

Elementary School (The lower grades)

## Highest Award

### A sparrow and an egret

1<sup>st</sup> Grade, Kaneshi Elementary School by Ai Nakamoto

In Okinawa, there was a sparrow that was small but felt happy.

“Hello, who are you? Where are you from?” the sparrow asked an egret.

“I’m egret. I come from the North that is far from here. Where am I?”

“This is Okinawa,” the sparrow responded.

“I like this place because it is warm and bright here. I feel comfortable!” the egret said.

“Good! I have been living here for a long time.”

“Have you? By the way, I’m starving,” the egret said.

“Really? Well, I will give you a goya,” the sparrow gave it (a bitter cucumber fried with pork, tofu and other vegetables) to the egret.

“It’s bitter!”

“Ha-ha,” laughed the sparrow. “The bitterness is good for your body. I will give you a pineapple as well.”

“It’s sour!”

“Yes, it is,” agreed the sparrow. “But, it’s also very sweet, isn’t it?”

“I can see that the trees and grasses here have a lot of energy and insects are happy,” the egret said.

“Yes, they are,” agreed the sparrow. “The flowers are also beautiful, don’t you think? Especially, this hibiscus is my favorite.”

“Your favorite?” the egret asked.

“Yes, it is. I also like the beautiful sea with a variety of fishes and mozuku (A type of edible seaweed in Okinawa), and the mountain in Yanbaru forest,” the sparrow replied.

“Wow, you like a lot!” the egret surprised. “By the way, why don’t you think travelling to abroad?”

“I want to go to many countries when I grow up of course, but will go back here again,” the sparrow responded.

“Why do you like Okinawa so much?” the egret asked.

“I am not sure, but I think it is because that I was born and have been living here,” the sparrow replied.

“Hmm,” the egret wondered, “I have never thought about that because I have continued to travel for a long time.”

“Well, you should live here as your hometown,” the sparrow suggested.

“Thanks for your offer. I can feel that here is a wonderful place from our conversation,” the egret expressed.

“It’s my pleasure.”

And then the egret told everyone about the great things of Okinawa at many destinations where he stays during his travels.

The sparrow has liked Okinawa more and more since then.