



Compromise – Michael Henderson

Compromise. 妥協. When people hear “compromise”, they often imagine (想像する) the act of reaching an agreement (合意に達する) at work or with your partner. In my opinion, I think the feeling of the word “compromise” can be described as giving something up (何かを捨てる) for something or someone else (何かや誰かなどのために). So, why am I talking about “compromise”?

Lately, I have been thinking about the decisions I have had to make in life (人生での決定したこと), and the biggest one is probably moving to Japan. When I left America to come here, I gave up many things. I can't see my family every day, or grow up as adults with my friends (友達と社会人として成長できない), or eat some of my favorite foods. And in Japan, I have to learn about a new culture, society, and language in order to survive (生きていくために), which is very tiring. Maybe you're thinking now, “why did you come to Japan then?”

I came here because while I gave up many opportunities and chances in America, I gained many things here (いろいろなものを得た) in Japan. I have met many amazing teachers, students, and people. I have learned so many new things about Japan and myself. I improved my Japanese. I feel more confident in my abilities. In conclusion, I achieved many of my personal goals (個人目標を達成した).

The message of this essay is not to talk about me, but to say that in life, we have to make many decisions (人生には決定する事が多い). Sometimes it is hard to know which decision is the best one, and sometimes compromise is inevitable (妥協してしかたがないことがある). And while compromise can be hard, if your decision is something important to you, in the end, things will be okay (結局うまくいくだろう). Don't live a life of regrets, but instead, a life of meaningful compromises!

Field Day – Katelyn Sondereker

A question that students and teachers often ask me is, “Do you have a Sports Festival (運動会) in America?” The answer to this question is a little bit complicated, so let me explain!

In high school, American students do not have an event like the Sports Festival. For us, May is the end of the school year, so many students are studying for the final exams. But around this time, seniors (三年生) in high school can “catch” something called “senioritis”. This means that they don't care about school anymore, so sometimes they stop coming to school or studying because it is almost time to graduate!

However, in elementary school, American students have something called, “Field Day”. This is an event that is similar to the Sports Festival, but it is very relaxed compared to the one in Japan. The events are often simple games like sack races, three-legged races, water balloon toss, and tug of war.

But my favorite game is called, “Popcorn”. In this game, students hold the edge of a rainbow-colored parachute (パラシュート). Usually, there are two teams, like red and blue. To play, small red and blue balls are placed on top of the parachute.

Then, students start to shake (振る) the parachute. The red team wants to stop the red balls from going outside of the parachute, and wants to make the blue balls fall on the ground. If there are no blue balls left on the parachute, the red team wins. This game is called “Popcorn” because the balls bouncing in the air look like popping popcorn (ポップコーンを作っている)!

What do you think about Field Day? Come talk to us about it!

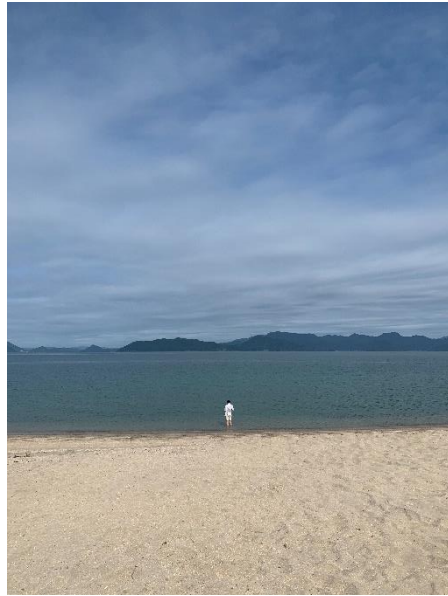


Elementary students playing “Popcorn”, a popular Field Day game in America.

Ashikita!

Have you been to Ashikita before? This weekend I went for the first time with my friends. I swam in the ocean several times including at night. The best part was being able to see the bioluminescence! (生物発光). I had seen it once before in America, but I didn't know you could also see it in Japan. So it was a **pleasant surprise**.

“pleasant surprise”: to be happy about something unexpected.



Michael in Ashikita looking at the jellyfish in the water



Superstitions in America

Recently in class, we talked about popular superstitions (迷信) in both Japan and America. So, I thought it would be interesting to make a short list of some popular and unique (独特な) superstitions from America!

- “Knock on Wood” (木を叩く)
 - This is a phrase we say to stop bad luck. We usually say it when we are talking about some future situation that we hope goes well. After saying it, you're supposed to knock on any wood that is near you! (一番近い木を叩かないと！)
 - For example: “I don't think it will rain today, knock on wood!”
- Spilling Salt (塩をこぼす)
 - This superstition is a little old. When we accidentally spill salt, we have to grab some of it and throw it over our shoulder (肩越しに塩を投げる). This is also supposed to stop bad luck!
- Opening an Umbrella Inside (室内で傘を広げる)
 - People believe that opening an umbrella inside is bad luck. When I (Michael) was a child, I was always afraid to open umbrellas inside my house or school.

There are many more superstitions that we have in America. What are some that you have in Japan?