

参加者各位

## 2013 年度 NIE 英作文コンテスト

拝啓 新春の候、  
皆様におかれましては、ますますご健勝のことお慶び申し上げます。

先日はご多忙の中、国際教育ネットワーク（NIE）主催の第一回「お国自慢コンテスト」に応募頂き、誠にありがとうございました。全国の加盟校からご参加頂き、有意義な「お国自慢コンテスト」を開催することができました。皆様方のご協力に心から感謝いたしております。

ささやかではではありますが参加賞を同包させていただきましたのでご笑納下さい。今回のイベントは国際教育ネットワークの年間行事をして来年以降も開催を予定しておりますので、今後ともよろしくお願ひします

敬具

平成26年1月15日

国際教育ネットワーク

理事長 安田 浩二  
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お国自慢: 熊本・熊本市 **My City: Kumamoto/Kumamoto City**

氏名 (Name)	Ms. Yui O. and Ms. Wakana Y.
性別 / グループ (Sex/ Group)	Student/Female
団体名 (School)	Washington Institute of Language

We were born and grew up in Kumamoto, so we would like to introduce some of the greatness of Kumamoto.

**Kumamoto Water**

Kumamoto's water is nurtured by the affluent nature. Therefore, the mineral water is used for tap water. It received the highest award of the UN "Water for Life 2013". Kumamoto Mizu Monogatari ("Stories of Water") is an official bottled mineral water from this fresh, delicious spring.

**Kumamoto Castle**

Kumamoto Castle is one of the most famous castle in Japan. It was built in 15th century by Kato Kiyomasa, Japanese Daimyo of Edo period. The castle has "Musha-Gaeshi", which is to prevent attackers from penetrating the castle. It also has "Tenshukaku", which is the central tower of the castle, and is the most defining feature of the Japanese castle.



**Tsujun Bridge**

Tsujun Bridge is an arch bridge for aqueduct. Its purpose was to let water flow into a higher area for farming. It's 84.0m long. The arch spans 27.3m. It is the largest stone aqueduct in Japan. The Japanese Agency for Cultural Affairs has designated the bridge an Important Cultural Property. It was built in 1854.

**Mount Aso**

Mount Aso is the largest active volcano in Japan. It has the largest calderas in the world with its circumference of around 120km(75mi). Inside of the caldera has green landscape that is gazed by cows and horses. The caldera is said to be the most beautiful.

**Kumamon**

Kumamon is a mascot of Kumamoto. He was created in 2010, and it has expand its popularity throughout the country. He won a nationwide vote of other mascots known as Yuru-Kyara. His height is 200cm, and weighs 100kg. Because of his nationwide popularity, Kumamoto has earned 11.8 billion yen(US\$120 million) in merchandising revenues for the first half of 2012.



Comment from Mr. Christopher Earnest, Harris English School.

From reading Ms.Yui and Ms.Wakana's article I learned that Kumamoto is a diverse and interesting place. Because it talked about both natural wonders and man-made things, it makes me think that Kumamoto is a very exciting place. A visitor could see a volcano and meet Kumamon in the same area. This was a very nice introduction to Kumamoto.

お国自慢：

**My City:**

氏名 (Name)	梶山 / Mr.Kajiyama
性別 / グループ (Sex/ Group)	一般 / 男性 adult/male
団体名 (School)	トミーズ外語 TOMMY'S 外語

#### THE PRIDE OF MY HOME PREFECTURE SAITAMA

I live in Saitama prefecture, which is one of 47 prefectures in Japan .

Saitama is a northern neighboring prefecture of Tokyo.

You can get here in only 35 minutes by train from Tokyo.

The population is approximately 7.2 million, and the area is 3,800 square kilometers.



Saitama has a lot of cities. The west area is called Chichibu, which is a mountainous area.

Chichibu city has a great night festival called Chichibu Yomatsuri.

It is one of the most famous festivals in Japan. It is held in early December every year.

The east area has a lot of rice fields. The rural scenery in early summer is so beautiful.

The most famous rice brands produced in Saitama are Koshihikari and Sainokagayaki.

They are the tastiest rice in Japan.

There are huge burial mounds called Saitama Kohun in Gyoda city. They were made in five century B.C.

The Saitama Prefecture Center office is currently aiming to resister this site for world heritage listing with UNESCO.

The professional baseball club Seibu Lions is popular and cool. Also, the professional soccer club Urawa Reds and Omiya Aludejya are exciting every game. The Olympic games will be held in Tokyo in 2020. The golf and soccer events will be held in Saitama.



A rich harvest , full bloom, historical culture assets, advance industries.

Would you like to come and see Saitama once in your life?

If so, I am expecting you sincerely.

OMOTENASHI. Thanks you very much.

Toru Kajiyama.

Tommy's Language School.

Comment from Mr. Robert Sakurai, Washington Institute of Foreign Languages.

I have never been to Saitama, but it sounds like it's a very exciting place to visit! I would like to see the Chichibu Yomatsuri. Saitama Kohun also sounds very interesting place to visit! I like soccer, so go see the soccer game would be a lot of fun! Saitama can be one of the most fun place to take a vacation. It's very convenient that it only takes 35 min.from Tokyo

お国自慢：山口県・防府市

My City: Yamaguchi/Hofu

氏名 (Name)	Ms. Airi M
性別 / グループ (Sex/ Group)	一般/女性 Adult/ Female
団体名 (School)	アメリカンランゲージスクール防府校 American Language School Hofu

### ● Tsunoshima Bridge

The total length of the bridge is 1780 meters.

It was built over to the remote island, Tsunoshima.

We can view the beautiful emerald green sea underneath the bridge. A lot of people enjoy swimming in the summer, I went swimming there last year.



### ● Hadakabo festival

Shouting together, groups of men, called Hadakabo, carry portable shrines which weight about 500 kilograms. They bravely go down the big steps in the shrine yelling, “Kyodai Washoi!” which means heaven-ho brothers!



### ● Kintaikyo Bridge

It’s one of the three most beautiful bridges in japan.

It’s also one of the best wooden bridges in Japan.

It has five arched bridges in its featured structure.

An ice cream shop which sells 500 different flavors is famous, too.



Comment from Mr. David Muir, Helena English School.

I have been to Hofu City in Yamaguchi Prefecture. I really love this place! I was very surprised to hear about the bridge (Kintaikyo).

It was interesting to learn that it was one of the three top traditional bridges in your country. Wow! I actually have many photographs and videos of this place. I’m really glad I took them!! I can’t wait to return there with my family and go to the Hadakabo Festival. I want to try carrying a “Hadakabo” !

お国自慢 :

**My City: Tsu**

氏名 (Name)	Juri Hattori
性別 / グループ (Sex/ Group)	Male
団体名 (School)	GES

I have lived in the various cities for a transfer until now I live in Tsu of Mie. Two years do not pass after I begin to live in Tsu, but I have noticed some recommended points as follows.

First recommendation, foods are delicious. Speaking of Mie, it occurs to Matsusaka beef and Spiny lobster, but can have a delicious meal other than these special expensive ingredients. For example, Tsu gyoza is popular particularly recently. Originally it has been a menu of the school lunch. The appearance wrapped in paste like a crape looks like great taste. Actually, it is juicy, delicious, in addition, cheap. Because Tsu gyoza is offered in many shops, and its taste is different each shop, there is fun to compare eating.



Tsu gyoza is 6 times as large as normal size.

At the beach of Tsu, clamming is possible.



Then, there is nature close to cities. The sea is near so as to be able to go by bicycle in several minutes from my house. In the mountain side, there are scenic mountains and the hot spring resort. I think that the location is precious, because I can easily go for clamming, cycling, and hiking.

Furthermore, if I mention it specially, many people of Mie are to be kind and calm. Because they are kind to a newcomer to Mie and do not show their strong senses of rivalry than urban people, I can live very calmly here.

In Japan, there is a proverb that "Wherever you live is the best place." I think that Mie is the best place even if I consider it. But there is only one thing I'm worried about. There are a lot of delicious foods and there is the place that can be relaxed, it is to become easy to gain weight. The current my problem is that I must exercise more than before in rich nature environments.

Comment from Mr. Glenn Squires, Time Life English Language School.

Mr. Juri Hattori's essay is quite interesting. I didn't know anything about Mie but now I can understand a little more. If I were to go here, I'd especially like to try the giant Tsu gyoza at various shops. I also agree with the comment about where you live now being the best place. It is so true.

お国自慢 : *Living Together Kiryu Textile* My City: GUNMA, Kiryu

氏名 (Name)	青柳育未 (Ikumi Aoyagi)
性別 / グループ (Sex/ Group)	F / 成人
団体名 (School)	Harris English School
<p>Our home, Gunma prefecture is located in almost the center of Nippon isle. From long ago ,Gunma has been key of transportation. Kiryu city used this merit effectively to improve the industry .It is best known for the famous ‘Kiryu-ori’, silk textile.</p> <p>The old legend of Shirataki-hime, said that in the Heian era, the skill of weaving silk was brought by Shirataki-hime who moved from Kyoto to get married with a man of Kiryu. This was the beginning of Kiryu-ori. And in the Edo-era, manufactures came from Nishijin, Kyoto, which is famous for silk textile, to teach their skills. Then Kiryu’s craftsmen improved their skills by themselves. As a result, Kiryu-ori grew up to the highest grade silk textile. Many people say ‘For the West it is Nishijin, for the East it is Kiryu’. It means Kiryu-ori has excellent quality, the better than that of Nishijin-ori.Thanks to silk, Kiryu grew up as one of the biggest cities in Gunma. If you step into Kiryu, you can enjoy an old-Japanese style town. I would like to tell you my 3 favorite things about Kiryu.</p> <p>First, there remain old-style buildings along the main street, Honcyo-dori. Most of them were made in the Edo-Taisyo periods and many old merchant’s houses and warehouses are there. These structures are registered as important traditional structures. Typical of the structures is the Saw roof (NOKOGIRI YANE). A unique fact is that people of Kiryu don’t only preserve but also reuse these building. Some of these building are used for cafés ,art galleries, event halls and so on.</p>  <p>Second, Karakuri-doll (mechanical doll).This culture brought by a craftsman who was popular in Asakusa in the Edo era. Why did Karakuri-doll become popular in Kiryu? Because of water power to manufacture silk. Once,many flumes ran through every direction in Kiryu. The flumes drove water wheels to manufacture twisted yarn. This water power was also used for performing Karakuri-dolls. Textile companies competed with each other for most elaborate performance, gorgeous costume and displays.</p>   <p>And lastlily, we can enjoy various festivals and markets. When Kiryu-ori was flourishing, the people of Kiryu held a market selling silk textile. SAYA-ICHI is the oldest market in Kiryu. [SAYA] means kind of silk. Now a days, tourist come to buy textiles and regional products.</p> <p>Also Ebisco ,the festival of Ebisu who is the god of commerce, makes the town lively in the fall. From more than 100years ago, merchant and craftsmen of Kiryu-ori pray for good fortune and the success of their business on Ebisco day.</p> <p>Today, Kiryu textile is recognized all over the world. They export textile to famous European brands as dress material, and to MoMA as souvenirs .Through the various exporting ,I believe that Kiryu is introduced to foreign culture and can make use of the experience for new city planning in the future.</p>	

Comment from Mr. Jonathan McLean, Adventure English School.

I have never visited Gunma Prefecture, so I was very interested to learn about Kiryu. I was happy to hear about the legend of Shiratakihime and the people of Kiryu. The most fascinating part for me was to learn about the Karakuri-dolles. I would really love to see how these dolles are controlled by water. I am sure they must be so beautiful! It would be great if I could buy one as a souvenir!

お国自慢 :

My City:

氏名 (Name)	梅岡 綾
性別 / グループ (Sex/ Group)	女性/UI School of English
団体名 (School)	UI School of English

Tokushima is a small city, but it has many things.

First, Tokushima is famous for sudachi, Japanese limes. (But many people in Japan confuse sudachi with kabosu or yuzu...) People in Tokushima squeeze sudachi many kinds of food: fish, tofu, miso soup, juice and so on. Also they sometimes use its skin! It smells really good. Sudachi is a very useful food. We love sudachi, and it's also our pride.

These days, sudachi is known among many people by Sudachikun that is a PR character of Tokushima. Sudachikun was 12<sup>th</sup> at the Yuru-chara-grand prix! This result made us very happy. It became a hope to develop Tokushima.



Next, there are many interesting dialect in Tokushima. For example, people in Tokushima often use a word, "kaku." It doesn't mean "write" in Japanese! It means "carry." So, when you're told "kaite," you shouldn't bring a pen and a piece of paper! You have to carry something. Also there is another example like that. People in Tokushima usually say, "sekoi." Most of people in Japan misunderstand about its meaning, but its true meaning is "feel trying." So you aren't said that you are stingy. Please don't be angry.

Finally, Tokushima is famous for traditional dance called Awa Odori. It's held for four days in August. Some dancers make a group, ren. Each of ren has a little differences such as yukata and motion. Also there is narimono who plays traditional instruments. The dancers and narimono show us the great performance. Tokushima become colorful and lively during this festival. Many people come to Tokushima to watch it. People in Tokushima and visitors have a great time together every year.



If you come to Tokushima, there are a lot of things to see and to eat, and places to visit!

Comment from Frontier Institute of Foreign Languages.

Thank you for introducing Tokushima. I have never been to Tokushima but reading this made me really want to visit Tokushima! I have tried Sudachi before but I didn't know that it was from Tokushima. I agree that Sudachi is very good on many foods such as fish and tofu. The dialect in Tokushima is very interesting! I would like to learn some more. Also that Awa Odori seems like lots of fun! Thank you for sharing Tokushima with us!

お国自慢：茨城県つくば市

**My City: Tsukuba City, Ibaraki Prefecture**

氏名 (Name)	林 浩二	Mr. Koji Hayashi
性別 / グループ (Sex / Group)	一般 / 男性	Adult / Male
団体名 (School)	ヘレナ英会話スクール Helena English School	

Tsukuba Science City is in Ibaraki Prefecture, approximately 60 kilometers northeast of Tokyo, and 40 kilometers from Narita Airport. Tsukuba Science City covers an area of approximately 28,000 hectares, which is about the same size as the area inside the Yamanote line in Tokyo. The population, as of November 2013, is about 220,000. There are around 7,600 foreign residents of Tsukuba, as of November 2009, representing 130 countries. They are students, researchers and workers including their families.

Tsukuba Science City was planned for high quality science, technology and education as part of a national project. The plan for constructing the city was decided by the government in September 1963. The first institution was completed in 1968. There are 31 educational and research institutes located within the Science City. The surrounding industrial area includes more than 300 private research institutes and industrial sites.



There are 153 parks in the city including Doho Park with its solar heated swimming pool, Ninomiya Park with its pool and tennis courts, Matsumi Park with its 45 meter high observation tower, and Oshimizu Park with its beautiful fountain. You should go to Matsumi Park, where you can see all of Tsukuba from the top of the observation tower. You can get more information about Tsukuba Science City at the Tsukuba Information Center in Tsukuba Station. If you want to experience the technological part of Japan, you should go to the Tsukuba Expo Center, the Geological Museum and the Tsukuba Botanical Garden. If you have time, Mount Tsukuba is also a recommended place to visit. You can enjoy the traditional side of Japan by visiting Tsukuba Shrine on Mount Tsukuba and small souvenir shops along the shopping streets. You might also enjoy riding in the cable car or the ropeway to get to the peak of the mountain.

The Tsukuba Express Line (TX) completed in August 2005 connects Tokyo (Akihabara) to Tsukuba in only 45 minutes. You can also take an express bus for Tsukuba at the Yaesu South Exit of Tokyo Station. There are various kind of festivals and of these, "Tsukuba Festival" held at the end of August is the most famous. It started in 1981 and over 400,000 to 500,000 people visit there nowadays. You can see Japanese traditional arts such as the biggest Japanese mobile shrine called "Mando Mikoshi", "Nebuta" and so on. This is my city, Tsukuba City. Thank you.

氏名 (Name)	津村梨乃	Ms. Rino T.
性別(Sex/Group)	学生(中学3年)/女性	Student / Female
団体名(School)	ジョーンズ英会話スクール	Jones English School

### Traditional Festival in Nagasaki

Do you know what place Nagasaki is? Nagasaki prefecture has a lot of islands so traditional events are different according to the regions. I'd like to introduce two festivals, "Shourounagashi" and "Kunchi" in Nagasaki city.

Shourounagashi, a festival to worship our ancestors, started in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Nagasaki city. The origin of this festival was traced back to the time, when a Confucian put the spirits of the dead thing on a small boat and threw it into the sea.

Since then this ceremony has been held every year and loved by people as an event in summer.

In this festival, we use a lot of fireworks called a firecracker. Firecrackers came to Nagasaki from China because cultural exchanges between Nagasaki and China were very active at that time.



Every year, a lot of people visit Nagasaki on August 15 to see this traditional event.

Next, let me introduce "Kunchi". This festival is said to have started when two prostitutes danced "小舞" in front of Suwa shrine. Kunchi celebrates the appearance of God, and during this festival, we



can enjoy watching a lot of performances such as a dedication dance called 奉納祭り and a dragon dance called 龍踊り There are some performances which use various kinds of ships and among them, a shogunate trading ship called "御朱印船" is the most well-known ship. It is one of the heaviest ships and is

approximately 5 tons. 18 men steer this ship. This performance is so powerful and attractive that a lot of people come to see it. Nagasaki Kunchi is held on October 7,8 and 9. If you haven't seen it before, why don't you visit Nagasaki in October and watch this exciting festival! It's worth watching!

When I was writing this, I noticed a very important thing. It is "China" that is related to both of the festivals. Nagasaki is known as the only prefecture that was trading with China when we were closing the country. So, the influence from China was big for Nagasaki. In this way, the culture of Nagasaki is unique. Everyone, let's experience the Nagasaki culture!



Comment from Mr. Christopher Lomas. Tommy's Language School

I wasn't aware that Nagasaki prefecture has many islands. That interests me and being that summer is my favourite season, I would love to visit Nagasaki to experience Shourounagashi. Especially the many fireworks displays. To witness 18 men steering a 5 ton ship during the Kunchi festival would be a stunning sight, indeed. Just that alone would make visiting Nagasaki worthwhile.

Comment from Mr. Peni Matararaba, Globa English School.  
 Ms. Mariko's article on "Festivals in Fukuoka" was quite informative and interesting to read. The pictures included also made the article very appealing. Grammatically, I thought the article was well written.  
 It has given me yet another reason to visit Fukuoka. I hope to visit Fukuoka to experience the excitement of these festivals someday soon. Furthermore, I look forward to reading more articles about Fukuoka from Ms. Mariko.

氏名 (Name)	真理子 M.	Ms. Mariko M.
性別 / グループ (Sex / Group)	一般 / 女性	Adult / Female
団体名 (School)	アドベンチャーイングリッシュスクール Adventure English School	

### Festivals in Fukuoka

Fukuoka prefecture is located in the northern part of Kyushu, facing the Japan sea and has a population of more than five million. Its capital, Fukuoka city, has two famous festivals; Hakata Dontaku in May and Hakata Gion Yamakasa in July.

Hakata Dontaku is a festival featuring hundreds of groups wearing colorful costumes, taking part in a parade. It was started by Hakata merchants to be a new year's parade called "Hakata Matsubayashi" in honor of their feudal lord. In Hakata Yamakasa several hundred men wearing



traditional costumes race throughout Fukuoka city carrying kakiyama, or decorated floats, on their shoulders. It is said that the origin of the festival dates back to 1241 when a Zen priest called Shouichi Kokushi was carried on a platform and sprinkled holy water over roads to eradicate evil spirits responsible for a plague that was ravaging the town of Hakata. Legend says that the platform developed into the float of Yamakasa.

Every year in Munakata City, to the northeast of Fukuoka city, Munakata Taisha hosts a marine festival called "Miaresai," or the festival of the goddess' descent. A parade of ships escorting the deities leaves Oushima port and makes its way to Kounominato port. Early in the morning on October 1<sup>st</sup>, a Shinto ritual is held in Nakatsu-Miya shrine on Oushima Island. The goddess deity of the shrine is boarded on a special boat called "Gozabune," and another goddess' deity which had been brought to Oushima from Okinoshima on the previous day is boarded on another special boat as well. Some 130 fishing boats fully dressed with colorful flags escort the sacred ships to Kounoshima port. The two deities are then moved to Munakata Taisha so that the three sister goddesses can be reunited. The magnificent scenery of the white boats and the blue sea appears on TV and in newspapers every year.



In this way, Fukuoka prefecture has interesting festivals connected with Buddhism or mythology. Fortunately, we can enjoy these festivals throughout the year.

お国自慢：鳥取県・米子市 **My City: Yonago, Tottori Pref.**

指名(Name)	法正 元	Hajime Hoshō
性別／グループ(Sex/Group)	中学生／男性	Junior High/Male
団体名(School)	英会話タイムライフ	Time Life Language English School

### Yonago Attractions

Tottori Prefecture, in the Chugoku area of Japan, has an interesting, unique shape. It is in the shape of a dog. I would like to introduce two lively festivals that are held each year in Yonago. The first one is the “Sakura”, or cherry blossom festival, held in April. People gather under the cherry trees into the late night, dancing and drinking. At this festival, there is a one of a kind “Ningyo Yaki”, which is a cake in the shape of a doll's face. It is very delicious. You should definitely try it.



Another lively festival is held in July. It is called “Gaina Matsuri (festival)”. There are many vendors lined up on the main street and it is very busy from the morning. At night, there is an event called “Gaina Manto” where groups of men take turns balancing tall towers of paper lanterns.

Next, I would like to introduce the highest mountain in the Chugoku area, Mt. Daisen. At Mt. Daisen, there is abundant natural beauty, as well as many tourist sites and things to do. If you go to the Mt. Daisen area, you should first go to Tottori “Hana Kairou” or flower park. It covers an area of fifty hectares. There are countless numbers of flowers planted throughout the park. If by chance it is raining, you can see many kinds of flowers in a large greenhouse dome. You can enjoy the many kinds of fragrant flowers inside.



Next, another place one should go to is Tom Sawyer “bokujo” or farm. It is a special place where you can see various kinds of animals. You can actually touch and feed the animals there. There is also a barbecue area where you can enjoy a picnic.

Next, for those who really want to play, a good place is “Milk no Sato”. It has a large meadow where you can bask under the sun. You will certainly feel refreshed.

There are many other tourist sites in the area, so you can surely enjoy yourself to your hearts content in Yonago.

Comment from Mr. Heather Green, UI School of English  
 Even from the first sentence I learned a lot about Tottori. The most interesting part was learning about the Gaina Matsuri. I really want to see the tall towers of lanterns! I think Tottori sounds like a beautiful place, especially “Milk no Sato”. I hope I can visit there someday.