

The 29th Edition of Thinking about Peace

[Junior High School Students]

Symbol of Peace

Daiichi Junior High School 2nd Grade

Narumi Kubota

What is peace?

How does peace look?

The time when hearing the voice of birds,

The time when nobody becomes sad,

The time when flowers are blooming beautifully,

The time when nobody thinks of killing themselves,

All of these times are exactly peace.

It is ordinary that each people has a different idea.

Bang! Bang!

The ocean and the earth would disappear after the sounds of gunshot.

Boom! Boom! Wham!

Everything would be burned by bombs.

Houses, animals, schools, national flags, and people's lives,

Everything would disappear as if it didn't exist.

“Help me!” “Run away!”

People run away.

Bombs keep chasing people.

The thing waiting for them was death at last.

All people had to go through this road.

The road that they are afraid of the most.

Time of death was approaching little by little to the innocent people who were escaping from bombs.

Days like that continued for a long time.

Days like this continued for a long time.

Finally, the peace declaration was announced.

However, it wasn't easy for the entire world to become peaceful right after the peace declaration.

The world can be changed by all people living on the Earth.

Can we say that we are at peace even though we destroy the people's lives, the ocean, and the Earth.

Wars are things that bring people and the world to death.

To not have the same tragedy again,

Can we, people, do anything?

Our Peace

Daini Junior High School 1st Grade

Yuuki Kaibara

When I stood in front of the Atomic Bomb Dome,

I thought I could see the sky of the morning, 8:15, on August 6th behind the burnt framework.

When I stood by the calm flowing river called "Motoyasugawa,"

I thought I could see the people who were surrounded with fire diving into there seeking water.

The thing I was shocked the most by was,

Many children my age were killed at that moment.

They had that ordinary morning,

And they were supposed to have that ordinary day.

Victims of wars are always people who are living happily and ordinary.

Wars take their lives.

Which country can win,

Which country should lose,

Is there any meanings for it?

We living today should

Not forget about the war,

Study hard,

Think well about peace

To not make the same mistake again.

Peace Learned From the People Who Experienced the War

Daini Junior High School 1st Grade

Kosei Yamamoto

Peace means there is no war. Japan, as we live now, is a peaceful country. I think peace, as we have today, was founded on the ultimate sacrifices of World War II. I decided to ask my great grandmother who experienced the war to tell me about her experiences. She told me the story of herself and her husband, my great grandfather.

My great grandfather was called into the army and went to the war when he was in his 20's. He was a member of a troop of horses and fought as a commander. It was good while his team was winning, but once his team started to lose, they didn't have anything to eat. They had to eat frogs or snakes and drink mud water to avoid starvation. Many of them were infested with lice and losing their physical energy, then died at last. It was very painful for him to face the death of his colleagues. He was caught by China as a captive soldier for about one year. He got married with my great grandmother after being released and coming back to Japan.

My great grandmother stuffed gunpowder into bullets and made military blankets during the war. She collected iron scraps with magnets. Since the country lacked materials, the military visited each house to collect all iron. People didn't have enough food, so they used sweet potatoes, pumpkins, eggplants, and vines of sweet potato to make mixed porridge. People hid in the shelter every time a B29 came over. Firebombs were dropped in Nagoya. They brightened up the night sky even if they were dropped at a place far away. People in the city dived into the moat around the castle because of the heat of those firebombs. There were dead bodies floating in the moat. There were also many people who were losing their skin because of burning at the roadsides. It was hard to see them directly. The war was over after the atomic bombs were dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. However, the country still didn't have enough food. It gave coupons of rations to the people. They needed to exchange them for getting rice or Miso. People living in the city took their Kimono to the people living in the countryside. Then, they exchanged the Kimono for rice and vegetables. All nations made efforts to get back the life they used to have before the war. We don't have any troubles or problems to have food and to play with friends today. My great grandmother said, "We must not have wars again. Peace should come first."

I thought she had a very hard time at my age. I don't think I can suffer it. Now, North Korea has lots of missile tests. I worry that we might have another war again. If we had a war, many people would be sorrowful and unhappy. So, I also think peace should come first.

There are some countries having wars in the world. I watched the news about the children my age holding guns. How do they feel about it? I also watched the sad news about people who got injured or lost their families. People's mind would be hard to heal even if those wars were over. Many people would be sad and unhappy because of

wars. We should not have any wars! It would be best if we could solve troubles or problems by having discussions.

My great grandmother told me her story as if the war happened recently even though it occurred 72 years ago. She told me her painful experience because she wanted to teach me how important the peace we have now is.

Passing Down

Daini Junior High School 3rd Grade

Takuto Hasegawa

“2 minutes and 30 seconds.” Do you know what it means? This is the countdown of the Doomsday clock. It means this countdown might start if wars with nuclear weapons started or atomic bombs in some countries burst.

Could we think and do something to stop destroying the world if the countdown would start? I think it is hard to make it. Japan, as the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks, should know that it would be too late once nuclear weapons were started up.

How can we prevent nuclear weapons from being used? I think we should explain how nuclear weapons are terrible and spread it in order to remove all of them.

My grandfather was born in Manchuria and his address was, “Manshukoku Chinjoshu Senshushi Seiyoku Kirigai 31gou.” He told me his experiences. When he was 7 years old, the war was over in Manchuria. In his life after the war, his family put Tatami against the windows to avoid the bullets from outside of the house. All men including his father were taken to Siberia by Russian soldiers. They were forced to work in a frigid environment. My grandfather got children's dysentery which was an official disease at that time. He had a high fever because of it. His life was always threatened by various things until he came back to Numazu where his father was born. I couldn't say anything when I heard his story.

I think the war and the atomic bombs damaged soldiers and their families. They also took away the places from the people everywhere. Both winners and losers were damaged by the war. The war kept afflicting the people even if it was over. The war didn't bring anything good. It hurt and afflicted people and brought them feelings of hate. People in the world should learn that wars or conflicts are hateful and foolish.

We should pass down the idea of the wars effect on many places and people in various aspects. The idea should be spread to not start the countdown of “2 minutes and 30 seconds.”

Peace would not come if we didn't try to have it. I think it is the thing we are

building. We should appeal for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

I would take this opportunity to appreciate my grandparents who told me their experiences.

I decided to spread and pass down their stories to the next generations.

The Way to Make a Peaceful World

Daisan Junior High School 1st Grade

Erika Yamamoto

I knew that there was a suicide bombing in one country in Africa when I watched the news this morning.

83 children were used for this suicide bombing. 55 of them were girls and most of them were under 15 years old. One of them carried a baby on their back. The reason why there were so many girls was their religion. Women had to hide their skin as much as possible in that religion. It meant they had more places than men to hide the bombs. That organization threatened or kidnapped children to collect many children. Those children didn't know anything. They were put bombs on their body and sent to enemies' territory. Then, their bombs were blown up remotely.

A long time ago, Japan used same tactics to attack enemies. However, it was done by adult men and they did suicide attacks with their own will. We don't have any wars in Japan today. However, there are some countries having wars or conflicts and some of them use children as a way to attack.

I was very shocked with this truth. I feel like I want to ask those countries which decided to use children for attacks how they view the children. I am very sad and angry that they treat people's lives as one of a tool for their war. They must not know why they were born to this world. There would not be any differences of lives between adults and children. I think people who think they can do anything with children are very awful. On the other hand, I feel I am very happy and lucky that I can live peacefully when I think about those countries.

There are no wars or conflicts in Japan. We can go to school and study there. Also, we can have every meal and live freely every day. However, there are countries which are the opposite to Japan. People in those country cannot study and don't have enough food. I think Japan is a very peaceful country.

I think it would not be enough to say we have peace if only all wars and conflicts were over in the world and people were relieved from wars and could live in safety. I think real peace would come true when all children can go to school and all people have enough foods and live freely. It is also important that people should understand

each other. Some people don't think of others and persist in their own ideas. I think they cause various problems. We have been told many times since we were elementary students that we should think about others and their position. I think making good educational environment for children can be the first step toward peace.

I thought about wars, too. I thought what advantages we could have by having wars. Countries might have some advantages, but people in those countries would not have any advantages. They would have lots of damages rather than advantages. There would be many victims such as injured and dead people and people who lose important things in the same way as the news I watched in this morning. I think solving problems with discussion, not with the sword can be the safest way to make a peaceful world.

People should understand others' position and reconfirm how people's lives are valuable to create world peace. We could live happily with a smile if we took each other's hand.

One Bullet

Daisan Junior High School 3rd Grade

Tsugumi Ikeno

I have never met my great grandfather. He died when my mother was pregnant with me. According to my mother, he was born in 1917. He was a very stiff and gentle person.

My great grandfather was married to my great grandmother when he went to the war. He didn't tell my mother many stories, but there was one she heard from him.

My great grandfather was fighting against American soldiers. My mother wasn't sure where it was, though. He was in the middle in the line of fire. I couldn't imagine how it was. If I were there, I could not move with fear. I would have various feelings for the blood and my life ending in a moment. More and more soldiers died around him. He felt that he didn't want to be beaten by American soldiers as he saw his colleagues dying. I asked my mother, "Didn't he feel sad about his colleagues?" She answered, "I think they couldn't feel that way because they didn't know when they would be shot down and they fought for the country and the Emperor. It didn't mean that they were cruel. Their situation at that time was beyond our imagination."

My great grandfather survived and could come home. When he was in the line of fire, one bullet flew toward him. He had a canteen on his shoulder. The bullet hit the canteen. He told my mother that he was saved by the canteen. The story that she heard from him was only this one. He didn't want to talk about the war too much.

It was a very short story, but it was enough for me to think about the life or death of

people. I was not sure how my great grandfather felt about the fact that he was saved. I heard people who didn't die at the war felt guilty for their living according to the TV program I watched before. So, I imagined my great grandfather might feel the same way as those people. What would a war be for if we had to feel guilty for living? All families of soldiers must wait for them to come home safely. Soldiers who survived a war had to live with feelings of guilty. I think everyone is a victim of the war. We don't have my great grandfather's canteen anymore. However, I still can tell about it to my children in the future.

Recently, we have a lot of chances to have missiles launched from one country. Japan and other countries have an intense atmosphere about it. We are very close to the situation of war. I want to ask my great grandfather how he thinks of the situation we have now.

Japanese people are often told that we take peace for granted. I think there is nothing wrong with taking peace for granted. Why do people have wars? Why do people try to take authority? I haven't found the answers. I think the answers are in Japanese history because we haven't had wars after World War II. I think there is meaning in my great grandparents surviving the war because I could know their stories.

I understand that people break their minds by hating each other even though I don't experience wars. I wish the world would be calm and peaceful for children in the future.

Delicious Beans

Daisan Junior High School 3rd Grade

Haruka Shiraishi

On August 15, 1945, Japan waved the white flag by the broadcast of the voice of showa Emperor. How did people feel when they heard it? I can't even imagine. Did they feel sadness, frustration, anxiety for own future, or relief for the ending of the war? Honestly, I don't think of the war so often in my everyday life. I don't care about the missiles by North Korea because I consider it is something happening in other countries. I think I would be thought of as a very happy person by people who knew and experienced wars.

Words which were written on the blackboard at one famous coffee shop attracted people's attention. "Most of the coffee that you are having now is from Africa, the Middle East, or Latin America. Those countries are politically unstable. The coffee you are enjoying now might not be available next year because of their civil wars or conflicts. The coffee you would describe as "relieved," "relaxed," or "settled down"

might come from the countries or areas where people are unsafe. The words of “peace and war” might not be familiar to you, but when you imagine that the coffee or Frappuccino you are drinking now might be unavailable next year, it can be a chance to think of peace. Nagasaki will have the 72nd anniversary of the end of the war this year. What is “peace” for you?”

There were so many reactions to these words. Life in Japan today is based on things, not only coffee, from other countries. We won't be able to keep having this life if those importing countries or areas started wars or were involved in ones even though Japan didn't relate to any of them.

We can get anything we want if you paid for it in the world today. We don't need to move to buy things because Internet shopping is becoming common. Since we are living in such a convenient world, many people forget to appreciate people who make or delivery things that we buy. I think I am also one of them.

How many countries or areas can produce everything they need? There might be no countries or areas like that. If so, it means every country relies on other countries. Can the difference of country, language, color of skin, and religion be the reason to become enemies?

If there were no people except myself, what could I do for living? I think I wouldn't do anything and I wouldn't even try. I might just give up my living. It must be really sad.

I think it would not be too difficult to get rid of wars, fighting, and bullying if each of us appreciated other people and that feeling spread more and more.

The last sentence on the blackboard of the coffee shop, “What is “peace” for you?”

My answer for it is that everyone will be able to say, “Thank you” to each other from the bottom of their heart. I decided to say, “Thank you” rather than “Excuse me” to fill my life with “Thank you.”

Building Peace

Daiyon Junior High School 3rd Grade

Daito Hagimoto

On August 6th this year, I prayed while thinking of things that happened about 70 years ago. The atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on same day in 1945. Many innocent people became victims. I spent the day thinking of the reason why the war occurred. Nevertheless, Japan is peaceful today. It is hard to imagine that it had the war until about 70 years ago. How could we build the peaceful country like this? I think the answer for it is important to not have another war.

On August 10th in 1945, Showa Emperor and Kantaro Suzuki the prime minister, decided to accept the Potsdam Declaration. Japan decided to end the war at that time. Douglas MacArthur, the field marshal, arrived in Japan and our country was occupied by the allied force after the Declaration.

Kijuro Shidehara became the prime minister and organized a new cabinet in October 1945 which was after the previous blue-blooded prime minister resigned. Shidehara was the minister for foreign affairs in the cabinet of Prime Minister Takaaki Kato, Prime Minister Osachi Hamaguchi, and Prime Minister Reijiro Wakatsuki. He took a cooperative diplomatic stance as the minister for foreign affairs. Japan has built peace since then.

The Prime Minister Shidehara's incumbency was only 7 months, but he worked hard for building peace. Most of the famous reforms after the war such as the Zaibatsu dissolution, agricultural reform, and so on started during his incumbency. The Human Declaration issued by Emperor Showa on New Year's Day in 1946 was also created by him. I think he considered it a dangerous idea while keeping peace to apotheosize the Emperor. The Constitution of Japan, which was started in the cabinet of Prime Minister Shidehara, was announced officially and executed in the cabinet of Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida who came one after Shidehara. It was within 2 years of the war.

I was very impressed with Shidehara's ability to get things done. It was my first impression about his work. Japan, which had the atomic bombs dropped on them became threadbare, made a new Constitution of Japan and did various kinds of reforms within 2 years of the war. It was hard to believe that Japan lost the war. Why did Japan have power and energy to recover? I think there were wishes of many people. Their wish was, of course, "peace" which is two words in Chinese characters and capable of making people happy. I am sure that they decided not to have any wars again as wishing for peace. Their wish must be a source of strength for Japan's rebirth. The Prime Minister Shidehara strongly hoped for the renunciation of the right of belligerency. That was why he took a cooperative diplomatic stance. There was also the other reason. He was damaged and lost his good friend, Kikujiro Ishi, by air-raid during the war. He must have thought that Japan would never have any wars again. His thought motivated him so much. Shidehara was awared of peace and moved for it. Not only politicians had power and energy for Japan's rebirth. The members of the Constitutional Law Association including Iwasaburo Takano drafted the Constitution of Japan. I think they also had strong thoughts that they should not have any wars again and their thought motivated themselves. This was also one of power and energy of Japan's rebirth. Each wish for peace became power to make a new Japan.

According to my grandmother, Mamoru Shigemitsu, the minister for foreign affairs at that time, attended the memorial ceremony for joining the United Nations. It means that Japan joined the United Nations at that time. The Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama signed the Soviet-Japanese Joint Declaration of 1956 2 months before the memorial ceremony. Japan re-established the diplomatic relations with the Soviet. At this time, Japan recovered from the isolation and established the relations with other countries, too. I think this re-establishment could happen because of the people's effort after the war. Their efforts bore fruit and enabled the country to join the United Nations. It took only 11 years after the war to join it. Joining the United Nations was also a big step for Japan's peaceful rebirth. We should not forget that there were many efforts of people who wished for peace.

Now, Japan, is a very peaceful country about 70 years after the war. Cheerful sounds of insects and birds make me feel at peace. I think I have to do something to keep this peaceful country. Many people such as Kijuro Shidehara, Shigeru Yoshida, and Tanzan Ishibashi participated actively to make Japan peaceful. However, they were not the only people to make it come true. We should not forget about the Japanese citizens. We also should not forget each of us is also a member of the Japanese citizens. This is the reason I feel that I should do something. We must not start any wars. We should take one step toward peace even if we have a situation such as starting a war. We should make efforts to build the building named "peace," not to destroy it.

Inhumanity

Daigo Junior High School 2nd Grade

Yuna Sasaki

Wars are cruel. Why do they never finish? Why do they keep going? Why do people have wars? I can't understand.

Wars are revenge. People's revenge won't finish and will last. Revenge consists of hatefulness. Once it came out, gentleness would disappear. As a result, people will forget their own quality. Wars never end until a winner is decided. It is impossible to stop before that result. Nobody can stop wars which have already started. This is why we should not start any wars. Never.

I have been wondering if it is good that I don't experience and know any wars or not. "What is a war?" I thought we would be very happy if we didn't experience any wars. However, it is the right thing that we never start any wars and never forget about the wars we had before. I think it is wrong that we pretend there were not fears of wars. We should pass down the truth of "wars" to the next generation. I think it is very

meaningful.

Can we have any wars? One person said, "I ate white paint during the war." People who are not related also forget their quality once a war started. Everyone can be broken.

Who started a war? Who can finish that war? Is it right thing that we just hate the people having a war? I have no idea. Whom can I blame? I have many things to learn about wars. Current situations couldn't be changed even if we wrote about wars on papers or people were afraid of them. Just don't forget about wars. Just don't forget about fears. This is what we can do for people in old times. This is what we can do for now. We need to think and find things we can do. It is impossible for us to completely understand wars. Honestly, I don't know much about either military force or tanks. The only thing I surely understand about wars is that they are "scary." They are a very inhumane occasion for people with hatefulness to kill each other. People will forget their own qualities as human. Citizens will be victims. I would call it "inhumanity."

Why do people have more wars even though they think and discuss the histories about them? Why can't I understand it? Why can't I do anything about it? I am even angry at myself who can't do anything. Paints we use in art class were food. "Things" we use were "food" for people who experienced wars. I think I will remember wars every time I use paints.

I like "The Diary of Anne Frank." Anne Frank wrote about her life in hiding place and her love for the boy in her diary. She was killed at last. Her precious memories also disappeared when she was killed.

Wars will take away important things such as quality, gentleness, and the mind of humans from people. This is why I think wars are inhumanity.

Visiting Hiroshima

Katahama Junior High School 1st Grade

Minami Furuya

I traveled to Hiroshima with my mother from August 9th to 11th. At first, the purpose of my trip was to gather information for my social studies independent research. However, I decided to write this essay too because I wanted to tell about the misery of the atomic bomb that I learned at the Atomic Bomb Dome and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

I first visited the Atomic Bomb Dome, then the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum by passing in front of Memorial Cenotaph. So, I'd like to start with the story of the Atomic Bomb Dome.

The Atomic Dome was originally called the Hiroshima Prefectural Industrial Promotion Hall. It was built in 1915 and its purpose was displaying and selling the products of Hiroshima. It was completely burned by the blast and heat wave of the atomic bomb at 8:15 in morning on August 6, 1945. It was 160m southeast of the place where the atomic bomb was dropped. When it exploded, the fire came out from its roof. It meant the heat wave worked almost vertically. As a result, the center area of the main building miraculously didn't fall over, and now it is existing as its present appearance. We cannot go inside of the Atomic Bomb Dome. All we can do is look from the outside. Debris is scattered inside and the building frame and other iron frames are exposed. I had many chances to see the pictures of the Atomic Bomb Dome when I was an elementary school student. I think everyone was the same as me. I had been given an impression that I couldn't describe with words when I saw it in person. I think each of us would have a different impression. I felt the fear of the atomic bomb which could easily destroy the building and the sorrow of the people who were killed in a moment. I also thought that I wanted people who hadn't visited here to visit this place and see it.

The memorial Cenotaph was at the south side of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. It was far from the museum. The cenotaph carries the epitaph "please rest in peace, for [we/they] shall not repeat the error." When I saw it, I couldn't read it well because the fence interfered. The word of "error" has been discussed since it was built. The issue is what is the subject, we or they, of this "error." My opinion is that the subject is Japan. America didn't start the war but Japan did. The reason for the war was made by Japan. This is why I think that Japan is the subject. However, Hiroshima city considered that its subject is all human beings. It was not because of someone. We should not repeat the sorrow of the war. Hiroshima thinks this is what the Memorial Cenotaph represents. In other words, we should focus on preventing tragedy rather than finding criminals.

The first place I visited in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum was the first basement. It was a big place and there was one picture displayed. The picture was about the town in flames. At that time, there were many wooden houses in the town. The atomic bomb made a heat wave, and that heat wave brought fire. There was something unfamiliar to me in the upper right of the picture. It could be the devil, god, or a victim. I was not sure what it was. The entire picture was painted with red and vermilion. The thing I was not sure of was melted in those colors.

When I moved further inside, there were documents and clothes which seemed like they were found recently. The picture of the atomic bomb, burnt clothes, pictures and stories of people who experienced the war, and so on were displayed there. The space

was surrounded by a heavy atmosphere. My mother suggested that we should ask a guide for an explanation when we went upstairs to the first floor. Our guide was old and the thing that impressed me the most was the dramatization video about Hiroshima before, at the moment, and after the atomic bomb. The video also included the present Hiroshima. I could understand more about what happened at that time because of the video. There were also pictures of people who got burned and the burnt tricycle. I couldn't say anything about them. I could only look at them. It looked very painful. I couldn't place myself in those victims' position and imagine their pain. There was also the area that displayed the models of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Each name was also shown there. We could look around the museum and see many things because of our guide.

The thing I wanted to tell the most is that people should go to Hiroshima so they can feel many things. Since 72 years have passed from the end of the war, the number of people who experienced the war is decreasing. It means the number of people who can tell us the story of the war is decreasing. I'm afraid that people's sense of danger for wars might decrease, too if we don't try anything. That is why I thought everyone needs to go to Hiroshima or Nagasaki to understand we should not have wars again. That was what I felt through my trip.

The Atomic Bomb in Hiroshima

Katahama Junior High School 2nd Grade

Kokone Sano

“Seventy-one years ago, on a bright cloudless morning, the atomic bomb was dropped in Hiroshima.” These words were in the speech of ex-President Obama on May 27th, 2016 in Hiroshima.

His speech continued as, “Why do we come to this place, to Hiroshima? We come to ponder a terrible force unleashed in a not-so-distant past. We come to mourn the dead, including over 100,000 Japanese men, women and children, thousands of Koreans, a dozen Americans held prisoner.”

He also spoke, “But the memory of the morning of Aug. 6, 1945, must never fade. That memory allows us to fight complacency. It fuels our moral imagination. It allows us to change... We should solve the problems by discussion, not wars.”

Ex-President Obama wants to get rid of all nuclear weapons from the world. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize with this idea. I strongly wish President Trump has the same idea.

I had known about the atomic bomb in Hiroshima from the books or TV programs.

However, when I visited Hiroshima and looked at the Atomic Bomb Dome in actuality, I felt a cold chill. I got more serious about the truth that the atomic bomb was dropped in Hiroshima when I looked at the exposed frame and the bombed-out wall of the dome.

There were many displays in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. I saw the models of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The explanation told was the real size of them were 4m. I was very shocked that such a small thing took lives of 140,000 innocent people in a moment.

There was an area surrounded by lots of people. When I looked through the people, I found it was the model of Hiroshima. The words of “center of explosion” were displayed on the screen after I looked at it for a while. After the video of people and cars crossing the town, suddenly, the atomic bomb was shown and dropped with the sound of “Boom!” Then, the mushroom cloud spread. The video picture displayed next was the burnt town without any buildings. I got a lump in my throat with a shock.

I moved to the basement at last. I saw the paper cranes made by ex-President Obama. He gave them to children who welcomed him. The fold lines of the cranes were very neat. I felt his wish for peace.

I saw the Children's Peace Monument at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. The girl, Sadako Sasaki, was the model of the monument. She experienced the atomic bomb when she was 2 years old. She survived and didn't have any symptom. However, she suffered leukemia 10 years after the atomic bomb and died. She folded 1,300 paper cranes as a wish for getting healthy while she was hospitalized. It was very sad.

Many paper cranes are dedicated to the monument every year. The old ones which couldn't be kept used to be burnt. Recently, they are recycled into post cards. I was given one. I could see many colors of paper on one post card. Each card looked different. I was very impressed that the paper cranes which had people's wishes transformed in to post card and were given to lots of people. I thought it was a wonderful idea.

There was also the Peace Clock Tower at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park. The clock plays chime sounds at 8:15 every morning.

Now, I appreciate my life such as living with my family, going to school, smiling and laughing with my friends, and so on. We should not forget about the atomic bomb. I wish there will be no wars in the world and all countries and people can help each other. I am going to try many things around me to strive toward peace.

Along with the song “Kieta Hachigatsu”

Katahama Junior High School 3rd Grade

Miyu Mizuno

I became one picture

In hot light

You became one statue

In hot wind

I melted in the wall

After shooting by the light

You disappeared in the earth

After blowing by the wind

I became the shadow

You became the thing

These are the words of the song “Kieta Hachigatsu” that my class is going to sing at the school festival.

This song's theme is the atomic bomb dropped in Hiroshima by America on August 6, 1945.

The number of people that died with the atomic bomb in Hiroshima was calculated at the end of December 1945 and it was estimated about 140,000. More victims who got severely injured lost their lives after that.

I found one picture. There was one person who had many black spots that looked like ants all over their body. The spots were keloid and called death spots in other words. Keloid usually appear on skin after a burn heals. The person in the picture got them because of radiation from the atomic bomb. As they are called death spots, people would die if they got keloid from radiation. I realized how the atomic bomb was terrible when I saw the picture.

Article 9 of the Constitution has great contents. However, the present condition of Japan doesn't match the Article. According to the Article, “Japan will not have wars,” “Japan will not have any weapons,” and “Japan is not allowed to have right of belligerence.” It also includes, “the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes.”

The Article also mentions that “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained.” I think this part is made based on the idea that the world cannot avoid wars. In my opinion, this is wrong. Japan has a mission to prevent any wars from occurring.

Recently, there are many kinds of video or smartphone games about wars. They are very cool and playing them are very fun. On the other hand, we have the truth that we

can launch missiles with nuclear bombs by pushing one button. When I think of their similarity, I am afraid that we might have a chance to have a war if someone couldn't identify the difference between the world of games and reality. It shouldn't be happening.

One day, one of my friend asked me, "You know when the atomic bomb was dropped in Hiroshima, don't you?" At that time, I couldn't answer. My friend continued, "That is our problem. Young people don't know much about the war."

I can imagine lots of things from the song "Kieta Hachigatsu." I can imagine that a person was melted and disappeared at a moment from the part of "You disappeared in the earth." I can imagine that indescribable tragedy occurred from the part of "I became the shadow. You became the thing."

However, there are many young people, like me at that time, who don't know these things. As long as there are people like me at that time, we need to know and learn about the tragedy of the atomic bomb. Then, we need to tell as many people as possible.

Atomic bombs which can make many victims at a moment are still owned by America, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Israel, and so on. Especially, North Korea who can intermittently launch missiles with atomic bombs toward America or Japan. We can know this information from news programs. If North Korea attacked Japan, it would bring enormous damages to Japan just the same as described in the song "Kieta Hachigatsu." The tragedy like that should never happen again. We should make efforts to peacefully solve problems by discussion. In step with the aging of the population, our generation should appeal more about "elimination of nuclear weapons" to the world.

I don't want to see more tragedy like Hiroshima in Japan. I wish the entire world would be peaceful.

Visiting Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Kanaoka Junior High School 1st Grade

Yuri Kanazaki

A hot summer came again with the buzzing of cicadas. Every time I see cicadas which are trying to live their hard short life as buzzing, I remember Hiroshima and Nagasaki which were dropped atomic bombs 72 years ago.

I visited Nagasaki in July the last year and Hiroshima in March of this year. There were trams, many cars, and many pretty stores so I thought they were very beautiful cities.

However, I still could feel their sad history behind these beautiful views.

The Atomic Bomb Dome was silently and heavily standing at the edge of the main town. I saw the picture of it many times. I had never seen it for real. My mind was braced for when I saw it for real.

There were many tourists from foreign countries. They took pictures in front of the Dome while smiling and flashing a peace sign. Their attitude made my heart break.

The Atomic Bomb Dome was a European designed building which was very rare at that time. It used iron frames in some parts and was considered as one of the popular place to visit in Hiroshima. People in Hiroshima was very proud of the building. It has been kept as the symbol of peace after the atomic bomb was dropped.

One middle-aged man with some thick binders gently talked to me, "Can I speak to you a little?" He was a child of the surviving victims of the atomic bomb. He was telling people how the atomic bomb was terrible as a volunteer.

Surviving victims are still suffering from the after effects of the atomic bomb. I thought it was impossible for them to heal the damage on their body and mind even though 72 years have passed.

I visited the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum when I traveled to Nagasaki last year. Both museums in Nagasaki and Hiroshima had many documents which proved that many lives of people were taken away at a moment.

There was one picture of a boy that shocked me very much. More than half of the boy's face had keloid scars. His eyes seemed like he blamed something. I was thinking of many things as I saw the picture. What happened to his family? How could he live by himself? His life was not so long at that time. What would I do if I were him? What should I do if I was left alone? I would have no idea what to do if I had to live alone surrounded by black dead bodies. I couldn't stare at the picture.

I have seen a model which showed the number of the nuclear weapons in the world. It was not only America. There were many countries such as China and Russia which owned nuclear weapons. I was surprised at the big number of nuclear weapons belonging to one country. The country which owned the most nuclear weapons had 7,300 of them. I thought the earth would disappear if all of them were used.

The entire world is supposed to not use the nuclear weapons. We promised each other. However, there is still a country which develops the nuclear weapons and launches missiles. Developing nuclear weapons to show off the power of your own country shouldn't be accepted. Other countries keep pressuring the country in order to make it stop. However, it hasn't stopped yet and America started to give more pressure against its act of provocation. They are about to have a fight. There is a possibility that Japan will be affected. I think those countries don't think of others. They just care

about themselves. Things we can do while living is caring about one's own family, friends, and even other people we don't know. Through my travels, I gained the thought that the world can be changed depending on each one's way of thinking.

Should Not Forget

Kanaoka Junior High School 2nd Grade

Reika Kato

The Atomic Bomb Dome was on TV. Every time I see it, I remembered my trip to Hiroshima.

It was the summer when I was 4th grader. I thought, "What is this broken building?" It was my first impression of the Dome. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was neatly kept and there were many monuments for victims of the atomic bomb. After I looked around Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, my mind toward the Atomic Bomb Dome and my feelings to pray in front of the monuments changed a lot. I learned about the cruelty and sadness of the atomic bomb there.

The atomic bomb damages broad area such as hundreds kilometers. It burns everything including people and buildings. The only thing it can do is making everything miserable.

My great grandmother told me the story of the war. It was about when the B29 bombers dropped firebombs in Numazu. She saw three firebombs were dropped on her house. She was a pregnant and had one child at that time. It was very hard for her to carry one child on her back while having a baby in her belly. She spent a night by the river and walked to Shimotogari to get on a horse and carriage owned by her relatives. Then, she went to Atano in Gotemba where her parents lived. Japan accepted the unconditional surrender on August 15th and the war was over. At the end of her story, she said while crying, "I felt at ease when the war was over. However, I lost one child because of the war. I really wish for a world without any wars." She still remembered a lot about the war even after 72 years has passed since the war. I thought she was very scared of the war, and couldn't forget about it.

I visited Peace Memorial Park in Okinawa in this summer. As I walked under strong sunshine and in warm wind, I found many monuments. I looked at them with stunned eyes. Each monument had a name of a prefecture. The shape of them were changed by each prefecture. The guide taught me, "This is because soldiers for Battle of Okinawa were from every prefecture." I thought the soldiers for Battle of Okinawa were only from Okinawa. So, I was very surprised about it. I also went to the Pacific Ocean side. I was surprised again that there were more monuments. Every victim's name was

carved on the monuments. I lost my words when I saw those names. Shurijo Castle which was registered as a World Heritage site was burned at Battle of Okinawa. It was rebuilt in 1992 and, now, it is beautiful castle. If there were no wars, the castle could remain in its original condition for years. Wars make more people sad and take a symbol from the country. I think we shouldn't have wars again.

One war took many people's lives and brought many people heartache. We should never have one. The things we can do now are understanding the tragedy of the war we had, telling the story to next generation, and making the peaceful world without wars. We still have countries which are having wars in the world. It means that there are many people losing their lives. We should learn more and more about how precious each life is.

Inheritance of Will

Ooka Junior High School 3rd Grade

Miku Okabe

Peace. What do you imagine from this word? Do you imagine white pigeons as a symbol of happiness, blue sky, cherry blossom in full bloom, or something else?

I think I often have chances to think about peace recently. For example, the topic of various classes is related to peace. I also had a chance to watch the video about people's life during the war. I have learned about it in several ways since I became a 3rd grader. I had negative feeling about the war such as "I don't want to accept any more" so I tended not to listen or see every time the war came up as a topic. I even thought that we didn't need to learn more about the war because all of us already knew the war was not right. However, one thing changed my idea and feeling for learning about the war and peace.

I visited my grandparents for Bon holidays during the summer vacation. I noticed one news with the words of "Today is the anniversary of the end of the war" when I watched TV. My grandmother who watched TV with me started to talk, "We should talk about the war even though you might have listened about it many times." The story was almost same as every year. However, I felt differently this year. I was more interested in the war. It might be because I had many chances to know about it before listening to the story. For example, I was impressed with the story when her family evacuated to Tohoku district before the end of the war. They didn't have enough food except sweet potatoes. They had too many sweet potatoes at that time so they still didn't want to eat them. She also told me that the place the family stayed was attacked on the next day of her leaving. Other people who were still there didn't survive. They

still didn't have enough food after the war. They mashed decaying rice and mixed with water to make rice dumplings. They tasted awful but her family needed to eat them to live. She knew and experienced many fierce things and could tell them to me. I could understand more about the war than studying at school. My grandmother is the person who is close to me so all stories seemed real for me. It was also easy for me to understand the fear of the war. I noticed it and started to think that we need someone who can tell about the war after the generation of my grandmother is gone. I also thought that there shouldn't be people like me who tended not to listen or see the war. My ideas are related to the things I was surprised about.

The thing I was surprised about was the truth that my grandmother was born 4 years before the end of the war. It means she didn't remember much about the time around the end of the war. However, she could tell me many things about the war. She was also told these stories by people who experienced the war. Now, she told me, her granddaughter, the stories. They are not just old stories. I thought they are an inheritance of will from the previous generation. I felt tension and I have an enormous responsibility. The next people who play a role like my grandmother has done will be us. I think I should see and listen more about the war rather than avoiding them. I understand why we need to learn about the war.

When I watched the movies such as "Barefoot Gen" or "Faithful Elephants" in my class, entire the class went quiet and some students even started to cry. I think, of course, remembering the contents of the movies is important for us. It is also important for us to remember what we felt when we watched them. It is not easy for us to get rid of all nuclear weapons from the world, or make the world peaceful. However, there is still one thing we can do. I think it is important for us to make an effort to keep doing the inheritance of will.

Peace. My grandmother imagined the daily life in peaceful circumstances from this word. We should appreciate happiness we are having now as well as telling the misery of the war.

Meaning of Peace and its Promotion

Ooka Junior High School 3rd Grade Takahiro Kanazawa

August in 1945. It was the month close to the end of the war. In the month, the war was over even though Japan tried to desperately resist against enemies. It was the historical month. Not only The Pacific War, there have been many wars or conflicts in the world. What is "peace" in present society? I decided to think of the efforts we need

to keep and protect peace in the world.

What condition can be “peace?” There is no war, and is peaceful and quiet. I think lots of people think these things at first. What is the opposite word to “peace?” In my opinion, peace is the condition that all people in the world keep a certain level of freedom and exist together. Of course, the concept of peace is abstract so everyone cannot think of same condition. Each of us has different idea. We should accept others' idea and help each other. Some people would say that is the condition of peace. However, could we say it is peaceful if we were happy with hurting or oppressing others? I don't think we can say that. The world couldn't be safety if we let others be exposed to dangers in order to seek our own safety. The reason why I mentioned that “peace is the condition that all people in the world keep a certain level of freedom” above was for balancing the rights between self and others. The rights and advocations of self and others are not always working out. When we have different ideas, we need to search for a compromise while considering both conditions and not discriminating on the basis of gender or position. We sometime need mediators for working it out. This system helps people a lot for people to socialize and prevent any conflicts. Therefore, I would say that peace is the condition in which people accept various ways of life and thinking for each other, don't harm others, and are treated equally and evenly. I like to keep writing based on my definition.

What effort do we need to protect and keep peace? Recently, activities of PKO or UN NGO in Africa and other developing countries are covered in the news. Those global activities are impactful but they are not easy for junior high school student to join. I think I should think of things around me rather than things in the world. For example, do I help others in my family? Do I not do things that make my friends reluctant? I think I could spread peace only if I helped others in trouble. Of course, peace will come true by supporting the people who are keeping peace in any ways such as donation or encouragement. It is also important for us to live with others, not only seek our own benefits. When we talk about what we can do for making the world peaceful, we often discussed that we don't use nuclear weapons or have any wars. However, those issues are too big to solve. They need a time and lots of effort. I like to introduce the effort that is not so difficult and each one of us can do. This is very simple. It's greeting. We should just try to greet everyone we meet from morning to night. It would be better if we could have some conversations, too. Both people who greet others and are greeted by others can feel very good. Then, we would like to try to greet more people on next day. The circle of greeting would be bigger and bigger. Communication with others would increase and, as a result, we can have a great time. In this way, I think we can spread peace.

It would be impossible for us to make world peace if we didn't make effort to reach it, even though we keep imagining what peace is. Let's make world peace together by ourselves.

The War is Fading Away

Shizuura Elementary and
Junior High School

9th Grade

Kanon Sato

I didn't understand what "the war" was when I was a young child. I just considered, "There was a big fight a long time ago." I had watched some movies and dramas about the war, but I couldn't imagine it as a real thing that happened in Japan.

However, I began to understand its fear and misery while studied about the war since I became a junior high school student. Things I learned about "the war" were more serious and strict than what I thought when I was a young child. I was very shocked. Since then, I started to want to learn about the war more and more. It was the first time for me to think that way.

The destination of our school trip was Okinawa. I studied about Battle of Okinawa for my research beforehand.

I couldn't believe what happened at the battle at first because I didn't know much about the war. I studied about the "Himeyuri students" well. The Himeyuri students consisted of the female students from Okinawa Teacher's School and the students of Okinawa Daiichi Female High School. They were the military nurses as well as high school students. They worked very hard for soldiers in the bunker, which was filled with damp air and got darker and darker as you go further inside. It was just like an ant colony. They did lots of work there. Cleaning the bunker, feeding soldiers, giving medicine to them, and even digging the hole to make the bunker bigger were their jobs. The amount of their jobs were getting more and more as the war became more and more fierce. Many soldiers died because of manpower shortage. Throwing away those dead bodies while avoiding the attacks by enemies was also their job. After their hard work for the military, an order of dissolution was given to them. They believed that the war was over and they worked very hard for their lives. However, Japan abandoned them because there was no chance of winning. The country didn't let them surrender so lots of them had to kill themselves. I was very shocked at the truth. I was very scared and got chilled when I imagined if I were them. Why did innocent nations and students have to be victims? Sadness filled up my heart.

I went to Okinawa with those feelings and thoughts. I could feel the real fear of the

war which was impossible to feel from resources in Okinawa. I couldn't stop crying when I read the last notes of the students which was displayed at Himeyuri Peace Museum. That was not only because they were poor or there was misery. I could feel their feelings and thoughts which I couldn't understand from my research beforehand. This experience was not only at Himeyuri Peace Museum.

When I visited and went into Abuchiragama, the atmosphere was suddenly changed. I felt clearly the insecurity, sorrow, and fear of people at that time while walking in darkness and quietness which I had never experienced. I could imagine the scenes as if I were there at that time. I think it was because I could think of the war in their position.

I didn't know anything about the war. We are living in “peace” that the people during the war wished so much. Peace we can have now is existing because they tried hard to have and keep it.

There are still many people who don't know about the war. There are also many people who don't understand how important our lives are. I learned the importance of peace and people's lives from my studies. I think the thing I can do now is tell the importance of peace to others.

It is our mission to keep peace. The value of our mission can be understood by people who learned about the war. That is why, I think, we should know about the war. It is the wrong idea that we think wars are not our business because Japan is not involved in any wars. It is the time to learn about the war because we are not involved in any wars now.

Peace

Shizuura Elementary and
Junior High School

9th Grade

Kotone Serizawa

I went to Okinawa for our school trip. My image of Okinawa was “fun” but I often heard the word “peace.”

It was my first time to be in Okinawa. Its ocean was beautiful and it had lots of nature. People in Okinawa were very fine and cheerful. I saw some people who were singing and dancing. I thought Okinawa was a very good place.

Okinawa used to have a battle even though it is very fine now. It was the Battle of Okinawa which was held between March and July in 1945. It was a ground war and there was a lot of damage.

According to the people who let me stay, the American military landed on the island

of Iejima. Most people of the island escaped and hid in the Gama cave. I was taken to the sites of the war. Every site shocked me a lot. Gama was very dark, and I could see some marks of grenades or cannon fire on the buildings. The island of Iejima was the center of the Battle of Okinawa.

The damages of the Battle of Okinawa were not only these things. The American military landed on main island of Okinawa and headed south. The people and injured soldiers stayed in Aburachigama, which played role of hospital. There were students called “Himeyuri students” in Aburachigama. I heard that they worked for injured soldiers all day. They must have had a very hard time that I couldn't imagine. If I were them, I couldn't endure it. We should not forget about Himeyuri students who kept saving people in the darkness with the sound of bombshells.

Not only things were damaged by the battle. 200,000 people including American soldiers died in the Battle. The people were told, “Kill yourself rather than being captured” so many people decided to kill themselves. As the American military moved further toward the south, the people didn't have a place to escape. Those people decided to kill themselves while saying, “It's for our country. It's for the Emperor.” When I imagined the scene, I felt very sad and wondered why Japan at that time didn't have the same idea as now.

I asked a person, who let me stay in Okinawa, about the war. That person's mother experienced the war. The mother often told the person about the war, and the story was unforgettable. According to the story, the mother saw the American military land on the island of Iejima. She also could see the American military anywhere and often heard the sound of attacking. I was very shocked at each story. The person's facial expression was also impressed me a lot. The person looked sad sometime even though she tried to keep smiling. The stories were not only about the experiences but also about the base. The person repeated, “If there were no bases in Okinawa, the Battle of Okinawa would not have happened.” Kadena Air Base in Okinawa was used by the American military. It is still used by them even though its space is smaller than it used to be. According to the neighbors, its noise is terrible and they are always afraid that something might be dropped from the sky. I think it is the opinion of the people living near the base.

Henoko Base also became an issue, recently. Its construction is progressing in spite of people in Okinawa not agreeing with it. I heard, “The base will be completed with the power of the government even though we disagree with it.” I thought there should be more discussion and opinion exchange.

People in Japan can live without wars now. We can go to school, play with friends,

and spend time with family. It is important for us to make a country that will not have any wars again to keep this peaceful life. I think it will also be for people in Okinawa.

Things that Okinawa Wanted to Teach Us

Shizuura Elementary and Junior High School 9th Grade Hizuru Takeuchi

Why was it changed to Okinawa from Kyoto? The destination of our school trip was Okinawa. It was always Kyoto until last year. Honestly, I liked Kyoto better than Okinawa. However, I felt this way only at first. Our class had started to study about Okinawa since the destination was decided. It took many hours and we also discussed about the places we will visit in Okinawa. As a result, we decided to visit many places related to the war.

First, we visited the monument of Himeyuri. There were pictures of each person who died in the war, their bags, surgical knives, clothes, and so on in Himeyuri Peace Museum. Some of them were replicas but we could see the real ones too. When I came to around the exit of the Museum, I could see the interview video of the people who experienced the war. I felt their feelings while I watched their faces such as they miss their friends and not want to remember the war. The reason I thought that way was because each of them cried while telling the story. There were also some people who didn't start to tell. One of them said, "I heard big noise of the bomb. At that moment, my friend who was next to me was..." I had heartache even though I just listened to other's experience. At the same time, I could feel the war was very close to me.

I also visited Aburachigama, which was a cave, and went inside. I was very surprised when I saw the entrance of it. That is because its entrance was much smaller than I expected. We had to bend down to go inside. There were steps at the entrance so we took time to go down. The inside of the cave was bigger than I thought. There were bathrooms, places for storing water, and other things that people used at that time on the ground. Each of us held flashlights to walk and look inside. Once all of us turned off the flashlights, the space became very dark as if I closed my eyes. People during the war didn't have any lights so they had to live in such darkness. I thought they must have had a hard time to live every day. I thought the entrance was so small because they didn't want to be found by enemies. During a war, if people were found by its enemies, they would be in trouble. That is why people had to live quietly. It meant that the people during the war lived quietly in this dark cave. I thought no one could live without pain during the war.

Throughout the trip of Okinawa, I strongly thought that we should never have any wars again. The life during the war must have been much harder than we thought. They didn't have enough food so they were losing energy every day. The only thing they did was waiting for the end of the war. Not only adults had to live like this. New born babies, children, and old people also had to live in the same situation. We studied about the war at school. However, I found its seriousness and pain were much bigger than I thought when I visited Okinawa, the place that had the war.

My opinion and thought toward the war was changed. I thought I underestimated the fear of the war. After the school trip, I thought about the war again. Only word I found was “fear.” I wanted to spread our thought toward the war to many generations. I think the destination of school trip next year will also be Okinawa. I expect students who will go to Okinawa next year to spread the things they learn and feel to their families or friends. I also want them to appreciate the life we can have now.

I thought each of us should feel the weight of the war, and tell the next generation in order not to have any wars. We also should understand the feeling of the people who experienced the war and keep the “peace” we have now forever.

Peaceful Japan

Ashitaka Junior High School 2nd Grade

Tomoki Sugino

What is a peaceful world?

If I asked this question, everyone would say,

“A world without wars.”

Is a world without wars peaceful?

Is that because no one feels misery?

Is that because there will be no victims?

Thinking about peace.

Everyone knows the answer.

However, world peace hardly comes true.

My friend said it like this.

Peace is very simple and very complicated.

Thinking about peace.

I will have the same answer after thinking.

Even though many people have the same answers.

Even though many people wish for peace.

World peace hardly comes true.

Thinking about peace.

It means “flatten” and “comfort.”

Everyone can be equally comfortable.

Everyone wishes for the world peace.

A world where people don't need power.

A world where people's mind gets together.

Everyone wishes for world peace.

How about Japan?

“Japan is peaceful.”

Most Japanese people think this way.

Is Japan truly peaceful?

Thinking about a peaceful Japan.

Does anyone take the advantage?

Does anyone take the disadvantage?

Do we make a decision with discussion rather than force?

Do we cooperate and help each other?

When everyone imagines a peaceful Japan,

Peace will come and spread in front of us.

Thinking from Bombing of Shizuoka in World War II

Hara Junior High School 1st Grade Kazutoshi Takahashi

I don't know much about the war. The only things I know about the war are taking many lives away, bringing sorrow, and that we should never have one again. However, there are many kinds of wars such as conflicts, civil wars, or terrors in the world.

Those wars are taking many people's lives.

I found one article in newspaper on August 9th. The title was, “Nagasaki. 72 years after the atomic bomb dropped.” As I read the article, I was surprised at one thing. It was, “The number of people on the victim's name list of the atomic bomb is 175,743 in total.” That number is almost same as the population of Numazu which has about 190,000 people. It means if the atomic bomb was dropped in Numazu today, only 20,000 people could survive. When I thought this way, I could imagine how terrible

the atomic bomb was. There are some survivors of the atomic bomb but lots of them are still suffering the after effect. I prayed while thinking, "I will never forget about the misery of the war," "I wish all nuclear weapons would disappear from the world."

I visited "Shizuoka Heiwa Shiryo Center," the resource center of peace in Shizuoka to know about the war close to me. When I entered the center, I found the resources about the Manchurian Incident. I had thought, "Japan was also attacked by Manchuria." However, I was wrong. Japan attacked Manchuria. I found that Japan did air-raids on Manchuria and China for a long time. I had thought Japan was a victim of the air-raids for a long time but it was also a victimizer. As I was going further inside, there was a picture of starved Japanese soldier. The picture was very cruel and I wanted to look away. I also found the truth that most of 2,300 war deaths were because of starving. I could understand how the war was terrible from this number. There were paneled pictures of the Bombing of Shizuoka in World War II. After leaving Guam island, 123 B-29 bombers flew low into the sky of Shizuoka and started to bomb. The fire spread from Shizuoka station to the town of Bancho in a moment. It was like a storm of fire. The bombs dropped at this time were M69 firebombs and M47 firebombs. Total amount of them was 868 tons. 60% area of main town was burned within 2 hours and more than 2,000 people died. The town was completely ruined. When I saw these paneled pictures, I couldn't believe my eyes. I knew how terribly indiscriminate bombers were. I thought again and again, "So many lives were taken away in such a short time... Most victims were not related to the war but they became the targets of B-29 bombers," and "Why? How? What for...?" What would be remaining after except sorrow and suffering? Wars separate families, take the future, hope, and precious lives away from us. If we could solve problems by discussion, not by wars, we wouldn't need to have wars. We don't need to show off own power or ability to other countries. It is the best way for each of us to be satisfied with our own territory, not to demand more territory in order to live peacefully. I think we can decrease the chance of wars in this way.

At last, I saw the pictures drawn by the people who experienced the war. The pictures were about burning buildings, air-raid shelters, injured people, and burnt people who couldn't be identified as male or female. All pictures were drawn truthfully. When I looked at the picture, I could find the scene after the air-raid. The drawn pictures described bloody bodies and burned bodies well. They told me how cruel it was. Only the people who experienced the war could draw those pictures.

I had to accept the fear of the war after I looked at the cruel scenes such as the pictures drawn by the people who experienced, things, and witness it even though I didn't know much about the war.

After 72 years has passed since the end of the war, the number of people who experienced the war is decreasing. It is getting hard for us to tell about the war to the next generations. I decided to be the one who would tell about the war in order not to lose its substance because I learned about the war. I wish all wars will finish as soon as possible and the entire world would be peaceful. I prayed on August 15th, the anniversary of the end of the war, while wishing these my thoughts.

Only Because of Peaceful Now

Hara Junior High School 3rd Grade

Karin Miwa

What is “war?” I think I had never noticed this word which is supposed to be on every dictionary until I became a 3rd grader of junior high school. I have had many chances to know and think well about the war in different ways such as reading stories, studying the history, and singing the song about the war.

I read the story, “Black Rain” in my Japanese class. It was 8:15 in the morning on August 6th, 72 years ago. The atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The atomic bomb was not identified and just called, “new type of bomb” at that time. The city of Hiroshima was destroyed in a moment by this unidentified bomb. About 200,000 of people's precious lives were taken away. The diary written by the bombed family of three was based on the novel, “Black Rain.” There were experiences and records of people who were bombed at separate places from the center of the bombing. The novel described in a detached tone the people who were damaged both physically and mentally. All characters in the story didn't have a way to know what happened or what damages occurred. It was no wonder because only the people who were near the center of the bombing could know what happened, but they died immediately.

I studied about the atomic bomb. The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima was called “Uranium bomb.” Gamma radiation was produced at the time of the bombing. If it hit a person's palm, it would kill the cells and make a hole on one's palm. It is told that people at the center of the bombing were killed by this radiation in one second. After the bombing, there were heat waves and blast waves on the ground. People were blown away and burnt. After 30 minutes, the city of Hiroshima filled with fire and the screams of people, and had black rain which contained lots of radiation. The 30km oval shaped area from north to west had this black rain. The black rain was thick so it couldn't be washed away. We often called the ordinary rain as, “blessed rain” but the black rain was, “rain of the devil.” The black rain also fell onto people who were looking for their families or were saving others. Those people, of course, didn't know

what it was and what the black rain would cause to them.

The atomic bomb brought many indescribable difficulties to people's physical and mental health. Its damages would never be healed after long time has passed. We should never forget the atomic bomb which brought sorrow, suffering, anger, heartache, and fear to people. I thought that from the bottom of my heart.

However, there are many countries which have and hold nuclear weapons like atomic bombs. The countries considered as the leaders of the world also have those weapons. There are more than 10,000 nuclear weapons in the world. Everyone in the world is supposed to think that we should never have any wars again, but we cannot say that we are sure that any wars will occur.

Do we really need nuclear weapons in the world? I don't think so. Japan, as the only victim of the atomic bombs, can advocate that we should not use nuclear weapons. That is why we have a national policy such as the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. I think Japan should appeal the elimination of nuclear weapons more and more.

I know it would not be enough to have world "peace" if we could get rid of all nuclear weapons. I often see the news about terrors, conflicts, and civil wars which are caused by differences of ethics or religion, and self-leading competition between countries. It is true that eliminating these fights is more difficult than that we thought. However, it is also true that we should face the wars and help and cooperate with each other for having world peace. I think Japan should be the leader of this and it would be the wishes of the people who died by the atomic bombs.

72 years has passed since the end of the war. It is wrong to say that it is not our business because Japan today is peaceful and not involved with any wars. We can have time to think about it because we are in peace and not involved with any wars. What is "war?" What is "life?" It is important for us to think about them with our families or friends. Knowing things happened in the world is also important. We can get one step closer to peace when we start to think and know.

I decided to learn more about the war and look for something I can do. I like to consider peace as my issue. I will keep wishing for peace and live with a dream. I believe that world peace will come true someday.

Calling for Peace

Hara Junior High School 3rd Grade

Yuuho Yamamoto

Human beings have had many wars again and again from time immemorial. Japan had many wars until 72 years ago. There are still many countries having wars every

day in the world. I feel that it might be impossible for us to have days without wars.

On the other hand, many people who experienced the war keep telling their experience to the people in the world in order to protest wars. I used to hear the story about the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum from my mother. I also had chances to study about the war at school. I read the story, "Black Rain" in my Japanese class and I studied about the war in my social study class and music class, too. Therefore, I decided to visit Hiroshima this summer.

The Manchurian Incident occurred in 1931. Then, 10 years after that, Japan attacked on Pearl Harbor and it became the beginning of The Pacific War. The course of the war was getting more and more difficult for Japan in a short time. On August 6th in 1945 when Japan was expected to be defeated in the war, the bomb dropped in Hiroshima was the atomic bomb, it was called "the devil's weapon."

I had a chance to hear the story from a person who experienced the atomic bomb. According to the story, all the citizens had a morning which was no different from any other day. At 8:15, the person felt the flash of light and the person's body floated in the air at same time. The body was flown away by strong blast wave in another moment. Most people who were within a 500m radius from the center of explosion died immediately. Some people who didn't die immediately also died in a few days. People who were closer to the center of explosion had worse symptom than people who were apart from the center. The scene right after the atomic bomb was dropped was an inferno. There were many people whose skin hung down and body was covered with blood. They walked around the city while groaning painfully. The city became full with those injured people and burnt dead bodies. The scene was beyond my imagination and my body started to tremble with fear.

After hearing the story, I started to look at resources displayed at the museum. There were explanations about whole picture of the atomic bomb and the background to dropping the atomic bomb. I also looked at things victims left behind, pictures of victims, pictures of the city, people in Hiroshima after the atomic bomb dropped, and drawn pictures of the atomic bomb which were drawn by the citizens. There were people suffering from injuries or burns and the city was completely destroyed in those pictures. There was one picture that stayed in my mind. It was the picture of one mother trying to rescue her child who was under a collapsed house by the blast wave. In the picture, she tried hard to rescue her child even though she was surrounded by fire. She didn't seem to care about her own life. I was very impressed with that picture.

In the story of "Black Rain," a similar situation was described. One father couldn't rescue his son. So, he abandoned his son and fled by himself. The son could luckily flee after his father left. Then, they met again and had an awkward moment. I

remembered this scene in the story and wished the mother in the picture could have helped her child and lived together. Would it be possible for me to keep helping someone without regard to my own life if I were her? I cried for her attitude of her not caring about her own life and kept helping her child who must have felt the fear of insecurity under the collapsed house.

I also felt the strong wish of the victims and their families for the elimination of nuclear weapons when I looked at the 20,000 things they left behind. Especially when I looked at the things junior high school students left behind, I thought their burnt and bloodstained clothes expressed their disappointed feelings of them having to give up their future dreams and hopes. They also showed their mothers' deep sorrow after losing their children. I thought each item told me victims' disappointed feelings of their lives being suddenly taken away and their heartbreak which was similar to the obsessiveness of the wish to live. It was as if those victims' souls were still by their belongings and called for something. I felt a tightening in my chest.

It is a very difficult thing to get rid of all wars and nuclear weapons from the world. Today, there are about 10,000 nuclear weapons in the world and some of them are hydrogen bombs, and have eight times the power of the atomic bomb dropped in Hiroshima. Technology to produce bombs has significantly progressed these 72 years. The progress of technology or science should exist for making people's lives better. However, some countries have progressed their technology or science for attacking, threatening, or destroying other countries.

Even so, we, Japanese people, should never forget about the atomic bombs dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I think only Japanese people can appeal how terrible nuclear weapons are and how painful it is to be the victims of them because Japan is the only country to have suffered nuclear attacks. I decided to keep learning about the war and the atomic bomb and tell what I learned to others as one young person born in Japan who didn't experience the war for avoiding same tragedy we had before.

“True Peace” is...

Ukishima Junior High School 3rd Grade

Haruto Suzuki

“What is peace?” When people are asked this question, I think many people would answer like, “There is no war,” or “There is no terror.” When I looked it up in the dictionary, it defined, “Without any wars or conflicts.” I also thought same way before.

However, now I think we cannot say we have “peace” only if we “don't have any wars, conflicts, or terrors.” I think there are more things we need to feel “peace” and

live with security.

Of course, it's a given fact that there are no wars or terrors. If people are involved in wars or terrors, no one could feel "peace." It is important that there are no wars because war means "scramble for life." Japan used to have and experience war. It was "the fear of the nuclear." The atomic bombs were dropped in Hiroshima on August 6th, and in Nagasaki on August 9th. Those bombs took many precious lives away in a moment. The number of victims was more than 200,000 people. It shouldn't happen again. That is why Japan should keep appealing. We also need to make an effort as much as possible to avoid despicable and miserable wars.

I think there is one more thing we need. People should be "peace." There is the other meaning of "peace" in the dictionary. That is, "There is no worry or struggling. Be in calm." If the condition without wars meant "peace," I think today's Japan is in "peace." However, if the condition without worry or struggling meant "peace," I think today's Japan is not in "peace." If each of us is in "peace," there would not be people who are bullied by others and would kill themselves because of bullying in Japan. However, we have such people today in Japan. Bullying occurs because we are not equal. There are many people who are discriminated in the world. The world with discrimination cannot have "peace." If one person is in "peace," which means calm and without discrimination, I think "peace" would start and spread from that person.

I think there would be no wars or bullying if people in the world became equal. I consider "true peace" as people in the world being in balance and equal. It is important for each of us to be conscious in of being "peace" to make people in the world in balance and equal. I believe that an effort by each of us will lead the world to "true peace." An effort by each of us might be very small. However, those small efforts would lead us to "true peace." I want everyone to believe it and take one step.

Believe in Peace

Ukishima Junior High School 3rd Grade

Misato Togashi

I was hospitalized for one week during last summer vacation. It was my first time to be hospitalized, so I had many things to worry about. However, one female doctor saved me from my anxiousness. She was my primary doctor and explained my disease well. She was very fun and kind. When she took a blood sample from me, she played music loudly for me. I could feel comfortable to spend time at the hospital because of her. Then, I thought I want to be a doctor like her.

There are many children who have more severe diseases than mine. Some of them

don't have a cure and die, and others are still suffering from their own disease. As it compares to the old days, medical care quality has been improved a lot. The number of patient who will die is decreasing. However, we still have many diseases that we don't know well and the ways to cure. I think children who are affected by those diseases must think why they have them or there is no way to cure them. Not only those children, but their parents also must have desperate feelings.

Japan is believed to be a peaceful country. I don't agree with it. I understand there are some people have to die because of diseases. However, recently, I often hear the news about abused children. Some parents kill their own children as a result of abuse. I am very surprised with this truth and wonder why those parents can abuse their own children. Living is the happiest thing for people suffering from diseases. Parents who can kill or hurt own children must have never thought of people with diseases. I cannot forgive those parents. Japan should seriously face to this problem and find solutions.

I wish these problems will decrease as much as possible. I also wish an environment where there will be no people who are abused and suffer from poverty and all people feel peace in their hearts.

I want to be a doctor who can save children struggling with unidentified disease. I also want to be a doctor like my primary doctor. I thought I want of being a doctor when I was once her patient. I wish my patients in future will think they want to be a doctor like me.

I hope the world will be at peace at the end of these violence and sufferings.

Our Role

Imazawa Junior High School 2nd Grade

Kaede Ishikawa

In September, 1939, misery, sadness, and long war started. I don't know about suffering, sorrow, and pain that people experienced during the war. Of course, I understand what it was because I watched the drama or studied about the war.

My great grandmother on my mother's side is the only person I could ask about the war.

She lived in Tokyo at that time. My great grandfather was a glasswork artisan. When he received a draft notice, they had one child and my great grandmother had another one in her belly. They must have happy life. It is hard for me to imagine how they felt when he received the draft notice.

My great grandmother still clearly remembers the morning of his drafting day. She couldn't stop crying and sent him off until she couldn't see him.

My great grandfather was no longer with us so I couldn't ask him how he felt at that moment. I imagined he looked his family very well not to forget how they looked like before leaving. It might be the last moment to see each other. If I were him, I could have suffered from such sadness. I couldn't leave my family which is the most important thing for me if I was told that I might not see them again.

My great grandmother tells me same stories every time I asked her. She clearly remembers about the war about 70 years ago since the end of the war. It is about my great grandfather. He could make it back alive to life.

My great grandfather worked on the battle ship as a member of navy. One day, the battle ship was attacked by battle planes of America. He was working on the deck at that time and got his leg injured. His leg was almost broken away. However, it was lucky it wasn't worse. Because he got life-threatening injury, he could spend life with my great grandmother after the war. She couldn't stop crying from happiness when he could make it back alive. I think he was also happy to hold his children again. She always tells me, "If he couldn't make it back alive, you would be not here."

I visited Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Atomic Bomb Dome in this summer. I had many things that I didn't know about the war. There were cruel pictures that I tended to look away. The canteen and shoes that were used by soldiers and burnt uneaten lunch box were also displayed. I saw the picture of the boy who was holding his dead brother on his back. The watch stopped at the time the bomb was dropped. I was left speechless. These were what people like us experienced 70 years ago.

Every time I listen to the story of my great grandmother, I think we should not let such miserable story of the war disappear. We should keep telling it in future. I think this is our role.

Already 70 Years

Imazawa Junior High School 3rd Grade

Runa Ishida

August 15th in 1945 was the day of the war ended. It was 72 years since then. The number of people who know about Japan during the war is decreasing every year. It is getting more difficult for us to know about it. People would forget about the war if we stopped telling. The memory of the war should not be forgotten and should be passed to the next generations. However, in these days, many people forget that we need to keep telling.

I had many chances to watch news about the war on TV on August 15th last year. The news was about Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, Atomic Bomb Dome, the

stories of people who experienced the war, and so on. Those were not happy and cheerful topics but all of them were necessary for us to listen. However, I found the words, “Since the war ended 70 years ago, we don't need to dredge up memories of the war” commented on SNS. I was very shocked. It is true that it has already passed 70 years. We have the anniversary of the end of the war for not forgetting the war even though such a long time has passed. It is important for us to remember what happened in Japan. Existence of people who lived in terrible situation that I can't even imagine and under the fear that they didn't know when it was over is disappearing. My grandmother's older sister is one of those people. According to her story, she couldn't get any food by ration so she had to exchange things for food or get food at black markets. Today is very convenient age. We don't have such problems to get food. That is why the consciousness for the war is disappearing and it might be no surprise. However, I would say that it's because we have to learn and tell about the war again and again. We have many ways such as movies, books, or Internet to know well about the war. As you learn about the war more and more, you would know how terrible the war was. We would notice that we should not forget about it. It is not fun to dredge up bad memories of the past but we can still learn important things from the war.

Not only Japanese people but also people in the world became victims of the war. People lived in severe environment that we cannot imagine today. These are our past that we should not forget. “Since the war was ended 70 years ago...” We need to tell next generation the war. It is necessary for peaceful Japan to be interested in and learn about the war. I think it won't be changed after 80 years, 90 years, or even 100 years. Each person can do only small things but we need such small things about the war to keep peaceful Japan in decades.

I decided to know well about the war and tell others what I learned.

Passing Down Peace from Generations to Generations

Imazawa Junior High School 3rd Grade

Riko Niida

“It would be good if there were no wars and nuclear weapons.” I always think this way every August.

Wars have too much to lose. We have nothing to gain from them. 72 years ago, the atomic bombs were dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. My grandparents were born in Hiroshima so they often talked about it since they were children. I also heard the story from my grandfather of the atomic bomb dropped. One day, when I watched TV, I saw some people who couldn't answer the days of the atomic bomb dropped in

Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Is that because of times? Is that because of Japan having peace? Even so, we should not forget about these days of the atomic bombs.

It is wrenching for me when I think of people during the war. It was ordinary for them to dedicate their lives to the country. They had to separate from their family or friends for devoting their lives. In spite of such miserable war we had, there are still wars in the world. Many people become victims of those wars. It is unbelievable for us today.

I hear the words such as nuclear, missile, terror from the news program almost every day. I think the world is in serious condition. Development of nuclear or missile doesn't seem to stop. Any terrors also don't seem to finish. Japan as the only nation to suffer atomic bombings, keeps delivering message of our experience. However, some people are still developing nuclear or missile and other people are still planning terrors. Don't they feel anything about the message from Japan? If we let them keep doing it, it would be just a matter of time before people in our generation experience wars. I'm afraid of it so much.

Peace is an environment that people can live in safe without any wars. Why is it difficult for people in the world to head toward the goal of peace? I don't understand it. Since the world is so big, I understand that we tend to have issues or problems between races or religions. Different races or religions have different opinions. Besides, some of them want to control others. That's very complicated. Even so, I think we can still solve these problems and understand each other by discussion, not force.

The people who experienced the war and can tell about it are getting older. I think we need to discuss what we can do for protecting peace during school classes.

I heard that the students in Hiroshima have the activities to appeal the elimination of nuclear weapons or importance of peace through international exchange between Japan and America. I think we should succeed the old people who experienced the war and appeal the importance of peace. We need to learn more about the war. There are many young people from foreign countries who think of peace seriously. On the other hand, there are some young Japanese people who are not interested in peace. I feel regretful about it rather than I was wondering.

More foreign people visit Hiroshima every year. However, the number of Japanese people who are visiting Hiroshima for learning about the atomic bomb is decreasing. It is a very sad fact. I want more people to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I think they can gain right information about Hiroshima and Nagasaki and spread what they gain in their countries after they actually visit and look. I think peaceful and safety future without wars and nuclear weapons will come true after the people in the world hold hand each other, discuss well, and understand well of each other. I like to pass down

the story from my grandfather to the next generation because I believe it is the way for such future.

Thought of Okinawa

Kadoike Junior High School 1st Grade

Marumi Bandai

It was middle of August. I arrived in Okinawa with my family. The sky of Okinawa on that day was very clear so we all could refresh. It was the second time for me to visit Okinawa. As well as last time, the atmosphere of Okinawa overwhelmed me. Visiting there was much better than watching it on TV.i

It was very hot and humid even for cicada so they didn't buzz. We went for swimming to Aka Island which was near Zamami Island. It was one of the places which produce lots of victims at the time of Battle of Okinawa. It was also the first place for American military to arrive in Okinawa. However, the ocean which was clear as the sky, in fact, it was clearer than the sky, was very quiet as if it said that waves erased all memories of the war.i

After swimming in the ocean, I met many people who said, "Hello" to us with smiles on the way to the place we stayed. I thought, "There are so many kind and cheerful people." At the same time, I wondered, "Why are they so kind and cheerful even though they have such painful history?" Is their history disappeared or do they try to erase it?i

For finding the answer to my questions, we moved to main island of Okinawa. There were many historical sites so I might find some clues for solving my questions. I visited three places; The Former Japanese Navy Underground Headquarters, Himeyuri Peace Museum and Monument of Himeyuri, and Peace Memorial Park. I thought all places seemed to speak to me, "We should not forget the memories of the war." I saw remains of grenades which were used by people to kill themselves, pictures of victims whose ages were almost same as mine, name lists of many victims, and so on. I understood how miserable the war was. Ordinary citizens of Okinawa were sent to the war and lots of them lost their lives.i

When I looked around Himeyuri Peace Museum, I noticed that the students of Himeyuri believed having war was a right thing and they worked very hard to play own role as abandoning their youth. If I were them, I would like to study more and play more. However, the students of Himeyuri lost their lives at perfect time for studying and playing a lot. It was just about the time.i

When I thought this way, smiles on people I met had different meaning to me. They

didn't either unknow about the war or try to forget about it. They were trying to live without any regrets. Their ancestors who became victims of the war taught them with their lives that we should not have any wars again. I think the smiling people I met accepted and understood their ancestors' thought such as, "They couldn't live even though they wanted." That was why they kept smiling.i

There are many wars or conflicts in the world. Why aren't wars or conflicts disappeared in spite of many miserable messages from the people who experienced the war? I think that it's because it is difficult for people to see around themselves. In Battle of Okinawa, each life had gone as if it was a shooting star. Some countries have strained relations with other countries because of different opinion they have. Of course, it is important for them to protect own country. However, they should think of what other countries think, what situation they are in, and what reasons they have for their action as well as advocating own demands. I think all countries need to discuss based on these ideas.i

I think the world cannot be changed forever if we have easy ideas such as, "It's not our business because we are only junior high school students" or "We cannot tell our opinion because it's the matter for politicians and countries." Now is the time for us to think what we need. We need to be able to notice and be interested in that each person has different set of values. When we can do it, we can respect others and create peaceful world.i

I will not forget what I learned and thought of it through the trip. I decided to face them and consider them as my issue for peace in future.

I Want to Like Japan More

Kadoike Junior High School 3rd Grade

Nanami Yamada

What is peace? I had never thought well about peace. People today including me can do or eat anything they want. Most people enjoy every day. I consider these days as "ordinary" thing. I think we are peace-addicted. What would happen if there would be a war in front of us? After about 70 years from the end of the war, the number of people who experienced the war is decreasing. Can we imagine that peaceful Japan will not be peaceful anymore? We have seen pictures of people and towns during the war or after the war in our social studies textbook. However, they were just a part of the war. There were more miserable things that happened. During the social studies class, our teacher talked in a dark voice about the facts of the war. It made our class, which was usually powerful, depressed. Japan had other incidents that produced many

victims aside from war. The Great East Japan Earthquake especially impressed me the most. It was when I was in lower grade elementary school. I still remember well after years. My relatives lived in Tohoku area at that time so they told me the damage situations in detail. I started to fear of earthquake even though I had experienced only weak earthquakes. At the same time, I started to think one idea. The Great East Japan Earthquake is not anyone's responsibility. However, wars between people or countries that produce a lot of victim should not occur. I also understand why the people who experienced the war remember about it for long time. They are just like me who still remember about the earthquake. During summer, I often watch TV programs telling about wars. Japan is the only nation to suffer atomic bombing. That is why people from different countries visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I often see them being interviewed on TV. An interview of from an American impressed me. According to the person, the reason why America dropped atomic bomb was, Japan didn't stop the war. That was the fact that the person learned at school in America. However, after looking the Atomic Bomb Dome and the Hiroshima Peace Museum, the person started to wonder if it was a right thing that America did it or not. There were many foreign people who said it was a right thing that America dropped the atomic bomb. However, that American person started to wonder. The interview helped me a lot. I saw other people who were crying happily because of the action done by the former president of America. Those people were victims of the atomic bomb. They were happier than me when I heard the interview.

Unbelievable incident occurred about 70 years ago in Japan. When I look Japan through “the war”, it doesn't seem to be memorable to us. Since I was born in Japan, I should think of the war. There are some people who say that today, Japan will never have any wars. However, I think every country can start the war. That is what people who lost their lives long time ago taught us. I think I should appreciate my “ordinary” life, because I'm capable of doing anything I want. I also feel the value of every day. I would like to know more about the past of Japan to like my country more.

One Step Toward Peace is Our Effort

Nagaisaki Junior High School 2nd Grade

Kyoka Oomura

“The fear of the war was indescribable. Many innocent people continuously lost their lives...” This is what my grandmother talked about the war. I thought the same way, “It was wrong that many innocent people had to die. I can't imagine the same thing happening in Japan today...” Then, I noticed that there are still some countries

having wars at this moment in the world. I started to be interested in the wars Japan had in the past.

I found a lot of information about the war and I was especially interested in one TV program. It was about the suicide attacks. The Suicide attack was one of the ways that pilots attacked enemies with their airplanes. Of course, it was impossible for them to return alive. In the TV program, "the last letters" written by the pilots were also introduced. One of them was looking back on his life and writing about it. The other one wrote their appreciation and apologized to their parents. I could see their last feelings in different types of words. It is unbelievable in today's Japan that people lose their own lives for the country. Sorrow and suffering of their families and friends were immeasurable.

There are some countries involved with wars or terrors in the world and many people in those countries have to die. It means there are hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people who are suffering tremendous pain or sorrow.

Can we do anything to stop making people suffer?

I think Japan is a very peaceful country compared to other countries in the world. Why is Japan so peaceful? I think that is because in the past we had the war. There were many people who went to the war even if they didn't want to and they bled for the country. We also had air-raids and the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Those bombs took many lives in a moment. Japan became a peaceful country because of these experiences.

Do we only apply our experiences to establish peace in Japan? Is it a good idea? I don't think so. There are many countries that have experienced wars. However, I don't think there is a country which has experienced more than Japan has. Japan experienced many types of things; such as the atomic bombs, air-raids, suicide attacks, and much more throughout the war. I think we can share our experiences and sorrow to other countries that are having or starting wars. There are many things that only Japan can share because it knows well about the fear and sorrow of war. That is why I think we, young people or children who have responsibility for Japan in the future, need to learn about the fear and misery of war from people who have experienced war while they are still alive. Then, we should share what we have learned to the world. I believe that countries that are thinking of winning their war by whatever means would change their minds and have compassion if they knew the fear and the devastation caused by the atomic bombs in Japan. If those countries could have compassion, they would start to care about both their enemies and themselves. As a result, they would stop having wars or terrors. The earth will be eventually being peaceful.

All wars should be stopped as soon as possible to have a peaceful earth. I think the

first step towards peace that we, young people or children responsibility for Japan in the future, think well about wars.

I don't know about real wars because I haven't experienced any. However, I'm sure that Japan used to make big mistakes in the past. Why did Japan have the war with America? I can't find the reason for it. Even so, I need to try to think about the war in order to make peace in the future. I would like to do something one step towards peace by gaining information on wars or terrors that have happened in the world.

After Winning the War...

Nagasaki Junior High School 2nd Grade Shinnosuke Yukawa

I watched a TV program about the war in the summer. There were two things that surprised me. First, it was possible for soldiers to send letters to their families. Second, America, which won the war, also had damages.

During World War II, the soldiers who were sent to the war could send letters to their families from Burma or Manchuria. When they didn't get letters from their families, they kept sending letters because they worried that their families might die.

The soldiers drew pictures of the war instead of writing words in their letters because the words that described the war were usually blackened out. The country didn't want to let people know that Japan was at a disadvantage. That was why the words were blacked out. I was surprised with this fact. However, I understood once I knew that the soldiers could strongly decide to return from the war alive because of the letters. It was not easy for them to live alone in the battlefield of the war. They could hold on when they thought of their families who were waiting for them.

I was very surprised at the fact that America, which won the war, also had damages. I had thought that only Japan had big damages, such as Nagasaki and Hiroshima with the atomic bombs. However, there were people who suffered from cancer in America. That was because America also dropped the atomic bomb, which had five hundred times the power, as the experiment. The people who lived near the place of the experiment were called "Downwinders." They proudly looked at the atomic bomb from a hill. The family had 6 children and 5 of them died of cancer. 40 to 45% of people who died during the experiment suffered from cancer. The percentage of people who have cancer in the village is still quite high as compared to the percentage of cancer in America.

I noticed that it was not only the countries that lost the war but also the countries that won had damages when I knew the story of the Downwinders. Some damages

would remain in the winning countries.

There is a country which is actively doing nuclear experiments. That country is North Korea. According to them, their experiments would not affect their nation because they are done under the ground. However, diseases called Kishinbyo and Obakebyo have become an epidemic in Kilju Country. These diseases don't have cure. As a result, some people escaped to other countries such as South Korea from North Korea. The reason for Kishinbyo was drinking water from the underground in Kilju Country. Its symptoms were headaches or stomachaches. However, people who were suffering from Kishinbyo were given a normal diagnosis.

I want North Korea to stop the nuclear experiments because the place of experiments also has damages. I am also afraid that they might have a war using nuclear weapons with America. If that would happen, damages would be brought to many countries in the world.

When I heard the words, "There are some damages because of a war," I always thought of losing countries. However, it is not only losing countries. Damages, which can last for years, will be brought to winning countries too. There are more than 15,000 nuclear weapons that can cause those damages. Especially, Russia and America, both own more than 5,000 nuclear weapons. I want to get rid of all nuclear weapons in the world. There are nuclear weapons because there are wars. I think we should not have wars again.

Things I Learned at Okinawa

Secondary School of
Numazu-Ichiritsu Numazu 2nd Grade Miku Kawaguchi
High School

Okinawa. It was our dream stage and the place we had set as our goal. That was because the national basketball championship was held in Okinawa. We made it and placed in the top 16. After the championship, we did sightseeing in Okinawa. I was shocked at that time.

We visited Shuri Castle and Shikina-en. They were very beautiful places and registered as World Heritage sites. I was very impressed by them. However, when I knew the truth, I was surprised and shocked. The truth was, that both Shuri Castle and Shikina-en were destroyed a lot during the war. I had known of the Battle of Okinawa by watching TV. However, the war was unfamiliar to me until then. I might avoid the fear of the war. After coming back from Okinawa, I kept thinking about the war. I

decided to study about the Battle of Okinawa.

The Battle of Okinawa started in 1945, 72 years ago. It was the largest and the last fight between Japan and America. 200,000 people which was 40% of the citizens of Okinawa at that time, died in the battle. Young children and women also became victims. There was a group of Himeyuri students and it had 240 16-year-old female students. 136 students were killed or committed suicide. I was shocked when I looked the pictures of children in Okinawa. They were very skinny, small, and looked sad. Most of those children died of malnutrition. I found the truth and it was hard to imagine today. While I was studying, I found the town named Chatan. It was the place where American military arrived. I remembered there was a team of junior high school students from Chatan at the championship. I thought the students I met might have grandfathers, grandmothers, or great grandfathers who were involved in the Battle as soldiers and they might not be with them anymore. When I imagined their heartache, my heart was filled with sadness.

I have regrets now. I didn't have a chance to listen to the story of the war from my great grandmother. She had a hard time escaping, trying to protect her 5 children during the war. That is only what I know about her experience of the war. If I listened to the story of the war from her, I could tell the misery of the war to others. That is my regret.

I appreciated that I could play basketball in Okinawa where the battle occurred. Okinawa has become cheerful and pleasant place. However, we should not forget there was the Battle and start any wars again. There are people who are suffering through wars in the world. I decided to think what we, living happy and in peace, can do and what peace is for those people. I believe that is the key for avoiding wars.

Until the Day of "End"

Secondary School of
Numazu-Ichiritsu Numazu 3rd Grade
High School

Shiori Saito

I don't know about the war. Not just things I studied in my class, never thought of people who were still suffering. I researched the historical reasons of the war and I would like to introduce the story of my great grandmother who experienced the war and told me the story with tears.

My great grandmother was born in 1935, she is 82 years old. She was only 10 years old at the end of the war. She was from Tokyo and experienced the Great Tokyo Air

Raids which had 106 air-raids. She saw B29 bombers above her head and the cylindrical things dropping from them. She evacuated to Sukagawa in Fukushima with her older sister. They lived apart from their family. However, she couldn't stay with her sister so she spent lonely and anxious days there.

There was not enough food at her evacuation home. She couldn't get water except when having medicines, so one of her friends told a lie to get water when she was thirsty. One night, when she got water to have medicine, she found a younger child stealing rice. That child ate them with her own hand. She was also hungry but she didn't tell anyone about the child. She thought she was much better than others because she could get water. One morning, the child sitting next to her had stolen bread for breakfast. She was blamed that she stole it. The other day, the package sent to her was shared with others without being asked. She had many problems and troubles at the evacuation home. After that, they moved to Niigata where their original house was. She could live with her pregnant mother and older and younger sisters.

At that time, her father and uncle were drafted to the war as soldiers. When she got the news, "The person from Yamazaki Family died," she thought her father died and cried a lot. However, the person who died was neither her father or uncle. When her father came to their evacuation home, he was with other soldiers and got closer to his family while dragging his leg. She and her family were very glad to see him alive.

Right before the end of the war, her youngest sister was born. She was named "Katsuko," wishing for Japan to win the war. She didn't expect that Japan would lose so she was very surprised when she found out Japan lost by radio from the Emperor. However, she also felt at ease because she didn't have to be separate from her family or have a hard time any more.

After the war, she and her family collected useful materials from their collapsed house for rebuilding a new one. They stored things in the shelter but it also collapsed. They stored family pictures, rice, and so on. However, some of them were ruined and they couldn't use them anymore.

She suffered from pneumonia and was hospitalized for a while. When I asked her to tell me about the story of the war, she just came back to home from the hospital. Even so, she told her painful story for me. She is very gentle and reliable. When I looked tears on her eyes, I almost cried. After she grown-up, she sometimes had hard time. However, her experiences that she could live through the war helped her to live happily. At the end of her story, she said, "I'm glad that you came to me and asked me to tell my story before I die. "Thank you." These words strongly remain in me. I thought it is not enough to just think. I decided to communicate in my social study

class. The will of people who experienced the war can be passed down by telling my own thoughts.

I Can't Talk About Peace

Secondary School of
Numazu-Ichiritsu Numazu 3rd Grade Mayuko Suzuki
High School

I have read many stories such as “Hiroshima no Pika,” “The Girl with the White Flag,” “Sadako and Thousand Paper Cranes,” and “Graves of Fireflies.” I felt and cried for misery, inhumanity, painful, and sorrow of the war which were written in these books. I thought the war should never be acceptable. However, honestly, I knew only the war in the books. It is just same as diseases. People appreciate the value of good health when they get sick. It means it is difficult for us to understand facts without experiences.

I love my grandfather. He was born at uncivilized place in Shizuoka. When he was 1st grader in an elementary school, he moved to China with his parents and relatives who joined the group of exploitation. He worked for agriculture there. At the end of the war, he and his families decided to come back to Japan. He was 10 years old at that time. They walked for long way from China to Japan. My grandfather carried his nephew on his back all the time. His nephew who becomes 75 years old this year always tells, “I wouldn't be alive if my uncle didn't carry me such a long way.” I am the one of them who can listen to the story of the war from a person who experienced the war. It is my grandfather for me but he doesn't want to talk how hard it was. He talked to me only the stories such as the coldness of China during winter or the beauty of a sea of cotton field. People might not be able to talk about own painful experience after they had experiences which were too hard. The father of the person I know went to islands of south-eastern Asia as a soldier. He also talked only about friends in the military, relationship with the people living in the islands, and being complimented by his supervisors. The person I know believed, “My father didn't have any problems or difficulties at the war” when she was a child. After he became 85 years old, he started to talk about bad things happened to him during the war as looking at the islands of south-eastern Asia on the map. She heard that he had abandoned his friend who couldn't walk, one of his friend killed himself by holding the gun muzzle in his mouth and pulling its trigger with his toes because he couldn't endure being hit by his supervisor for losing ration items, and so on. When the close person talked the truth,

she really felt that she couldn't say anything about the war or peace because she didn't experience it.

My grandfather looks at me who is spoiled with smiles. My mother would drop and pick me up when it is rainy. I can get almost everything that I want to get or eat. Even my selfish mind is also accepted by my family. As hiding his painful memories such as starving or the fear of death, he calmly looks at me who is having privileged life. He says, "The person who had grueling experiences is not easy to jealous or envy others," and "We can have meals and live with family. We're sure that tomorrow will come and we can dream for future. I think we are very happy." I think all people who had grueling experiences think that they should not let others experience same suffering they had. My grandfather knows very well that my daily life such as I am always healthy and happy, is very precious and valuable. I think that is why he doesn't say anything.

I can't talk about peace. However, I know the fact that wars are the most foolish thing in the world. I haven't experienced. Learning from the books is everything. My grandfather smiles as saying, "I thought I didn't have to die anymore as looking up the sky at the end of the war." I think his smile is the truth. I will visit Atomic Bomb Dome in this autumn for our school trip. After looking at the fact of cruelty of the war, I expect that I will confirm how happiness I have is valuable and be filled with gratitude toward all people related to me.

I can't talk about peace. However, I can be one of them who are trying to have peaceful world. I want to be a person who learns the truth and knows how peace is important for us. Peace is when the world is calm without any fights and people who are fighting become friends again. When we express peace in Chinese character, it is called "Heiwa." "Wa" used to be old name of Japan. We should not abandon the word of "Heiwa" no matter what happened...

What is Peace?

Heda Junior High School 3rd Grade

Ibuki Saito

What is peace?

How do you answer this question?

Do you think the answer is that no people are dying?

Do you think the answer is that no wars are starting?

Do you think the answer is that everyone is getting along with?

All of them are impossible.

There are people who are dying in somewhere.

There are conflicts or terrors in somewhere.

There are fights in somewhere.

What is peace?

I asked my grandfather.

“That is, when we can have meals and talk to people every day.”

He answered.

He is 84 years old.

Since he experienced the war when he was same age as me,

Ordinary life is peace for him.

What is peace?

I also thought our ordinary life is peace.

Ordinary life for me is

Having meals,

Talking with my friends,

Being able to laugh, cry, or getting angry.

If I lost my ordinary life,

It would be the hardest thing for me.

Not being able to have meals,

Not being able to talk with my friends,

Not being able to laugh, cry, or getting angry.

They are not all.

However, there are some people

Who lost these ordinary things in the world.

We should think of those people.

We should do something we can do.

If many people did small thing,

Ordinary life might be back to people.

I want to think and do something

For many people as possible

To spend ordinary time

To have ordinary life.

