

- Starting from a simple question of what clean water is, the students learned the importance of protecting the clean water of Shiga Highland. Then, they began to think what can be done to make it happen, not just in the school but also extending the thought horizon to outside the school. It is truly awesome that they have developed their thoughts to that level.
- I could easily see from your presentation that you have learned a lot from the "water" of Yamanouchi and Shiga Highland. You looked into the question of water because you won the prize for the rice you grew when you were 5th graders. That's a very convincing reason and motive for your research project this time. On a personal note, I am rather curious to know more about your activities of last year. I am amazed that you, school children, successfully grew and harvested rice that was so tasty. Well, even if you already have a feeling that the water is clean, you will know for sure how clean it is, after you do the pack test as you did and obtain concrete data. From your presentation, I could see that you were thinking deeply from a scientific approach about the quality of water in various places. I was able to see also that you have interacted with many different people in the course of your activities. By getting involved with various people, you were able to see the goodness of your own area and gain a fair perspective by comparing it with other areas. I was reminded of the benefit and importance of exchanges with others. We drink water freely every day and use it a lot in our daily lives, but after listening to your presentation, I realized that there are some issues that we have to tackle. It was a very informative presentation. Thank you very much.
- Your activity began with a focus on the river water which you used for rice cultivation. You touched on a very interesting point. I have seen many activities that focus on rice cultivation, but this is the first time that I have come across an activity that was designed from a wide perspective extending to the farm water. I was also impressed by how you worked together with the members of the community and universities.
- The activity is a very vibrant learning process, starting with rice cultivation and school trip and then making special visits to a university, Shiga Highland, and other places to make first-hand observation of the ongoing efforts there and hear directly from the people who are at work there. You were able to see water-related damages and problems with your own eyes and to get in contact with the ongoing activities to solve them. It will prove to be an invaluable experience that will provide the basis for you to think about the protection of water environment in the future.
- It is really amazing that you were able to carry out such a thorough activity program, triggered by the interest in finding more about clean water. I felt that the opportunity you had to interact with those who are studying water as well as experts doing advanced initiatives was instrumental in presenting new perspectives and ideas to the school children. It must have fostered the students' willingness to carry out further research and studies on their own initiative.
- What impressed me most is the consistency in keeping the students' inquisitive mind always at the center from the starting point of Yukishiromai, a local specialty product of Yamanouchi-machi, through a visit to university research in engineering, and ultimately to the social challenge of preserving clean water supply. A student's aspiration to "keep clean water by making effective use of the good things that Yamanouchi-machi has" could only come as a result of the well thought-out project kickoff of taking up the local specialty product.
- The students got a stimulus from their own rice cultivation to look at the water of the community in which they live. Then, they went on a search for the source of the water and started thinking what needs be done to keep it clean. Finally, they acquired the determination to protect the water in the community. The commitment borne as a result of the whole process is just wonderful. Keep up the good work in protecting the beautiful water!
- First of all, I sensed your willingness to improve yourselves when I learned that you were not satisfied just by the delicious rice you cultivated but rather you went on to analyze why the rice was made delicious. Then, you visited a number of places and met with people of different areas in order to study and protect clean water. From the presentation, it was clear to me that you are addressing this issue earnestly. I had some vague perception that water in Nagano was clean, but your activity has made me feel that if we simply continued our current way of living ignorantly, we would not be able to maintain the clean water. I have come to believe that we need to change our way of thinking little by little. It was a very informative presentation.