

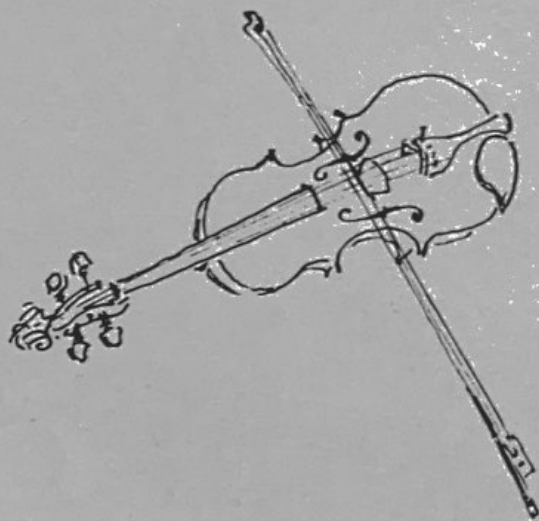
TALENT EDUCATION JOURNAL



NO.10

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Editor's Note

Masayoshi Kataoka

"For elementary or junior high school students with high enough ability to play Bach's concertos, it is natural to achieve high academic standards at school," Dr. Suzuki says in his article, "Let Every Child Graduate from the Advanced Level." "Our purpose," he clarifies, "does not lie in a movement to create professional musicians, but to create persons of a beautiful mind and fine ability." To understand this better, Kenkō Aoki, editor of the Japanese magazine, *Talent Education*, has collected questionnaires from parents of advanced students presently enrolled in elementary and junior high school. These provide a profile of the academic achievements and growth in human relationships of the students. We are pleased to present these results in "Talent Education and All Round Development" from *Talent Education* No. 56, followed by parents' comments occasioned by the questionnaire, "How I Raised My Child."

"A Point of Violin Instruction" by Dr. Suzuki teaches the method for learning to relax the right wrist.

"Reminiscing on Thirty Years" by Hiroko Masaka, an early talent education student presently teaching in Matsumoto, is continued from issue No. 9.

"Foster Children with Teaching Materials" by Shigeki Tanaka is from the book, *Young Children: Everything Depends on How We Raise Them*. Mr. Tanaka describes an important teaching point for early education.

We are also happy to present in this issue the final installment of the translation of *A Father's Record* by Kiyoshi Suzuki. We would like to express our thanks to the translator.

Let Every Child Graduate from the Advanced Level

Shin'ichi Suzuki

Now that it is clear that ability is not inborn, please assist your child to develop fine ability.

What determines a human being to be superior or inferior? You know well how important childhood education is, as a seedling needs great care.

In the world in general, many may think that fostering high ability by music only concerns music. It is not so, however.

Whatever it is fostered by, the ability that a living being has acquired is an asset, it is a strength, part of that person's entire ability. I used to ask the mothers of elementary school children playing the advanced level graduation piece, "How is your child's academic achievement at school?" The response almost always was, "He's tops at least in his class." Since I know this as a fact, I no longer need to ask this question.

Bach's concertos, whether for the violin or the piano, are pieces that conservatory students study. For elementary or junior high students with high enough ability to play them, it is natural to achieve high academic standards at school. People beyond the ocean who have come to recognize such high ability of children have noted many facts about this new education: hence its spread overseas as an innovating approach.

Of course, our purpose does not lie in a movement to create professional musicians, but to create persons of a beautiful mind and fine ability. We engage in human education through music

so that children will grow with beautiful and high sensitivity, through an unparalleled, uniquely musical approach.

For a better understanding of this, Mr. Kenkō Aoki has collected questionnaires from parents of advanced and post-advanced level graduates throughout the country and summarized the results in the following survey. Please look at it carefully.

Talent Education, no. 56



*The earlier period
The better environment
The better teaching method
The more training
The superior instructor.*

(Five Mottoes of
Talent Education)

GRADUATION PIECES

VIOLIN

Level 1 (Pre-Elementary)	Gossec: Gavotte (Book 1)
Level 2 (Elementary)	Bach: Bourrée (Book 3)
Level 3 (Middle)	Vivaldi: Concerto in g minor, 1st Mvt. (Book 5)
Level 4 (Pre-Advanced)	Corelli: La Folia (Book 6)
Level 5 (Advanced)	Bach: Concerto in a minor (Book 7)
Level 6 (Post-Advanced)	Mozart: Concerto No. 4 (Book 10)
Level 7 (Post-Advanced, Second Stage)	Mozart-Kreisler: Rondo Paradis: Sicilienne

PIANO

Level 1 (Pre-Elementary)	Bach: Minuet No. 2 (Book 2)
Level 2 (Elementary)	Bach: Minuet I, II; Gigue from Partita (Book 4)
Level 3 (Middle)	Mozart: Sonata K. 331 (Book 7)
Level 4 (Advanced)	Bach: Concerto Italien
Level 5 (Post-Advanced, First Stage)	Mozart: Coronation
Level 6 (Post-Advanced, Second Stage)	Bach: Partita in B ^b
Level 7 (Post-Advanced, Third Stage)	Beethoven: Appassionata

**Talent Education
And
All Round Development**

*Questionnaire for Students Presently
Enrolled in Elementary or Junior High
School Who Have Graduated from Talent
Education Levels Five and Up*

Kenkō Aoki

Mr. Suzuki has always asked that "children continue studying with talent education at least till they graduate from the Advanced Level." This reflects his warm concern about the budding ability of children which might otherwise be frustrated midway in its growth.

He has believed that the academic achievement of children whose ability has developed to the Advanced or Post-Advanced Level while in elementary or junior high school will invariably be outstanding. This has been borne out by his experiences over the years, and I am sure instructors have also realized this. In charge of the Piano Study Group for the past ten years or so, I, too, have felt it to be true.

This conclusion was reinforced by a recent survey.

I have conducted research on the experiences of students presently enrolled in elementary and junior high schools. Let me add that I had the guidance of psychologist Teru Tako concerning the categories employed in this survey.

The questionnaire was completed by 457 students including 191 violin and 266 piano students.

1. Age When the Student Started Talent Education

	Violin	Piano
2 1/2	11	4
3	73	26
4	49	63
5	25	70
6	13	45
7	9	25
8	5	13
9	6	7
10	--	8
11	--	5

The earlier music is started, the better. In both violin and piano, the majority started between age three and six.

2. Motivation for Entering Talent Education

Many were inspired by Mr. Suzuki's books or by his lectures. Other reasons are varied: heard about it from someone; as a result of a serious search; by chance, etc.

3. Age Graduated from the Advanced Level

	Violin	Piano
4-5	3	-
6	5	1
7	20	2
8	14	5
9	27	17

10	45	31
11	26	41
12	17	52
13	18	42
14	5	41
15	2	20
Not Known	9	14
Total	191	266

What this tells us is that the majority finished the Advanced Level while enrolled in elementary school.

The graduation piece in the violin is Bach's Violin Concerto No. 1 in a minor. Of course the student must perform all the movements from memory. The piano student has already finished the long sonata by Mozart, K. 332, at the Middle Level, and performs the entire Concerto Italien by Bach for graduation from the Advanced Level.

4. Age Graduated from the Post-Advanced Level

	Violin	Piano
6-7	6	1
8	12	1
9	8	3
10	13	8
11	21	12
12	15	23
13	9	42
14	9	41
15	4	20

Not Known	9	11
Total	106	162

Again, many graduated while in elementary school. The rest finished while in junior high school.

In the violin, Mozart's Concerto No. 4 is assigned for the First Stage of the Post-Advanced Level, and for the Second Stage of the Post-Advanced Level, Paradis' Sicilienne and the Mozart-Kreisler Rondo.

The student graduating from the piano Post-Advanced Level, First Stage, performs from memory all the movements of Mozart's "Coronation." This big piece takes twenty-five minutes with string orchestra or piano accompaniment. The Second Stage requires Bach's Partita No. 1, and the Third Stage, Beethoven's "Appassionata." Of course the entire piece is played from memory in each case. Forty-eight students so far have finished the Third Stage.

Whether the violin or the piano, it is a marvel that elementary and junior high students perform beautifully the pieces music school students struggle with. Moreover, six children among them have studied both the violin and the piano.

5. Influences in Other Areas of Life

By studying music (violin or piano) since early childhood, the student must not only have acquired musical ability but have received various influences in other areas of his life. What results have parents observed?

a. Academic Areas

Understanding and memorization increased	93
Began to study on own initiative	43
Became more motivated to make efforts	39

Academic record in general rose	23
Creativity developed	4
Nothing changed	12
Not enough time to study academic subjects	8
Exam periods are felt to be a burden	1
Academic record went down	1

b. In the Areas of Attitude and Habit

Daily habit formed and life became more regular	111
Concept of time formed, skillfully manages practice	81
Came to enjoy music	40
Became serious and polite	37
Became meticulous in everything	11
A sense of responsibility grew	9
Distinction between good and bad was gained	2
No change	7
Practice is a burden	13

c. Human Relationships

Cooperative, has many friends	181
Thoughtful, kind	65
Popular, trusted	24
Leader type among peers	8
Shows clear judgment in human relations	4
Competition in a good sense grew	3
No change	10
Hard to make friends	11
Became self-centered	1



d. Personality Formation

Became more cheerful	46
Positive outlook	27
Less easily distracted, thinks more deeply	24
Richer sensitivity grew	29
Became friendlier	22
Became receptive and respectful	19
Developed unique personality	1
No change	11
Lacks rigor	3
Rebellious	2
Introverted	2
Easily bored	1
Tense	3

The results of five additional items are as follows:

e. Did concentration increase?

Yes	273
Somewhat	33
Can't tell	34

f. Did patience grow?

Yes	325
Somewhat	27
Can't tell	31

g. Did action become brisk?

Yes	107
Somewhat	42
Can't tell	116

h. Did ability for oral report grow?

Yes	203
Somewhat	41
Can't tell	65

i. Did confidence grow?

Yes	238
Somewhat	51
Can't tell	56

While fostering musical ability through the violin, piano, cello, and flute, talent education also values human growth. The above nine points all point to desirable results.

This questionnaire, apparently answered in the majority of cases by the mothers, reflects some voices, though a very small number, worried about the lack of time after school: it's hard to find sufficient time for academic study, practicing is a burden, time for playing with friends was reduced, etc.

This has something to do with the reality of club activities at school which keep children long so that they can't go home until late afternoon. I think it is important to make such activities less restrictive so that children's hours at home can be made longer.

Today problems of education are debated particularly in relation with elementary and junior high students' misconduct. We should not neglect the question of personality formation.

The children appearing in this questionnaire are, we have discovered, studying violin or piano despite the tremendous pressures from club activities, junior high or high school entrance exams, and what not, efficiently employing their limited time.

6. *Notable Academic Achievement*

Then how do they do at school?

a. First let's take a look at violin children's academic record in elementary school.

Of 191, 96 served as class representatives

for the student council (50.3%), and four headed the council.

27 children were within the top five in class, 14 received "above average" grades, and remaining 55 don't know where they stood. Since some schools don't publicize students' rankings, it is hard to tell exactly how these children have done, but if they did, the number of outstanding students would further increase.

Of 88 junior high students, 29 (23 percent) served as class leaders, three as president of the student council.

Nineteen ranked among the top five in class, two in the "above average" category, and the ranking of the remaining 29 is unknown.

b. Of the 266 piano students 149 (56 percent) served as class representatives in elementary school. Seven headed the student council. Thirteen were top in their class, 21 were between second and fifth, eleven had "above average," and the remaining 84 don't know. This is also due to school principles not to notify students of their relative achievement.

While in junior high school, 69 (34.8%) of the total of 198 served as class representatives; four served as vice president of the student body.

Seventeen were top in their class, sixteen came second to fifth. Six ranked "above average," and the remaining 84 don't know.

Combining the violin and piano students, 53.6 percent served as class representatives in elementary school, and 34.3 percent in junior high school.

This means that one out of two or three have been elected representatives. Some have been elected four times in a row, while some others have ranked first not just in their class but in the entire grade.

Students elected class representatives are

not only excellent in academic work but are certainly popular among students. That so many are outstanding students at school brings pride to talent education.

Some teachers say, "Drop the violin, drop the piano, concentrate on school work." In fact, it should be the other way round. As the saying goes, "the more one enjoys, the more skilled one becomes," the children have fostered an unusual ability over the years. That this ability has a carry over to other areas, I think, is proved here with a living testimony.

7. Favorite Subjects

Last, I asked these students to list their three favorite school subjects in the order of preference. The following table combines both elementary and junior high students.

First Place	Violin	Piano	Total
Music	37	138	175
Math	63	103	166
Japanese	38	78	116
English	17	54	71
Gym	20	36	56
Social Studies	6	33	39
Science	15	16	31
Fine Arts	12	4	16
Industrial Arts, Home Economics	11	2	13

Second Place	Violin	Piano	Total
Music	34	94	128
Japanese	39	86	125
Math	34	67	101
Science	26	45	71
Social Studies	16	44	60
English	16	39	55
Gym	15	32	47
Fine Arts	10	8	18

Third Place

Japanese	28	70	98
Music	30	67	97
Math	24	53	77
Social Studies	18	56	74
Science	18	51	69
Gym	19	30	49
English	9	18	27
Fine Arts	7	11	18
Industrial Arts, Home Economics	9	3	12

8. Parents' Comments

This questionnaire provided space for parents' comments. More than 350 parents responded. Excerpts will follow.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the parents who made this survey possible.

Parents' Notes

How I Raised My Child

The following are excerpts of parents' comments from the Talent Education Center's questionnaire.

(From the Violin School)

Mother of Hiroko Yamazaki (12)

We started the violin when Hiroko was small. We thought it a mere hobby then, but it's been eight years, Hiroko having graduated from the Post-Advanced Level. I didn't expect it to last so long. When she was about three, she gazed and gazed at small talent education children on the TV screen. This provided us the motivation to enrol her. When we sat in on a lesson day, she wasn't easily persuaded to leave. While observing for hours every week, she began to beat the rhythm with her body. She watched smaller children leaning forward, and bigger children with an eye of admiration.

Once she started Twinkle, she gradually came to dislike repeating the same things and getting corrected. However, when she was first asked to play alone at the group lesson, she was pleased by the praise and applause with which she was rewarded by her teacher, mothers, and students. After that she began to listen to the record and to practice with enthusiasm. There were times when she nearly stumbled again later on, but each time she was able to break through the difficulty through everyone's warm encouragement.

Group performances in class, Christmas concerts, recitals at local chapter level, and so forth have helped her continue till now to

experience the joy of playing strings. She seems to have acquired the habit of practicing regularly and making ceaseless efforts, while also gaining confidence with which she can tell herself, "try, and you'll never fail to accomplish."

In the higher grades in elementary school, she became busy with academic work and committee responsibilities. However, she has been using her time skillfully to practice. Playing the violin has served sometimes as relaxation and at other times as comfort, providing her a source of vitality. I feel grateful that, not only in music, but in all areas including spiritual, academic, and physical aspects, she has developed in accordance with the tenor of talent education.

Father of Atsuko Nishihara (11)

Our daughter, who has been playing since a tender age, now plays pieces so difficult that we never imagined she would be able to play. This is a great marvel to us amateurs.

We owe it to talent education that we were able to closely observe to what height a small amount of daily practice can, when accumulated, enhance human ability. We are impressed, though at this late stage, by its faith and the system which concretizes it.

The child spontaneously acquires the principle of step-by-step progress through the violin. It is wonderful that talent education brings together the teacher, the child and the parent in an organic relationship.

Having served as vice president of the students' council when a fourth grader, this year Atsuko was elected the president. I think that confidence that she gained through violin recitals has been an asset for her.

Fortunately she has friends (including her

parents) with whom she can make music at home. This has exposed her not only to the joy of ensemble playing but to a wide range of human relationships. I believe that it will prove a great treasure in her life ahead.

Mother of Yuichirō Imai (10)

I had my son hold a violin at three and nine months before he knew what it was all about. All I did every day was simply wish nothing else but his rich growth.

With the aim to continue, having started it, till he graduate from the Post-Advanced Level, our family has shared his violin experiences these seven years, taking pleasure in every small achievement he has made.

For the little child, practice meant cutting into his play time. Up until Book 8 or 9, he thought he could quit if he only finished Book 10, and repeated, "Let's be sure to quit." And when he finished Book 10, --did it now become too precious?-- he started to say, "I'm not quitting!" Right now, he is studying toward Mozart-Kreisler's Rondo, the piece for Level Seven graduation. He owes this to the teachers who encouraged him and rescued him each time he fell into an abyss. He has enjoyed playing a solo at a chapter recital and at mini-concerts. He has also had Mr. Suzuki's lesson twice. These proved wonderful stimuli to him.

I would like him to continue to grow, with music as a friend, as a human being who responds to what is beautiful and who never loses sympathy. The ten books behind us, I am full of gratitude toward our teachers and other related people. Thank you very much.

(From the Piano School)

Mother of Seizō Azuma (18)

Our child showed great, even extraordinary, interest in music. When we moved to Matsumoto on a job, we immediately started to look around for a good teacher. This was right before Seizō turned five. We observed a talent education classroom, where we saw small children growing beautifully, and resolved to enrol him right away.

Since then, both my son and I have learned a great deal through the piano in the Kataoka class. Every lesson day was almost breathless, fire sparking between the teacher, the child, and the observing parent.

We were moved by our teacher's zeal. She spared her own time for the children, and at times continued to teach despite ill health. We have tried our best to follow her, wishing to somehow respond to her enthusiasm.

I don't know how many great pianists of the world she has taped for us. She has tirelessly repeated, "Please let your child listen to the records, please let him hear the tapes."

I think it is nearly impossible to measure how very much it helped my son to listen from early days to innumerable recordings of great performers.

Our child entered a music school this spring in order to become a performer. I hope he will walk straight along the road he believes in. And that he will let us hear performances that will remain in our heart, however few.

Mother of Miwako Karita (11)

It's already been over seven years since my child entered talent education.

I walked around looking for a teacher, holding my three year old daughter's hand and carrying my ten month old son on my back. It feels as if that day were yesterday. We were lucky enough to find Teacher Kanda, with whom we have been studying ever since.

Miwako was first a timid weakling, but when she was a fifth grader, her home room teacher commented in her third term report card: "even brighter, more cheerful, and politer than ever, a fine child with a kind heart." I think we owe this undeserved praise to talent education. Miwako and I said to each other that our future project will be to search for the good sound and to cherish the sound. By having this in mind all the time, I hope that a thinking mind as well as a compassionate heart will grow.

When she is big enough to know the wider world, she will realize the gift of talent education. Then Mr. Suzuki's thought will again come alive in her mind. This will be the fulfillment of the purpose of our contact with talent education.

Miwako is approaching a stage of growth reputed to be difficult. I hope she will continue to learn from Mr. Suzuki with the piano as a support for her heart. I would like to thank both Mr. Suzuki and Teacher Kanda.

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Foster Children with Teaching Materials

Shigeki Tanaka
*Young Children: Everything
Depends on How We Raise Them*
(no. 10)

5. Fostering Children with Teaching Materials

A child's humanity is fostered through contact with the parent in daily life. However, why not go a step further and try to make available various materials in order to satisfy the child's desire to learn?

The parent's attitude in handling this is extremely important, since, if she forgets the main object which is responding to the child's desire to learn while fostering a forward-looking human being, and seeks to make the child learn the material, the result is always overemphasis on intellect, cramming, and dehumanization. Let's consider the alphabet for example. When she decides to teach her child the alphabet, what does the mother first think about? She is apt to be concerned with how to make *him learn it accurately and fast*.

The purpose should be to foster a forward-looking human being *by means of* the alphabet, *by teaching it to him*. Yet, isn't it tempting to change this to just *teaching the alphabet*? This is a diametrically opposite direction.

This is because parents themselves received such education, and because they believe that learning means making a single minded effort, withstanding what is painful and disagreeable.

We must change our idea of learning: for children, learning is something that they enjoy,

that they are eager for. When we look at small children around us with this view, we discover any number of children who, under some stimulus, have rapidly learned to read before we knew it, although they neither bothered us by repeatedly asking how to read this or that letter, nor made any painful efforts to learn.

With such children, we will realize, their environment was in fact working on them so as to stimulate their interest. For example, they were around when their big brothers or sisters were reading a book. In the old days, children read the reader aloud many times. While hearing it without making a conscious effort to listen, the little child learns the lesson first through the ear, then becomes aware that the different shapes of letters have different ways of reading. He reads the textbook imitating the big brother, who laughs at him when he makes a mistake. The little one also laughs and corrects his error. Before long, he is able to read it correctly.

This was how I learned to read around age four. What a great joy it was to be able to read. I was often scolded by my mother for being too engrossed in a book to respond to her repeated calls at a mealtime. Pleasure of reading acquired in early childhood doesn't seem to fade throughout my life.

If, on the contrary, my mother had tried to teach me by force, I might have learned to read, but I would not have taken this much pleasure in reading, blocked by something like a sense of duty. I don't know how vacant my life would then have become.

It is wonderful to be able to understand and particularly to play music. Music directly touches human emotion. How happy people are who are privileged to enjoy it. An instrument like the violin, technically speaking, is easier

and more natural when learned from childhood. When an adult tries to learn it, it requires tremendous effort; moreover, an inferior student, he makes such slow progress. The difference astounds us as to what prodigies children are.

Yet, many mothers try to *make their children learn* the violin. They strictly enforce the lesson hour on the children, change their expression about whether the children advance in pieces or not, and try to force them to learn at any cost. At this point, before they know it, the subject of learning the violin shifts from the child to the mother, and the mother will be saying, "Please practice for my sake." Some children resist practicing; others practice so as to avoid having to see their mothers grieve. At this rate, music which should be a pleasure will end in nurturing hatred and a gloomy sense of duty in the children's mind.

A mother has told me that she is constantly struggling so that the child will continue, thinking that letting him drop midway what he has started will leave a bad influence in the future. What has brought the child to a point where he wants to give it up in the middle is not the child's but the mother's own attitude, yet she thinks it his fault. Hence this struggle.

Although at first the child may not have started the violin on his own initiative, if the mother skillfully navigates him to take interest, he will be so inspired that he will amaze her. When inspired, he learns with concentration, makes rapid progress, and becomes good at it. When good at it, he becomes more interested, and when interested, he practices harder than before, making greater progress. This is how a child advances. The child becomes cheerful, positive, responsive, and strong. This learning attitude does not simply affect the violin lessons but learning in other areas as well.

When Mr. Suzuki observes such an attitude in a child, he asks his mother, "Hasn't he been doing well in math, too, lately?" She smiles, and according to what I hear, answers yes.

That's the point of talent education. The mother of a violin student once asked Mr. Suzuki, "Will my child become something?"

"He may not become something. But he will become a fine *human being*," he replied. I would like you to ponder these words.

6. Don't Differentiate between Play and Learning



Traditionally, early education has stressed that small children learn various things spontaneously through play and that therefore it should be avoided, or even forbidden, to intentionally try to teach them anything.

Many mothers and kindergarten teachers seem to firmly believe this.

This represents an idea that young children's play, unlike adults', constitutes their serious life, and if adults try to cram children with things to be learned, it will obstruct their healthy development and negatively influence their future life. I'm sure this is not wrong.

However, unless one considers well the realities of young children's play, it is questionable if play can immediately be connected to learning.

Scholars have published different theories: excess energy, diversion for the purpose of relaxing psychological tension, preparation for future activities, an outlet for repressed desires, etc. A French psychologist Wallon explains children's play as having four aspects: "rules," "fiction," "chance," and "success."

Children try to play within "rules" they have established, but they also try to break them. They understand reality, but they also wish to play in fantasy, or "fiction." While at play, children can display their ability, but they may also discover their potential by "chance." Play ignores interests, but there is also an expectation of reward for "success." Thus, all four aspects of play are two-sided, and play oscillates between these contradictory poles.

Viewing children's play in the light of constant forward direction, learning, I think also has two sides. First, it is a game which has a forward looking potential for development; second, it is a backward looking game with no potential for development.

Whatever it is, in forward looking play children's eyes shine with joy. Not so in backward looking play. They either repeat the same things over and over again in the same way without prospect of development, change from game to game without settling on any, or at times try behind grownups' backs what they are normally forbidden to do--or play may be an outlet for repressed desires.

Recent children's play, I fear, has a strong backward looking inclination. What concerns me most is that some children vacantly watch their friends at play at a distance without trying to join. Even if invited to join, they only imitate their friends, unable to do otherwise. Others can't play by themselves unless a grown-up plays with them.

Children's play is easily influenced by the environment. Friends aside, the environment around them including parents control their play both internally and externally. Granted that every child has wonderful potential, the environments that surround children are never identical. Not only that, undesirable environ-

ments seem to be increasing nowadays.

The importance of children's play perhaps lies in freedom and initiative. In play where freedom is restricted and initiative is being lost, desirable learning can't be expected to occur. It's no good to think that there will be learning if we simply leave children alone to play.

Learning how to read, though often associated with cramming, can be a pleasant game for children if we first prepare an environment, stimulate their interest, and skillfully present materials when they show signs of a desire to learn.

Am I now clear as to why it is not good to separate play from learning, to consider play enjoyable and learning painful?



A Point of Violin Instruction

An Important Instruction on How to Relax the Wrist

Shin'ichi Suzuki

Many students play an upbow to the frog in such a way that the tip points to the left. Please watch and correct this habit.

Why doesn't the bow stay parallel to the bridge, why does the tip lean toward the left at the frog position? Many students fail to readily correct this, no matter how often you mention it during the lesson; nor are they able to correct it. The problem is that their wrists are stiff.

Unless you teach the student how to "relax the wrist" at the frog position, the bridge and the bow can't stay parallel, and the tip of the bow inevitably sways to the left. It is proof of a stiff wrist. And a stiff wrist is one of the worst defects in violin playing.

I always repeat at lesson, "Hang down your elbow after each bow, relax your wrist before you play the next note." This instruction for relaxing the wrist and arm is very important.

If the student relaxes the arm, the wrist also naturally relaxes. Therefore, if you teach him "to hang down the elbow, see that the bow is parallel with the bridge, then let it move straight," you can correct the leftward bend of the tip. Again, if you tell him to "relax the wrist" and let him play at the frog, you can likewise guide him to play with the bow parallel to the bridge. The reason is that relaxing the arm, hanging the elbow down in a relaxed way, and relaxing the wrist are all one thing; one can't relax the wrist alone.

In short, it is necessary to release the tension from the arm. Tension in the arm is the most unwelcome, unnatural thing that spoils one's playing.

I would like you to guide every student so that he can play the whole bow, including at the frog, straight and parallel to the bridge. Try

*the wrist exercise for playing
each bow after relaxing the wrist.*

Although the bow will do, at first let the student try with a ball point pen. Let him hold the pen as though holding the bow, and tell him to relax the wrist without moving the back of the hand. The wrist will go down a little.

Teach him this movement (it's the same thing with the bow). Use this wrist exercise a lot in class: 1. Hold the bow; 2. relax your wrist. When playing a piece, too, the student should start playing after setting the bow on the string and relaxing the wrist as in step 2.

Be sure that the student understands well that playing with the step 1 bow hold results in "slip tone" or in pressing; that anyway it's no good. He must not fail to relax the wrist as in step 2; the weight of the bow must sit on the string when the bow starts to move. This is the principle of good playing. One who has mastered this will always have already relaxed the wrist when the bow lands on the string. This is an important instruction.

*Talent Education, no. 56
"Lectures on Music
Instruction," 29*

Pajamas and the Violin

Kiyoshi Suzuki
A Father's Record
(no. 10)

58. Pajamas and the Violin --Twelve and Three Months

This was when I wasn't home. My wife and Eiko started to prepare for bed a little earlier than usual. Humming some melody, Eiko opened the case and took out her violin. My wife was watching, puzzled: "Is she going to play it now?" Eiko then burst out laughing: "O my, I took my violin out of the case--how funny, I thought I was going to get my pajamas." "O I see. I was wondering if you were going to play the violin. So, you mistook it for your pajamas," my wife, too, laughed aloud with Eiko.

She told me about this when I returned. "Isn't habit something. I was watching her, wondering what she was up to. She took off her clothes, folded them, and put them by her bedside as usual, then, cheerfully singing a tune, she opened the violin case," she repeated the story in greater detail, laughing again.

How amusing it must have been to Eiko, who had been opening the case many times a day for the past ten years, when she unconsciously walked over to her violin, picked it up without thinking, then recalled that she was on the way to get her pajamas.

Recently she has been practicing by herself, but when she finishes, she goes to my wife, whatever she may be busy doing, to say "Thank you for listening." If I am home, Eiko comes to say the same to me. She has repeated this every day since two years and six months; maybe she doesn't

feel that her practice is over before she goes through this ritual. This, too, may be ability which Mr. Suzuki always talks about.

When a child has learned to do something through repeated practice, or "the more training," she probably feels she just has to do it. If we are too occupied with just the violin, it is possible to forget the important object of fostering a human being. I think we should not neglect paying attention to daily life so that our children will grow, in every aspect of their lives, with behavior that represents "the better ability."

When deep affection, high human sensitivity, truthfulness and good will are sensed in behavior which has been spontaneously nurtured, then talent education has borne fruit.

59. Eiko's Practice Schedule --Twelve and Four Months

Eiko's recent practice schedule is as follows.

Sunday: Books 1 and 2 or Book 3 (on alternate weeks, hence each book is reviewed once in two weeks), Mozart-Kreisler Rondo, Bach Aria on the G String, Vivaldi Concerto for Three Violins, the Duet Book, Zigeunerweisen, songs (Annie Laurie, Dreaming of Home and Mother by J. P. Ordway, Auld Lang Syne, etc.)

Monday: Book 4 or 5 (on alternate weeks), Vitali Chaconne, Beethoven Concerto, Sunday Home Concert Vol. 1.

Tuesday: Book 6 or 7 (on alternate weeks), Saint-Saëns Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso, Beethoven Romance in F, Kreisler Liebesfreud, Dvořák Humoresque in G, Sunday Home Concert Vol. 2

Wednesday: Book 8, Wieniawski Concerto, Schon Rosmarin, Traumerei

Thursday: Mozart Concerto No. 5, Bruch Concerto, Vivaldi Concerto in d minor (first and second violins)

Friday: Mozart Concerto No. 4, Book 11 (Tartini Sonata in g minor, Bach Concerto No. 2 in E Major), Daquin "le Coucou" (a song learned at the summer school)

Saturday: Mendelssohn Concerto, Lalo Symphonie Espagnole, Twinkle Variations (Suzuki)

Daily: Practice the present piece well every day.

The above is a schedule Eiko made up herself. Right now she is studying Bach's Unaccompanied Sonata No. 1.

Some parents ask me, "Eiko must practice long hours every day, doesn't she?" I have never timed her so I don't know or worry about how long she actually practices. My wife and I, however, never neglected constantly encouraging her to observe the review schedule no matter what. Eiko also seems to be practicing with that intention. She makes it a rule to practice some before going to school in the morning. If there is sumo wrestling on the radio after school, she plays the violin listening to it, sometimes shouting in joy, "He won, he won, Wakanohana won!"

Listening while at work, my wife sometimes says "Whoops!" in a funny voice. This is when a piece she knows sounds strange. Eiko may play the section over, or may simply continue. It is

a very relaxed kind of practice. A sixth grader, she now comes home later from school, about which my wife feels rather concerned.

60. The Violin Class Is for Everyone



"Talent education is really fine, isn't it," a piano teacher I know said. "What aspect of talent education looks good to you?" I asked. She replied, "In talent education the parent accompanies the child. I really envy that." "Then why don't you do it that way in your class, too?" I said frankly. "Students would stop coming if I demanded such a thing. So, they don't ever make progress," she answered, grieving over the contradiction between her need to support herself by giving piano lessons and her desire to teach her students well.

Parents who attend the violin class entered talent education with the understanding that "the child has to be accompanied to the lessons" so that there is no such dilemma as the piano teacher described.

Not only that. The instruction which enables the student to really play the violin is in the talent education approach. The violin class is an arena of children's education in the broad sense of the term. Therefore, our attitude itself is different from merely wanting to give children violin lessons.

In talent education violin class, moreover, the members handle the administrative aspects of the class. The class is not only a place for fostering their own children, but at the same time the basis for promoting the movement for fostering every child. Parents often wish to assist only their own children to learn to play the violin well. This is an expression of

self centeredness observed not only in the violin class but at school and in other educational institutions.

"I want my child to excel" --this is a natural paternal desire. Precisely for that reason, however, the best way for one's own child is to choose a way by which members of a group studying together, sharing the same thought and the same method, can unite their strength to grow together.

Talent education violin class is for everyone. No one is a guest. For the guest's child does not grow. When all the members without exception feel the class is their own, that sentiment makes the class a great place for learning, it can help foster every child.

However, more often than not, things don't go according to theory. The violin class is no exception. Some help run the class with enthusiasm, others carry out their responsibility perfunctorily, and still others remain guests, saying they are busy.

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"Mr. Suzuki is special," people have often commented in connection with running the violin class and other things. It is quite strange, for there is no reason why I am special. If I try to explain it, maybe it means that I am somewhat more serious about my child's upbringing than some others. However, there should be no distinction in parental love of the child. I don't love my child more than other parents do theirs. Every parent deeply loves his child. Other members and I receive the same kind of education in class. Other members and I can equally be interested in the class as our own. Other children's mothers and Eiko's mother have discussed their children in a friendly way, while they have grown in their own different ways. In Eiko's case, however, what's special is that *both* parents have been deeply interested in the violin class. This seems to have led Eiko to think that "papa moves right away putting aside everything else, once it's related to talent education."



I take care of the class, thinking it is mine, not for other people's but for my own sake. I feel like telling other parents, "Places where your child receives education exist for yourself, not for others."

61. Real Parent and Child

--Age Twelve

Eiko is entering junior high school in April. One day after supper, handing me a piece of paper, she said, "Papa, fill this out." It was an application form for junior high school. "Do you need an application to enter junior high school?"

"Yes, my teacher told us to bring it back after our parents fill it out."

"All right, then, why don't I do that."

"Today-I have the golden opportunity, for some day I must tell her," I thought, and began filling in the blanks from the top down. I wrote "foster daughter" without hesitation when I came to the space where they asked her relationship to me.

"Eiko, do you know this?" I asked turning to her.

"I know it," Eiko didn't seem so surprised.

"I see, then papa will tell you who your natural mother is. It's your aunt at Azumada."

At mention of my wife's sister-in-law, Eiko's face became a little clouded. She didn't much admire this aunt, whom she'd heard about through our conversations with grandfather and other relatives. I think it was natural that her expression somewhat changed. I continued:

"Before you were born, when you were still in her tummy, I asked her, please give birth to your next baby as my child. I'll never complain whether the baby is a boy or a girl, even if it is crippled, handless, legless, deaf, or blind; Whatever kind of child is born it shall be my

child, I said. And that baby was you. Mama once said it would be nice if it were a boy, but I told her we couldn't tell such a thing until it was born. I was content whether it was going to be a boy or a girl. The baby was a girl, so papa named her Eiko. Eiko, a shining child, because she shines beautifully, and because she is *émi*able. Isn't that a nice name? Your aunt didn't have enough milk, so mama made cream of rice every day, and papa carried it there by bike. You grew by drinking it every day. Right after the war when cow's milk wasn't available like now, there was no other way.

So Eiko is papa's and mama's own child, not a stepchild. Neither of us ever thought of you as a stepchild. If a friend says you are a stepchild, tell her with determination you aren't one."

Eiko listened looking down.

"My only pleasure is that you grow beautifully. Mama feels the same way. Both of us live every day with you as the center. You continue to live as before, too, Eiko; so long as we're nice to each other, everything'll be fine."

Seeing a tear drop on Eiko's face, my wife also said, "You aren't a stepchild; Eiko's my child. All right?"

Eiko nodded.

"You needn't cry any more. Eat a tangerine now."

I handed one of the tangerines which were our dessert, took one myself and started to peel it. Eiko, too, started to eat hers right away. She is fond of fruit. By the time we each finished eating another, she was back to normal, and laughed aloud talking of the day's events at school. My wife and I looked at each other in relief.

I had been waiting for the chance to tell

Eiko that she was our foster daughter. This was such a good chance that I could have thought the gods gave it to us.

Eiko had sometimes asked my wife, "Mama, I'm a stepchild, am I not?" My wife had answered, "You're my child. Ask papa." Eiko never asked me about it, though I had meant to tell all if she did so.

It's easy for this kind of thing to get around, so her school friends had said to her, "You're a stepchild, aren't you." It must have hurt her little heart. All the more so I appreciated this good opportunity.

Eiko's life hasn't changed at all since then. It's as if nothing had ever happened. I am convinced that this will never disturb our family relationship.

Love between parent and child is not a matter of reason. When the child responds to the environment of true love, mutual affection spontaneously develops--isn't this what love between parent and child is?

"No matter how much you may love children, unless you have a child of your own, you never understand a parent's feeling." There seems to be such an argument; however, some parents in this society don't love their children. The mere act of having a child is not limited to human beings but is universal to all living things. Yet, only humans can, with deeper love, foster their children as beings with lofty and rich humanity.

As an old saying has it, "foster parent rather than the natural parent." I don't mean to say that this makes me, a foster parent, a true parent for Eiko. I think that a deeper bond than such a proverb implies exists between us and Eiko. Not the reality of having fostered a child, but the love which made parents feel they *must* foster her--isn't this what creates the heart-to-heart bondage between the parent and the child?

Since the parent brings up the child, later

the child has to care for the parent--if the parent raises the child on the basis of such a deal, I must call it insincere.

In any case, nothing will make us happier than seeing Eiko grow as a person with lofty humanity.

When I discuss talent education with the members, I always quote Eiko as an example. Someone who knows my love of music is likely to comment as if it were a matter of course: "It's because Eiko's your child that she made so much progress in violin."

"Yes, it's because she's my child, who accepted talent education without resistance and has practiced it as much as possible," I answer.

"No, I don't think that's all."

"What else is there then?"

"You understand music, and play music."

"Oh no, I'm just a music fan. I am no different from any ordinary parents who love music. I don't play a single instrument well."

"No, that's not so. I do follow what you say about talent education, at least to some extent. But I can't think it the only factor in Eiko's growth. After all it must be hereditary."

"Well, do you think so? If it were hereditary, Eiko wouldn't have become what she is now, for my music is below the amateur level. It's not unreasonable to think as you do, though, for that's how we all used to think traditionally."

If he is persuaded at that point, I don't pursue the topic of Eiko, but if he refuses to believe me, and if Eiko isn't around, I start by saying, "Then let me tell you," and try to explain further:

"I'll give you proof of the fact that Eiko's violin playing isn't hereditary. Eiko is an adopted child, not at all related to me by

blood. I raised her from babyhood. It was decided that she would be my child from before birth, but she isn't my natural child. So it's impossible that her musical talent was inherited from me. What do you think? Are you still unconvinced?"

"Is that so? So Eiko's not your child?"

"Oh yes, she's my child."

"Yes, I see, I see--I wonder if I see."

"Do you see?"

"I wonder if that's so," he might still hesitate, but in the end he can be persuaded.

Mr. Suzuki says that "cultural talent" is not hereditary. I believe these words, having observed Eiko's development.

As a musician's child becomes a musician, a painter's child paints pictures, and a literary man's child writes fiction, it is discussed as heredity and considered a matter of fact. That is because such examples abound in society, and because children's talent grows given the parents' living environment.

"The earlier period, the better environment, the better teaching method, the more training, the superior instructor" --these five principles of talent education are quite difficult to attain, though seemingly simple. Shouldn't all of us adults think about them for the sake of our children?

62. Lastly

--Parents Only Pray

Repeating failure after failure, I remain as inadequate as ever, while Eiko will graduate from elementary school and advance to junior high school this year. What I have done up to now can't be undone whether I laugh or cry; it will forever remain unerased.

By the time a child enters junior high school,

her ego has developed to the extent that it is not too much to say that her personality is fully formed. This is what the parents have fostered. Whether or not she pleases the parents, whether or not society accepts her, whether or not I still try to do something for her, Eiko's heart is grown so much that I can't change anything now. I can only pray that her grown heart will be "healthy, full of love, and full of truth." I don't believe that a prayer can make a child's heart, yet everyone has the heart to pray for the child. I, too, continue my prayer every day. Eiko has grown up to such a point.

I have strongly felt the difficulty of preparing an ever better environment for the child while maintaining the family's livelihood. What I have been able to do, with neither economic ability nor a strong will, is not much more than I have written in this record.

If this record brings those who are raising or will be raising small children to the realization that children can grow to any height depending upon how they are raised, I will be most happy.



Reminiscing on Thirty Years

Part II

(continued from Summer 1981)

Hiroko Masaoka



(Taught in the U. S. and Canada; former member of Rotterdam and Berlin Symphony orchestras; presently teaching in Matsumoto and Tokyo)

By 1952, the movement had taken root. The first graduation ceremony was held at the Kanda Public Hall on October, 25, with 196 graduating students present. The required graduation piece was, I think, Mozart's concerto No. 5. I was among the graduates. (According to a recital program, Mozart's No. 5 was Book 9, Book 10 being Vitali's Chaconne.)

In commemoration of graduation, the Suzuki class students gave their first solo recitals one by one. We took turns on Saturdays on the second floor of the Music School, making a program from the pieces we had played before. I played Mozart's No. 5, Eccles Sonata, Bach a minor, and smaller pieces.

After graduating from the Post-Advanced Level, students had the opportunity to show the results of their study in turn at the biannual spring and fall Music School recitals. The programs carried the students' names and the books they played, which helps me recall who played what piece. I played Vitali's Chaconne and Mozart's No. 4 in 1953, all the movements of Mendelssohn in 1954, Bruch's concerto in 1955, and Beethoven's first and third movements in 1955. There were

then about twenty students past the Post-Advanced program. From about the time I finished the Post-Advanced Level, I was often given a chance to perform the Rondo. Whether at summer school, visiting a chapter somewhere, or when there was a guest at the Suzukis', Mr. Suzuki said, "Hiroko-chan, play the Rondo." This lasted nearly ten years until I left for the States. I played other pieces, too, but always along with the Rondo. Probably my bowing in the Rondo was very poor. However, while playing it solo for many years and many hundred times, the piece changed into one of my favorites. Other people thought "Hiroko, i. e., the Rondo," and I, too, could play it with ease. How patiently Mr. Suzuki had me continue to play until I found a favorite piece, until I gained confidence. Thanks to that, when, auditioning for the Berlin Radio Orchestra, I played the Rondo along with Chausson's *La Poème*; I could safely perform without getting too nervous.



Since I was unfocused and slow in response in everything, I must have been a handful in comparison with such quick minded and studious violin mates as Yōko Ōike, Tomiko Shida and Kikichirō Mamine.

"Slow motioned Hiroko-chan" was a sort of slogan. Even so, Mr. Suzuki was so impartial as to let me play in a group or solo each time an occasion arose. That gave me confidence, and spurred me when I tended to neglect practice at home with my mother being out at work.

I gave a fund-raising solo recital for the city-run nursing home in 1955 at the Physics Department auditorium, Shinshū University. I was able to use the profit to purchase new

yukata (unlined summer kimono) and what not for elderly people in the nursing home and to invite them to a mountain spa for one day. I wrote in a school composition that the elderly people at the spa sang, pleased, as Mr. Suzuki played folk songs and lullabies. I was also invited to other chapters inside and outside Nagano Prefecture and was given many chances to play solos.

When Instructor Matsui moved to Tokyo in 1959, he left me to teach a few advanced students. In 1960 a dozen beginners entered the class, so I learned many things from such senior members of the violin school as teachers Kataoka, Shinozaki and Maruyama. But then, I could hear a teacher giving instructions in the next room clearly as though through a pipe. . . . Often, a joint concert was held with a few students selected from each class. The monthly tuition I received for the first time was 400 yen (approximately \$1) per elementary student (up to Book 4) and 1,000 yen per post-advanced graduate.

I also recall the founding of the alma mater in 1959 in a room of Hongo Elementary School in the middle of the summer school. At that time there already were 230 graduates who had finished the highest level in seven different years. Thinking it sad that they scatter away, Mihoko Yamaguchi, Mitsuko Ariga and I worked as a preparatory committee, and with Hideya Taida as president, started the association dividing the country into three separate regions. Committee members of each region held meetings; we also printed a bulletin through 1951 (five issues). To my regret, it flickered out after that.

In 1952, I went to the States to study and assist with talent education under the direction of John Kendall, chairman of the Music Department at Muskingam University in Ohio. I left on a JAL propeller plane in late November, nearly toppling head over heels with the luggage close to the limit and wearing two coats (to

save money on shipping). As I was stuffed like a snowball, how hot it was when, unable to land in San Francisco due to fog, the plane stopped overnight at Hawaii. This was the time when people in Matsumoto were working furiously toward building the Hall.

The following year I moved to Oberlin College, and was able to meet Mr. Suzuki there when he toured the country with the first overseas tour group. The group included my Matsumoto students, Ryūgo Hayano and Isako Fukazawa. I was deeply impressed seeing them play with Oberlin children in a group performance. Mr. Suzuki's lecture in Philadelphia received an enthusiastic response. The tour children's performances also had beautiful reverberations.



Leaving teaching for a while after that, I played in orchestras in Europe. I took it lightly thinking "I want to try everything," but working in a professional orchestra wasn't easy, since I neither read music well

nor had any experience. The job required long hours of hard work, and there were few women except harpists since orchestral playing was so demanding physically. Moreover, I was the youngest. Fortunately, Mr. Kōji Toyoda was the concert master of the Berlin Radio Orchestra. Colleagues emphasized harmony among themselves over skill. So somehow I managed to carry out my responsibilities. The Japanese players were all first class in skills, but, partly due to language difficulty, some failed in personality. Since I was young, I worked hard, feeling as if I represented Japan.

It's already been nine years since I returned in 1971, somehow with an impression that

I had learned many things. Perhaps the "unfocused Hiroko" of the old days did not change after all, however. I have not been able to effectively use what I learned in foreign countries in teaching, yet already my first Twinkle students after my return are graduating from the highest level.

What is on my mind recently, although senior teachers must have thought about it and solved it long ago, is that some students want to go into music while others wish to enjoy it as a hobby.

Up to now, neither in the States nor in Europe have I even once thought about the fact that I was educated by talent education rather than in regular music school. I have studied with music school graduates from Japan and mingled with foreign professional musicians without being conscious of this.

However, recently some parents have approached me saying, "I would like my child to go to music school somehow, so he must take lessons from Prof. X." In many cases, they know nothing about Prof. X except his titles, and I worry about possible negative influences on the child. On such occasions, I sometimes wonder whether it might be good to ask Y who was a colleague in a foreign country to teach the student. However, I think that the most natural way that leaves what is good untouched is to directly audition or enter society from talent education, as Mr. Toyoda and Miss Shida auditioned for the Conservatory in Paris. I think the shortest way might be to produce such musicians as would win prizes in the Queen Elizabeth Competition direct from the Talent Education Music School, but I wonder if this violates the principle of the Suzuki method. Well, I don't seem to have reached enlightenment yet.

For those children who wish to continue playing the violin as a hobby, I would like to

provide an arena where, even after they grow up, they and their children can enjoy group and ensemble playing. Since some senior teachers have already succeeded in doing this, I hope to achieve this at any cost.

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I have written a long memoire from a very personal point of view. I am submitting it though I think this can't arouse interest in others. I would be happy if those who read it would advise me.



"Man is a child of the environment."

"Sound breathes life--
Without form it lives."

"Strings are mindless
They only sing forth the heart
Of those who ring them out."

--words of Shin'ichi Suzuki



P.S.

