July 2008

The Sano Senior High School English Library

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Profile
Kishiwada SHS 1989-92
Sano SHS 1993-08
M.Ed. TESOL 1995

Learning follows need.

To pass the entrance exam and enter a university, Japanese high school students need to learn a lot of English. Entrance exams in Japan require high levels of proficiency in grammar and vocabulary. So that is what is taught. Sadly, most lessons focus on grammar translation and English at the 'sentence' level. One of my jobs at Sano SHS is to create a need for students to use their English skills at a more fluent level by reading books and writing essays. The Sano English Library is an important part of creating this need.

In 1994 I began purchasing graded readers for the English Library. These are shortened novels or collections of short stories written for second language learners so that students at any level can start and finish a book quickly and fluently. This is central tenet of 'extensive reading'; that students are able to read at a fast pace without the use of a dictionary. Using my ALT budget, (sadly, there no longer 'is' an ALT budget) I purchased 80 graded readers from Oxford University Press (OUP). Year by year I acquired more books as budget allowed. I'm thankful to my English department for supporting me in this venture. By 1996 I was able to move my young English library out of a cardboard box and into a locker in the Kokusaika room. In 1998 we were able add it to the school library and continue to expand. In 2006 our new librarian, Shindachi Sensei kindly moved our library to the front set of shelves – out of obscurity into a place of honor. We are now up to about 750 books and management of them has become far simpler with the computerized lending and tracking system recently installed. I'm proud to report that we now have enough books on the shelves to serve most of our students here at Sano.

Having the books in the library is only the first step however. We've tried a variety of ways to get the students to read. Here are some of the highlights:

Shared Reading

When my English library could be carried in a cardboard box I brought it to class. I first tried Shared reading. I tried several different methods:

1. ***Teacher reads and students listen***. I picked out an appropriate level story and read for 10 minutes at the beginning of class.
2. ***Teacher reads with pictures***. This was the same as above with some visual aids introduced.
3. ***Pass the book***. In this case the teacher starts out the story and passes the book to the students.
4. ***Students read in groups***. In groups of 4 students pass the book with teacher monitoring.

All these methods met with mixed success and depended strongly on the personalities and attitudes of the learners involved.

SSR (sustained silent reading)

Having the students quietly read their books as we walked around checking on and advising them worked well and allowed us time to check their reading progress. However it cost too much in-class time to continue on a weekly basis. This led us to using our writing program to administer reading.

Reading connected to Journal Writing

The 1st and 2nd grade students of the Sano SHS Kokusaika program keep an English 'journal' notebook. We assign them a topic each week, collect notebooks and respond to their writings and include letters of our own. It is a weekly, 'one on one' connection to the kokusaika students which we could exploit for our reading program. And so along with their topic list we assign a term goal of either a number of books or a number of pages and we monitor their progress using a reading chart and by having them write book reports. Recently we've included a book predictions form for the students to fill out when they first select a book. We've experimented with this format for a number of years and have found that interacting with the students through their English journals was the most useful approach for monitoring their use the English Library. Interestingly, students going up to the library to check out an English book often leave with a Japanese book too. Our Koukusaika classes have become the largest borrowers of Japanese books as well!

Promoting reading:

Along with using English books in the classroom and connecting it to journals there are some other techniques we've used to promote reading. Our librarian has led an effort to revitalize the library; making it a very welcome place to bring students.

We take advantage of this with our 1st and 3rd graders holding a number of classes there throughout the year. With our first year students we introduce them to a form of shared reading using endless quest books. These can be read in groups of 4 with students making choices on how to proceed through the story.

Links:

For extensive reading resources a good website to start with is Rob Waring's website: http://www1.harenet.ne.jp/~waring/

His 'links' page for graded readers is quite good. http://www1.harenet.ne.jp/~waring/er/series.htm

Moving forward.

Developing a reading program for Sano SHS has been an interesting challenge. Japanese students are very busy people but they have a real need to use English at a higher level than mere grammar translation homework can teach. Providing them with the correct level of books and a reason to read them is an ongoing challenge. With this in mind Sano SHS welcomes your feedback on this 'endless quest.' And as I often say to my students, '**Thanks for reading**.'

Robert J. Garrity

日本語の要約はこちらから

佐野高校 English Library

Learning follows needs.（必要があるから生徒は学ぶ）

日本の高校生は大学入試のために熱心に英語を勉強しています。大学入試では非常に高いレベルの文法や語彙知識が要求されるため、多くの授業においても文法や英文解釈に重きが置かれています。しかし残念ながら、大学入試を目的とするだけでは生徒は英語を「文」としてとらえるレベルにとどまり、それ以上の学びがありません。私は佐野高校で、生徒に実際に英語の本を読ませ、エッセイを書かせることによって、英語をさらに高いレベルで使う必要性をつくり出すことが自分の使命であると考えています。佐野高校 English Library はその重要な役割を担っています。

1994 年に English Library のために難易度別の英語の読み物を購入し始めました。どんなレベルの生徒でもすぐに読み始められ、読み終えることができるように、英語学習者用の様々な種類の本を購入しました。これが extensive reading（多読）の中心となる考え方です。つまり、生徒が辞書を使わずに速読できるということが大切です。私に充てられた ALT 予算をやりくりして、オックスフォード大学出版から８０冊の本を購入しました。英語科の理解もあり、年々購入冊数を増やすことができました。1996 年には、段ボールに入れていた本を国際交流室のロッカーに移すことができ、1998 年には、学校図書館に置くことができました。2006 年には、新しい司書の信達先生の協力のもと、図書館の入り口の棚に置いてもらうことになりました。現在、冊数は約 750 冊となり、導入された蔵書検索システムのおかげで、その管理もずいぶん楽になりました。この本棚にある英語の本は、佐野高校のほぼすべての生徒に役立ててもらえるという自負があります。

しかし図書館に本を置くというのは第一歩にしかすぎません。どのように生徒に本を読ませるか、様々な方策を試してきました。その一部を紹介します。

Shared Reading（輪読）

本を段ボール箱に入れていた頃は、箱を教室まで持っていき、Shared Reading から始めました。その方法はいくつかあります。

１　教師が読み、生徒が聞く。　生徒に適した難易度の話を選び、授業の最初の１０分間、教師が音読します。

２　教師が絵を使って読む。　１とほぼ同じですが、絵を使います。

３　本を回す。　教師が読み始め、それを生徒に回して順に音読させます。

４　生徒がグループで読む。　４人１組で本を回しながら生徒同士で読みます。教師は巡回指導します。

これらの方法は、クラスの生徒の意欲や個性に左右されるところが大きいので、うまくいく場合もあればそうでない場合もありました。

SSR（Sustained Silent Reading　黙読）

　生徒が黙読している間、教師が机間巡視しアドバイスを与えるという方法は、うまくいきましたし、生徒の学習進度をチェックできるという点でもよかったと思います。しかし、この方法を毎時間授業でやり続けるのには時間がかかりすぎます。そこでライティング活動を読書活動の統括と結びつけることにしました。

Reading connected to Journal Writing（ライティング活動と結びついた読書活動）

　佐野高校国際教養科の１、２年生はEnglish “journal”（英語「日記」）をつけています。教師は毎週トピックを与え、ノートを回収し、生徒の作文に対してletters（手紙）などの形で返事を書きます。これは週１回の、国際科の生徒との１対１のつながりであり、これを読書活動にも活かすことができると考えました。Journalのtopic list（トピック一覧）とともに、該当学期に読むべき本の冊数かページ数の目標値を生徒に示しておきます。その進捗状況はreading chart（読書表）を使って、さらにbook report（読書レポート）を書かせることによってチェックします。最近ではpredictions form（予想用紙）を取り入れています。これは生徒が本を選ぶ際に記入するものです。このような形態でライティングと結びつけることが、生徒の読書活動をチェックするのに一番効果的なやり方であるということが、長年試してきて分かったことです。興味深いことに、英語の本を借りに図書室にやってくる生徒はよく日本語の本も借りていくのです。国際科の生徒が全校生徒の中で一番貸出冊数が多いのです！

Promoting reading（読書活動の推進）

　英語の本を授業で使ったり、それをjournal ライティングと結びつけたりすることと共に、読書活動を推進するのに取り入れた方策がいくつかあります。司書の先生は、図書館をより活性化させ、より多くの生徒に利用してもらうよう尽力されています。年間を通して、１年生と３年生の多くの授業を図書館で行っています。１年生では、　endless quest（ある種のゲームブック）を使って、輪読を体験させます。この本は、４人１組になって、生徒が物語の進行を決定していくというストーリーです。

リンク：

多読については、Rob Waring のウェブサイトを参照されるとよいでしょう。

Moving forward（挑戦は続く）

　佐野高校での読書活動の推進はやりがいのある挑戦でした。日本の学生が忙しいことはたしかですが、彼らには単に宿題で英語を日本語に訳す以上の、さらに高いレベルで英語を実際に使う必要性があります。適切なレベルの本を与え、そしてそれを読む理由を生徒に与えることは現在も進行中の挑戦です。より効果的な学習活動となるよう、みなさまからのご助言をこの「終わりなき冒険」に賜れば幸いです。最後に、いつも生徒に言うように、「お読みいただき」ありがとうございました。

A little about me…

May, 2008

Hi folks,
Welcome to the Sano Senior High School. I will be your English Conversation teacher this year. I asked you to prepare a self-introduction so please allow me to do the same for you…!

My name is Robert Garrity, but everyone calls me Rob. I'm from the USA. I was born in Green Bay, Wisconsin. That is up in the north part of the US, near Lake Michigan. If you can find Chicago on the map, Green Bay is straight north from there. It's cold and snowy, but beautiful in the winter and it has great weather and lots of natural beauty to enjoy in the summer. I grew up on a Dairy farm. When I was 15 I used to get up at 4:00 am every morning to milk our 200 milk cows. I sometimes fell asleep in my morning classes (-_-).
In High School I never dreamed that I would live in (or even travel to!) a foreign country. I liked English and hated math. In university I studied history. I was really interested in Asian history, so I took a few classes about Japan and China. I traveled to Japan as an exchange student. It was my first time to go abroad and I didn't speak any Japanese. I studied at Kansai Gaidai for 4 months. Wow! It was wild and strange. I had no money so, to survive, I mostly ate instant ramen and little frozen pizzas (>_<)… But I learned to like Japan. I found that Japanese people were very kind.
After I graduated I came back to Japan to work. I started out teaching at Kishiwada SHS and changed to Sano a few years later. I live in Kishiwada with my wife and two daughters.

Good luck this year!

Rob,

Journal Topics for 1st Year Seminar Class

Class	Topic 1	Topic 2	Topic 3	Topic 4	Topic 5	Topic 6
1-7	4/25	5/1	5/16	6/6	6/13	6/27
1-8	4/23	5/7	5/14	6/4	6/11	6/25

Topic 1: Welcome Page! Please create a nice welcome page for your journal. It should have at least one picture, your name, and anything interesting that represents you. Be creative!

Topic 2: Self Introduction: Please introduce yourself to your journal teacher. Talk about anything that makes up who you are.

Topic 3: The BIG DIFFERENCE between JHS and SHS: How's high school life? Maybe many people are asking you that question right now… What is the biggest difference between Sano SHS and your Junior High School? Good and bad are both ok.

Topic 4: Doraemon's Pocket: Wouldn't it be great to have your own Doraemon! He could help you in so many ways. But don't get too selfish like Nobita! What would you do with your own Doraemon's pocket?

Topic 5: Book Report #1

Topic 6: My Top 3 Ways to Enjoy Summer: YEAH! Summer is here. What are the three best ways to spend your summer? Give me some help so I can forget about the heat. Please!

How to keep an English Journal:

- ✓ Try to write about 1 full page for each topic. More is always better…☺!
- ✓ Always write in pencil so that you can correct your mistakes.
- ✓ After you hand in your journal, we will check it and give you a grade out of 5 points. We will also write some messages to you. Please read them!
- ✓ If you are absent, always bring your journal on the first school day that you come back to school. If you are late or forget your journal you must come down to the office and explain why you are late. You must turn in your journal by the next morning or get **zero** points.
- ✓ **Never copy**! Dictionaries and computers are good for looking up words, but never copy a sentence. Use your own English and your power will grow!

On Reading: Your reading goal is **one book**. Your total Reading grade is out of **ten** points. We will teach you about reading up in the library next week!

Reading Chart

Name: _____

Power Bar!

10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	150	160	1

Weekly Reading Graph

Wow! More?																
30 pages:																
25 pages:																
20 pages:																
15 pages:																
10 pages:																
5 pages:																
Pages / Date:	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____	____

Reading Log

Start	Finish	Catalog #	Title	Pages	Reading Goal:	
					Reading Rules...	**- You ma**
						- Mark th
						- When y put your together.

Book Report

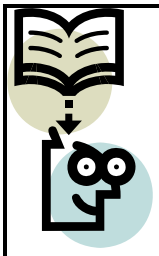
Name _____ (__ - __ - ___) Book Catalog Number _____

Title _____ Publisher _____ Level _____

Number of pages _____ Started reading ___ / ___ Finished reading ___ / ___

Please answer the following questions in your book report:

1. Summarize the story in your own words. Write this clearly and completely. If you read a book of short stories you must summarize <u>each</u> story. If you need advice please ask us.
2. Did you like the book? Why or why not? Would you recommend the book to others?
3. Was the story difficult or easy for you? Why? What made it easy or difficult? For example: the vocabulary, the ideas, the grammar or the story line (plot).
4. Choose one character that you liked or disliked in the book and write about them. What did you like or dislike about this character? Why did you choose this character?_____



Teacher's Comments:	Grades:

Title: _____ **Pages_____ Level ____**

About your Book:

Q 1. *Why did you choose this book?*

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Q 2. *Read the back cover. What do you think is going to happen?*
Make some predictions about the story or the content of the book.

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Started on: __/__. ***Finished on:*** __/__. *I was Right!* *I was wrong…!*