

Elementary School (The upper grades)

## **Highest Award**

### **“A secret of popularity of Okinawa”**

6<sup>th</sup> Grade, Moromi Elementary School by Sae Nakachi

I researched about tourism in Okinawa.

When it comes to Tokyo, it is Tokyo Skytree, and when it comes to Chiba, it is Disneyland. I doubted whether Okinawa is popular with sightseers even though there is no particular noted place there, so that I researched following things.

“Why is Okinawa popular?” I found some reasons about it. Some sightseers said, “This is because Okinawa is warm.” It is true that people who come from cold regions may feel restful. The other visitors said, “I have simply a longing for Okinawa that it is far from the mainland of Japan.” or “Okinawa is a tropical resort in Japan that is closer than Hawaii and Guam.” I thought the beautiful sea in Okinawa is amazing for those reasons. Furthermore, I found that there are many sightseers who come to Okinawa more than twice for a year. Then, I investigated how many repeat visitors come to Okinawa for a year. There are about five million six hundred ninety thousand visitors for a year, and one third of them are repeat visitors.

Next, I looked into the facts of repeat visitors, “Why do they come to Okinawa again?” I found the reason from a manager of a resort hotel. He said, “Repeat visitors may want to come back to Okinawa or want to be relieved, because they can feel extraordinary lives in Okinawa that they cannot experience in their places, such as Tokyo.” When I heard his opinion, I thought, “I see, they may feel comfortable through the peaceful atmosphere and the locals of Okinawa.” However, I thought those are not all reason people come to Okinawa, so that I made another attempt to investigate the fact. Then I found some reasons why many visitors come to Okinawa again. For example, some repeat visitors from the mainland of Japan said, “My heart is comforted when I go to see the blue ocean.”, “I feel nostalgia when I eat Soki soba (Okinawan noodles).”, “I can have peace of mind when I talk with local old men and old women.”, and “Although I can find some good things in cold regions, I prefer warm districts to cold one.” Through those opinions, I thought, “Visitors from the mainland of Japan may feel something that we do not feel so usually, and it would be ungrateful of us to be not able to feel like them.”

However, when I thought about the all facts deeply, I felt from my heart that those are very wonderful things for us. At the same time, I was anxious whether such circumstances of Okinawa continue permanently. When we lead the future of Okinawa, we will make special effort to develop Okinawa, and the current adult people may be impressed with our action.