

## 千里国際学園 中等部・高等部

シリーズ「世界は千里でひとつになる The World Comes Together in Senri」 第16回

SIS : A Bilingual Environment SIS のバイリンガル環境

SIS & OIS English teacher / Catherine Brown

Sakura (Gr.11) is a student in the high school elective class 'Creative Nonfiction'. She and her classmates have just read a piece from the New Yorker magazine, in which Jerome Groopman describes the responsibilities of being a doctor and the importance of considering the needs of the patient. Sakura's essay below follows a similar theme, describing the responsibilities that her father faced when he looked at possible schools for his children.



### Breathe Easy

by Sakura

My father's eyes sparkle gently when he talks about his children.

"What's left to do is to let them assert their own independence," he says.

"Although, of course, I will always be there for them – a 'guide' in life as a father."

He speaks of the biggest responsibility he ever had with an air of thoughtfulness. His deep voice rumbles with warmth as he picks his words with care.

Out of the many decisions he had to make for my sister and I, the most difficult was what education to give us.

He explains how straightforward everything seemed when we were young – "When your children are still toddlers, everything is easy. All you have to do is feed and care for them. But as they grow, the development of who they are as a human being is up to you."

He continues quietly. "Everything affects the development of a child. Everything, from how their parents treat them to where they live. Can you begin to imagine how significant their education is in all of this?"

"To me, the most important consideration in bringing up a child is that they grow naturally. Each child has their own uniqueness' and talents that can develop freely. The problem is that society has a tendency to crush or repress this. That was exactly what I didn't want to do."

And that's also why he chose Senri International School. It was a school that had the freedom to let the children breathe and grow in their own way. It protected and nurtured the uniqueness that each child had inside of them. To my father, it was the ideal school.

When asked I how he felt when he first came upon the school, he recalls the first time he stepped through the airy genkan.

"My first impression was great – I stepped into the school and I thought, 'This place is excellent'. It looked like just the environment for my children."

Mr. Osako welcomed him in person. After a long talk with the headmaster, my father was sure that this would be the school.

"It just seemed like the perfect place. The environment was superb and I felt like I could trust the teachers with my children."

The airy genkan he stepped through eight years ago is the very genkan I enter every morning to start a new day of school. I will be graduating in less than two years.

My sister also attended this school for approximately five years and graduated in the year of 2003. Currently, my older sister is attending the University of Melbourne, majoring in theatre.

"I'm not worried at all about you and Kay," he says with a slight shrug of his shoulders.

"I made a lot of decisions for both of you and those responsibilities have been completed. Now, all that's left to do is let you stand on your own feet and watch you walk your own way."