

Yanaka Elementary School

June 26th, 2018

This report is about what I saw while Mrs. Susan and I were visiting Yanaka primary school. I made observations about what happened in the primary school while being an interpreter for Mrs. Susan.

Besides observing various kinds of lessons from different grade levels, we also saw students serving food for lunch and cleaning by themselves. In the first class, which was music class, Mrs. Susan showed a strong interest in the Japanese traditional instruments that were in the music room. Next was art class, Mrs. Susan was really amazed by how many painting utensils they had at their disposal. More than that, she was really impressed by what was written on the wall: "Art is not only about how to paint beautiful pictures, but also a chance to face your own heart and feel the nature around you." After all the morning classes were finished, Mrs. Susan had lunch with the students. At the beginning, all the students were too shy to talk to Mrs. Susan, but after a mixed student started talking to her, the atmosphere became a lot more casual and friendly. After lunch, first grade students started cleaning the classroom, seniors from sixth grade came to help and teach them how to deal with everything, even the principal came and joined. Finally, during the last class, the students talked about different traditional Japanese toys. After some students introduced them, the students divided into several groups to play different games. Mrs. Susan believes that it's a good way to keep Japanese culture alive and joined them as well.

Jiaheng Zhou, Master's Student at Graduate School of Education

June 27th, 2018

While showing page by page of a picture book about American geography, Suzan explained an American girl's life, from the map of the United States to the state she lives, to the district, to the town, to the street in her neighborhood, to her house, to her room. Suzan draw a vertical line in the center of the blackboard, showing the common aspects on the left side, the different aspects on the right side between the American girl and the students in the class. Students sometimes repeated after Suzan, sometimes answered her questions. They were mostly calm and quiet, well behaved. Some students eagerly answered her questions, some sat quietly listening to her. Suzan, at the end of her class, told the students that they could find more common things than different things between children in the United States and those in Japan.

Yutaka Ochi, Associate Professor of the Center