted, and through so much collaboration, they are able to operate as a perfect team.

Achieving this was not without its trials and errors. On the first day of cutting, the teacher gave no detailed instruction, letting the kids figure it out for themselves. While it is important to experience this stress free, it is also important to leave room for the children to find the best way to go about such tasks. And as such,

errors can happen.

Yuta's saw has a crack and makes it difficult to cut. The crack happened on the first day, when the cut was not straight, thereby stressing the saw to the point of breaking. The teacher shows this to the students and teaches them how the saw can break if the cut is not perfectly straight. He invites the other groups to have a look and let everyone try the broken saw. Through this, the children learn the proper handling of tools, and re-commit themselves to the construction work. Soon thereafter, three gentlemen wearing suits enter the schoolyard, led by the schoolmaster. They are three members of the municipal government. Even with such unusual visitors, the children keep their focus and continue working. Some take a curious peak, but the work goes on. The visitors are impressed, and start asking many questions to the schoolmaster.

Meanwhile, the work carries on, and once a sufficient crack has been made into the bamboo, they all pull the bamboo down the middle to split it into two, length-wise, accompanied by a loud crunching sound. A boy falls on his rear, from having a bit too much momentum. Laughter fills the schoolyard. The boy himself has a good laugh.

After an hour, the final touches are made on the wall. "We did it!" "It just looks like a 'House'!" The cheers erupt. The confidence from being able to build such an impressive structure by themselves, is beginning to emerge by piling up these kinds of experiences. Surely, the dinner table conversation at home will be filled with stories of their most recent achievement.

● **The highlights from this example:**

- * By listening to the teacher, things go smoothly. Repeating this experience builds trust amongst the students, as well as with their teacher. They open their hearts to the teacher, and listen with a sense of respect. By building this foundation early on, the quality of their education improves dramatically.
- * When voluntarily following the instructions of a respected and trusted adult, the child is filled with a sense of freedom. In a comfortable and well organized environment, the children can pour their passion into each activity and achieve a feeling of freedom. It is critical at the early years to create this environment as often as possible.
- * Achieving things by oneself is the foundation of all learning. The teacher thinks about each child's abilities and their limits, and carefully assigns new challenges that help them grow, in part by laying out a detailed sequence of events. Of course, unexpected things can happen, and it does not always go well. Such occurrences can be dealt with a sense of humor, and be woven into the learnings of the day. By doing so, classroom becomes ever more lively.

● **Relationship to ESD and SDGs:**

- * Some challenges are at a local level, while others are on a global scale. Regardless, the ability to work with others is essential to overcome complex challenges. As shown with this example, by starting at an early age through collaborative projects, and enjoying the fruits of labor, a sense of optimism is instilled into the children in a natural way, that fosters cooperation and success
- * Activities conducted with passion during childhood will help lead to attributes such as persistence and focus, that are essential for problem solving.

Building a House (3rd Grade)

The building block introduced in Part 2 is a unique program for the third graders. The following pictures illustrate how this program, which is carefully prepared and supervised by the class teacher, provides an opportunity for the children to have a sense of achievement, "We built a house by ourselves!"



Children digging holes to secure pillars and wall materials.



Children are divided into four groups to install pillars.



Children tackle tasks by cooperating with each other – here, one is holding a bamboo, and another is cutting it.



A thick bamboo for a bench inside the house is being cut.



Children are making themselves at home inside the newly completed house



A protective ornament made of straw was placed at the entrance. The straw was harvested during the rice-growing class.

Movement of Singing and Imagining

-Building images and nurturing atmosphere during the lower-grade game class- A game class from the first grade

When talking about exercise, children tend to be divided into a group that loves exercising and another that resents it. However, at Yokohama Steiner School, every child looks forward to the exercise class. It is because a “gym consisting of songs and images” is waiting for them, where children sing, play music and listen to stories. This section introduces our gym that allows each child to truly enjoy, support friends, and enhance his/her physical ability.

After the main lesson in the morning and the 20-minute break, children who were out playing came back and filled the classroom with excitement. Their teacher had them sit down and waited until they settled down. “Let's go down to the Sun Room (a small hall on the first floor). Kento, Haruna, Yuta, please carry the balance beams. Yuka, please bring beanbags.” Meanwhile, other children started lining up in their regular order. Joyfully, but in a calming voice, the teacher started singing:

Snap, snap, snap, snap
An elf goes through the forest carrying a sack in the early morning
Coo coo, a bird calls him from a branch
Where are you going, Mr. Elf?
A mouse secretly peeks out from a hole...

A song is a magician of the space. The happy song brings rich colors and breeze of the forest. The children are immediately drawn into the other dimension and start singing too. They pretend to be the elf, the line leaves the classroom, and they march along with the good rhythm.

Snap, snap, snap, snap
The elf goes through the forest carrying a sack in the early morning...

Children become gradually excited and their voice goes louder, but they never escalate too much. Downstairs, an administrative staff hears the happy song and opens the office door to look. Eventually, the front of the line appears from the upstairs. Then three children carrying long balance beams come down slowly and carefully. The sweet singing voice passes in front of the office as a festival parade and disappears into the small hall next to it.

The elf dances
Totten, tatten, pitten poh
Oops, he falls and laughs
Hahaha ho!

Joyous laughter fills the hall. The children put down what they were carrying, hold hands and make a big circle. The teacher flips his body to the left to subtly indicate the direction, and slowly, starts singing a song about a watermill:

A watermill rotates, a watermill rotates
With a stream current, round and round

It is a simple melody and rhythm but creates a soft and comfortable space. The class circles clockwise as they sing. The teacher changes the direction at a break of the song, and the circle goes counterclockwise.

A watermill rotates, a watermill rotates
With a stream current, round and round

The big circle comes and goes. The teacher starts singing faster with small steps to speed up the circle. The children filled with joy follows him, bouncing. Then the teacher turns around and slows down, taking big, heavy steps. The children enjoy the change and adjust their steps as if they themselves were becoming giants.

To the right, to the left, swiftly, slowly. The warmth of a big and inclusive circle of the entire class, peaceful space created by the song where the children can feel secure, and cheerful feelings brought by various rhythms. These elements softly touch the heartstrings of the children in a way they long for. The children wait for the next instruction from the teacher with a dreamlike expression.

When the teacher brings out an ocarina, the children get ready as if to say, "it's coming!" The moment the ocarina starts chirping, all the children scattered, shouting for joy. They run freely around the room while listening carefully to the teacher. The ocarina stops suddenly, and the children run to the teacher. The teacher starts playing the instrument, and the cycle repeats. Divergence and concentration, concentration and divergence. Just that, but the children love this

rhythmic repetition more than anything.

Eventually, the ocarina is put away. The teacher places the balance beams in a U-shape and takes out a flute while waiting for the excited children to settle down. Each child picks up a beanbag from a basket and forms a long line at the end of the balance beams.

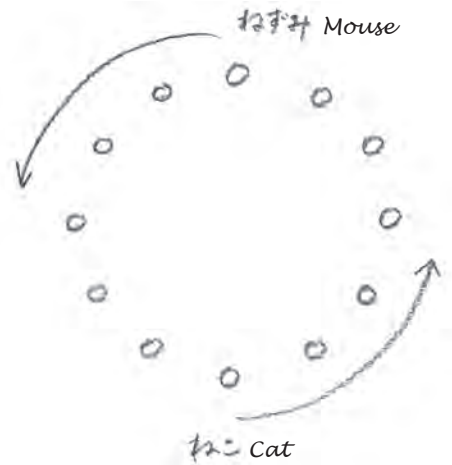
“Let's deliver the treasure, without dropping it, to the country across the bridge.” Yuka, who is in the front of the line steps up on the beam and places a red beanbag on the head. The flute starts playing – Poh, poh, po, poh. The sound surrounds the space with an air perfect for the elves crossing the bridge over the valley. One child crosses quickly, another goes carefully while keeping the balance, and another hastily grabs the beanbag so it would not fall. Small dramas are created, laughter bursts out, and eventually, all of them finish crossing the beams.

Then they put away the beams and the children make a big circle again to get ready for a game. “Aoi, you will be the mouse. Kento, you are the cat.” Two children facing each other on the opposite side of the circle are invited. The teacher indicates the direction to which the two children are supposed to run and starts singing:

Cat is eyeing on the mouse
Cat wonders around the wall
Run, Mouse, run, Mouse
Don't get caught by Cat!

Clap! As the teacher claps his hands when the song is over, the mouse and the cat go out of the circle and start running. Kento is a fast runner but cannot catch up with Aoi running at the opposite side of the circle. As he returns to his original spot without catching up with Aoi, he touches Kumi who is next to him. Now Kumi is the cat. The moment Kumi starts running, Aoi makes another round and touches Yuka. Yuka then becomes the mouse.

All the children run without getting caught by the cat or catching the mouse. And yet, when the song starts, they cannot help but excitedly cheer on the mouse



again. The children enjoyed the game and immersed themselves in the joy of running, slow runners and timid children alike.

Run, Mouse! Run, Mouse!

The cheers repeated and echoed in the hall.

● **The highlights from this example:**

- * Songs, music, and imagination-filled words are important educational materials that enrich every activity regardless of subjects. Especially, when children are engaged in activities as a group, a safe space for everyone can be created by skillfully using songs and music. In the cat and mouse example, time to sing is set aside before the game, creating excitement with the image of the mouse running away from the cat, which leads to a deep experience of the activity.
- * There is no need to sing in loud voice; instead, we focus on singing a song appropriate for each piece. When a teacher sings in a way that is most suitable for a song, children do not shout out the song.
- * During the game class for lower grades, we remove competitive elements as much as possible so that each child can move around with joy. It is important to ensure that children can link physical activities with happy feelings. Through the accumulation of such experience, any children can become fond of physical movement, and their physical abilities can be naturally strengthened.

● **Relationship to ESD and SDGs:**

- * The reason art, such as music and story-telling, is essential to our education is that art is capable of transforming various elements into wholeness. What is important in promoting ESD and SDGs is the capacity to incorporate apparently isolated events into a meaningful entirety. The true nature of what appears to be non-sustainability in the world is the way we humans live isolated from the wholeness of the global environment.
- * The artistic approach has the power to restore human wholeness and reconcile the world and people. ESD aims to transform not only our knowledge but also our values, behavioral patterns, and lifestyle itself. ESD is where an artistic approach can play an active role.
- * Also, when addressing SDGs that finely define global issues to be solved, it is important to maintain a big perspective that goes beyond efforts to solve individual targets. Artistic senses will surely give us the strength to work on SDGs.

Report by the Teacher in Charge of UNESCO Associated Schools Network

Relationship between the vegetable gardening class and ESD

Yoshihiro Yokoyama (3rd-grade teacher)

At Waldorf schools, the third-graders learn “living and occupation.” They learn hunting/gathering, farming, and dairy farming. They bake bread with their own harvest and try essential tools that have been created by humans. In this way, they follow the path of how human beings have been living on Earth.

Specifically, the farming lessons will be based on work in the vegetable and rice fields. Children borrow a plot of land from a nearby farmer and receive instructions from local farmers. Since the rice field is situated in the forest and managed by a local group, the third-grade class borrows a plot from them and learns rice growing processes, from planting seedlings to harvesting, under the Association's guidance.

While advancing with their learning in connection to the local community, the class also grows vegetables in the schoolyard. The following section discusses the vegetable gardening activities in the schoolyard.

In May, I gathered my students at a corner of the schoolyard. I told the children who were surrounding the area that would become their vegetable garden,

“You are all people from ancient times. Let’s make a vegetable garden.”

The children were puzzled.

“Where is the shovel?”

“There wasn’t any shovel back in time. Let’s use our hands.”

The children tackle hard ground by hand, but things do not go smoothly. They come up with an idea to use rocks and sticks in the yard to continue. By using tools, the task goes faster than just using hands, although the process is still slow. Day after day, they continue

working. They would dig a little and soften the soil. The “tilled” area slowly expands after their daily effort for one week. Children start looking more hopeful. They become more active and start looking forward to doing the work in the following week. In the third week, the small plot was mostly tilled with its soil softened and becoming airy. The ground looks quite different now, and the children touching the soil are filled with joy with their eyes shining. In the fourth week, they learn how to use a hoe and its meaning for the first time. Their garden is now complete.

By working with hands and sticks for three weeks, instead of using the hoe from the beginning, I feel that the children have developed a strong affinity toward the soil where seeds would be sewn. Taking time to work on something with devotion leaves a long-lasting impression in them, physically and spiritually.

During the task preparing the ground, people may feel concerned that some children would not want to engage themselves in the task, saying, “I want to use the shovel soon,” or “I know we have a shovel...” This did not happen in the case of my class, and all of the children actively worked on the task. I analyzed why that was the case and would like to share some of my findings.

At Yokohama Steiner School, the class period is 100 minutes. Teachers set aside time to sing and move around during the class. Children love to sing songs and move their bodies along with the rhythm of songs. In May when we worked on the ground, the class sang a sowing song and recited a hoeing poem.

Sowing Song

Let's sow seeds in our field

(children make a circle)

What do we sow? What do we sow?

(children move forward and hold each other's shoulder,
pretending that they are discussing what to sow)
Carrots, carrots, let's sow carrot seeds
(they return to a big circle)
Let's sow, till the ground
We grow God's blessing

Hoeing Poem

Hoe the Mother Earth
Cultivate the hard ground
Into the dark ground
For sunlight to reach
Putting my strength in each throw of the hoe
In the bed of light, water, and air
For life to wake up again
I cultivate with all my wishes
I cultivate the Mother Earth

By singing a song and reciting a poem that are related to children's learning and setting aside time that is fresh and dynamic before they start working on the tasks, children are able to strengthen the connection between their learning and experiencing.

I also held the task to till the ground at the same time

period for one month. By repeating, children were able to work on the task with regularity. Since they knew that they would engage themselves in the same task the following day, they came to school with high hope, "I will till the ground again! I will make it soft!"

I also believe that the ability to continue a task for a certain period of time can lead children to a good outcome.

Children at Yokohama Steiner School study botany in the seventh grade, chemistry (plants, oxygen, and carbon dioxide) in the eighth grade, and chemistry (photosynthesis) in the ninth grade. The experience in the third grade can surely secure a solid foundation for natural science during the upper grades.

As I mentioned above, the third-graders worked with the soil and came to feel an affinity toward it. Through the work in vegetable and rice fields, they will learn to be grateful for not just soil but also light, winds, and rain. By physically moving around, singing songs, and reciting poems, and keeping the learning going, the contents of the learning seem to permeate deep inside children's bodies and hearts in addition to the mind. I am confident that such activities transform into strength that supports the world in the future.



Whole-body potato-digging at the rented vegetable field (3rd grade)

*Regarding this article

When Yokoyama, in charge of the UNESCO Associated Schools, reported his practice of vegetable gardening for the third-graders in a workshop, some participants told him, "This is never possible at my school. The moment I suggest tilling the ground by hand, students would go out of control complaining that they do not want to do such a thing or becoming sarcastic and suggesting the use of tools."

Part 1 started when we became interested in figuring out why such activity is possible at a Waldorf school. This article was a documentation of the report given at the workshop.

Part 2

Round Table

Developing Advanced Learning in Upper Grades **What Comes to Bloom based on the ESD Foundation Cultivated during Lower Grades**

Mami Nagai (Class teacher, 9th grade)

Yoshihiro Yokoyama (Class teacher, 3rd grade)

Noriaki Fukuda (Parent)

Masashi Sato (Secretary-general)

How does the foundation building of ESD during lower grades, discussed in Part 1, lead to learning in upper grades? What is upper-grade learning characterized by implicit ESD?

In Part 2, we will look at our practical cases included in a booklet, UNESCO Associated Schools ESD Good Practices in Japan, which was distributed to participants from around the world during the UNESCO ASPnet International ESD Events in Okayama, Japan, 2014, celebrating the final year of the UN Decade of ESD.

Through a round-table discussion and using the cases introduced in the booklet, we would like to illustrate how upper-grade learning at Yokohama Steiner School links each lesson to another, and how students receive inclusive world images rich in inspiration by incorporating such lessons. The discussion also touches upon how our teachers work with the unique curriculum and teaching methods that enable such learning.

Round Table

Developing Advanced Learning in Upper Grades

What Comes to Bloom based on the ESD Foundation Cultivated during Lower Grades

Part 2: We will deliver the Developing Advanced Learning in Upper Grades is delivered in a round-table format. We have four speakers: The current ninth-grade class teacher, Mami Nagai; the third-grade class teacher, Yoshihiro Yokoyama; a parent and expert in educational psychology, Noriaki Fukuda; and the Secretary-General, who is also in charge of Sustainable School, Masashi Sato (MC). The following contents were recorded in a conference room after the assembly at the end of the second trimester.

Challenges of Sustainable Schools

Sato: We are hosting today's round table to record our discussion for a booklet, which is going to be the compilation of the Sustainable School Project at Yokohama Steiner School.

Yokohama Steiner School applied for and was accepted to the Sustainable School Project through public invitation by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). Publishing this booklet has been a part of the project plan since the application phase.

Dr. Yoshiyuki Nagata (University of the Sacred Heart) calls the educational practice found at Yokohama Steiner School “implicit ESD” - practice in which ESD wells up from deep within as ESD permeates every activity at school. However, as the word “implicit” represents, such ESD is hard to see. Just by glancing, what makes ESD is not apparent. Therefore, we set our goal for the Sustainable School Project to visualize and communicate the implicit elements of ESD at Yokohama Steiner School.

One of the qualities required for a Sustainable School is “expansibility (versatility)”. A Sustainable School is evaluated based on whether, as an ESD focus school, it “has motivation

for activities with the potential to be utilized and practised by any school,” and “has strong motivation to expand its efforts, methods, theories, etc. that are found in its practices and collaborate with other schools.” By documenting our school's activities and issuing a booklet to share with other schools, we would like to address such requirements. At the same time, we thought that we could review our activities through such a process.

Importance of Foundation Building in Lower Grades

In Part 1 of this booklet, we wove the daily activities of Mr. Yokoyama's class into a story. The story seems far from the familiar image of ESD. However, if we think of implicit ESD, his story tells us how to make the foundation of ESD. Mr. Yokoyama, I would assume



(From left) Masashi Sato (Moderator), Noriaki Fukuda, Yoshihiro Yokoyama, Mami Nagai
(December 15, 2018)

that you have many thoughts. Please share what you think was important, or discoveries if any through this process.

Yokoyama: I am currently a third-grade teacher, and this is my second round of a nine-year cycle. Now after having this class for three years, I feel that the third grade is the roundup of the lower grades. The third-graders of our school engage themselves in many lessons that require the use of hands and feet. In other words, they move their hands and feet according to their teachers. What often happens when all the students tackle one task is that some students are blankly standing there, and others keep playing around. However, I rarely see such an incident among the current third-graders. What makes them different? It comes from the relationship of mutual trust established between the children and their teacher during the first and second grades.

Children respect their teacher and listen to others well. This is possible because we paid special attention to children so that they would not feel stressed in the new environment of the first grade. I think that such a relationship was nurtured by carefully crafting every aspect of their life, not only their daily lives but learning contents and the way to teach so that they would not be confused. These make the children ready to work as a class when the time comes.

I felt this relationship of mutual trust when we went to make mugwort dumplings in April. During a field trip, it may often be the case that children become playful in transit or on-site, but this class did not show any sign of such misbehavior. They were ready to learn what they wanted to learn. I thought, "This is what is important," And I realized that this was the outcome of our daily efforts during the first two years. We did not aim for this during the first two years, but the accumulation of an everyday effort bore fruit in the third grade.

I am sure that it will be that way, each and every day will be important for the coming years. Future learning will touch more upon the essence of the Sustainable School, and with the solid foundation to learn, more and more children will be able to absorb and deepen such



Third-graders at the end-of-trimester presentation
(Morning circle time)

essence.

Nurturing Aspiration for Good Adults

Sato: Today, we have one more guest, Mr. Noriaki Fukuda, who is a member of our UNESCO Associated Schools Network Activity Group. He will be speaking from a parent's perspective as his son studies in Mr. Yokoyama's class, and also from an expert's perspective as a professor in educational psychology. According to what Mr. Yokoyama has just told us, the children had two years of preparation that led to deep learning in the third grade. Today's end-of-trimester presentation also showed how the children engage themselves in daily activities with joy. Mr. Fukuda, does your child tell you things that happened at school when he comes home?

Fukuda: Yes. Now that he is in the third grade, he is more verbally expressive. During the first and second grades, he used to show me his main lesson book*, saying, "I drew this today," or drew pictures of what he felt was interesting. That was how he expressed himself and communicated with me.

Sato: For parents, don't you think that the main lesson

***Main lesson:** Approximately 100-minute long, first unit in the morning. Each core subject is taught for 2-3 weeks so that the teacher and children can concentrate on lesson themes. There is no textbook; lower grade students copy in color what their teacher writes on the board into their notebooks. The notebooks become the portfolio of the child.

books are sort of report cards?

Fukuda: Yes, they really are. By just looking at one page of the notebook, I can picture what kind of learning evolved. Before my son went to Yokohama Steiner School, I participated in a sample main lesson for adults. Coincidentally, the instructors were Mr. Yokoyama and Ms. Nagai, and the lesson was on the Industrial Revolution in the United Kingdom. Based on that experience, I was able to grasp the width and depth of the main lesson. In that sense, I usually look at my son's notebook and do not need to communicate with him verbally.

Sato: I see. I would like to ask Mr. Yokoyama. Earlier, you mentioned that the children could respond to your instructions since there is a relationship based on mutual trust between you and the children. From an outsider's view, they may appear to be just obedient children. However, from our perspective, the situation is that the children intrinsically follow their teacher's instructions and learn. And it did not happen because you told them, "this is how you behave." Then, where does the difference lie between telling children what to do and how Yokohama Steiner School builds the relationship based on mutual trust?

Yokoyama: What we often do is that we ask children who come to school for the first time, "Why did you come to school today?" They would answer, "We came to study." We ask again, "Why do you study?" Then we tell them, "You study so that you will become respectable adults. Look at your father and mother. They can calculate. That is why they can buy necessary items every day. You will be able to do so too." Or we would say, "Your father and mother read books and newspapers. They can write letters. They can do these things because they know characters. When you know the characters, you can read books and study."

In other words, we help them cultivate how they view adults. We tell them stories so that they can nurture respectful views for adults in general, including their parents. Instead of giving them an order, "Study!", we are giving them motivation.

Sato: You work with them every day so that aspiration

arises within them.

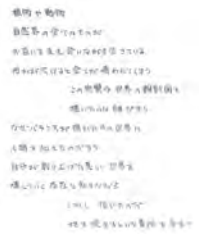

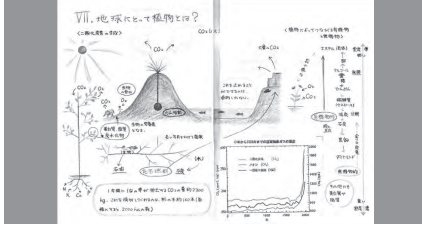
Yokoyama: That is right. Children whose permanent teeth started to come out have a strong desire to encounter adults whom they can respect. Therefore, what is essential for teachers is to maintain awareness that we are the presence of aspiration and motivation to study in the eyes of children. I believe that it is vital for us to make the efforts for having a deep philosophy that makes children think, "This person has something special."

Sato: I realized that teachers are trying to develop an environment where children can find adults to whom they truly would like to get connected. Now, as illustrated in the theme, I would like to see how various subjects formulate a larger, more comprehensive picture in an organic way through upper-grade learning. I would like Ms. Nagai, who is the ninth-grade class teacher to talk.

There is a Point Where the Quality of Learning Transforms

Sato: I have this booklet with me, titled UNESCO Associated Schools ESD Good Practices in Japan. Ms. Nagai's former class was in the ninth grade when the UNESCO ASPnet International ESD Events were hosted in Japan. This is the booklet that MEXT put together to distribute to the participants from all over the world. We summarized Ms. Nagai's practice at Yokohama Steiner School and submitted it to MEXT, which resulted in getting included in this booklet. It was recognized as outstanding practice. However, unfortunately, the information in this booklet is too limited, and it is difficult to convey its real value. Therefore, I would like Ms. Nagai to discuss your practice in more detail.

Nagai: It is the second seven-year transformation of human growth, which is expressed as "crossing the Rubicon" in Waldorf education. Children say farewell to their childhood, take one step higher, and aspire to learn vigorously. That is where the third- and fourth-graders are. And the path to growth does not follow a straight line; it meanders and intertwines with many

<p>Yokohama Steiner School</p> <p>Learning about the global environment through practical training in chemistry and agriculture</p> <p>Environment [Keywords] Combustion and plants; three major nutrients generated by plants; how water, oxygen and carbon dioxide circulate on the planet; how humans, animals and plants coexist; how plants are the planet's only creators of oxygen</p> <p>▶Goal</p> <p>By helping students to reach a deeper understanding of the plants that are such a familiar presence, through practical training in chemistry and agriculture, and lectures on natural agriculture, we aim to foster a keen sense of the importance of conserving the global environment, and a desire to put this awareness to work in their own daily lives.</p>  <p>▶Activity</p> <p>■ Seventh-grade students (students in the first year of junior high school) Through observation, students notice how roots, stalks, leaves and flowers differ from one another. Students consider the relationship between the elements of the natural world that create the bodies of plants.</p> <p>■ Eighth-grade students (students in the second year of junior high school) By learning about acids and alkalis (i.e. bases), students reach an understanding of the properties and role of water, and reaffirm their awareness that water circulates around the planet.</p> <p>■ Ninth-grade students (students in the third year of junior high school) Through practical training in agriculture, and lectures on natural agriculture, the students learn about the profound relationship between plants (agricultural products), humans, animals and the global environment. By learning about organic chemistry, they also realize that the three major nutrients necessary for the survival of living organisms are all generated by plants. They also come to understand that oxygen is created by the process of photosynthesis, whereby plants generate nutrients.</p> 	 <p>▶Outcome</p> <p>■ Achievements Through learning about chemistry and doing practical training in agriculture over three years of junior high school, the students individually realized that we need to protect plants that protect the global environment – in other words, the forests – and they also wrote poetry with a message about environmental conservation.</p> <p>■ Remaining tasks By giving them a scientific understanding of plants, we were able to raise students' awareness of the need for global environmental conservation. Going forward, we plan to develop the program by broadening the conversation into the field of modern society. This will involve lessons where the students find out which parts of the world are showing a decrease in forest area, confronting the relevant causes and problems, and considering solutions that would stop forests decreasing.</p> <p>▶Transformation</p> <p>The students are gaining a keen awareness of the process that begins with a small-scale chemical event and leads to a global phenomenon. The above examples of our activities are merely highlights intended to provide a rough idea of our whole ESD program. Instead of looking for changes resulting from individual ESD projects, we are assessing changes in terms of the cumulative fruits of all our ESD work so far.</p> <p>※ Essence of our ESD efforts</p> <p>We see it as important that, instead of being an individual segment of the school's daily educational practice, ESD permeates our entire curriculum. We want to demonstrate the principles of ESD in every subject. As a methodology for harmoniously eliciting true development in children, ESD is the true essence of education.</p>
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Reprinted from: UNESCO Associated Schools ESD Good Practices, the commemoration of 2014 UNESCO ASPnet International ESD Events (please see P.64 of this document)

learning elements.

For example, in the third grade, the theme is to learn how human beings put their feet on the ground and live with their power. Children find themselves that they have to do everything by themselves. Fields of learning do not vertically grow upward. Instead, each field intertwines one another, and children collaborate using their intellectual abilities, mind, and physical strength. The third-graders are learning that various areas of learning coming together makes human beings. In the fourth grade, children start learning about eras when their parents and grandparents grew up. Local Studies also begin, and as their cognitive abilities expand in space and time, more elements appear. It is not just human beings that exist in this world. Animals are here too. So, animals are now within their sight for the fourth- graders. Such learnings during the third and fourth grades bring dynamism.

Sato: This image truly represents the concept well.

This narrow spot is where qualitative transformation happens.

Nagai: Yes. In terms of its design, it is all thanks to the talent of its designer and parent who created this poster.

Sato: In Part 1 of this report, we tried to illustrate the part below this narrow point. And what we would like to look at in this round table for Part 2 is how the upper section, the rich learning experience during upper grades blooms on the foundation built during lower grades. I think that this good practice helps us understand the process. Ms. Nagai, can you please explain this example again?

Learning Global Environment through Practical Training in Chemistry and Agriculture

Nagai: Just around the intersection of this tree form,

世界と“わたし”はつながっている

9年生

みずからの理想を求めて

7年生

内面との対峙

5年生

心身の調和

3年生

世界との出会い

1年生

学びのはじまり

8年生

論理的思考の発展

6年生

法則・秩序との出会い

4年生

大器に立つ

2年生

意識の目覚め

世界と“わたし”はつながっている

それを実感できる9年間のカリキュラム。
その実践を支える教員と保護者のパートナーシップが
学校の一体感を生み出しています。

横浜シュタイナー学園は、横浜市緑区の大きな森のそばの小中一貫シュタイナー教育実践校です。
機関包括型でESDに取り組むサスティナブルスクールとしてSDGs推進に貢献しています。
<https://yokohama-steiner.jp/>

サスティナブルスクール・横浜シュタイナー学園

ESD poster exhibited at the 10th ASPnet National Conference in Japan

learning in natural science starts. Animal Studies in the fourth grade, Botany in the fifth grade, and Mineralogy in the sixth and seventh grades. Physics starts in the sixth grade, and Chemistry starts in the seventh grade, which starts with combustion. Students learn that something is burning inside our bodies, which simultaneously leads them to Nutrition.

In this way, science expands its fields while becoming individualized and specialized at the same time. Ultimately, in the ninth grade, students look back on their path of learning and find themselves where they can finally feel, "Uh-huh, this is what I have been learning." During the ninth grade Chemistry, the learning in natural sciences that has been advancing step by step, as shown in the tree image, is connecting back to Botany that they learned during the fifth and sixth grades.

Currently, I have a student who is preparing for high school entrance exams. The student would bring quiz books of Chemistry and Physics problems for high school entrance exams, saying, "Ms. Nagai, I don't understand them!" I am impressed to see how much middle schoolers out there are studying and how difficult those problems are! Compared to that, the learning in Chemistry at Yokoyama Steiner School is only touching upon its essence. And I believe that the most important factors within the essence are plants, the global environment, and human beings.

After studying Botany in the fifth and sixth grades, the seventh-graders burn plants. When burnt, matter is decomposed and divided into various elements. Putting such elements back together becomes the study of Chemistry. When you learn science in this way, students will understand, "What makes this world full of energy are thanks to the plants!" In the Nutrition class during the ninth grade, students learn the three essential nutrients and other vitamins necessary for human beings. They learn at the end that all such nutrients come from plants.

Every Material Cycle Comes Back to Plants

This is why we burn plants many times during the seventh-grade combustion experiments. Students burn roots, stems, leaves, flowers... everything. They discover that elements composing plants burn down to their original state. Plants are made from sun rays and heat, minerals from the ground, water, and air - various things from plants. When burning them, ash remains and becomes minerals. Through combustion, light and heat emit. The opposite process of what the sun has done to plants occurs. It is an image that everything that makes plants goes back to where it was.

With the image students gained during the seventh grade, they further break down matters into acidic and alkaline groups in the eighth grade. What is ash? What is an acid? Students look at the characteristics of broken-down substances through various experiments. They then discover that, among alkaline substances, limestone, which is closely linked to human beings, circulates around the Earth. Lime often originates from various organisms, which dissolves into the ground and becomes limestone; humans harvest the limestone, burn it, and produce quicklime. We then process it into the stucco. In this way, lime goes around the Earth. Such an image of circulation leads to learning where students understand nutrients as chemical processes. What is protein? Fat? What about carbohydrates? And students learn that it is only plants that can produce all these elements on Earth. This allows them to see that plants



are the only entities that can produce oxygen for Earth. Then they begin to think about the environment.

In the ninth grade, students participate in farm training. Yokohama Steiner School has been taking the ninth-graders to a biodynamic farm* from our first graduating class. Students can learn this agricultural method that captures the Earth as one living thing while helping agricultural work. By experiencing plants through vegetables in the field and animals through caring for cows, students realize how the farm lives according to seasons, which links to their classroom learning and experiments. This is how learning in upper grades is integrated and becomes wholesome.

Poems about Chemistry

Through these, students start thinking, "Plants are amazing!" The other day, our sixth graduating class completed the Chemistry section of their main lesson. At the end of the Chemistry block, I told the students, "Please write a poem about what you have learnt"- I did this to both the first and sixth graduating classes. They all said, "What!?" but ended up creating beautiful poems. I have them here now.

I will start with a paragraph written by one of the students from the first graduating class, which was included in the booklet, UNESCO Associated Schools ESD Good Practices in Japan.

"As I learned Organic Chemistry, my impression of Chemistry changed quite a bit. Until now, I had an image that Chemistry tries to fit everything in logic. However, as I studied the subject, I realized that Chemistry was magnificent and connected to the philosophical realm. What I liked the most among things that I learned through many experiments was a microscope. Potato starch and sugar looked very beautiful under it. What I normally saw and what I found through the lens were quite different, which was interesting. I was touched by substances that had turned into a dusky color as a result of chemical reaction with iodine solution looked

magical through a microscope. Writing a poem [about Chemistry], I thought, seemed difficult at first. However, when I tried, it was unexpectedly fun. I sat in front of my desk, writing a poem and reading it out loud as if I were talking to myself, and I did not even notice how much time had passed. I had meant to write something more practical about Chemistry, but it became something grandiose. The lesson was interesting as always. Thank you."

And her poem follows:

Plants and animals

Everything in this natural world lives

While helping each other

When one thing goes missing,

everything crumbles

This perfect blueprint

I wonder who drew it

Why, into the balanced world,

The designer added humans

The beautiful world that the designer had created

The designer knew that humans would destroy

**But by giving them an obligation to rule over
the land**

The designer believed in humans

(Female, 1st graduating class)

Although the students in the sixth graduating class of this year carry different colors to the first graduating students, they wrote wonderful poems as well. The student whom I am introducing next plans to take an entrance exam for high school. He has been studying under various different methods and has tried summer programs too. The following paragraph was written in

***Biodynamic agriculture:** Agriculture that considers a farm and its surrounding forests, grass fields, ponds, etc. as a complete ecosystem and enhances the quality of land and agricultural products by achieving a healthy circulation of the ecosystem. Rudolf Steiner proposed this method in 1924, providing a source of movement in modern organic agriculture. There are a few biodynamic farms around Japan.

such a context.

"Since Chemistry in this block was titled Organic Chemistry, I thought that we would study organic matters in the field of Chemistry. However, I was a little surprised to find that the lessons consisted of various fields such as Botany, Nutrition, History, etc. As I expected, everything was flowing and connected, unlike partial and disconnected knowledge that I had learned during the summer program, and I experienced again that [what I had learned at Yokohama Steiner School] had been absorbed smoothly into my head. Thank you!"

This is her poem:

**Nature is, for humans,
A big treasure box.
In a human's daily life
It sometimes becomes food with pungent
fragrance and flavor
It sometimes becomes a house that
wraps around us
At one time, also became
A threat that humans could not control.
Even so, this treasure box for humans
Has always been an important existence.**

**However, as time passes, things have changed.
Humans, even when hurting nature,
Charged forward heeding only their own desires.
When they looked up to the sky,
The world was completely gray.**

**In order that such a thing does not happen,
Let us think about what we can do.
For the rainbow-colored treasure box.**

(Female, 6th graduating class)

I would like to introduce some more. This next one was written by a male student:

**I am the center
That is what we think
But next to me, there is another person
We are next to each other
It seems that we are far apart
But also close together**

(Male, 6th graduating class)

**Plants give us food
Plants give us strength
Plants give us housing
Plants give us "something"
Is this what real harmony is?**

(Male, 6th graduating class)

**An organic substance is a material that burns
It is a substance that,
when burnt, generates carbon dioxides
and leaves ash behind
It is a substance that becomes air and nutrients
The air and nutrients are taken
in by an organic substance
When this organic matter is burnt
It becomes carbon dioxide substance
and ash again**



9th-graders singing at the end-of-trimester presentation (the 6th graduating class)

This flow circulates the world

And provides support to us

(Female, 6th graduating class)

This poem was clearly written based on the student's deep thought on the contents of Organic Chemistry. The next one is also quite impressive.

In ancient times, humans as well as animals

Lived in harmony with Earth

**Gradually, humans started to have more interests
in themselves**

**Such consciousness brought goodness as well as
evilness**

In the perpetual current of time

**Humans started to become obsessed with
themselves**

The obsession became tangled and swollen

Reproducing hatred and scars

And destroyed nature

Obsession made humans forget the harmony

**Humans, if they cannot remember what they
have left behind**

And stand up,

Will destroy themselves

As they kill the Earth

(Female, 6th graduating class)

There is something we have to do

People think for themselves and take action

**People know what they have to do from
the beginning**

What each one of them

Has to do for the finite Earth and Universe

Since their resources are not perpetual

(Male, 6th graduating class)

Everything is connected

Panels: This is what ESD is.

Nagai: Exactly. You don't have to think, "Let's do ESD!" It naturally becomes ESD. I feel that the more

I invest in children, the more I get. The student who was taking high school entrance exams told me that by experiencing a type of learning outside the school, in which she had only been memorizing partial knowledge "because it will be in the exams," she understood that the lessons at Yokohama Steiner School had been teaching her that "everything is connected." Her paragraph I introduced is the first of hers to say, "Thank you."

Yokoyama: That's wonderful. I am not confident enough to draw out students' thoughts and impressions like this. The way you guide them must be very good.

Nagai: I have always had an idea that everything starts with plants and ends with plants. I am really terrible at science, and whenever an experiment goes well, my students tell me, "You are the one who is the happiest." The experiment on alcohol distillation was a huge challenge too. But the students had a great time with those experiments, and I believe that my image of science was communicated with them.

I felt so when we went to the farm. We went to a biodynamic farm in Hokkaido called the Sophia Farm, with many dairy cows. The owner shared his dream, which was to purchase the entire mountain to heal the Earth, by not introducing fertilizers from outside, not removing anything from the farm, managing the farm with what it had on and, nurturing and sharing life in an organic way. He told the students in between tasks that he would be happy if young people came, worked together and spread his dream. I am sure that the students received his message that everything is connected. They understood that the entire Earth is connected by looking at his land. That realization is key for ninth-graders, I thought.

The Power of Imagery for Integrating Curri-culum

Sato: I made a big discovery as I was preparing for an interview with Ms. Nagai. Since her good practice has been structured based on the Waldorf curriculum, I thought that I would be able to interview other teachers

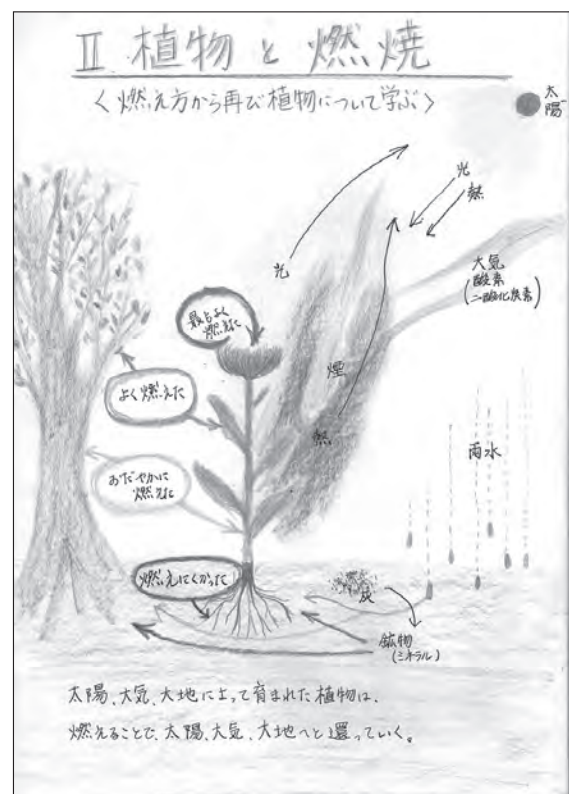
in order to explain it. However, Ms. Nagai told me, “That would be impossible. It is based on the Waldorf curriculum, but I am the one who creates this vision through the curriculum. Other teachers have their own visions. I am the only one who can explain this particular example.” Ms. Nagai, can you explain more about what you said?

Nagai: Although I am not good at science, I have had a sense of “connectedness” ever since I taught the fifth or sixth grade, and I was greatly inspired by the combustion block during the seventh grade. This is the drawing (right) on the first page of the notebook I introduced in the ESD Good Practices booklet, and it is a summary of the study of combustion. This image is a continuation from the fifth grade, where we ask, “what are plants and their roles?” In the nutrition block, students make a connection between us humans and plants. Even if we eat meat, we are eating the meat of an animal that eats plants, which is the same thing as eating plants indirectly. And students find out that plants are the ones that can truly heal the Earth suffering from global warming.

I have been communicating my vision with my colleagues. With teachers who do combustion experiments, I try to tell them that the experiments are exceptionally important because they tie in with ninth grade learning.

Yokoyama: I agree with Ms. Nagai when she says “I can talk about it because it is me.” I think that it comes down to how Ms. Nagai looks at the world through this curriculum. A teacher may know what s/he would like to communicate with students from the very beginning, or the teacher may discover a vision in the process. That is, there are new discoveries as s/he teaches the Waldorf curriculum from the first grade, and after the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades, there are more discoveries, etc.

The important thing is that Ms. Nagai was the class teacher of the first graduating class, meaning she found the vision all by herself. She is the discoverer, so she can tell us the joy of “Wow, I found it!” The rest of us just hear from her and have not made any discoveries yet.



The first page of “Plants and Combustion” notebook (female, 9th grade, the 1st graduating class)

I think that the energy that she carries is completely different from what the other teachers have.

Nagai: It is possible that others have wondered “Do I have to do the same?” and become passive.

Yokoyama: So, I believe that strength comes out from the struggle of finding how a teacher would like to address the curriculum. In Ms. Nagai's case, she had many thoughts through plants, and the energy of those was communicated to her students. In other words, it is not something that every teacher can accomplish, but rather Ms. Nagai's own world made manifest.

Sato: And Mr. Yokoyama, you are building your own vision in a different field.

Yokoyama: That's right.

Nagai: The amazing thing about this curriculum is that, ultimately, each teacher makes his or her own discovery, and communicates the discovery using himself or herself as an instrument. It is a once-in-a-lifetime encounter, not a case of “We all have to do the

same thing because it's what Ms. Nagai did." What Mr. Yokoyama discovers will have a great impact on his students. This can happen probably because the curriculum at the foundation promotes awareness and learning for adults too.

Yokoyama: I agree.

Nagai: Not all of us can do the same thing. However, if a teacher has a deep understanding of this curriculum and its background when preparing to stand in front of children, each teacher can make his or her own discoveries, which creates a positive impact on children.

Yokoyama: Yes, indeed.

The link between Lower Grade Learning and Upper-Grade Learning

Sato: I wanted Mr. Yokoyama to discuss his discoveries but as well time is running out. Earlier we talked about foundation building in the lower grades, and I wonder if you have a strong sense that such processes and accumulation of efforts are supporting your good practice?

Nagai: Definitely. The lower-grade teachers bring the four seasons to their classrooms by doing seasonal Reigens or circle times. There is a season table in the classroom, and children play a winter game during winter, sing seasonal

songs or play such songs during circle time. What is important for children is to feel the seasons. The entire school places importance on seasonal events. Even my naughty ninth-graders say, "Each time on annual celebration ends, we can feel that we have gotten closer to our graduation." This is how profoundly the seasonal celebrations have become part of them.

In the lower grades, children listen to many stories about fairies and animals and immerse themselves



Top: 2nd-grade handwork. The one-on-one instruction deepens the connection with the teacher.

Bottom: 9th-grade handwork. In upper grades, it seems that work seamlessly appears from students' hands.

in a fairytale world. By experiencing such a world, children can experience human beings' existence as one supported by many other organisms and elements rather than as kings of the universe with a lofty attitude. In a positive way, they accumulate feelings toward the world as if they were like lingering snow. In the fourth grade, they encounter Zoology. It is a very important subject. Some children pretend to be animals themselves, and they all come to love animals.

When they start getting interested in plants in the fifth grade, they become obsessed with, for example, lichens. They find them here, find them there, even on a wall at the park, even though they have never even heard of the word “lichen” before! They also collect moss and mushrooms and start understanding plants as a presence close to themselves. In this way, an image of nature seeps into the children's minds without difficulty. I think that such an image provides strong support for learning in upper grades.

Handwork Power that Supports Learning

Sato: How about the collaboration between subjects? Are there any examples of the good practices mentioned so far that utilizes such collaboration?

Nagai: There are many in the third grade.

Yokoyama: Yes, there are. Collaborations among subjects in upper grades would be... with art, maybe.

Nagai: True. Sketching after studying optics, for example. Students transform what they have understood in their head into an artistic work. I would tell them, “We just learned this theory. Let's do sketching with light and shade in mind.” This creates a back-and-forth interaction between art and knowledge without becoming biased toward either one. And handwork gives students a supporting pillar for their minds. I feel that, in every grade, handwork is a solid base for learning.

Sato: I would imagine that this is a very novel idea for regular teachers.

Nagai: I think it is, very much so. It is not the learning done in home economics just so that children can say, “we can manage tasks at home.” It is “work done by hand” where something beautiful is created by their own hands. During today's end-of-trimester presentation, the eighth-graders went onstage in beautiful Eurhythmy tunics*, which they had just completed the day before yesterday. The eighth-graders recently performed a big play (all scenes of “The Winter's Tale” by Shakespeare). They went straight to the Eurhythmy tunic making afterward without taking

a break from the play. Both boys and girls spent time after school sewing their dresses.

And here is the collaboration between handwork and other subjects. For example, in the World History block, students study the Age of Exploration in the seventh grade and the Industrial Revolution in the eighth grade. That is the era when the sewing machine was gradually invented, and so the handwork teachers hold back their eagerness to teach how to use sewing machines until they have finished learning about this particular era. With the Eurhythmy tunics too, if the World History class has already discussed [the Industrial Revolution], students can use a sewing machine, but otherwise they sew dresses by hand, one stitch at a time!

During the handwork classes, we place importance on completing beautiful objects by hand, which children themselves use for a purpose or give to others for use. Completing a project and using or putting on the end product themselves can give tremendous strength to children.

Sato: Does that mean that learning is transformed into will power?

Nagai: Absolutely. The ninth-graders are making shirts for their graduation projects. They pick their favorite colors, make a design by themselves, and cut out patterns with their teacher. Students who work fast are now working on side finishing or making cuffs, while there are some who are still knitting socks, which were the previous assignment. They are desperately trying to catch up. Boys who are bigger need more yarn and they really have to put effort into knitting. But they cannot move onto shirts unless they finish the socks, so they eventually do complete their socks. That is the strength to overcome challenges. I once asked mothers what the kids were doing with their completed socks and they said, “They are wearing them. They say they are nice and warm.”

***Eurhythmy:** A major form of physical art in Waldorf education. The components of words and music are expressed by body movements. It is performed in a loose dress.



Beautiful harmony created by all the students from 1st to 9th grades
(the end-of-trimester presentation in fall, 2018)

The True Nature of Active Learning

Sato: Mr. Fukuda, what are your thoughts? Can you share your impressions after listening to these stories?

Fukuda: I would like to make a comment as a parent. When I heard for the first time that the same teacher teaches children for nine years, I had no idea what it meant. I also thought that learning could be better if teachers with a focus on one subject, such as a history teacher or a science teacher, could share their knowledge. However, after the first year and then the second year of getting to know Waldorf education, I started to understand that children are receiving the wisdom of people who have been in this world before them through this curriculum, as you have explained. Rather than obtaining superficial knowledge that is cut into pieces and put together again, children receive from their teacher tools to feel and experience the world. Using different angles, approaches and methods, they have hands-on experiences. This is probably the true nature of active learning. Every single piece of day-to-day play and activity turns into communication with the world presented through their class teacher. Such processes culminate after nine years.

What I felt as I saw today's end-of-trimester presentation was that a world has been firmly established for each grade. And a real ability to learn deeply is acquired by feeling such world. They can find out whatever they want once they are out in society, and far now they are

learning the basics of how to interact with the world. I as a parent think that this curriculum is amazing.

Sato: And the world view that teachers are communicate with children is never forced upon them, correct?

Fukuda: I believe so.

Sato: I would imagine that, because the children themselves are self-willed and active, they do not become passive recipients in class. They seem to have a power that is always working to digest their teacher's perspective and transform it into their own.

Fukuda: When I look at the children in every grade, I can feel their passion for actively reaching out for anything and everything in the world around them. I feel something very powerful in them, a desire to know what is incomprehensible, including mysterious things that cannot be categorized into academic subjects and such.

Sato: That is very true. As we have now heard many wonderful stories, I would like to wrap up this round table by touching on SDGs.

What Integrates a highly fragmented the World

Currently, it is hoped that the UNESCO Associated Schools Network and Sustainable Schools will play a role in promoting SDGs. SDGs consist of 17 goal divisions, which are further divided into sub categories. These 17 societal problem areas, which include no

poverty or hunger, good health and well-being for all, quality education, etc. have smaller societal targets, and UNESCO Associated Schools and Sustainable Schools are asked to be the bearing entities of solutions.

I think that today's round table revealed an alternative way of addressing SDGs to choosing one goal from a set of finely subdivided social issues. What do you think?

Fukuda: Definitely.

Sato: Just listening to the poems written by the students, I thought, "This is it."

Nagai: Indeed. They are not excellent or obedient children, they are ordinary, playful upper graders. However, deep inside, they know the importance of looking at hidden aspects of things, or feel that everything is connected in the world, which may rise to the surface at a certain moment in their lives, or become a source of strength to live without their noticing. I place more importance on such inner values than checking off each item on the list.

Sato: As I observe how the children are, I feel that they can be an engine for transforming such intricate and subdivided social issues altogether.

Nagai: Yes. All of them are positive, including alumni.

Fukuda: It really is true.

Nagai: The children are truly positive and energetic. Their way of being, whereby they are not afraid of following their own paths, reveals that what they learn at Yokohama Steiner School can last well beyond their time here even though it is not at all directed toward entrance exams.

Fukuda: Sustainable learning! I think that support and care for each child from teachers leads to solid self-confidence in the child. If each child can value himself or herself in a true sense, s/he can value his/her neighbors. Considerations to the land upon which a child is standing, or his/her surrounding world, naturally come out. Instead of breaking down every issue into pieces, such as an environmental issue, a disparity issue, etc., the children can value all space and time in which their daily life co-exists with the past, the present, and the future.

Especially during lower-school learning, they work in fields, build a house - very simple. But they learn life's most important things in the first three years. The ninth grade is three times the first three years. When I think about it, I feel enthusiastic.

Sato: Mr. Fukuda, you have a lot to look forward to!

Fukuda: While I look forward to the remaining six



17 goals of SDGs to be achieved by 2030. Each goal is further broken down to smaller targets (169 in total).

years, I would also like to find out what I can do and what role I can play as one of the parents who support the children.

Wanting to Communicate Joy as Light

Sato: Indeed. Finally, Ms. Nagai and Mr. Yokoyama, could you give us your final thoughts?

Nagai: Using each teacher's strong field, s/he draws from the curriculum what s/he will bring along when walking the path of nine years with the children. Because of this curriculum, each teacher can develop a unique program. I do not think that I have mentioned this before.

Yokoyama: I don't think so.

Nagai: In that sense, this round table has brought me a big take-away and a lot of good energy!

Yokoyama: Because I am currently the third-grade teacher, I was able to think about what comes next for my class as I listened to Ms. Nagai. And I was reassured that this is an amazing curriculum. Also, the question of how to structure lower-grade learning tends to be overlooked, but this curriculum watches over human beings who are on the path to grow with love and care. Thus, teachers need to keep learning, transform discoveries that we find from learning into joy, and communicate this joy to children as light.

Sato: Ms. Teramoto, having observed today's round table, do you have any thoughts?

Teramoto: This is my second year since my daughter



joined Yokoyama Steiner School. As my fourth-grade daughter was recently studying Zoology, I took her to the Zoolasia Yokohama Zoo. Even though she is generally reluctant to study, she stopped at each booth and read what was written, saying, "Ah, so this animal eats this." When I asked her, "What happened? You always used to just go straight past all these booths," she answered, "It's because I'm studying Zoology at school." Instead of just being taught, she actually wants to learn for herself. I am looking forward to watching her growing up. Thank you.

Panels: Thank you.

Part 3

After Yokohama Steiner School

Which direction did the children who studied and grew up under the implicit ESD discussed in Part 1 and 2, take after graduation? To report their “now,” we would like to reprint a part of the article from a reportage “Sailing into Freedom” by Hideyuki Tabata. In the article, Mr. Tabata, a parent and professional reporter, follows up on the alumni of Yokohama Steiner School. The names in this part have been changed.

After Yokohama Steiner School

Excerpt from "Reportage Sequel: A Year at a Waldorf School – Sailing into Freedom –

Learning is fun: Visiting the alumni (Part 1)

In March 2017, the fourth graduating class of five students graduated from Yokohama Steiner School. Some students of the first graduating class are now university sophomores. It has been four years since I contacted the alumni last time. What paths are the children taking after they graduated from Yokohama Steiner School? I visited some of them during their spring break. The first three of my interviewees went on to explore the world outside the Waldorf education.

Child-mother conflict

Ken (2nd graduating class), who graduated from Yokohama Steiner School on March 2015, is a senior at Fujino Steiner School in Sagami City, Kanagawa Prefecture. He is the one who gave me the inspiration to write this sequel. Around the end of the second trimester of his junior year, he approached his mother, Noriko.

"I want to attend a winter course at a prep school."

"What are you talking about? You are attending a Waldorf school, why would you want to go to a prep school?"

Noriko chose Waldorf education for her children with conviction. Ken's commute is a three hour round trip. The Waldorf seniors have major events one after another including a graduation project presentation, an Eurhythmy performance, and a senior play. It is challenging to set aside time to study for a college entrance exam. If Ken ever wanted to go to college, Noriko was ready to give him a gap year. She wanted him to be engaged in the senior year and have a full experience. Why a prep school for college entrance exams? Such

preparation would sacrifice "now," which is irrevocable and important for his future. She was shocked. She thought that things did not go as she had wished and that her perfect scenario for his future was shattered. Ken and Noriko got into an intense fight with raw feelings and tears.

Ken has always wanted to become a journalist or a Japanese language and literature teacher. Either way, he needs to go to college. His Japanese literature teacher at high school whom he admired succumbed to illness. He was studying using reference books but felt that he hit the wall. He started to think, "I want to study Japanese language and literature deeper. I want someone to guide me." When he visited a prep school and told them his target universities, he was told, "Start preparing for exams right away." Waldorf schools, in general, do not offer preparatory study for college entrance exams; however, the prep school presented him with what he would have to do in order to get accepted by his target universities in a realistic and visible form.

In June, the juniors including Ken participated in navigation training. After learning the Age of



Navigation training at Fujino Waldorf School (provided by FWS)

Exploration in their world history class, they sailed for three days in the Suruga Bay. It was the wrap-up for the study of spherical geometry. The students were divided into teams and planned their route by themselves based on daily weather and maps. With even small miscalculation, they would not reach the destination.

Noriko, after debating on this issue for a long time, began to think this way:

"When Ken came back from the training, he appeared to have gained strength that pushed him to go out in the world. He was looking ahead, looking at his future dream and university education that would be required for his dream. I came to realize the reality - unless he learns test skills, he will not be able to reach his dreams. Ken was ready to absorb more and grow intellectually, and I wanted to help him do so even if he needs to go outside the Waldorf education.

Habit of studying

As soon as he enrolled in prep school, he took an English practice test. His instructor looked at his score and scolded him:

"You just chose the right answers by chance. Your way of studying will not work. You will fail on the way. You have to go back to tenth-grade English grammar and study hard."

He was able to get high scores in reading comprehension and listening problems. However, he was not good at grammar. He was the opposite of other high schoolers who scored high in grammar but low in reading comprehension and listening. It was incomprehensible to the instructor. "There is no way he is able to understand the reading material when he does not know the grammar." The English lessons in Waldorf education is based on the direct method that does not use Japanese. Students get used to English by ear, and they are encouraged to grasp the general contents of paragraphs rather than worrying about grammar.

"I had never been denied so strongly by someone else," Ken says, although he does not seem to mind at all. It is because he knows that he needs to study

English grammar in order to get accepted to his target universities. He now studies at the prep school until 10 PM almost every day. He continues mischievously as if he heard some good jokes:

"I am a type of person who is always saying, 'I'm in trouble,' but to be honest, I feel that things will work out and I can do it if I try hard."

"Things will work out." The students of the second graduating class often say this phrase. They have strong self-esteem that makes their parents shake their heads and say, "Where do they get that confidence?"

Ken puts it, "It's probably because of Ms. Kanda. She is a very confident person."

Ms. Masami Kanda was the teacher for Ken's class for nine years. After sending out her class, she went back to teach the first grade. She is now teaching her second set of third-graders. Ms. Kanda never stopped saying about Ken and his classmates, "I am proud of my children!"

"I think that I found what I want to do in the future because I went to a Waldorf school. Ms. Kanda's lessons were outrageously fun! She does not teach us, she always invites us to think together. I was not good at math, but I liked it. She was a bit careless about Japanese History, but she taught us the habit to study and think."

Ken does not hesitate to say that his hobby is studying. It is fun to prepare for college exams. It is fun to know things. And he wants to do well for his graduation thesis too. He says that he cannot forget the feeling of achievement when he completed his graduation project in the ninth grade at Yokohama Steiner School. He launched a website with his classmates and started writing articles about their progress in the graduation projects.

Noriko now prepares rice balls every day for Ken, who comes home late at night.

Local History, Maps, and a Bicycle

"I got a very unique education from one of Steiner Schools for over 9 years."

This is a sentence from a speech Takasuke (3rd gradu-



Training of a competitive cycling team (provided by Takasuke)

ating school) presented at the National Vocational High School English Speech Contest in January 2018. In the speech, Takasuke talked about classes at Yokoyama Steiner School. That there is no textbook. That the main lesson books that students create become textbooks. That Mr. Yoshihiro Yokoyama, who was Takasuke's teacher, did not give answers right away. "What is the answer for three plus seven?" in regular schools would be "Which equations produce 10?" at Yokohama Steiner School. The answers are infinite. Students cannot sit passively in class. And they acquire an ability to come up with various solutions for a problem.

He learned how to play piano on his own. He performed an emotional piece of Chopin's Nocturne as his graduation project and made the audience cry. However, he chose neither the Waldorf high school nor music.

He had always liked maps ever since he was in the third or fourth grade. At Yokohama Steiner School, he was studying Local History and Geography. He was naturally attracted to maps. Looking at them made him want to visit places and oceans, which led Takasuke to bike riding, and expanded his world.

"I feel as if I could go anywhere with my own power when I am single-mindedly pedaling as I look at mountains afar and receive breeze in the face. There is something special about it."

Takasuke went on long-distant biking to visit Enoshima with his classmate during the fifth grade, and by the eighth grade, he knew that he wanted to "become a competitive cyclist in Europe." Naturally, he decided to go into competitive cycling in high school. In Kumamoto City, where his grandparents live, he found just such high school with a strong competitive cycling team. This public high school even had a Chinese language course – the language he studied for nine years at Yokohama Steiner School. Their foreign exchange program was well-established too.

Now, at this high school, he immediately changes into his uniform after school and goes to bank training for a track competition or goes on to

public roads for road training. The training ends after 7 PM. Recently, he added a 1-hour voluntary practice after he gets home. He said that there were things new to him at the beginning such as military-like manners and rules, but he is now used to them and devotes himself to tough training so that he can leave good records at competitions.

Tour de France

While Takasuke enjoys extra-curricular activities to achieve his dream, he thinks that academic classes are boring.

"Those who have received the Waldorf education will find most of the classes uninteresting. The only subject that I do not see a big gap in is mathematics. Other subjects are different from the education I had for nine years at Yokohama Steiner School."

What is the difference?

"In high school, teachers read the contents of textbooks to students. We could just study textbooks because we can find everything that teachers teach us in textbooks. The classes at Yokohama Steiner School were structured in a way that students naturally wanted to participate in them. We write down everything our teachers write on the blackboard. Our notebooks should look all the

The Goal of Education

Have you ever heard of Steiner School? I'm sure most of you haven't. Well, the school's origin is from Germany, and there are seven schools in Japan now. And I got a very unique education from one of them for over nine years. Today, I'll tell you what I learned at the school and what makes it unique. I'll give three examples of the uniqueness of their education.

First of all, at Steiner School we had no textbooks. Can you imagine? How did I learn? Let me tell you. We wrote and wrote. We had to write down every day what we learned from our teachers in our own white notebooks called "epoch note". It was really hard work, but we always took easily readable notes by using a variety of color pencils and fountain pens.

Secondly, the teachers didn't give us the answer right away if we faced a problem. They let us to consider how to solve and how to lead ourselves to the answer. For example, in mathematics, most of the teachers who are in normal public school ask the students, "How much is three plus seven?" Of course the only answer is ten. It's simple. However in this education, teachers ask "What equations have the answer ten?" By asking so, the answers will be infinite!

Thirdly, the teachers don't encourage using the internet or television. They often said to us, "Don't believe all information and what newscasters say on TV". They taught us not to depend on the internet, but to go to the library and search for answers.

Do you understand how unique Steiner School is? Very different, right? While I was at Steiner School I figured out that by choosing the hard way, we won't be passive, we won't be bound by only one thing, and we would find many answers and create many ways all by ourselves. I learned it from this unique education of taking the epoch notes, by thinking about equations, and by not using the internet.

I'm sure that the goal of education is to think about various things with our own brains. Finding a lot of ways leads to opening our minds. Never to choose easy ways when you decide something. Never to believe everything in the media without thinking deeply. Why don't we stop and take time to search for infinite possibilities by making an effort, on our own?

Takasuke's speech

same, but each one of them comes out unique and different. In research projects, everyone does his/her best throughout the process from preparing reports to giving presentations. I never thought that studying is something passive as in sitting in front of my textbook and listening to my teachers. But the biggest difference between regular schools and Yokohama Steiner School is teachers' and students' value toward studying."

In high school, he has to take tests frequently including regular exams. Students mostly study for those tests, grades, and class promotion. On the contrary, at Yokohama Steiner School, there are neither tests nor grades that rank students with numbers. This is because Yokohama Steiner School emphasizes how much a student grows, not how better s/he is than others. Although Takasuke has doubts about his current status, he has been studying hard for the tests and became the top student in his grade last year.

"My future path is still vague. Honestly, it depends on how much I can get better in cycling during my junior year. If I can reach the top level in Japan, I would like to try a European team or study abroad for training after graduation. I would like to study not only English but also French for that reason. If I am not that good, then I would like to go to college with a competitive cycling team and try national championships again."

Takasuke's mother, Fumi says:

"As a parent, I am consistent with telling him that he should do what he wants. However, it is financially challenging. I am willing to support him while he is a student, but after that, I hope that he can continue to do what he likes while working."

What Takasuke has been aiming for is the world's most prestigious road race, Tour de France. It is a race held every July in France and its neighboring countries, in which cyclists cover more than 3,000km in three weeks. "The race is harsh, but its tactics and fight against nature are even more brutal. Team members devote themselves to run in order to let their team leader win. The team leader, in return, runs under enormous pressure. I think that cycling has extremely complicated and harsh elements that no other sports have."

Takasuke closed his speech as follows:

"I'm sure that the goal of education is to think about various things with our own brains. Finding a lot of ways leads to opening mind."

He continues to pursue his dream with an ability to think and open mind that he nurtured at Yokohama Steiner School.

I Want to Study All Subjects

Next, I visited Hikaru, a classmate of Ken. Hikaru entered a public high school in Kanagawa Prefecture with an integrated course. In addition to regular subjects, students of this high school can choose electives such as art, information, and engineering depending on their future paths. He chose this school based on tuition and commuting distance. He belongs to the student council as well as its nationally-known art club. His academic achievement is excellent, just as that of Takasuke, with GPAs of 4.8 (10th grade) and 4.5 (11th grade). Hikaru also "loves" to study.

"I think that it is the same as 'I like sports or music' not because I received Waldorf education. While sports are something that we voluntarily participate through extracurricular activities or club teams, studying is something you have to do. If you feel obligated to study, even if you originally liked to study, you will eventually dislike it. Wait a minute, maybe it is thanks to the Waldorf education that I am maintaining my passion to study. I am grateful for Ms. Kanda for helping me gain a habit to study."

What is so fun about studying?

"World History, for example." Hikaru brought up the Exodus around 1500 B.C. Ms. Kanda read the Old Testament to her students:

"Moses led the slaves and escaped from Egypt to get to the promised land of Canaan. The Egyptian king sent out his army to bring them back, but when Moses raised his arms, the ocean split and made a path. When Moses and his people crossed the ocean, the path was closed, and the Egyptians who were after Moses were drowned to death."



graduate speaks at Yokohama Steiner School parent training workshop

Hikaru said:

"When I heard that story, I thought that it was a myth, but I realized that it was a fact because my high school textbook discusses the Exodus too. As Haru (Hikaru's classmate) mentioned in her graduation presentation, the story is relevant to today's Islamic State that has been attempting to regain the Holy Land. The Old Testament does have unrealistic stories like the dividing ocean, but by reading textbooks, I learned that it is based on history which is fascinating. Everything fell into its place when two types of history - Ms. Kanda's mythological history and textbooks' archeological history - came together."

Hikaru also thinks that classes at his high school are boring but textbooks are interesting. He thinks that essence is there, condensed, and they cover a wide range of knowledge. He is often reading textbooks rather than listening to teachers during classes.

There is no textbook at Waldorf schools. Students listen to stories given by teachers, research on their own, ponder, and create main lesson books, which become their textbooks. Hikaru thinks that this is why classes are fun.

"Teachers at Yokohama Steiner School have to start with making textbooks. And they have to do four

subjects, including Japanese language and literature, mathematics, science, and social studies. It requires a tremendous amount of knowledge. Miscellaneous knowledge is the first step in studying. How teachers present fun knowledge to students so that they can learn actively is very important. In daily scenes too, it is more interesting to talk with someone with a wide range of knowledge."

Hikaru is planning to apply for college next year.

"To tell the truth, I want to study all the subjects of both science and literature. But because it is impossible to achieve such a feat during the four years of college, I want to study philosophy that defines what academic study is."

Nine years of elementary and middle school education has a significant impact on human growth. Ms. Kanda, the class teacher of Ken and Hikaru, summarizes the importance in the following way:

"I believe that the final goal of education is to nurture a person who can educate oneself. The real learning starts when the person graduates from schools. It is important for students to physically learn the joy of learning through school activities because joy has the power to make any impossible things possible."

After Yokohama Steiner School

Excerpt from "Reportage Sequel: A Year at a Waldorf School - Sailing into Freedom"

Route-finding: Visiting the alumni (Part 2)

"For now, without any vision of what it will do for my future, I would rather not to go to university."

In Japan, the number of candidates for university admission is smaller than the number of students that universities have room to accept. These days, more than 50% of high school graduates proceed directly to university. Some reasons that high school graduates choose to go to university include improving their "brand," enjoying a four year "grace period" before becoming a member of society, or getting an educational background that will help their future career. It seems that none of those factors persuaded the three Yokohama Steiner School graduates who I met with this time.

I would rather act

"When I tell my high school friends that I have been learning ballet, nobody gets surprised. On the other hand, when I chose the Tokyo fire department rescue team as a topic for my three minute speech in my high school class, everybody was surprised."

Manami (1st graduating class) has a lithe body sculpted by ballet. When she was at Yokohama Steiner School, some of the younger girls longed to have an elegant figure like hers, and started learning ballet. The delicate touch of her drawings soothes people's feelings. On the contrary to her elegant image from the outside, Manami decided to become a trainer of search and rescue dogs. Next spring, she is going to study at a special school for dog trainers.

Manami went to one of the private high schools in Tokyo. During her three years at high school, she earned a grade point average of 4.7 out of 5, which is nearly straight As. Of course, her teachers strongly recommended her to go to university. With a recommendation from the principal, she could even try to apply to a highly-ranked university. But that was

not what Manami wanted for her future. "There is no point for me to go to those universities. There, I have nothing interesting to learn. I wonder if I would become a truant." When she was in 9th grade at Yokohama Steiner School, she was also recommended by her ballet instructor to move to Russia to take advanced lessons. She refused that too. Her desire to be involved in rescue work was stronger.

From her childhood, she had been attracted to rescue jobs, such as firefighters. "Dezome-shiki," which is a traditional new year's event performed by Yokohama Fire Departments, was one of her favorite events to attend. She never missed it. She was in 6th grade when the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred in 2011, and it had a huge impact on her life. After that event, she found many articles about rescue dogs in her favorite rescue magazines. She thought "This is it." "My body is not strong enough to rescue people by myself, but I could be a rescue dog trainer. Besides, I love animals." She recalled a conversation she had with a high school friend.

Friend: "In an emergency, there are always people to help. Why do YOU have to bother with it?"

Manami: "What if EVERYONE thinks like that? Then, NO ONE will help. I would rather act than be an on-looker."

In May, when she was in her second year of high school, a fire broke out in the school gymnasium. It was caused by an over-heated floor light. Suddenly, a pillar of fire shot up. Students gathered together and screamed, but did nothing else. She thought, "I would rather act than just scream and run around. I do not want to be an on-looker." The arrival of fire trucks and firefighters also had a big impact on her. "I was so impressed by the fact that they instantly gave us a big sense of relief, just by arriving."

Most of her high school classmates are going to university next year. Manami told me, "One of my classmates took five entrance examinations and passed



Solo dance performance at school (provided by Manami)

at only one university, which was one she never had wanted to go to. I do not understand why she even took the entrance examination for that university. Another friend of mine was not allowed to choose a vocational school, only because everybody else in her family went to a big university.”

To achieve freedom

“A hint is in our main lesson book.”

The following is Manami’s story.

“In my high school, each class was supposed to design its own T-shirt for Sports Day. The shirt designs all looked similar - copying a big brand logo, such as NIKE or Adidas. In class I often heard the term ‘copyright infringement’. I think that was what my classmates had learned from their classes. Here, in our high school, everybody has the same textbook, including our teacher. What students did in class was to copy whatever the teacher wrote from the textbook on the blackboard without any imagination. No illustrating or colouring. It was just boring. At Steiner school, there were no textbooks. We wrote down on our notebook everything our teacher wrote on the blackboard, which became our own textbook. Our notebooks should look all the same, but actually each one of them comes out unique and different.”

In general, the Japanese education system is intended to produce students who will smoothly fit into society. The

purpose of education is more focused on how students can adjust themselves to the system. On the other hand, Waldorf education is more focused on how students can think and act by themselves. When they have grown, their mind is free to choose what they want. Manami does not go to university simply because “everyone else is going.” Perhaps it is because she has already grasped freedom.

Manami says, “Spending four years at university without an ambition is just wasting time.” “I feel that most students go to university just to get themselves a good reputation. Afterwards, entering a good university may help you get a good job, but does not help your life if you do not get real skills there. I would rather master professional skills that I really need. I hate things that are half-baked. I want to spend my time for what I really want to do.”

Her goal is to get an international certificate as a rescue dog trainer. Yet, she is still 18 years old. There is still plenty of time for her to consider different possibilities in the future.

“At eurythmy class, I learned how to move with using my sense of the space around me, not my eyes. Although there are many of us moving, we try to avoid any contact with each other. I could feel everybody’s movement without looking. We could even move backward without looking back. Because we could just feel the space. At Steiner school, we learned that kind of sense. A sense to feel the right move. It was that kind of sense that led me to rescue dog training.

I like fancy, beautiful things, too. I thought it would be fun to work as part of the staff at a wedding venue. But it is not a real job for me. I would say it is like the “formen” (form drawing) movement we used to practice in our notebooks at Steiner school, drawing a figure eight. With a bee-wax crayon, we kept continuously tracing the same figure on and on and on. Sometimes, the crayon went out of the track, but it would always come back into the track. Now, I see my own track to keep tracing on. That is my life.”



Hiroaki's graduation project - container café

Live as an outsider

In March 2017, in Fujino, Sagami-hara-shi, Tokyo, where the mountains are still covered with snow, I visited Hiroaki and Kohei at a café built from a shipping container, where Hiroaki had just finished remodeling. Both Hiroaki and Kohei were classmates of Manami at Yokohama Steiner School. After graduating from Yokohama Steiner School, they enrolled at Fujino Steiner School's high school, where they completed the last of their 12 years of Waldorf education curriculum this last spring. For his high school graduation project, Hiroaki built his container-café, and Kohei helped him. They both greeted me cheerfully, "It is good to see you again!" Unlike Manami, these two boys have not yet chosen the path they will follow after graduation. Their mothers are worried about it, but they say, "We are very much excited for what will happen next!"

Both of them once considered the possibility of beginning university immediately after high school, as their teachers recommended. Hiroaki had considered studying architecture at university, and Kohei had considered comparative art. They visited open-campus events to get a feel for the university atmosphere. Kohei even took the entrance examination just in case, and failed it. He filled his exam paper with critical comments about university education.

"I wrote what I liked. At that time, I had nothing in my mind that I wanted to study at university, so there was

no way for me to choose the one."

Meanwhile, Hiroaki got good enough grades to take the "recommendation entry examination," but already made up his mind not to go to university. Instead of spending money on an entrance examination, he chose to have a nice sushi dinner with his family.

At the time of high school graduation, not everybody has a clear plan for the future like Manami did. One possibility would be to allow yourself extra time to think about your future while you are in university, but that is not what Hiroaki wanted.

"At the beginning, I intentionally did not decide on specific plans for this café. I only made a rough sketch. These days, construction works are divided into specializations in order to achieve greater efficiency. I heard that, at work sites, a lot of carpenters are not skilled enough to adjust the thickness of lumber manually with a plane. What they are doing at the site is just fabrication. I wonder if that is an interesting thing to do.

Sometimes, things naturally start taking shape while you are working on them. For me, it is similar with university. If I set a goal to go to a university and commit to it, I have a feeling that I would probably miss another greater possibility in my life. That would be a shame. I do not mind living as an outsider, in order to find my own great path to follow."

I would say that Steiner school is also an "outsider" compared to the public education system in Japan. I wonder if it has an influence on Hiroaki's mind. Hiroaki recalled, "In a wood-carving class, we started carving without having any image of the shape you aimed for in your mind. We just kept on carving the wood. Through this process, we began to see that the wood showed its own shape and we could feel its flow. Our teacher, Ms. Nagai told us, "Feel the flow and follow it. That is what matters most." I wonder whether her words still remained deep in my mind, and are still leading me to who I am now."

Kohei and Hiroaki have a good relationship and are positive influences on each other. Kohei started learning cello when he was in 3rd grade, and is an amazing

cellist now. He chose a famous composer from baroque, Vivaldi, as the theme of his high-school graduation project.

"I am more interested in Vivaldi than Beethoven. When you listen to Vivaldi's compositions, you know that his music is more impromptu, not like Beethoven. Beethoven's music is very organized and structured. I liked the playful mood that Vivaldi's music has, and I wanted to know why I like it so much. Through my studies, I found myself in the way of Vivaldi's life. I did not wish to follow the crowd. I want to be myself."

I knew that their way of thinking was not always like this. Our conversation reminded me of something. Upon their graduation from Yokohama Steiner School, if Kohei and Hiroaki wanted to continue with Waldorf education, they had to choose a school that was some distance from their neighborhood, as Yokohama Steiner School does not have a high school. Their choices were Fujino Steiner Gakuen, an incorporated educational institution in Sagamihara, Kanagawa, or Tokyo Kenji Steiner School, a non-profit organization in Tachikawa, Tokyo.

Find the nature of learning

Kohei said:

"I chose Fujino because it would give me an easier path to the next level of education, to university. I thought during high school I would spend a lot of time preparing for university entrance examinations."

Hiroaki also said:

"At that time, I was more focused on stability, just like the others who went to university without any vision. I chose Fujino, because it was an incorporated educational institution, which allows graduates to take a university entrance examination without any special certificate, such as a 'certificate for students achieving the proficiency level of upper secondary school graduates'."

What changed their way of thinking?

Kohei said:

"While I was at Yokohama Steiner School, I sometimes



Inside of the container café

wondered if we were really doing okay. There, we were always singing. But once I experienced lessons at a Waldorf high school, I gradually started feeling that this was the right way to learn things. For example, in history class at Fujino Steiner Gakuen's high school, we had a serious debate in the class. In the debate, we pretended as if we were the people who actually lived in that situation. Without deep thinking and understanding about the background of what made things happen, it is not possible to have a debate like that. Through those kinds of lessons, I started realizing that there was something more important for me to learn more than just memorizing numbers and names of the events. Learning things is not for entering university, it is to enhance my mind. I realized that, in my life, I do not have to care about anything other than what I really want to do. That is what I learned from the lessons at Yokohama Steiner School. I recalled that my teacher in those days, Ms. Nagai, had the exact same style of teaching in her class."

At preparatory school, they usually complete the whole high school curriculum by the second year of high school, and spend the third year of high school preparing for university entrance examinations. On the other hand, at Waldorf high school, 12th grade is the most meaningful year of all, and it includes so many big events. It also seems that there is no particular preparation or instruction for students regarding university examinations. Although Hiroaki's mother,

Keiko, had wanted her child to have Waldorf education, she started wondering if this direction was really what she wished for her child. She was satisfied with the whole 12 years curriculum though.

“In retrospect, as an ordinary mother, I had hoped that my child would go to university and get a stable job.”

Kohei's mother, Hiroko, has the same thoughts as Keiko. It is not hard to imagine that these two mothers feel like that for their children.

Kohei:

“To me, it was my parents who put me on the track of Waldorf education at the beginning. And now, they try to put me back on the ordinary path, entering university, just like ordinary parents. That is interesting.”

He is not being sarcastic. Rather, he appreciates his parents.

I do not want to give up this unique experience I have had at Steiner school. It is a shame to see others give up this path easily when we reach 12th grade, and change their direction to entering university. I feel we should mature our learning. “

“Yes, it is a shame.” Hiroaki followed.

“It seems that everybody feels that entering college is the only right path to becoming a grown up. We found a different way. It is a shame that I don't do eurythmy any more. I think I would choose Waldorf education for my own child for sure.”

Gap Year

Since the fall of 11th grade, Hiroaki was absorbed in his graduation project. He kept working on remodeling a shipping container into a café, every weekday until 8pm, and without taking off weekends or holidays while he was working on the project. He covered the walls and floor with wooden boards, and built a counter inside. To save time by avoiding his daily commute, which was two and a half hours each way, he stayed over at multiple friend's homes nearby school. From this experience, he got to know an owner of a café in Kyoto, who was the father of one of the friends that Hiroaki stayed with. Hiroaki is going to help him

renovate his café in Kyoto this April.

“I have not yet decided to be an architect or a carpenter. I am also interested in making wooden furniture and wooden accessories. It would be fun if I could both design and construct on my own. One certain thing is that I would always like to be involved in wood work. For now, I hope to go to Northern Europe in another six to 12 months. I am interested because they often use wood as a building material, whereas the rest of Europe usually uses stone. One of the purposes of going to Kyoto is to earn money for the trip.”

Hiroaki loves wood. He loves its smells and textures. He has been feeling wood from his childhood. He often went hiking with his father and spent time in the mountains. He loves the fresh air. He loves trips. In his 9th grade summer, he travelled alone by bike to the Japan sea from Karuizawa, Nagano. A few years later, he rode to Karuizawa from his home in Yokohama, and through to the Japan sea, crossing the entire width of Japan's Honshu Island.

“I might have a different idea in my mind when I come back from the trip. Let me arrive at the airport first, and I will think about my future once I start riding my bike somewhere in Northern Europe. It is going to be all right. Though I prefer to take a tough route.”

“My future is fully open.”

Kohei also is going to travel overseas. He is going to join a group seminar for a week, held in Dornach, Switzerland in April, related to Waldorf education. He is very much looking forward to interacting with students of his generation.

Kohei is not thoughtlessly thinking that things will go OK for him overseas. He has experiences that he can rely on. In the spring of 2015, the Sixth Asian Waldorf Teacher's Conference was held at Fujino Steiner Gakuen in Sagamihara, where Kohei was a student. At the conference, about 400 Waldorf teachers from 10 countries got together in Fujino to discuss and share problems and results. Kohei worked as an editor of a Fujino Steiner Gakuen student magazine, and was forced to do interviews with foreign visitors and write articles about them. He thought it would be a

nightmare. But once he started, things turned out okay. It was easy to communicate with people in English with some limited words he knew. It was actually fun. Since then, he started being interested in mastering foreign language and cultural exchanges. English was not his worst subject any more. He even started learning German by himself.

"I just cannot stop enjoying communicating with people from overseas. I would like to expand my horizons. I think, maybe, I will get some ideas about my future through my experience in Switzerland. If I have communication problems during the trip, I might change my direction to mastering foreign languages first. Another idea in my mind is a 10 month program in Jarna, Switzerland, also related to Waldorf education, to deepen what I learned during my first 12 years of Waldorf education.

Wandering around. Searching for one's future. It looks like that these two young men are putting the concept of "gap year" into practice, even though it is not yet established in Japanese society.

Journey of self-discovery

Hiroaki's hobby is biking, and Kohei's is rock climbing. They both are quite serious about their hobbies. Kohei climbs 50 meter rock faces.

Kohei: "I love the outdoors." "Yes, nature is essential for our life." Hiroaki responds. They compare their coming journey to skiing, which both of them are fond of.

Kohei: "Skiing on a slope is fun, but it is not an ideal thing to do from the perspective of environmental impact. To make a ski slope, trees must be cut down and the surface must be flattened. Cross-country skiing is more ecological. No maintenance is done by humans. We ski snow-covered terrain, among wild trees, and on

the rocks sometimes, just as they are.

Hiroaki: "There are no ski lifts or other forms of assistance. We have to rely only on our own skills and locomotion to move. It's not easy. We may get lost. There might be a danger. We might even die. But we are more attracted to cross-country terrain than ski slopes. It's the same reason I like biking -- to see parts of the world I have never seen."

Kohei: "For us, rock climbing and biking are more than just 'sports'. Through our experiences, we learn how to use our knowledge and skills to reach parts of the world that are new to us. It is just like 'route-finding'."

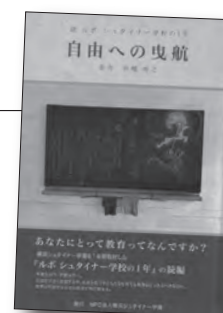
In mountaineering, 'route-finding' means setting off for a destination, such as a summit, without any predetermined path for getting there. This requires a person to use their own knowledge and senses, and navigation tools such as maps and a compass. Moreover, it is important to be able to make decisions under extreme circumstances.

Hiroaki: "I know that we shouldn't spend time without knowing what we are doing. Young people tend to go overseas to look for a purpose. Our purpose to go overseas is to enjoy the process itself, not to look for something to enjoy. Living, searching for possibilities for the future...that itself is pretty exciting. I just cannot help getting excited."

Kohei: "Exactly. It is like living on a journey."

After World War I, R. Steiner, the founder of Waldorf education, began thinking that education was the reason why so many young people seemed to have lost their purpose. One hundred years after Steiner founded his first Waldorf school in Germany, here in Japan, young graduates from Waldorf school are living with full passion for life.

Part 3 is reprinted from the book "A Year at a Waldorf School - Sailing into Freedom," which was published in 2018 by Yokohama Steiner School, with the permission of the author. The book also includes other stories about practices of active learning, moral education, theatrical education, agricultural training, ITC (Information and Technology Communication) education, global citizenship education, and graduation projects at Yokohama Steiner School.



Part 4

References

Sustainable School Project Annual Report (1996)	68
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Yokohama Steiner School

KEYWORD

All-round ESD, implicit inclusive approaching

Education filled with arts and stories, responding to the child's essence.

ACHIEVEMENT



これまでの活動

ねらい (GOAL)

As, self-transformation is said to be the theme of ESD, the whole education must change to realize the sustainable society. To nurture the health of children, education also needs to keep going and growing.

Our goal of the ESD, is to continue creating the education by obeying the dynamism which exist into this education, responding without mistakes to the challenges coming at each stages.

活動内容 (ACTIVITY)

We had been devoted to creating new learning opportunities in the land of Yokohama: Education content, management style, how to launch, legal positioning, etc. In terms of education, the international Waldorf curriculum, based on insight into qualitative changes in growth and development for each school year, was reorganized in accordance with Japanese culture. Every trimester, we coordinated the school subjects and have realized ESD with organic wholeness on both the vertical axis (correlation between development stages) and horizontal axis (correlation between subjects).

At the same time, in teaching methods, we have used art-rich stories to instill artistic initiatives that use the five senses, such as painting, poetry, singing and physical activity. These efforts are related to "integration," an important element of ESD.

However, the child's ego is still in an immature stage, and it is necessary to wait until the ego is firmly rooted in every corner of the child's personality in order to be able

to strongly integrate the self and the world. Meanwhile, we, educators stand as helpers to provide integrated and harmonious world to the children. The method using stories and art approaches to the essence of children.

SDGs were adopted by the United Nations in 2015. This goal of sustainability is subdivided into 17 fields. To get to the goal, we need to go through the steps.

Ascertaining the stage of children's growth, picking up the right issues at the right time, and arranging artistic activities that stimulates the child's imagination, the mind and sensibility as much as possible so that the child's ego can be connected as "my problem" with complex events in the world. These kinds of learning helps the child to sympathize with the beauty of truth, order and ethics in this world. In this way, the essence of the implicit inclusive approach is to cultivate a personality that can freely connect to the subdivided SDGs and integrate them powerfully.

変容 (TRANSFORMATION)

The faculty members and parents are just overwhelmed by the ESD mind that is transmitted like a quiet wave by the graduates. Their graceful and straight posture convinces

that what they will choose in society, what they will create and what they will work on will be oriented towards increasing the sustainability of the world.



ACTIVITIES



これからの活動

As a member of the ESD focus-school project, we set the goal of organizing the ESD elements of this education by verbalizing, visualizing and publishing them as materials that can be shared with society. To that end, we will continue to implement task activities such as fieldwork in parallel with ongoing development of educational

activities. We are also excited about participating in “Institutional Comprehensive Approach to Global Climate Change,” an opportunity given to us in conjunction with the status as a focus school. We expect to compile and publish our contributions to the project in the form of high-quality educational materials.

FOCUS (COMMENT FROM THE PROJECT PROMOTION COMMITTEE)



審査時の注目ポイント

Yokohama Steiner School applies an international curriculum and also has created an ESD model with an organic overview that combines the correlation between different developmental stages and school subjects. This will be the model for “integration.” Their educational focus on artistic imaginations and expressions of art, music, drama, and body expression is also worth mentioning. I look forward to see how the school explores the way students’ excellent qualities and transformations occur and presents the results to many people. (Ichinose)

**Excerpt from *Sustainable School Project Annual Report* (1996)
Published by Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU)**

* The “ACTIVITY” section summarizes the core of our education described in Part 1 and Part 2.

Yokohama Steiner School

Learning about the global environment through practical training in chemistry and agriculture

Environment

【 Keywords 】 Combustion and plants; three major nutrients generated by plants; how water, oxygen and carbon dioxide circulate on the planet; how humans, animals and plants coexist; how plants are the planet's only creators of oxygen

► Goal

By helping students to reach a deeper understanding of the plants that are such a familiar presence, through practical training in chemistry and agriculture, and lectures on natural agriculture, we aim to foster a keen sense of the importance of conserving the global environment, and a desire to put this awareness to work in their own daily lives.

植物や動物
Plants and animals
自然界の全てのものが
Everything in this natural world lives
お互いを支え合っている
While helping each other
何かが欠けると全てが壊れてしまう
When one thing goes missing, everything crumbles
この完璧な世界の設計図を
This perfect blueprint
描いたのは誰だろう
I wonder who drew it
なぜバランスがとれたその世界に
Why, into the balanced world,
人間を加えたのだろうか
The designer added humans
自分が創り上げた美しい世界を
The beautiful world that the designer had created
壊すに存在を知りながら
The designer knew that humans would destroy
しかし、信じていた
But by giving them
地上に統治する責任を
an obligation to rule over the land
The designer believed in humans

► Activity

■ Seventh-grade students (students in the first year of junior high school)

Through observation, students notice how roots, stalks, leaves and flowers differ from one another. Students consider the relationship between the elements of the natural world that create the bodies of plants.

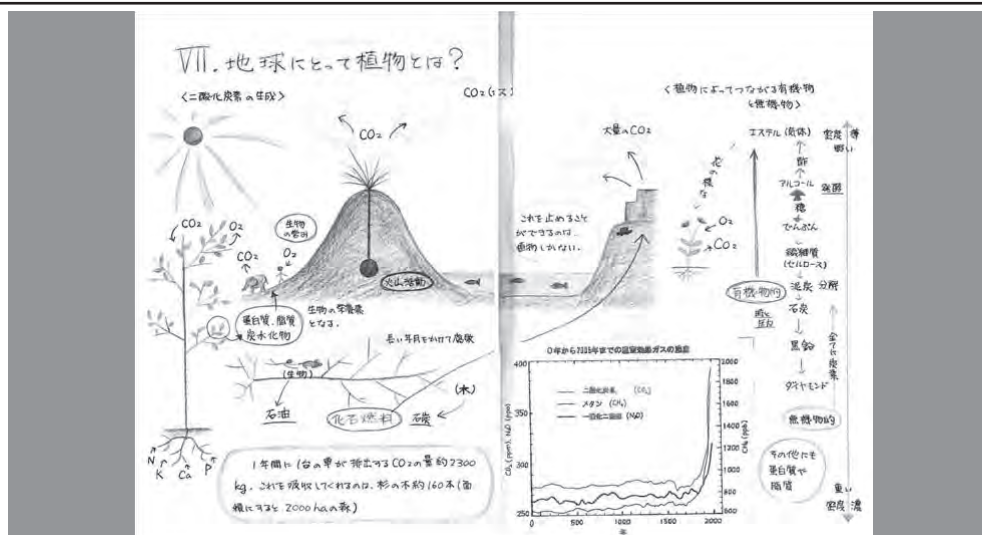
■ Eighth-grade students (students in the second year of junior high school)

By learning about acids and alkalis (i.e. bases), students reach an understanding of the properties and role of water, and reaffirm their awareness that water circulates around the planet.

■ Ninth-grade students (students in the third year of junior high school)

Through practical training in agriculture, and lectures on natural agriculture, the students learn about the profound relationship between plants (agricultural produce), humans, animals and the global environment. By learning about organic chemistry, they also realize that the three major nutrients necessary for the survival of living organisms are all generated by plants. They also come to understand that oxygen is created by the process of photosynthesis, whereby plants generate nutrients.





► Outcome

■ Achievements

Through learning about chemistry and doing practical training in agriculture over three years of junior high school, the students individually realized that we need to protect plants that protect the global environment – in other words, the forests – and they also wrote poetry with a message about environmental conservation.

■ Remaining tasks

By giving them a scientific understanding of plants, we were able to raise students' awareness of the need for global environmental conservation. Going forward, we plan to develop the program by broadening the conversation into the field of modern society. This will involve lessons where the students find out which parts of the world are showing a decrease in forest area, confronting the relevant causes and problems, and considering solutions that would stop forests decreasing.

► Transformation

The students are gaining a keen awareness of the process that begins with a small-scale chemical event and leads to a global phenomenon. The above examples of our activities are merely highlights intended to provide a rough idea of our whole ESD program. Instead of looking for changes resulting from individual ESD projects, we are assessing changes in terms of the cumulative fruits of all our ESD work so far.

Name : Yokohama Steiner School

Representative : Yasushi Kano (Representative Director)

No. of students : 108

Address : 3-1-20 Kirigaoka, Midori-ku,
Yokohama, Kanagawa 226-0016

Tel : 045-922-3107

Target age group : Seventh- to ninth-grade students

(students in the first to third years of junior high school)

Subject/area : Practical training in chemistry and agriculture,
and lectures on natural agriculture

Partner school/organization :

Kanagawa UNESCO Associated Schools Network (points of
contact: Nagatadai Primary School, Arima High School),

Tamagawa University, NPO Niiharusatoyama Association for
Spreading Peace (designated administrator, Niiharusatoyama
Community Centre, Yokohama),

Association for the Protection of Niiharu Yatoda Area,
Tambo Club, NPO PukaPuka, seven Steiner schools nationwide,
and many other organizations

* Essence of our ESD efforts

We see it as important that, instead of being an individual segment of the school's daily educational practice, ESD permeates our entire curriculum. We want to demonstrate the principles of ESD in every subject. As a methodology for harmoniously eliciting true development in children, ESD is the true essence of education.



Thoughts on ESD

My encounter and learning

Noriaki Fukuda

Professor of Psychology, Clinical psychologist
Member of Yokohama Steiner School UNESCO group

Being involved in the creation of this booklet which summarizes ESD related activities at Yokohama Steiner School, and also through participating in the round-table discussion (which is introduced in this book), made me rethink what UNESCO ASPnet, ESD, and Sustainable Schools are. I was also able to confirm the idea of “indicative” ESD approach and deepen my own understanding.

As a clinical psychologist working on people's mental health problems, I have supported children as well as to advise schools dealing with students who were experiencing difficulty with daily school life. Through these experiences, I came across several schools that had incorporated biotopes and green curtains into the campus. These school said they had been working on ESD as a member of UNESCO ASPnet, which was what triggered my interest in ESD. That was about five or six years ago. The question “What is sustainability?” has been on my mind since then, but I hadn't fully grasped the idea

It was through observing the unfortunate retreating of the glaciers in Switzerland about a decade ago, that I had built a strong awareness of the ways of our civilization and its consequences on the global environment. I thought that awareness of environmental issues would lead to ESD, but I also felt that more was needed.

ESD became a personal cause when, after much thought about the essential skills needed to thrive in this current state of the world, I made the decision to entrust my children's education to Yokohama Steiner school. I was very attracted to the fact that Yokohama Steiner School was a part of UNESCO ASPnet. Through

the school orientations, tours and hands-on classes, I learned that there was an alternative way of learning which was different from the ESD that I already knew. Learning at Yokohama Steiner School aims to holistically understand the environment in which we live, exploring relationship between the environment and ourselves. I felt that it was about learning the meaning of our existence, and the strength to find the path and method to thrive - in other words, the wisdom to forge our own path in life.

Steiner education has a hundred-year history, proving its sustainability and that it will continue to be successful. I believe this is because it instills the essential learning necessary for the children to grow. I can finally say that I comprehend the meaning of “sustainable”.

In the professional psychology world, the English word “development” translates as growth. In addition to society's "sustainable development", I think ESD is also a way to learn and support people's "sustainable growth". It is about believing in the possibility of, supporting and encouraging people's lifelong improvement.

I encourage the readers of this booklet to imagine what children at Yokohama Steiner School experience, through the actual learning contents, graduates' report and the words of the teachers as a promoters of learning. I hope you will feel the meaningfulness of the act of learning. Once you do so, I'm sure you'll want to experience firsthand the learning at Yokohama Steiner School. I believe that the significance of being a sustainable school is to spread the depth of this learning widely.

Epilogue

Yoshihiro Yokoyama

**Teacher in charge of UNESCO ASPnet
Yokohama Steiner School**

Every opportunity for me to participate in Sustainable School workshops and interact with other teachers had made me think about what message I should send out as a member of Sustainable Schools. I eventually found myself eager to communicate something, although it took me a while to put together my thoughts. And this is what I found:

To describe the link between learning at Yokohama Steiner School and ESD in an easy-to-understand form. And to make our example available for practices by those in various educational fields.

Thus, this booklet project launched.

It is one of our goals at Yokohama Steiner School for children to learn how to live with a sense of wonder and respect for their surroundings. They engage themselves in learning through physical movement, surprises, joy, and inspiration. We nurture their minds and soul so that they can respect adults around them and thank the natural environment. I came to think that introducing our educational practices that lead to ESD activities would be our mission.

Part 1 is written based on my class practices, but this is only an example. Other teachers leading children at Yokohama Steiner School teach classes with their own creativity and insights. I want to note that we narrowed our scope of interview for this booklet due to limitations on space and time.

I will be honored if readers find something valuable in this booklet. I am filled with gratitude for everyone who helped give shape to our ideas throughout this project, and who hosted and managed Sustainable School workshops, which gave us the opportunity to create this booklet.



A report from 'Research on Curriculum, Learning, Teacher Education of Alternative Schools in Japan' (research chair, Atsuhiko YOSHIDA) by Grants-in-Aid for Scientific (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science). Collaboration with Yokohama Steiner School.