

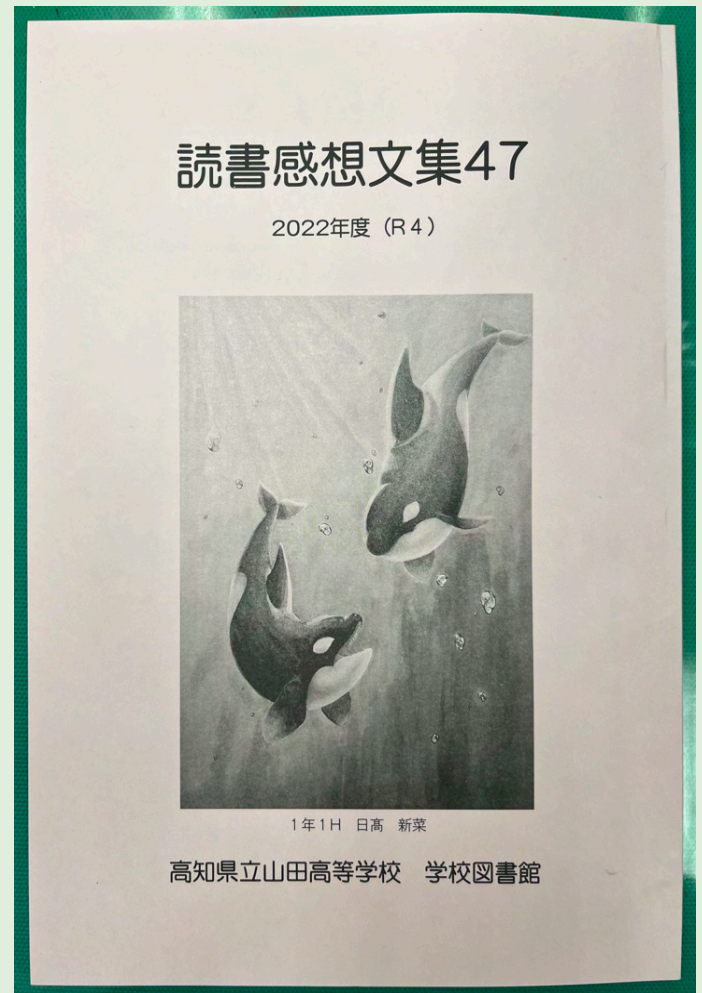
Thoughts on Yamada High School's 47th Collection of Book Reports

As an ALT during finals week, I don't have much work to do, so I've been passing the days by reading. Since I enjoy reading and was free anyways, I decided to read Yamada High School's 47th Collection of Book Reports. Students all wrote book reports as homework for Japanese class over summer break, and thirteen of them were selected and submitted to a Kochi Prefecture book report competition. One student won an award of excellence, two others were selected for competition, and the school overall won an award of excellence. This collection contains those thirteen book reports.

My thoughts in brief—reading this collection reminded me how valuable writing book reports can be. A book report is a layered format that interweaves your thoughts on the book, yourself, and the relationship between the two and can draw the interest of readers while also being invaluable to the writer. Reading this collection, I learned a little bit about a wide variety of topics, like synaesthesia, Suguru Osako and long-distance running, dyslexia, an international science fair, and sudden cardiac death. More than just getting a peek at what students are reading about and interested in, I also got a glimpse of their thinking about life, whether it be choosing a certain career, using time wisely, or valuing every moment and not taking them for granted.

A book report is also valuable as a snapshot of your current self. Rereading it (and the book) after some time has passed lets you reflect on your life from the time when you wrote it to the present and see how your way of thinking has changed. I took this as an opportunity to reread some

of my high school book reports, and rereading them I was reminded just how much of a stubborn, aggressive idealist I was. Rereading was embarrassing, yet highly amusing, and although I see now how juvenile my thinking was, I'm still glad I was forced to write it. I think it would be wonderful if someday this collection, too, gets reread.



「読書感想文集四十七」を読んで

学年末考査の間、
 少なくて、毎日ひたすら
 本を読んでいます。読書が趣味で、暇だったから、山田高校の「読書感想文集47」を手に取りました。この文集は、生徒が夏休みに書いた読書感想文の中から選ばれた、高知県青少年読書感想文コンクールに出品した十三篇を掲載しています。そのコンクールでは、優秀賞が一名、入選が二名、学校としても学校優良賞でした。感想文を一言でいえば、感想文を書くことが大事だな、と感じました。感想文は、選んだ本について、自分の関係について、その間の関係を組み合わせて、深い媒体で、読者の興味をひき、自分なりのためのもので、この文集を読んだら、共感や感動、大傑と陸上長距離、国際障害者、死

など、幅広い話題について少し学びました。それと生徒の興味関心だけじゃなく、進路の選択であれ、時間の有効活用であれ、当たり前だと思われがちな毎日を大切にすることが大切にするのであれ、各々の人生の考え方も垣間見ることができました。

現在の自分のスナップショットとしても有意義です。時間がずいぶん経つてから、感想(とその本)を読み返すと、書いた当時から今までの人生と考え方を深く省察できると思いました。これを機に私は高校時代の感想文を読み返してみました。読むだけだと恥ずかしく、頑固で、攻撃的な理想家でした。今なら、いかに稚拙だったと分かるけど、「そういう人間だった」と苦笑しながら、文集も、良かったと思えました。この文集も、素敵だと思えます。