

I participated in the H.I.H. Prince Takamado Trophy All Japan Inter-Middle School English Oratorical Contest and was able to experience many things. Among them, there were two that left a particularly strong impression on me.

The first was listening to the many speeches given by people from all over Japan. Hearing about environmental and social issues from various points of view made me think that we should not live our lives as we do now. I was more surprised at the presentations from students who participated in the finals. It was very cool to see them all presenting and expressing their thoughts in a dignified manner, and I learned a lot from their phrases and gestures.

I also enjoyed the opportunity to stay all night with other students. At the district preliminary and prefectural competitions, students did not have many opportunities to talk with each other, so it was difficult to know what they had done well and how they could improve their speeches. However, at this competition, many of us spent up to four days there, and I spent three days there. I was able to ask my friends about the differences in their lives at school and how they learned English.

I am grateful to the many people who helped me during this experience. I will never forget to thank them for giving me this valuable experience. I think it is no exaggeration to say that it changed my life. I will remember this opportunity and hope to make the most of it in my future life. Thank you very much.

Izumigaoka Fuzoku Junior High School 3rd Grade Yanagita Sakurako

Thank you for having the opportunity to participate in the traditional and historic Prince Takamado Trophy. I was reminded once again that students aiming for the national competition have an incredible ability to express what they want to say. Of course, their feelings, thoughts, and desires are presented in English, but I was also amazed by their ability to articulate their thoughts and emotions in their own words. I was deeply moved by the level of skill middle school students can achieve, and at the same time, realized my own inadequacies as an instructor. Listening to the outstanding speeches at the national level clarified the areas I need to focus on to improve further.

I would like to express my gratitude to the JNSA staff who organized this event, my student who worked hard to prepare for this speech competition, her supportive parents, and some dedicated teachers. Thank you very much for this wonderful experience!

Izumigaoka Fuzoku Junior High School Teacher Gunji Shoko