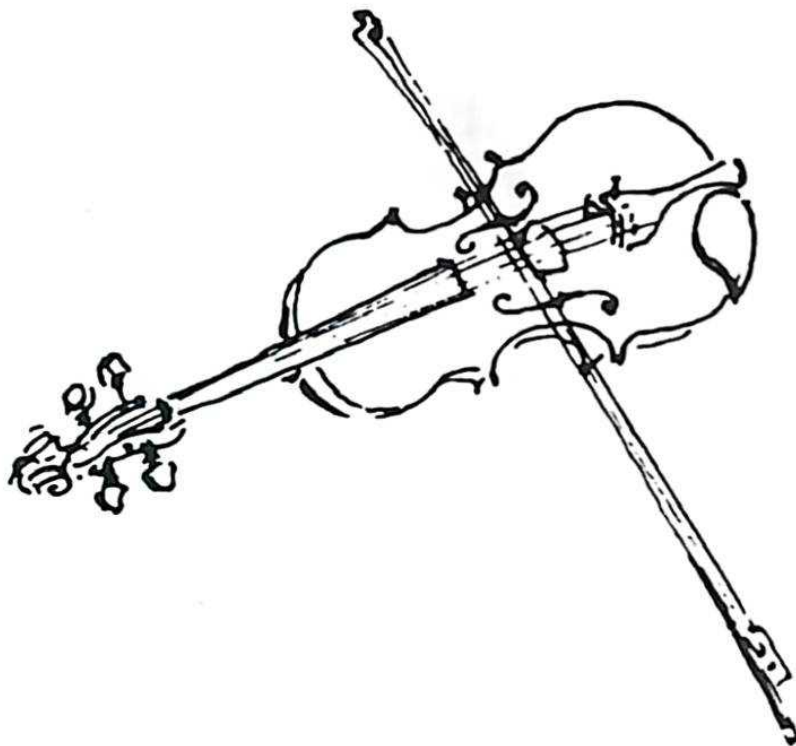


# TALENT EDUCATION JOURNAL



No. 22  
SUMMER  
1985

Cover by Kiyokazu Andoh



Editors Masayoshi and Eiko Kataoka  
236 Spring Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63119

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Translation by Kyoko Selden

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

Masayoshi Kataoka

Dr. Shin'ichi Suzuki explains two important conditions in musical education in his article, "This Is How to Foster Every Child as a Fine Student." The first is parents' responsibility for home practice, particularly insuring that children listen to the tape. The second is teachers' responsibility to instruct in beautiful tone and fine musical expression.

The year 1984 was the twentieth anniversary of the Ten Children's Tour. A highlight of the tour was a concert at Carnegie Hall on October 13th, sponsored by the Hall. Dr. Masaaki Honda reports on the tour in "Introducing Talent Education to the World."

Kiyoshi Kato, advisor of Talent Education, provides a moving account of his experience with Dr. Suzuki in the early period of the talent education movement.

Dr. Suzuki's Lecture on Music Instruction this time introduces his new idea concerning improvement of violin students' tonality. He advises instructors to check each student's musical ability at the end of each book.

In this issue we complete the English translation of Dr. Suzuki's book, *Talent Education for Young Children*. We would like to express our appreciation to Kyoko Selden for her contributions to the journal. "Education in Yoji Gakuen" contains two articles by teachers about teaching calligraphy and English to young children.

The second installment of "A Record of Home Lessons" by Chihoko Takezawa describes her daughter's daily home practice during her Twinkle stage. This and Kiyoshi Kato's article will be continued in the next issue of *TEJ*.



## THIS IS HOW TO FOSTER EVERY CHILD AS A FINE STUDENT

### —Two Conditions—

Shin'ichi Suzuki

Every child without fail will grow with fine musical ability under the conditions described below. I would like you to carefully read and practice this, for I am spelling out the method here in clear words from my fifty years of experience. Please trust and follow me.

Every child is a truly wonderful existence; certainly everything depends upon how he is raised. It is enough to recall how children learn their mother tongues. I have taken up my pen with a heartfelt wish that you would carry out the method for your children.

The two conditions for the growth of outstanding musical ability are, first, home upbringing by the use of taped music, and, second, the teacher's instruction in fine and proper tone.

Having joined talent education in the hope of fostering superior ability in your children through music, you are paying tuition to your teacher for the education. Since I want you to foster every child beautifully, I almost wish to be the one to pay you the monthly tuition for home education. Please understand that there are two places for child education: the teacher's classroom and the home class. And at home you are the teacher.

Moreover, the highest responsibility for every aspect of education rests with the parent. What if the parent with this great responsibility is so relaxed as to think that education is taken care of because tuition is being paid to the teacher? The child of such irresponsible parents can no way develop.

"Where love is deep, much will be accomplished. Don't doze off," I joke. In fact now is the important time for raising your child. It'll be too late when your child is grown. Please do your best.

Let's get on to the main topic.

## Two Conditions of Education

(1) Home education for which you are responsible. This is education toward acquiring outstanding ability and outstanding musical sensitivity through having the child repeatedly practice every day with the tape or record. (This is home education; it is the Suzuki method.)

(2) Education for which the teacher is responsible. Here I refer to instruction in beautiful tone and guidance which fosters fine musical expression. (The quality of tone is the teacher's responsibility.)

These two aspects can be compared to the right and left legs on which we walk. If the left leg is no good, we cannot walk; if the right leg is poor, we can only walk poorly — how much less likely that we would be able to run. The situation of music education in today's world is that so many students grow with similarly handicapped musical ability.

Let me ask you never to make your child a musical cripple. It is sad that many parents, after making them musically disabled, blame it on the children: "My child somehow seems no good." I hope you understand my struggle which makes me want to pay tuition to parents.

Neither scold nor get in the way at home lesson but skillfully motivate the child, have him repeatedly play the earlier pieces in order with the tape, encourage him by saying "you're getting better step by step" — this is the first thing in education. If you have your child repeatedly practice the earlier pieces every day, ability and sensitivity grow before you know it so that it becomes easier and faster for him to learn a new piece. This builds speed for advancing. If you only have him practice the assigned piece, he simply struggles to learn what he cannot yet play; hence ability does not grow and it takes time. Many regard only the assigned piece as practice, but if you have your child enjoy playing the earlier pieces which he can play again and again with the tape, ability is acquired rapidly and he soon can learn new pieces smoothly and easily.

I call this "paradise training" which helps children grow happily and quickly. When you consider the assigned piece the only practice and have your child work on it exclusively, ability develops slowly with the result that the child loses interest. Please avoid the error of education which limits practice to the assigned piece. Let's call this assigned-piece-only approach "purgatory education." Children gradually stop practicing.

While the child is repeatedly playing pieces he can play with the tape, musical sensitivity, which is the most important, gradually grows. This indeed is the strong point of the Suzuki method, and is the crucial approach to helping him acquire outstanding musical sensitivity. If he hears his parents speak it every day and if he himself speaks it every day, every child grows with proper Osaka or Tokyo dialect. This principle also applies to music. This is the wonderful ability development we have been talking about.

The responsibility for developing children's superior musical sensitivity lies with parents. Let me ask you to help them grow beautifully. Depending on the way you raise them, all children grow beautifully.

In the past, it was believed that only children with natural musical gifts could succeed. The degree of success in everything, it was thought, depended upon birth.

What I discovered some fifty years ago was that all ability was not inborn. The baby, born as a tabula rasa, develops the linkage of brain cells through adapting to daily outside stimulation, and acquires ability by physiological and cerebral conditions. This view is now gradually gaining acceptance.

"Proper recognition of human beings and their ability" — this important question was freshly raised as a revolutionary approach. Try to thoroughly understand that "man is a child of the environment, no talent is inborn"; discover your children's wonderful natures, and be sure to foster them as fine individuals.

### **Education in Beautiful Tone Is the Teacher's Responsibility**

Fostering in students the most beautiful tone and ability to express it is the instructor's responsibility. Therefore, we hold seminars to study playing technique and instructional approaches or teaching method for helping children to grow better. We are making efforts to make our own tone more beautiful and more refined.

If the teacher masters finer tone and more beautiful expression, the student's tone also improves spontaneously. In training in tone, important teaching problems include correct and natural posture, correct bow hold and maneuvering, correct arm motion, and so forth.

In piano instruction, too, teachers constantly work toward tone: what kind of tone should be produced, how to express tone, and how to instruct in tonalization for tone refinement.



In piano, as in violin and cello, repeated home practice of earlier pieces with the tape performance constitutes the Suzuki method. Beautifully foster musical sensitivity and accumulate ability — I would like you to thoroughly and unfailingly carry this out.

Due to traditional commonsense, many fail to practice this in piano; however, let me sincerely ask members of the Suzuki method to carry out the most important home education for creating outstanding musical sensitivity and for developing ability. If the tape is not in tune with your home piano, ask your teacher to prepare a tape tuned to the pitch of your piano.

As for teachers, I would like you, as in violin, to always have the student play the piece with the tape in class when he is finishing it at lesson. All students grow while acquiring superior musical sensitivity before they know it. As in violin, instruction in tonalization is the responsibility of the teacher. Piano teachers' seminars on tone and technique are already held, but let's further advance our study seeking an ever better teaching method so that every child will play with more beautiful and refined tone.

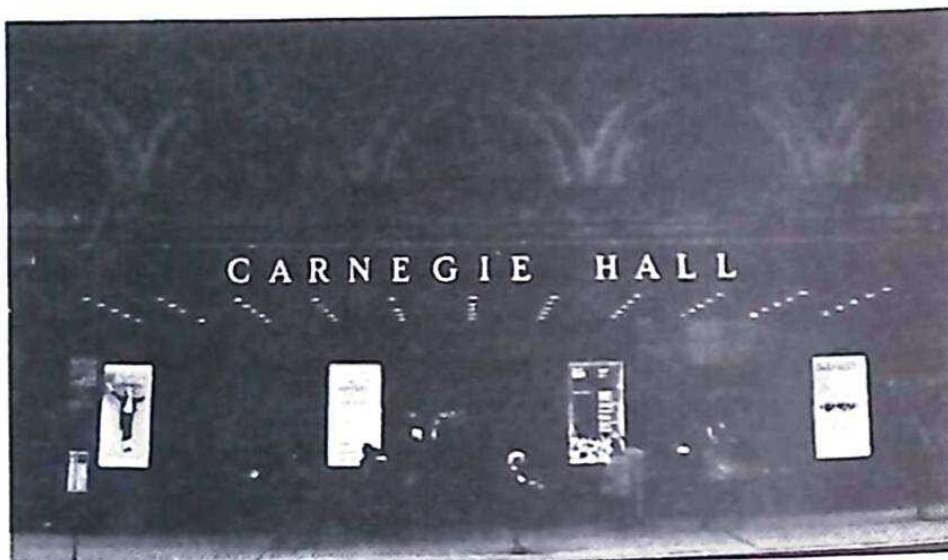
Let me again sincerely ask: practice without fail this two-sided approach of home teaching and class instruction so that every child will grow as a student with outstanding ability and superior musical sensitivity. Every child grows; everything depends upon how we raise them. It is as in the mother tongues throughout the world. Please do your best.

*Talent Education*, no. 70



## INTRODUCING TALENT EDUCATION TO THE WORLD

—The Twentieth American Tour—



The entrance to Carnegie Hall

Masaaki Honda  
Tour Leader

Our first tour was in March, 1964, Mr. Suzuki among us accompanying the ten children. This year marked the twentieth anniversary. Counting the total number of overseas tours, however, we have toured twenty-two times, including the two separate European visits.

This year we travelled one month, starting in Merced, California, and ending in Los Angeles.

### **Merced, California**

After two and a half hours on a Greyhound charter bus from the San Francisco airport, we arrived at Merced, a small city of 40,000 or 50,000 in central California. It is a quiet, clean city with no particular industry besides agriculture.

On the day after our arrival, we had a rehearsal at a church. The rickety piano was barely usable. This is an often encountered phenomenon in the States, difficult to comprehend in a country with such deep understanding of music.

The children's concert took place in the Merced University gym. Although the acoustics were not perfect, the concert went well, all tickets having been sold out several days ahead. When the program ended, the audience gave a standing ovation to the Suzuki children they heard for the first time. A reception was given at a big house of a host family. Unfortunately, however, we had to excuse ourselves early due to fatigue from the trip, and went to bed quickly.

On the hills from Merced to San Francisco, we were impressed by the innumerable wind mills, which we learned were for generating electricity. Somehow I felt merry associating them with Don Quixote.



## Tulsa and Oklahoma City

The first concert in Oklahoma was in Tulsa. Due to the rush during the brief transfer time at Denver, a child left a purse at the gate. Although we contacted the airport, unfortunately it was never retrieved. I am afraid that a thirty minute transfer is too difficult. This was the second tour performance in Tulsa. Rich as an oil producing city, its cultural center hall was really great.

On the morning of the concert, the Hasegawa team and I appeared in a television show while the other children had a pleasant time riding ponies in the meadow.

The tour also visited Oklahoma City for the second time. Last time we were invited by the Symphony Orchestra where Kenji Kobayashi is the concert master. This time our host was the university.

Talent education is proceeding here under the leadership of Professor Lacy McLarry, chairman of the music department, and is achieving a high performing level in the estimation of Mr. Hirose. The concert at the university auditorium was a full house. After the program, cellist Frederick Welme, who had played with Heifetz, came backstage and praised the children's performances. That night Emiko Yashiro ran a slight fever, but, to our relief, it went down the following day and she recovered her energy.

The local television station recorded the practice scene at a host family. They graciously consented when we asked them to let us have a copy since we plan to prepare a twentieth anniversary video tape.

### Ottawa, Kansas

The 350 miles between Oklahoma City and Ottawa was six hours by bus. We got off the highway at Wichita to buy food at a supermarket, and had lunch on the bus. Since it is more economical and time saving than going to a restaurant, and at the same time easier to control the nutrition, we make it a rule to use this method when we ride buses.



At the chapel, University of Kansas in Ottawa; second from left is Prof. Lewis; extreme right is the author.

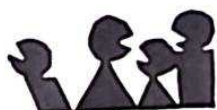
At Ottawa, Professor Alice Joy Lewis has been doing beautiful teaching for many years, often holding workshops to which she invites guest instructors from different areas. Again this time, instructors from various localities came coinciding with our concert. We saw them teaching enthusiastically from early in the morning. Professor William Starr was among them, and he vividly reminisced his Japanese experiences at the reception.

Having forgotten to bring her tour dress to the concert, for the first unison piece Saeko wore Reina's, which was, charmingly, almost a long dress. Since her host was kind enough to go home to bring it, after that all were able to proceed in their own outfits, and the concert ended in a standing ovation.

### **Murfreesboro, Tennessee**

We had planned to have the leisure of one hour to transfer at St. Louis on the way to Nashville, Tennessee. Mr. and Mrs. Masayoshi Kataoka were waiting for us, having prepared a Japanese box lunch for each of the tour members. Due to the delay of our plane, we just managed to get the lunch and ate it on board. We were truly grateful to them for their warm thoughts.

Our host in Murfreesboro was the Japan Cultural Center of Middle Tennessee State College. The concert at the College hall was sold out a week earlier. We heard that the Nissan auto factory nearby had contributed a sum to the concert. Mr. Mabley, whom we had met on the bus from the Yokohama City Terminal to Narita Airport, happened to be the manager of this factory, and attended the concert with his wife. How small the world is, indeed.



## Columbus, Ohio

This being the third concert in Columbus, we were met at the airport by many people we already knew. We were hosted by the Capital University, where Professor Virginia J. Christopherson, head of the music department, leads talent education. I always envy the fact that Suzuki classes in the States are often held at colleges and universities, with good relationships with citizens. I wait for a college somewhere in Japan to take it up, but, sadly, so far none have taken the initiative.

After the performance, there was a reception in the hall. The head of the department was the first to pass the punch, a sight rarely seen in Japan.

When we went to the counter at the Columbus airport to check in for departure to New York via US Air, we were told that we sixteen were not booked in. This was ridiculous; our flight had been scheduled half a year earlier, we insisted, but they replied that we were not listed in the computer. After hard negotiations, we were finally able to board the next flight. Our arrival in New York, consequently, was much delayed, upsetting our plans.

## New York

On our tour last year, we talked with Kenji Mochizuki about a possible twentieth anniversary performance in New York. This led the Soffer office to negotiate with Carnegie Hall, and the result was the concert hosted by the Hall, the second such concert by a Japanese group, following the first by the Tokyo Quartet.

On the day of the concert we were interviewed by ABC and NBC stations as well as "Japan Today" and some newspapers, which made us freshly realize the Hall's prestige. Although we were concerned about the turn out, the house was eighty percent full. The event was a success, including the performances.



Concert at Carnegie Hall

The city was crowded, however, and prices were high. When we moved to Wilson, North Carolina the next day, I felt relieved. Nor did the children speak most fondly of New York.

### **Wilson, North Carolina**

There is no Suzuki in Wilson. However, we had a successful workshop with many participants from Greenville, Chapel Hill, and even from Virginia. We were hosted by the city's Cultural Council. Since the concert occurred the day before Mr. Suzuki's birthday, the children played "Happy Birthday" on stage as the audience sang along.

We were surprised by the strange encounter when we discovered that Mrs. Graine who hosted the Hasegawa group was the sister-in-law of the American Naval Commander at Atsugi, an acquaintance whom I had invited to the National Concert this year.

### **Birmingham, Alabama**

This was our first visit to Alabama, where talent education seemed quite successful. Local TV recorded our arrival, workshop, scenes at host families, and performances. Again we arranged to get a copy.

The concert took place at Samford University's big hall with an audience of about a thousand. The main instructor here was a former Air Force Colonel, Mr. Wade. I found the contrast between air force colonel and talent education interesting. We learned that, while in the service, he had studied with Toshiya Eto.

### **Fort Worth, Texas**

On arrival at Dallas Airport, I was pleasantly surprised to see Haruo Masuzawa in the middle of the welcoming group. Now a Dallas resident, he is assisting Dr. Evelyn Herman.

The successful concert here had a large and enthusiastic audience, which rose in ovation even for solo performances.

### **Little Rock, Arkansas**

Returning to Arkansas after some years, I was pleased to see many people including those from Memphis. We had a busy day, since the concert took place the day of our arrival.

### **Oxford, Mississippi**

Oxford is a small city where the University of Mississippi is located, with nothing striking besides the house of Nobel Prize author Faulkner.

Although talent education has not been founded, Professor Sagan, head of the music department of the University, told us that he hoped to take this occasion to start a Suzuki program.

Staying at a hotel for the first time after New



York, we were able to enjoy our leisure.

### Amarillo, Texas

Returning to Texas, we were welcomed by a performance of many Suzuki children at the airport. Officers of the Chamber of Commerce also met us in their uniform blazers and put a cowboy bandana and a sheriff's badge on each of us. Moreover, we received the key of the city. The warm atmosphere made us happy.

On the night of arrival, a reception was held at the home of Mr. Marsh. His spacious ranch had camels, llamas, yaks, and long horns. The children greatly enjoyed feeding them, but out of too great excitement, one dropped a violin on the floor, cracking it. Fortunately the performance went well on an instrument borrowed from the host family. Better than a crack in an arm bone, we said to one another.

### Claremont, California

This was our twelfth performance in the Los Angeles area, the most frequented area in the States thanks to the Mills' efforts.



In front of the auditorium, Claremont.

The day after arrival, we were in a rush with the rehearsal, workshop and concert schedules, but at the final concert everyone performed beautifully, having forgotten their fatigue from a long journey. The moment the program was over, the capacity audience stood up with thunderous applause.

That night there was a Halloween party. In costumes thoughtfully prepared for them, the children had a lovely evening to conclude the tour.

## Epilogue

As always, I felt my duty was finished at last when I handed the children over to their parents safe and sound at the Narita Airport.

When we accompanied Mr. Suzuki who took the first ten children to the States, who would have imagined today's development? While leading the tour for twenty years, I have also acted as a doctor, interpreter, flight supervisor, porter, etc., etc. Over the years, there were times when my health was poor, and when I had to close my practice for an extended period of time. For twenty years, I was never home for a daughter's birthday in October, making my absence felt all the more by the family.

On the other hand, through assisting and introducing talent education to people of the world, I have been able to make friends and acquaintances everywhere, and gained rare experiences. I customarily talk ten minutes to convey the meaning of talent education after the intermission at the beginning of the second portion of the concert. Starting with the Suzuki theory that every child grows according to the environment, I refer to the need for self discovery and development. Development, I proceed to say, requires a method. The Suzuki method, which is one answer, aims at human perfection. I further emphasize the duty shared by individuals who have developed ability through the method, of letting it be known to society. Last, quoting from Shakespeare's verse, I conclude that

talent education is like merciful rain, never a forced type of education; that those who give and receive it alike partake in its blessings.

Fortunately, hearing that my speech was clear and well delivered, I am pleased to have carried out my responsibility, however unsatisfactorily.

Recalling how, at the time of the first tour, we had hoped a college or so might take it up, I marvel at its spread today.

Mr. Suzuki's philosophy, instruction, and personality constitute the center of this movement. Let me conclude by wishing him good health in the future as in the past.

*Talent Education*, no. 70

\* \* \* \* \*

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INTERNATIONAL SUZUKI ASSOCIATION  
(ISA)

— The Wisconsin Resolution —

I would like the following to be known to everyone related to the Suzuki method: by this writing, I commit to the International Suzuki Association the right and duty to lead and supervise the continuation, development, and spread of the worldwide Suzuki movement in the future.

Since the International Suzuki Association is the only international representative organization recognized by me, let me ask every national organization and every individual in countries which have not yet organized to act together under the leadership of the Association. Its purpose is to spread true understanding of the Suzuki philosophy in child education, to foster human beings nobly through music, and to advance the Suzuki method.

With several hundred thousand members throughout the world, I am confident that the International Suzuki Association will occupy a big place in developing an innovative educational method not merely in music but in all educational areas of a worldwide scale.

Shin'ichi Suzuki

### Membership Information

The Board of Directors of the International Suzuki Association has established the following categories of contributing memberships.\*

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Evelyn Herman

Treasurer

International Suzuki Association

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Dallas, Texas 75230

U.S.A.

## THESE STEPS TOWARD TOMORROW

### Historical Narrative (1)



Mr. Suzuki and author

Kiyoshi Kato  
Advisor

### Dialogues with Mr. Suzuki

**Kato:** It's good to see you after a long time and find you as healthy as ever. I understand you still have much to do; we need you to stay healthy forever.

**Suzuki:** As you know, since our task in education is a grand enterprise for humanity's future, we can't even rest one day. We must continue this movement until countries throughout the world adopt as a national program our educational principle that every child grows; I am making efforts with this understanding.

**Kato:** There is power in your posture forever facing forward and always challenging something. The energy you radiate gives us great courage. However, since you keep striding ahead with that tremendous energy, it is a job following you. I imagine that people have a hard time trying to catch up with your big steps.

**Suzuki:** Since a while ago I have decided to postpone my retirement age to about 110; even so I wish to have more time in order to realize my dreams. Maybe this makes me walk fast before I know it. [Laughter.]

**Kato:** So, I have decided to walk a little slowly instead, with a desire to spotlight your footsteps, or, narrate the history of talent education from the time of its inception.

**Suzuki:** It appears I had better trust it all to you, Mr. Kato, since I tend to face only forward as you said. [Laughter.] I wish you good luck.

**Kato:** Your research is a really big task. You are concerned with how to realize an ideal society. Moreover, your principle not only applies to art but spreads to the areas of education, psychology, philosophy, and thought. I can understand that you feel you don't have enough no matter how much time you may have. You cannot afford to look back. Thoughtful people around the world have just begun to recognize your work; all the more so, you cannot pause.

**Suzuki:** Right. There are increasing numbers of people in the States and Europe who are sympathetic with the Suzuki method, yet there are still problems in our own country. Our work lies ahead.

**Kato:** I look forward to the day when the whole world resonates with your idea. It has been over thirty years since the movement started. I am moved to think that the energy for education which exploded out of the postwar ruins is continuing to increase heat, while radiating light. It feels like just yesterday that I shook hands with you with a mutual pledge. When the war ended, you said in an old inn room in Kiso Valley, Shinshu: "From now on it is the era of children who will shoulder the next stage of history. To foster innocent children with ever higher human sensitivity is our duty, our task." I have not forgotten my emotion then.

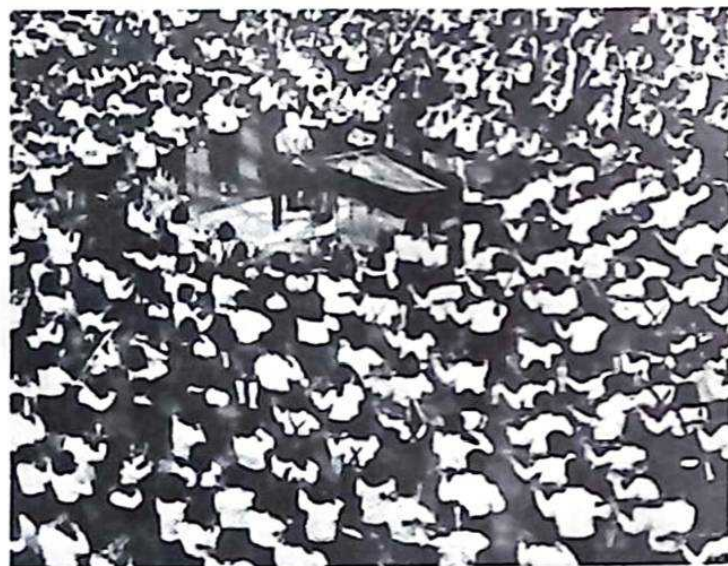
**Suzuki:** By defeat in the war, the principles people throughout Japan had believed in suddenly fell apart. We all felt lost. All the more so, I thought I had to plant the seed of new educational thought. In order for

that, I had to focus on the coming era. This seemed the only way. While studying in Germany, it occurred to me that children all over the world had the ability to speak their mother tongues fluently. This ability, I thought, should not be left alone; the basis of human growth was education. It seems that the postwar period provided the best chance for us to let people know this.

**Kato:** About that educational principle, I talked with you many days. Do you remember? You said that education was the essential task for Japan's future.

**Suzuki:** We advanced the first step of our movement then, you based in Tokyo and I in Matsumoto, where I moved from Kiso. Please go ahead and talk plenty about those days.

\* \* \*



From the thirtieth national concert.

March 27, 1985. This was the day when the Talent Education Institute's thirtieth national concert was held at the Budokan, Tokyo. 12,931 students graduated from various levels. The glare of stage lights, camera flashes from all corners of the hall, children's high-pitched voices — the excitement of the participants added to the atmosphere. In second tier center seats



reserved for distinguished guests, were seen visitors from foreign embassies and legations, the Crown Prince and Princess with their nephew, Prince Norihito of the Mikasa Family. Mr. Suzuki on the center floor appeared particularly animated. Soon the hall became hushed, and piece after piece was performed, now Bach, now Mozart. Every growing child, for every child grows, looked proud. With my eyes quietly closed, I stood in rising sound. Wonderful reality unfolded before us. When we began our movement 36 years ago, who would have foreseen what we experienced today?

### Living Destitute

It was one day in 1948 when we were starting the movement. Tokyo had not yet been reconstructed, and tragic traces of the March 1945 air raids remained everywhere. No matter where I looked, a landscape which could only be described as wasteland stretched endlessly. It was winter. Mr. Suzuki and I had just arrived at the foot of the bridge which is located under the hill of the present day Budokan. Approaching noon, the wind over the burnt field swirled snow-mingled black dirt upwards, whipping our exhausted bodies. It had easily been three hours since leaving my home in Den'en Chofu. We had gone out to Meguro, then walked to Gyoranzaka, to the First Bridge, to the Second Bridge, to the Third Bridge, to Kanda; then from Jinbo-cho, Kanda, finally to Kudanzaka-shita. This was an almost dismayingly long distance, physically spent as we were by the extreme food situation.

As everyone who lived through the war experienced, the rice ration was then 310 grams per person per day, and only ten percent refined dark rice at that. As for vegetables, it was something like two scallions every other day, the barest minimum for maintaining life. Even these we had to go and get after hearing a radio announcement; each day was totally uncertain. In affluent times like today, it is not easy to imagine that

situation. It may be said to have been a famishing purgatory on earth.

However, even in that marginal situation, our spirit, strangely, had a fresh radiance. On the day of the surrender, the old power disintegrated, and the cruel pressure on our learning, thought, and speech instantly evaporated. The air of the coming of freedom was a great joy. I still cannot forget how moved I was when we stood at the threshold of a completely new era, our slates clean again.



### Alleviating Hunger with Coffee

Before arriving at Kudanzaka-shita, Mr. Suzuki and I had stopped at a couple of coffee shops in order to alleviate hunger which assaulted us now and then. We drank coffee, walked, and, while walking, eagerly continued to discuss tomorrow's new education. Coffee then was so poor that it cannot be compared to what we have today, and most of it was handed down from the American army. In the worst cases, used coffee brewed for the second or third time was taken for granted. Still, it greatly helped for momentarily staving off hunger. Mr. Suzuki and I found a third coffee shop near the bridge, and decided to rest there again. Our legs were like sticks from the cold. "We have coffee," said the paper pasted on the store front. Entering through the old-looking door, we found several shabby chairs. In the center of the shop was a "Lumpen stove" [old-fashioned, cylindrical coal stove], in which just one log was burning. A smell of smoke and a faint warmth of the fire were in the shop. We ordered coffee again. This made a total of four cups each. At some coffee shops they served only one cup; others provided a refill.

Mr. Suzuki, whose stomach was not so healthy, seemed to be suffering somewhat from the effect of the coffee. From time to time he lightly pressed his stomach with his hand. In those days, there was little else to drink at a coffee shop; naturally such a thing as cake never appeared since there was none to order. Even so, in those days we found such warmth and comfort in a cup of coffee.



### The Day of Mr. Suzuki's Lecture

That day Mr. Suzuki was expected to lecture on new education at Shirayuri Girls' School at Kudanzaka-shita. I had already heard him at Kiso Valley; I had also read and reread his books, *Talent Education for Young Children and Its Method* (1946) and *Talent Education* (1948), until the pages were worn. So I had comprehended his educational principle in my own limited way. During the war, while teaching violin at Fujiwara Technical College (later the department of technology, Keio University), I lectured on musical esthetics. From a professional point of view, therefore, I had already been studying Mr. Suzuki's idea of education.

Mr. Suzuki's theory had a revolutionary novelty unknown to educational circles in the past, and it stirred the hearts of those who were seeking a path. Taking its origin in awe of human life, his theory complies with the logic of great nature. It precisely grasps child growth as a process, and expresses the law of the growth of every child in plain and familiar terms as "the mother tongue approach." Then, he asks, what determines superiority or inferiority of human beings? When children are left alone uneducated, adults call them inferior children. Where does this irresponsibility come from? Such thinking, Mr. Suzuki grieves, has long afflicted mankind, especially children. He then continues to explain growth as a matter of physiology of the brain or of psychology rather than of heredity.

This theory, however, is not easily understood by the majority of traditional thinkers. The quality of talent, they say, is already determined at birth. Just because a child is educated, the situation does not suddenly change. This has been so over many eras, and will be so in the future . . . . We cannot deny that such an idea existed somewhere at the bottom of educators' hearts. Mr. Suzuki's theory diametrically opposed this.



April 1949, at a lecture meeting at Sakae Elementary School, Nagoya

### **An Instant Substitute Lecturer**

While resting after our coffee, Mr. Suzuki suddenly appeared ill. Pressing his stomach again and again, he complained of pain. His face was pale, cold sweat breaking out. What was I to do? The promised hour approached second by second: he was to lecture at two o'clock that afternoon. The sudden situation frightened me so much that I felt simply lost.

At that point, Mr. Suzuki quietly ordered me to substitute for him. I was perplexed. However, I thought it was too bad to retrace our steps after coming all the way. It was Mr. Suzuki's firm principle to take every opportunity, however small, to promote his educational method. So I explained our situation to the shop owner,

and after taking Mr. Suzuki near the stove, I left for the lecture hall alone. I was trembling, not merely from the cold; the gravity of the matter made me shake. Shirayuri Girls' School was behind the Yasukuni Shrine. Shown in to the hall, I found that about sixty parents had already gathered there. When someone in charge announced, by way of introduction, that I had come as an emergency substitute for Mr. Suzuki, the audience stirred momentarily, and the air was spoiled. The substitute has come despite everything, they felt, however, so let's hear what he has to say. In this atmosphere I began.

I do not remember anything I said then; probably I made a desperate effort to speak while quoting this and that from Mr. Suzuki's books. Having been with him all the time, I had become able to serve as an instant substitute. When my talk was over, a few sympathizers came forward. This was to me both a delight and a surprise.

I returned quickly to the coffee shop to find that Mr. Suzuki's pain had grown worse. He could hardly walk, but with determination we exited, I supporting him. To our good fortune, a streetcar rumbled down the street toward us — a skeleton of a streetcar, stripped of its window glass. It was pure luck, as streetcars ran only two or three times a day in those days. Gently leaning Mr. Suzuki on the seat, I prayed that we would make it home somehow.

### **Wartime: Taking Students to the Kiso Valley**

One day when the war was gradually becoming severer, I received a visit from Kikuo Suzuki, Mr. Suzuki's younger brother, at a room in Fujiwara Technical College. Kikuo, a violinist himself, once the second violin of the famous Suzuki Quartet, was then president of the violin company in Kiso, Shinshu. His company was no longer able to produce violins with the war daily worsening. So he had decided to produce wooden airplane parts for the sake of the country. Since violins

were regarded as luxuries, he had no choice but to shift to war production. Thus, he had come to look for people who could draw blueprints necessary for the production of parts. In those days, under military order, we were not allowed to send students except to large factories designated by the forces. However, wherever they worked, they served the country all the same. I thought that we should not question the size of the factory at this moment. Promptly consulting other professors, we decided to cooperate with Kikuo.

Fujiwara Technical College had three departments: applied chemistry, taught by Tokyo University professors, electricity and mechanics, both taught by Hokkaido University professors. Having decided to send students, we had to rack our brains concerning the selection. Perhaps because Kiso was safe from air raids, there were 24 applicants for the quota of four. Some parents even came to my house to appeal directly. I was both impressed and annoyed by their parental concern. Since it was impossible to take all of them, as a result of a strict screening process, I finally chose four, and took them to the Kiso violin factory.

We were welcomed at the factory not only by Kikuo but by Shin'ichi Suzuki, the factory director, and his good advisor, Kenkoh Aoki, the famous music critic. From around the time we entered Kiso, big cities began to be exposed to daily violent attacks by B 29's, and soon all Tokyo would turn into a sea of furious fire. [To be continued.]

*Talent Education*, no. 70



## TESTING VIOLIN TONE AT THE END OF EACH BOOK

Lectures on Music Instruction, no. 43

Shin'ichi Suzuki

At every lesson the teacher instructs in the proper posture, proper bow hold and maneuver, precise intonation, beautiful tone, and beautiful vibrato, toward greater correctness and greater refinement. His aim is that every student will refine his tone gradually as he advances in the material from Book 2 to 3 to 4 to 5.

A new idea has occurred to me to introduce a system to test the tone of the student at the end of each book, whether Book 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, or 7.

Let me ask you teachers to practice this from now on as a new approach in the Suzuki method. We will also do this eventually in the cello school.

The details of the test will be determined according to the student level with the focus on the melody of the Chorus from Judas Maccabaeus, and handled by each teacher. I would like you to try this approach and discuss it together, since what you feel necessary can be added to this.

### **Exam Problems at the End of Books 2 and 3**

(A) Examination in correct intonation. The student is tested on intonation through two performances of Chorus, first starting with the third finger on the A string, then with the third finger on the D string.

(B) Correct posture and proper string shifting are tested through the two Choruses.

(C) Examination in the beauty of tone and sound volume (performance on the Kreisler highway).

D) The student plays the two Choruses holding the bow upside down at the tip, then again with the normal bow hold. This test compares the two different bow holds and checks whether the performances are the same in every way including volume.

I would like instructors to always work toward these four points at regular lessons. Tell your students that they will be tested at the end of book 2, and again at the end of Book 3; that they will advance to the next book if they pass the test. Individual exams at lesson will do.

### Exam Problems for Above Book 4 Classes

(A) volume, beauty, refinement on the G string.

Δ The ability to play with a horizontal bow, using the entire length of the bow.

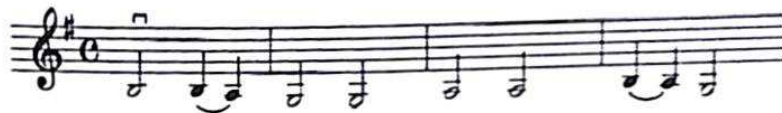
Δ Whether or not the right elbow is in a low, correct position when playing at the tip. The posture when playing whole bows using the arm; the position of the wrist and arm when playing at the bow tip.

Δ Bow hold and finger maneuvering for the Panda. Volume and tonal beauty.

Δ Playing whole bows on the Kreisler highway.

Δ Beauty of vibrato.

(Assigned piece — the entire piece on the G string with whole bows)



(Use this also as lesson material in class.)

(B) Volume and beauty of tone.

Δ Let the student play Chorus starting with 3 on D, 3 on A, then 3 on E. Instruct in beauty and volume of tone on each string; create the ability to play with beautiful and powerful tone on the Kreisler highway.



Δ Is the vibrato like the beautiful vibrato of a vocal master? Teach how to develop the ability to vibrate beautifully.

Δ Check how musically the student can play Chorus and with what dynamics.

Δ Teach Casals' tonalization and test the result.

Δ Instructional approach to bigger volume:

First use the open D. Fix the bow still and hit the string without sound by moving the arm up and down. Hit it many times strongly with the horse hair and the arm. With the wrist relaxed, the elbow should be directly under the hand.

By way of instruction, right after repeating the up and down arm movement while rapidly hitting the string, have the student play Chorus on D using whole bows. The volume becomes much louder. If this important instruction is repeated also at home, the volume changes greatly. (Do this on each string. The arm moves horizontally when hitting the E string. The A and D strings should also be hit in the direction the bow faces.) Use this also at group lessons; have your students perform Chorus again and again on the E, A, and D strings.

(C) Test the beauty of vibrato. Instruct students with a vocal master's fine vibrato in a record as a model, and test them by having them perform Chorus on each string.

(D) Test Correct posture.

Δ The position of the violin; the posture of both arms for violin playing.

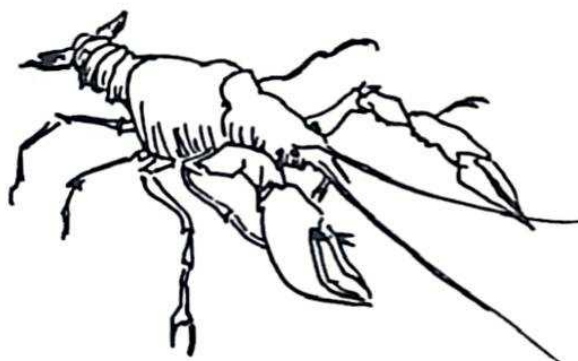
Δ The Kreisler highway and the correct bowing (whole bows) keeping the bow parallel to the bridge.

Δ The pliant wrist of the right hand which holds the bow (test whether it is always relaxed).

Δ Pay attention when the student plays at the frog: test whether he is playing with the right elbow held low in the same way whether on E, A, D, or G string. If the right elbow is high, it is because the student holds

the bow with the center of the thumb. Instruct so that he will hold it with the right corner of the thumb nail. He should play with the nail.

*Talent Education, no. 70*



*"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."*

*— Shin'ichi Suzuki*

## EDUCATION IN YOJI GAKUEN

### PART III

From Shin'ichi Suzuki, *Young Children's Talent Education*, continued from *TEJ*, no. 21.



### Calligraphy

Kimiko Akiyama

It has been seventeen years since starting to teach calligraphy as part of talent education at Yoji Gakuen on Mr. Suzuki's invitation. For the first seven or eight years I assisted my husband Kinjoh, but after that I have been teaching the class by myself.

I teach the bigger children's group all year, but with four year olds I start around the middle of the academic year in October. Earlier than that, they can neither hold the brush well nor easily follow the procedure of rubbing the charcoal stick against the inkstone to make ink before writing.

It is good to start calligraphy at this early age. Although children who start in the fifth or sixth grade are quick to understand and write cleverly, those who start early produce richer and more interesting calligraphy. Not too much difference may be observed when writing on regular size rice paper. But when I teach writing big letters on a long strip of paper, I observe a clear difference between ordinary children and those who started at preschool age. This, I think, is due to the growth of sensitivity in early starters.

Different instructors have different ideas and approaches to calligraphy. As for me, I hope to teach proper letters with traditional strokes at the risk of being called conservative.

Just throw brush strokes against the paper with absolute freedom whether or not the result looks like letters — this is interesting in its own way. I do feel tempted to try this approach, too, but I wonder if this is not something children should experiment with on their own after they have learned to write fine, correct letters.

Calligraphy, or the way of writing, is a Way. From the beginning, therefore, I teach correct letters and proper writing form.

Children who start at Yoji Gakuen and continue as my students are already copying directly from classical Chinese calligraphies by the time they are in middle school. I teach Yoji Gakuen children twice a week.

Although I feel humble about my instruction which does not change even once in ten years, I think it important, as Mr. Suzuki says, to repeatedly teach the same thing in order to foster ability.

Children can tire, however, from having to write the same letters again and again. At some point I try to change letters, or change the arrangement of letters so that the same shapes appear as often as possible without seeming to be the same material. When I change words though retaining the letters, children continue to write with interest.

I try not to be particular about niceties of brush execution or exact shapes. Since it is not so important to let them draw a single line endless times, I avoid pursuing it too far.

What is more important than anything else for young children is for them to enjoy writing.



Besides the hiragana (Japanese script), I introduce kanji (Chinese characters) limiting to those from the first grade language materials and easy ones from the second grade. In brush calligraphy, hiragana is more difficult than kanji.

It may be good, as a method of practicing writing with the right elbow raised sufficiently high, to let them trace. However, both my husband and I avoid allowing our students to trace. Here as at home, I write a model for each student to copy from, not to trace. The first time they use a new model, until they learn the shapes of letters I walk around to see what they write. Children at Yoji Gakuen are so quick of understanding that they hardly watch the model by the time they make a second clean copy, although they do have the model side by side with their paper. I think it is fine this way at first.



The only thing I am strict about is the elbow motion. Since it is poorest if the elbow does not move, I coach each child to sit with a proper posture and to move the arm, elbow held high.

I do not nag if the shapes of letters are somewhat different from those of the model. However, later when I correct them with red ink, I discuss it so that children can understand.

They write four letters on rice paper (slightly larger than  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 11$ ). Although two big letters might be ideal, children can become bored of writing only two. It is difficult to make a phrase unless we use at least four letters including one or two Chinese characters; besides, children will lose interest unless it makes sense as a statement. So I have them write two lines each

consisting of two letters. They make ten clean copies of the same phrase. Then as a final step, they reproduce them on a long strip of paper. Before writing, I ask them to estimate with their own eyes how to distribute the four or more letters they are going to write. When this is repeated, their eyes become competent. The preparation of an opus at the end of learning each set of letters, regardless of its quality, provides great incentive for children.

Since Yoji Gakuen children's memory is well trained, they learn to write quickly, and, in the final months before graduation they prove mature enough to really enjoy calligraphy. Through calligraphy, children learn to be able to settle down. I have also observed this with my students at home: even children who are naughtiest at first begin to change gradually.



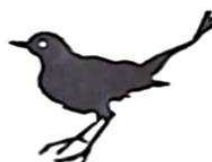
Kitten's pose  
as it gently presses  
a fallen leaf.

For children graduating in March, I start haiku in September as soon as the second term begins. Each child writes one haiku in two lines or so on long strips of paper. It involves nothing new beyond arranging letters into a haiku, but their eyes shine as they work with the joy of writing a longer statement.

Seeing the graduation calligraphy pieces, some parents wonder: "Did my child really write that? Did the teacher perhaps hold the brush over my child's hand to help him write?" They do not believe that what is before their eyes is young children's ability accumulated over two years.

After two years, the same children who at the beginning only drew circles with black ink on white paper, circles which looked flat or triangular, are ready to demonstrate calligraphy before an audience at graduation. They proceed with correct forms of calligraphy and pick up the brush properly. With ample ink in the special size brush for large calligraphy, almost too big for their little hands to hold, they write in one breath, showing their confident profiles to parents and guests. I find it so gratifying to see them demonstrate their calligrapher's art with flushed cheeks and shining eyes that I instantly forget all my previous painstaking efforts. They, too, are pleased when applauded by the audience — a precious sight to see.

As Mr. Suzuki says, all children are more capable than adults think. If I were more competent and had more time, I know they would be able to write even better.



## English

Toshihiko Nakagaki

Starting English conversation in early childhood is best for the reason of pronunciation among others.

Speaking from from my experience of teaching high school and middle school students, I know that the older the student the more difficult it is to master pronunciation.

Children can parrot unadulterated foreign pronunciation; another thing is that they never tire of repeating the same thing again and again. Moreover, if it is skillfully incorporated into games, it is easy to let them concentrate due to their special childlike nature, i.e., becoming carried away in games.

Children do not perceive English as a language of a totally different system from Japanese. In other words, they do not think that there is an English expression for each Japanese word; they do not learn the English "cat" as something that corresponds to the Japanese "neko." If an object a child sees happens to be a neko, he immediately pronounces the word "cat." He does not go through the Japanese word "neko" because for him the object and the word "cat" are directly related. Thus, the moment he sees something, an English word instantly occurs to him. The reverse of this is that an object or idea occurs to the mind on hearing an English expression. This habit is also easy to train in childhood.

Next, "lubricating the tongue" seems definitely best in childhood. Compare children and adults: it is nearly impossible to speak fluently when started after growing up. When they comprehend mentally, adults think they have it and do not bother to go any further, but children are never that way.

In learning to read English, it is sufficient to follow written words with the eyes and comprehend them in the head. However, when it comes to spoken English which requires instantaneous comprehension, the tongue, rather than the head, needs to learn it. This is quite difficult for adults. Children, however, can learn to lubricate their tongue through repetition since, as I mentioned above, they never tire no matter how many times the same thing is repeated. It resembles haiku memorization practiced by Principal Yano. On hearing the first few syllables of a haiku, children can fluently recite the rest. In the same way, in our English class, if I suggest a situation, there is a spontaneous response. For example, told to ask my name, they immediately say in English, "What is your name?"

This is possible when tongue-lubricating exercise is repeated again and again. Adults dislike such practice, misled by the illusion that if they can mentally understand, they have more or less learned to talk.

In this connection, there is the problem of hearing. I wonder if sharpness of ear is not children's privilege.



It is good to train the ear and form the habit of discerning sound by the ear. If a child listens to music from early childhood or learns proper pronunciation directly from a native speaker, with all the precise differences among sounds, he can distinguish what adults cannot. When we learn English as I did after growing up, we cannot distinguish between "the" and "s" unless we listen carefully. Although we can pronounce "b" and "v" with distinction, our ear may not easily hear the difference in a foreigner's speech. This is another thing that is possible if sufficient aural training is given in childhood.

At Yoji Gakuen English conversation class meets once a week in two sections, the red group of younger children and the blue group of older children. Five year olds who enter for just one year of schooling are also put in the blue group to study with those who have already taken one year of English. They follow the class without a problem.

The red group children are somewhat limited not merely because of the lack of familiarity with English but because of a more basic problem: their understanding and everyday experiences are limited. In the first place, the scope of their Japanese experiences is very small. I think in my own amateurish way that it is questionable to try to override those limitations.

Suppose they can count up to ten or so, I also keep within that scope in English. I stir their interest by talking about how many people there are in this room or how many friends they have, which leads to the question: then in English how do you count? I avoid explaining the material verbally and try to let them experience it.

At first I introduce familiar objects children feel friendly with: animals like monkey and dog, or doll. I then add objects that surround us: wall, window, desk, etc. Instead of asking what desk is in English, I simply say the word pointing at a desk. I am sure one way to

learn English is to associate each word with a corresponding Japanese word; however, I think it is better for children to learn English without this kind of connection with Japanese. It is simpler for them to absorb English through direct experiences in their school lives. At first I have children hear simple words many times and repeat after me; then I introduce dialogues. Through repeating simple words of one to two syllables, they become used to English pronunciation. Two or three months after that stage, they start practicing greetings. Long before this, however, I begin familiarizing them with the expressions by greeting them in English. By then, their tongue is well lubricated through repeatedly pronouncing simple words. Since the time is limited, all they learn is short words, but my aim is to let them hear as much as possible.

Having taped dialogues between an American girl who was studying at my high school and a Japanese girl with good English pronunciation, I have it played from time to time at Yoji Gakuen like background music. The simple dialogues on the tape provide natural ear training for children.

What is important is not whether children do or do not understand the meaning of an expression; my ideal is that they spontaneously learn the expression from the situation in which it is said. As much as time allows, I attempt to help them intuitively comprehend their experiences.

In the second term, I increase the vocabulary and at the same time add English songs. They learn them quickly since Principal Yano often has the children sing them to her piano accompaniment even on days I am not there. I also introduce singing games. In what can be called action learning, they walk while singing or indicate parts of the body by putting the hand on the head or shoulder, combining rhythm, melody and action. I increase their vocabulary through these songs, and eventually let them speak dialogues facing one another. The red group children cannot yet proceed smoothly, but the blue group does fairly well. In order to help

the reds, I sometimes mix the two groups. This is effective since younger children pick up the mouth shape and pronunciation of older ones.

Before graduation Yoji Gakuen children learn approximately 200 words with correct pronunciation. They come to be able to conduct simple conversation of greetings. "How are you?" "I am fine, thank you." "What is your name?" "My name is such and such." "Where do you live?" "How old are you?" Children learn to speak such sentences fairly smoothly during the first two terms, and can answer foreign visitors properly. When asked "What is this?" they answer in full sentences. When I say "Open the door" in English, they respond by opening the door, demonstrating the connection between action and language.

When one recalls that the minimum number of English words learned during the three years of middle school is 500, Yoji Gakuen children can be said to acquire a rich vocabulary.

The question remains as to how much they can make use of it in elementary school. In any case, within the limited scope of Yoji Gakuen experience children learn something comparable to middle school English. I find this startling.

Even high school students cannot smoothly verbalize from English learned at school, but these children can make sense speaking with foreigners, though at the simplest level. They can sing at least five or six English songs.

If there is anything that can be called a teaching method for early childhood, I think it has to do with how well the teacher can play with children using English. For young children, having fun with English or playing games while increasing English knowledge should be the idea, rather than formally setting out to teach English.

Take conversation. If speaking to the teacher, a child may feel too relaxed: when he does not understand, he can ask; he can rely on the teacher, well aware of the adult-child relationship. Therefore, he may not actively involve himself.

However, if children have to converse by themselves, they have to depend upon themselves; the dialogue may happen between one child and another or between one child and one group of children. This kind of situation requires them to use the head or to take the initiative to a certain degree. Therefore I try to let children talk to children as often as possible, paying attention to motivating student initiative. At the same time I also conduct group competition. Since there are some differences in the speed of learning among children, one-to-one competition might cause a slow goer to wrongly feel that he is not bright. So I let them compete in group games in which we judge which group is fastest or which group speaks more correctly. This inspires children. In a group, even a child who is too timid to speak alone can share a sense of accomplishment while imitating his friends, and eventually develops confidence.

Since the only lesson of the week comes when the material is almost forgotten, it is good to cover the gap with the tapé recorder. Fortunately Miwa Yano incorporates some of my English lesson materials within her own hours.

I also appreciate the enrolment at present of an American child who demonstrates "model speaking."



Let me introduce a couple of English games we play. First there is London Bridge. While singing the song, children as a river flow under the bridge formed by two friends. At the end of the song, the bridge falls, catching a child. Whoever is caught then becomes one side of the bridge.

We also play a game requiring attention and swiftness, using 8x8 inch animal and flower cards. I place a card each on everyone's desk. When I say "cat," the child with the right card holds it up quickly. If he fails to do so before I clap hands three times, I take it away. I clap gradually faster or fewer times, and the last child who has not lost the card receives a card as a prize: the king if it is a boy and the queen if it is a girl. I believe that this game helps to train the ear and to foster concentration and agility.

Another example is the use of skits. They enact the play of the rabbit and the turtle in which the overconfident rabbit takes a nap and loses the race to the hilltop. Two children first exchange English greetings, then start the skit. As the rabbit-child hops away and pretends to sleep, the turtle-child sings "Are You Sleeping?"

I use finger dolls for a dialogue between monkey and dog. Changing animals can increase the fun.

These are but a few of the many games we play. After all, depending upon the teacher's ambition there are endless possibilities.

If these children could continue in the same way, they would demonstrate superb ability. The empty space of six elementary years seems to be a big problem. By the time they enter middle school, they may have forgotten everything they learned at Yoji Gakuen. However, when they learn to pronounce "s" and "th" or "b" and "v," unlike others, these children are able to reproduce the proper pronunciation without ado. They may have lost their vocabulary, and they may have forgotten sentence patterns in dialogues; yet the sense of sound must still remain in the furthest corner of their ear, and the English pronunciation and rhythm must still be alive. Therefore, I am confident that their English ability will bud again when stimulated once more from outside.

[The end.]

## A RECORD OF HOME LESSONS



Chihoko Takezawa

Shoichi Yamamura  
Instructor

This is a record by the mother of Kyoko Takezawa who joined the Shoichi Yamamura class, Nagoya in November 1969 at age three. It describes the week by week progress of home lessons during the first year of her violin training. It covers the stages from rhythm practice to Bach's Minuet no. 3 and tonalization.

[Continued from the spring issue.]

### March 1 – March 7, 1970

Although Kyoko was very happy to start Twinkle and practiced willingly, I was not sure if she was going to be able to play it.

Since she knew the piece through hearing the record every day, she could enter it without much difficulty. However, as would be expected, she cannot speedily put down fingers 1, 2, 3 with precision, and sometimes she does not know where she is.

At first she had to be very cautious about fingering 1, 2, 3, but I am surprised to find that she is now putting the fingers down fairly fast. When it started to sound like Twinkle, she was delighted, this being her first piece.

When I tried to play on a full size violin, I discovered that the left hand tires sooner than I had thought. After playing Twinkle several times, Kyoko still continues to play without complaining of any pain. Looking back at the times when we struggled with violin hold, this alone seems to indicate great progress.

*(Instructor) March 8*

*Congratulations on playing Twinkle in four and a half months. Never forget in the future as in the past ever better posture, better tone, and better environment.*

*Note: place 1, 2, 3 on the finger board once before playing. Until about the time Kyoko learns Perpetual Motion, let's always teach her good left hand posture. For this purpose, repeat placing 1, 2, 3 on the finger board keeping a beautiful left hand shape.*

**March 9 – March 14**

A new exercise: instead of putting down 1, 2, 3 before playing as in the earlier Twinkle exercises, first play 3, put down 2, then lift 3.

On the first day, with each finger, I guided her with my hand on hers, and all she could manage was to put down the right finger where I led. By the second day she seemed to understand the point of the exercise: she started to voluntarily try before I suggested. By the third day she could handle it more or less; but, since the fingers did not move as she wanted, she tended to put 1, 2, 3 down in a row spontaneously as in the former exercise.

When she plays by putting down one finger at a time, other fingers become stiff and stretched. It is still difficult to place the fingers in precise spots (although she may not notice slight differences, she seems to know when the intonation is clearly wrong, for she sometimes tries to fix it); I have corrected her each time.

Despite her childlike satisfaction for having been able to play Twinkle, she has started to reject my corrections with displeasure, since, when interrupted, the piece cannot maintain its shape as a piece. This has made me think about how best to let her enjoy practice while helping her improve.

*(Instructor) March 15*

*Does she play by ear or from memory (since she presses the strings somewhat)?*

*Practice the rhythm of Variation 1 a bit.*

*Please add Variation 2.*

### **March 15 – March 21**

Twinkle Variation 1: probably because I corrected her case by case about placing fingers 1, 2, 3 on the a string in the right spot (lifting a finger after placing another), the result has become a broken performance of separate measures rather than a continued flow of the piece. It is so choppy that I anticipate her losing her place; yet seeing that she continues without errors, she may be playing while tracing her memory. Although she must have learned it spontaneously through daily listening and practicing, it often seems possible that she is searching her memory. The reason is that, while she sometimes plays unhesitatingly if in a choppy manner, at other times she thinks before she plays the next note. When teaching her, I didn't worry too much about choppiness: I thought she would come to be able to play skillfully if only her fingers learned to move. However, I have realized that it is different from the way we grasp the entire piece by looking at the printed music, then practice sections while paying minute attention to each. Her choppy performance and a correct one remain separate; with no relation between the two, the former has become set. It took two days to correct the rhythm. She takes my advice so literally that how to present it to her can be a problem.

This week I have paid attention to correct intonation and good tone (no pressure), but she still tends to press, and the bow climbs up so that she ends up playing at the frog.

Although she got the rhythm of Variation 2 fairly fast on the first day, she not only plays it so slowly that she loses the rhythmic feeling, but, all the more for this reason, she applies power and presses too much.



*(Instructor) March 22*

*First rhythm performance with other children at the joint group lesson of the local chapter.*

### March 23 – March 28

This week my attention went to how not to press and what part of the bow to use. Her right arm gradually bending, I found her playing near the frog. I had her correct herself each time; but, whether she forgot it quickly or did not get the message, she paid no attention for three or four days. Eventually, however, she started to want to fix herself, catching her weakness before I spoke: "I have to play here at the mark;" "I shouldn't press, should I?" she said.

Although she *could* play Variation 2, her tempo was too slow. Perhaps I did not do a good job when I tried to make it faster: the up bow in \_\_\_\_\_ became a little too fast, messing up the rhythm.

*March 29: no individual lesson due to the national concert.*

### March 30 – April 4

Although we practiced in the same way as usual, somehow I feel that Kyoko's playing has become sloppy. It may be because the material has become familiar, but then sometimes she suddenly gets stuck and repeats the same place again and again.

*(Instructor) April 5*

*Please listen to Twinkle on the record.*

*Let's produce a little bigger tone, as you were able to do today at lesson. Please practice that same tone and bodily movement. Repeat practicing good posture which keeps the violin from hanging down. Practice Variation 2 (and the rhythm of Variation 3).*

**April 6 – April 11**

This week I tried to have practice sessions which would induce her to want to play with big tone. Seeming to have comprehended how to work toward big tone at the Sunday lesson, she practiced paying great attention to that. However, when she tried to produce big tone, power was added with the result that the tone became pressed and the bow moved fairly wildly.

She entered Twinkle Variations 2 and 3 without difficulty, and by the third day she was able to play them better than I had expected. Yet, from the fourth day on, she began to be shaky, with the tempo becoming too fast or too slow. Thinking that after all she had not yet mastered the piece, this week I tried to let her listen to the record many times with emphasis on Twinkle. I realize that in the past I had not played the record enough. Let her listen even if briefly each time — I thought I should diligently play the record with this constantly in mind; and, as I made efforts in this way, I found that I could have her listen more than I had anticipated.

When I accompany her on the piano by way of a game, she enjoys playing.

*(Instructor) April 12*

*Compared with the time it took her to learn Variation 1, Variations 2, 3, 4 went quite rapidly. (Pay attention so that the violin does not hang low.)*

[To be continued.]



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