

第33回 兵庫県高校生英語スピーチコンテスト阪神大会出場

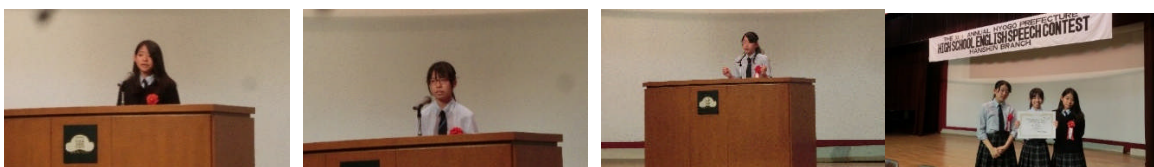
日時：平成30年9月29日(土)

場所：園田学園高等学校

国際探求 の授業で生徒一人一人が400~500wordsの英語スピーチを書きあげます。全国大会出場のスピーチを分析したり、神戸市外国語大学の野村教授の特別講義も受け、スピーチの書き方や表現方法について学びます。サマースクールの期間中に校内スピーチコンテスト予選を実施しました。今年度は応募締め切りの関係もありこの予選で上位に入賞した生徒3名が兵庫県高校生英語スピーチコンテストに応募しました。改めて何度も推敲を重ねた結果、全国大会でも上位入賞者がでるレベルの高い阪神大会の書類審査を3名とも通過し兵庫県高校生英語スピーチコンテスト阪神大会に出場しました。

阪神大会出場決定後もスピーチ原稿の内容をよくするために何度も担当教員とやり取りを行い、発表の練習ではALTの先生に発音の仕方や抑揚のつけ方など具体的な表現方法を指導してもらいました。当日はレベルの高い発表が続く中、3人ともやや緊張しながらも練習の成果を出し切ることができました。残念ながら県大会への出場はかないませんでした。1名が独自の視点が評価され審査員特別賞を受賞しました。

【阪神大会出場スピーチタイトル】『Euthanasia』、『The Word “Do Your Best”』、『Realize the happy death』



【阪神大会審査員特別賞受賞スピーチ】

The Word “Do Your Best”

“Do your best!” Do you often use this word? How do you feel when you are told this on sports day, for example? I think most of you may feel excited or energized. But, when you are told it, even though you have already done your best, do you still feel happy? Someone may think “I’ve already done my very best!”

In Japan, working hard is regarded as a highly virtuous trait to have. Workers who work for long hours are thought to be good, and in schools some club teams encourage students to practice long hours, so the longer you work, the better. Collectivism is another custom of Japanese people which makes it hard for us to work reasonably. These customs bring about pressure and create an atmosphere which makes it difficult for many Japanese people to go home earlier. In worse case scenarios, some people go as far as committing suicide because of this constant pressure.

In Japan, there are over 20 thousand people who kill themselves every year. Every 15 minutes one person kills themselves. Can you believe this? I’ll tell you the story of a woman who committed suicide because of overwork. She worked at the advertising company Dentsu. Japan has formally capped overtime work at 80 hours a month. However, in the busiest month, she had worked for one hundred thirty hours overtime. According to her twitter, she worked for twenty hours a day. Can you imagine working from 8 AM to 4 AM the next morning?

How do you feel when you hear this? Do you think this happened because she was weak? I don’t think so. I think she was cornered because her coworkers didn’t understand her situation. She worked so hard and for so long that she showed symptoms of depression. Why didn’t her coworkers notice her symptom? And if they did, why didn’t they come to her aid when she desperately needed it. Could the company have prevented her suicide? If they had said to her “Don’t be too hard on yourself. You should rest,” perhaps they could have saved her, instead of saying “You can do this, too,” or “Do your best.” We shouldn’t allow this to happen anymore.

Some of you may think people who killed themselves are weak or cowards. But I don’t think so. The problem is that we don’t have an appropriate system to monitor our working conditions and prevent illegal overtime working. Now under the pressure of employers, a new law would require employees to work overtime for up to 100 hours. This is completely unjust! This will not help our current situation of overwork and suicide.

If anything, this will make it much worse. I truly believe people who committed suicide actually did do their best, despite always being told to work harder. We can help solve this unnecessary pressure in the workplace. If you or someone around you feel such pressure, please know you don’t have to work so hard. By doing this we can help those who feel trapped in the corner, find freedom and fulfillment in their lives. (517 words)

