

IV. THE MATERIAL DEVELOPMENT 1994

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Let's Understand Each Other through Baseball And *Sumo*

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《The intention of developing this material》

We developed this teaching material for cross cultural understanding in education, and it can be used for the 4th to the 9th graders.

In developing this, the points we paid attention to are as follows:

1. To utilize materials which students are interested in the most.
2. To develop teaching materials which can be used for cross cultural understanding both in the USA and Japan.
3. To develop teaching materials which can be made the most of for cross cultural understanding, not only for reading as a whole but also by using various parts of the material.
4. To allow teachers to choose parts of the material which are appropriate for their students needs.

We thought that baseball and *sumo* are representative sports in the USA and Japan, and they are closely related to the history and culture of each country. This is why we decided to choose them as materials.

The method of our survey is as follows:

1. To survey children in both in the USA and in Japan by questionnaires to determine their attitudes towards sports.
2. To give students in North Carolina and Minnesota (from 5th to 9th grade) a *sumo* presentation, and so that they can learn about it.
3. To interview people in North Carolina and Minnesota and survey their ways of thinking about representative sports, for example, baseball and football.

This material has three short stories, and in the stories, three Japanese children visited some parts of the USA and experienced different cultures there. By adopting this approach, we hope that it will make the material more interesting for students. So, therefore, there are no questions in this material.

In detail, this material can be used for social studies and Japanese language classes for the 5th and the 6th grades at elementary school. At junior

high school it can be used for social studies and English lessons, in addition it can also be used for special lessons.

When you actually use this material, we recommend that you should select the contents from the material to suit your purpose and the students' actual needs.

If you hope to use the materials, pictures, videotapes and so on, we have introduced in this teaching materials, please get in touch with our society.

SECTION I

☆Comparison of the result of the questionnaire about sports between American and Japanese children☆

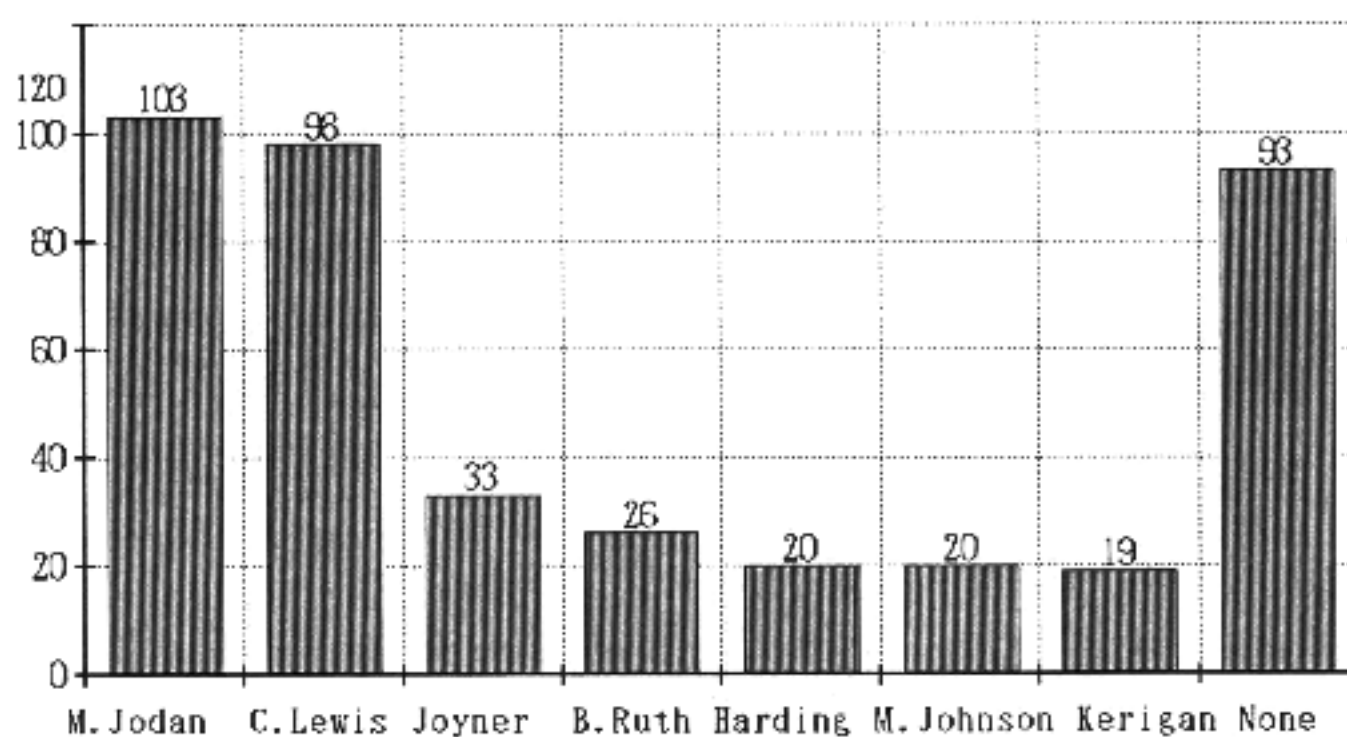
We asked elementary and junior high school students the following questions.

Question 1

Do you know any American (Japanese) athletes? If your answer is "YES", please write their name(s).

'Line graph 1' shows the answers for question No.1, the American athletes whom elementary and junior high school students in Japan know. About two-thirds of the students know the names of American athletes. But in the USA only 3 percent of students know the name, Sadaharu Oh. The result indicates that Japanese people receive a lot of information about sports from the USA, but Americans do not receive such information from Japan.

GRAPH 1

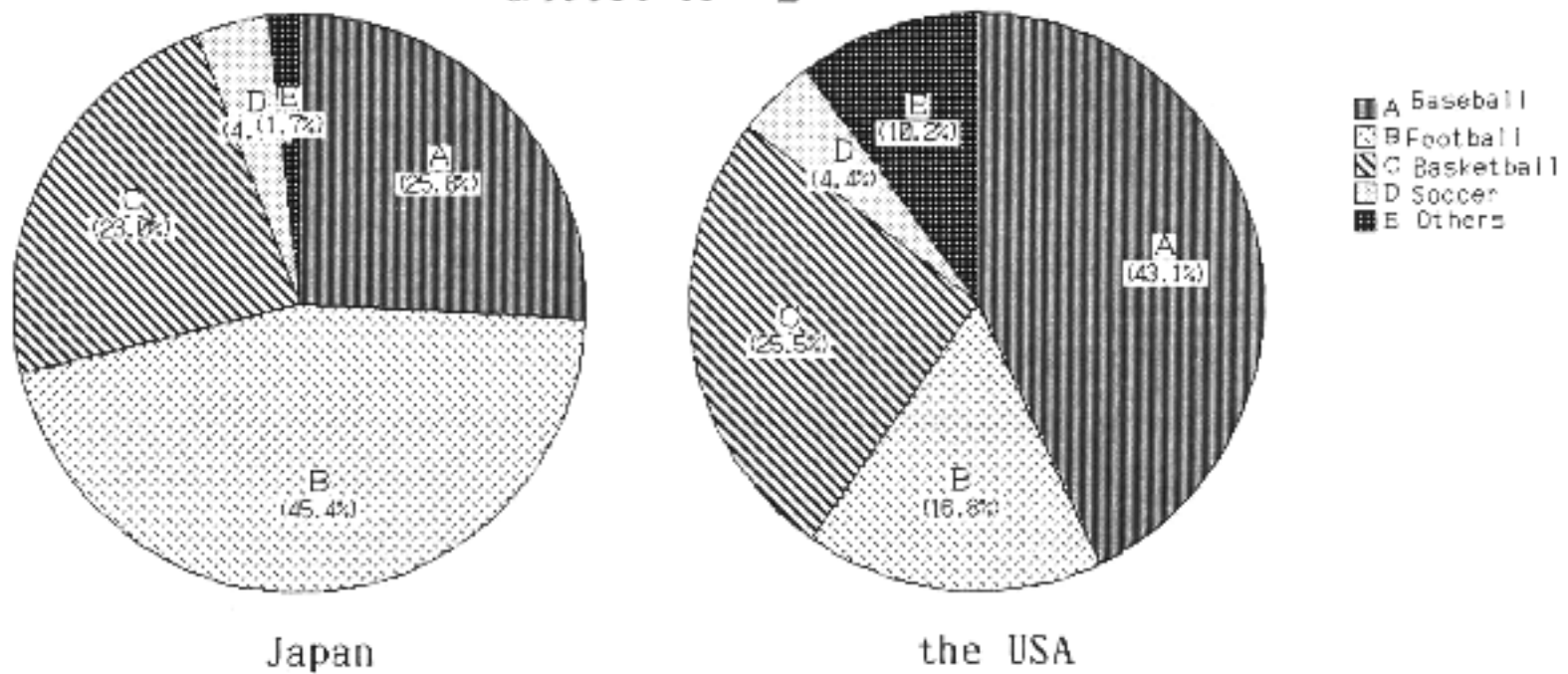


Question 2

What is the national sport(s) of the USA?

'Circle graph 2' shows the answers for question No.2. The answers are separated into three sports, baseball, football and basketball.

GRAPH 2

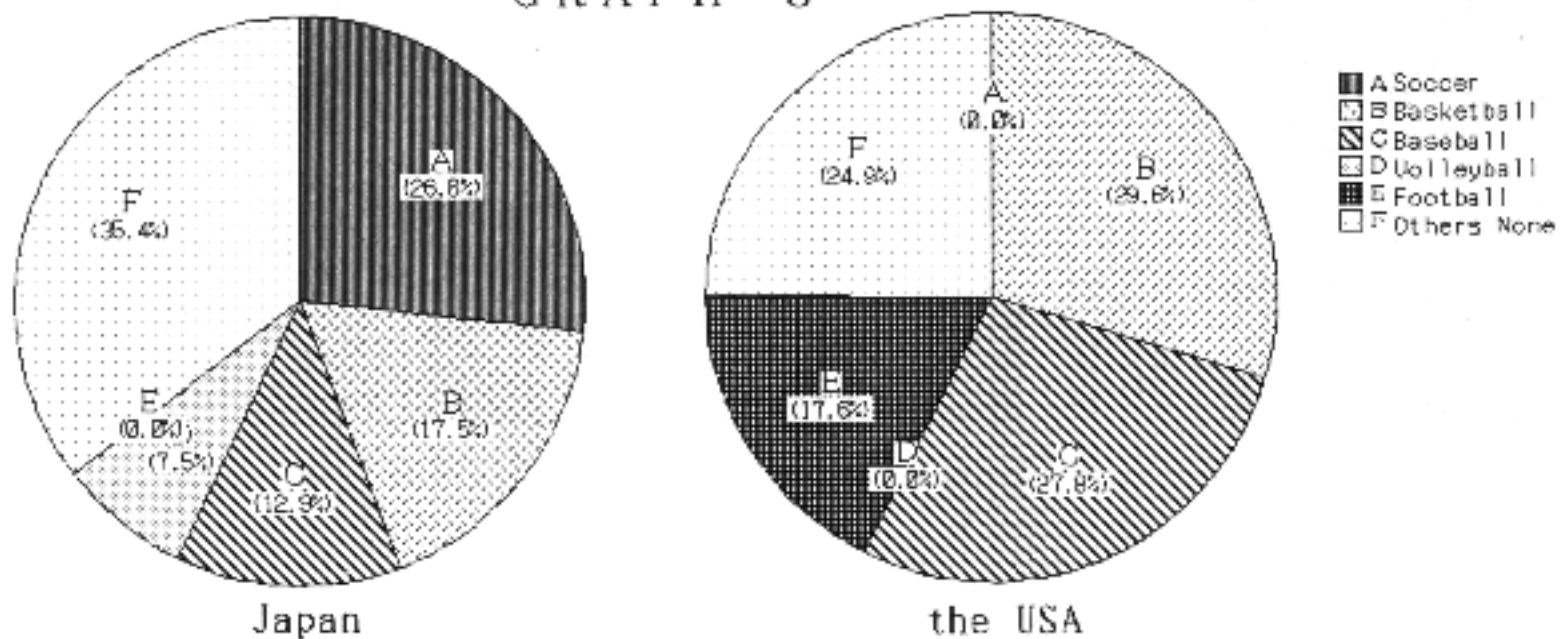


Question 3

If it was possible for you to be a professional athlete, what sport would you choose?

Look at 'Circle graph 3'. In the USA almost all students chose the three major sports. In Japan most people answered firstly soccer, secondly basketball and thirdly baseball. But no one chose the Japanese national sport, *SUMO*.

GRAPH 3

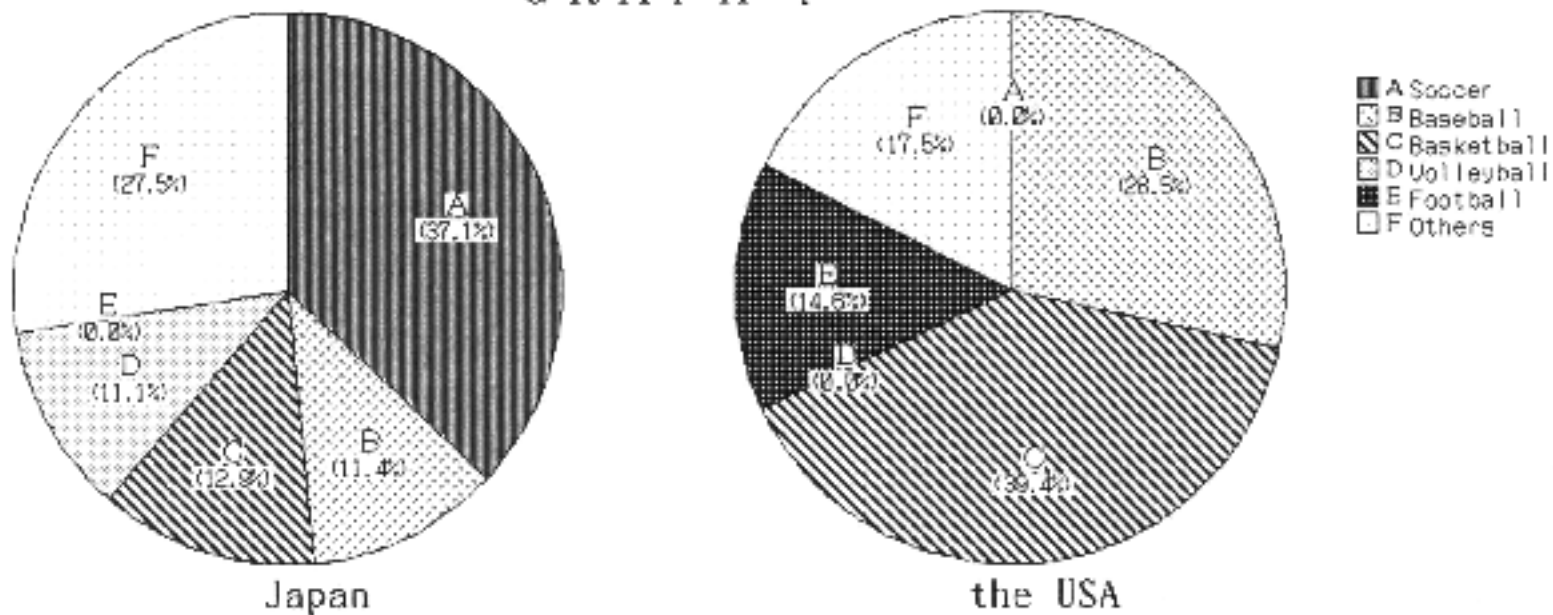


Question 4

What sport do you play the most?

Look at 'Circle graph 4' . The result for question No.4 was similar to that of question No.3.

GRAPH 4

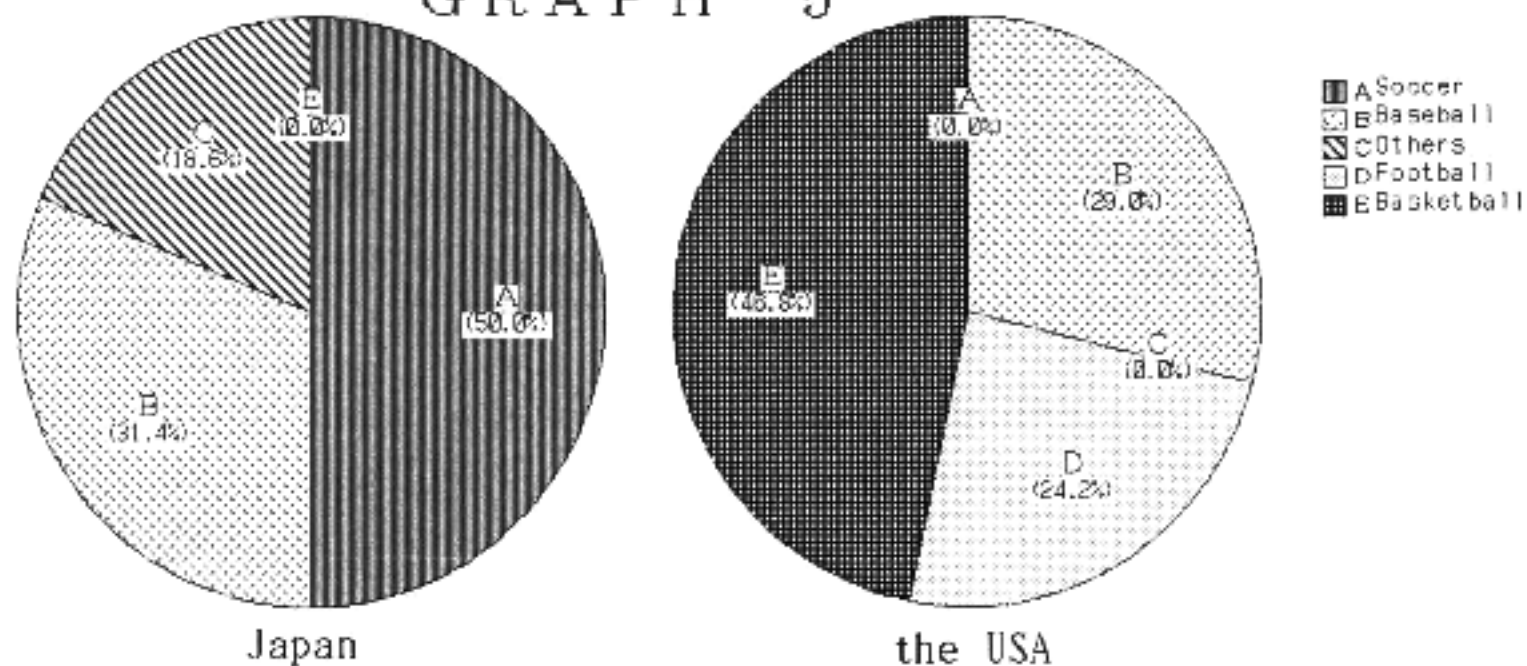


Question 5

What sport do you watch the most?

"Watch" in this question includes "watching on TV" . 'Circle graph 5' shows almost the same result for questions No.3 and No.4. From the answers for questions No.3, No.4 and No.5, we know what sports are popular for Japanese children.

GRAPH 5



Question 6 (for Japanese)

Have you ever watched live baseball and *sumo*?

Question 7

Do you have the following baseball goods?

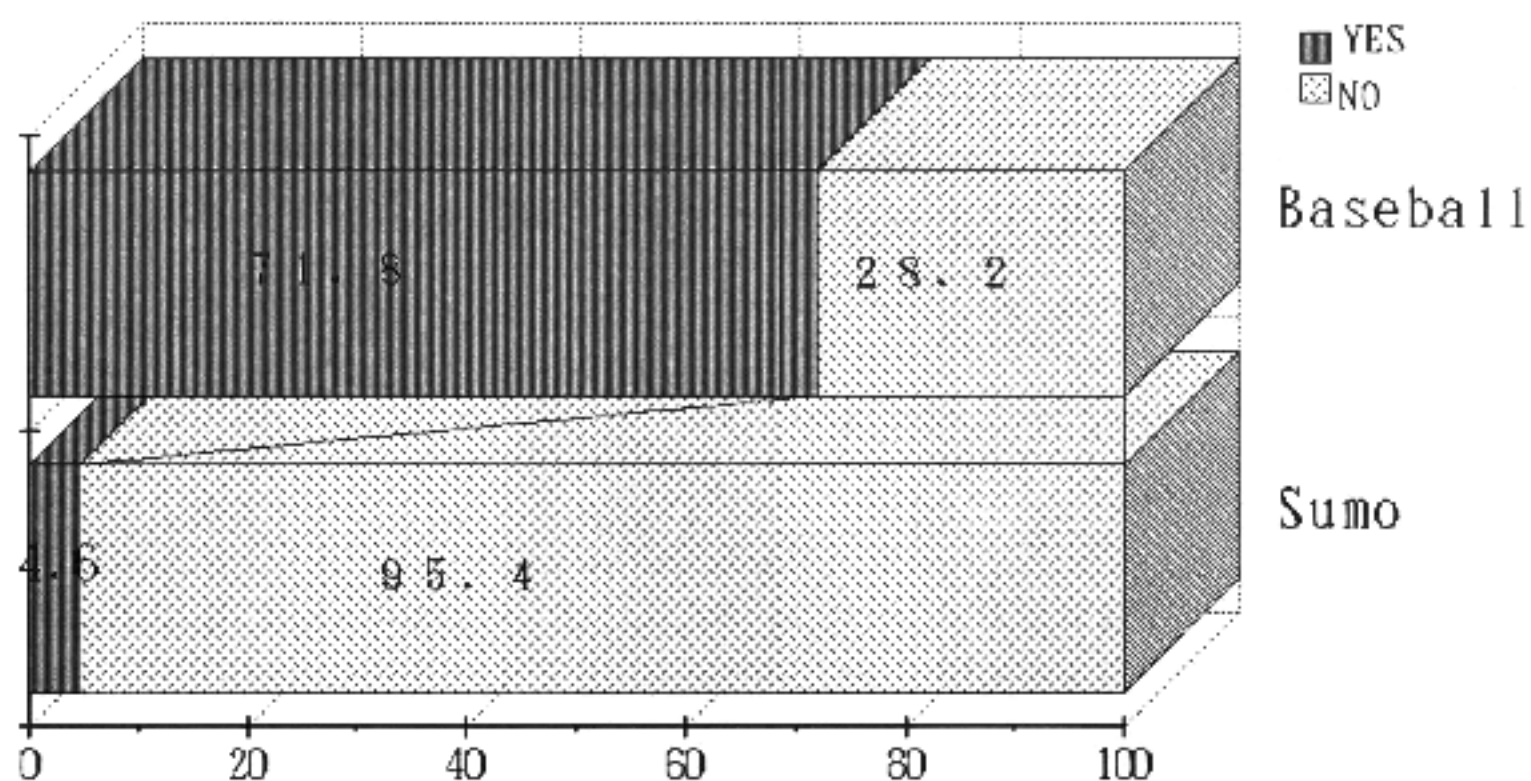
Baseball gloves Baseball bats Baseballs Autographs of players

Question 8

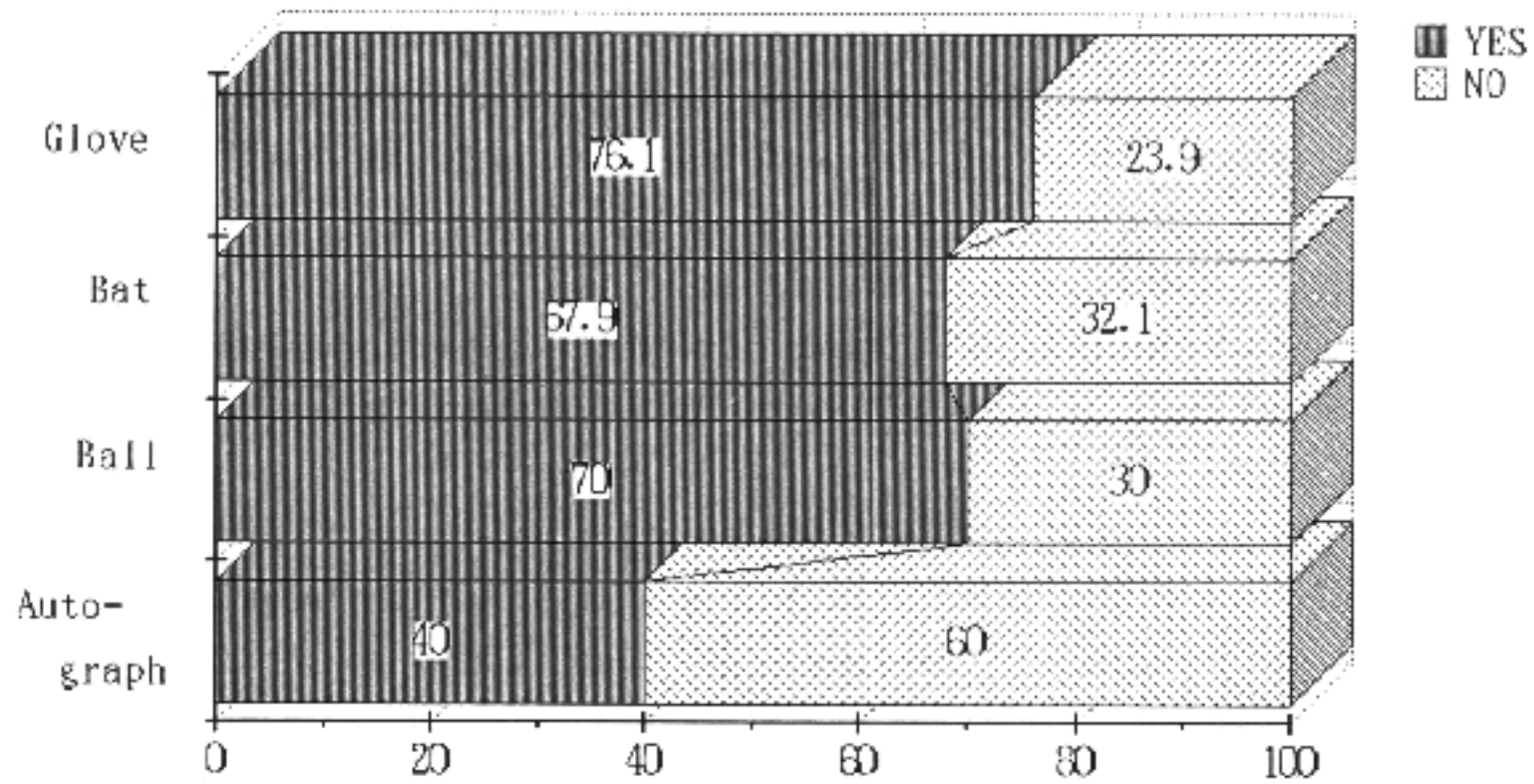
Do you have any *sumo* goods?

Looking at 'Bar graph 6' , 'Bar graph 7' and 'Bar graph 8' ,we came to understand that fewer children have ever watched live *sumo*, that is not on TV, than children who have watched a baseball game at a stadium. And It is difficult to find any children who have *sumo* related goods such as autographs, posters, magazines and so on.

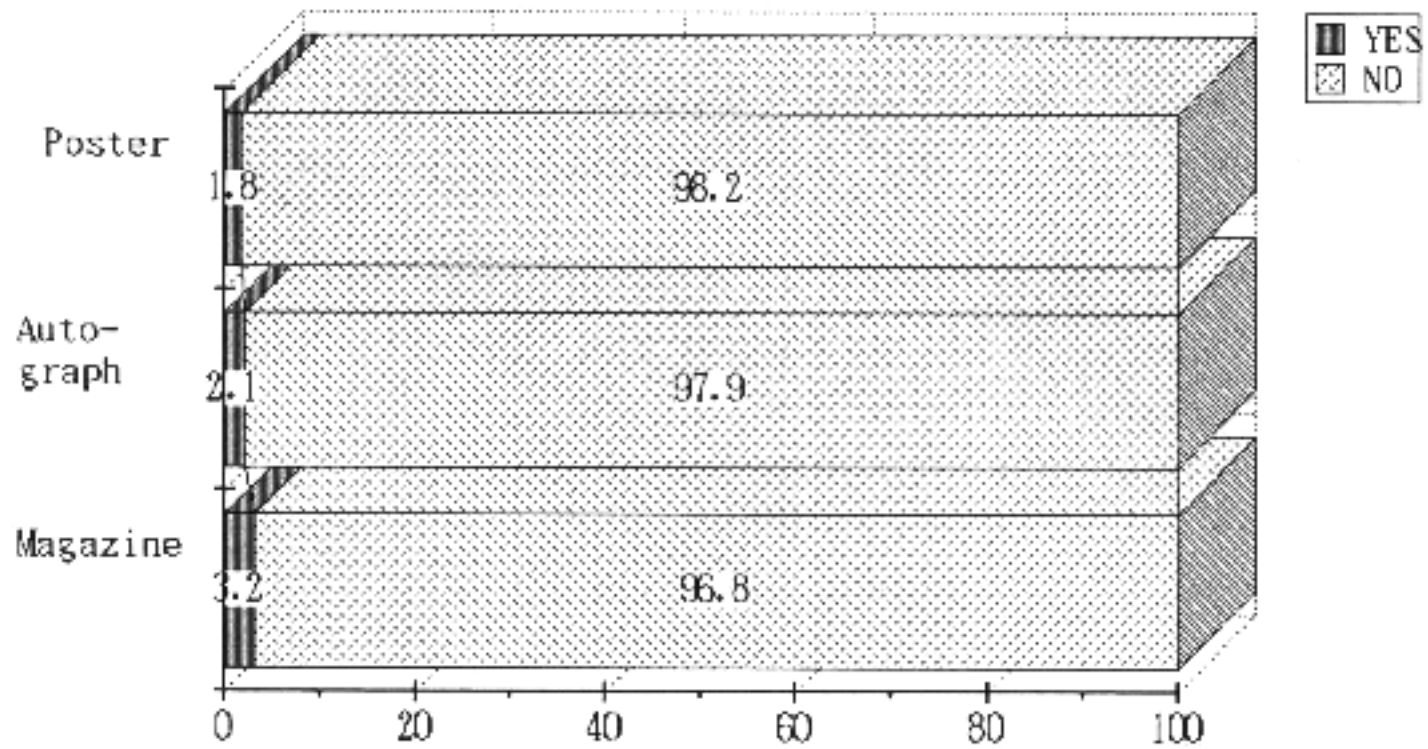
GRAPH 6



GRAPH 7



GRAPH 8



Three Japanese children, Junichi, Kazuhiko and Yoshiko, saw the above-stated results and talked about them.

Junichi: What? The children in the USA don't know about Japanese athletes.

do they?

Kazuhiko: No, they don't. Sadaharu Oh? We have never watched his play.

Yoshiko: I cannot believe that they don't know *Kazu* of *Verdy Kawasaki*.

Junichi: Me, neither. But I can see something strange in the results from Japanese children.

Yoshiko: Really? Please tell me about them.

Kazuhiko: Look at the result about *sumo*. Everyone says that the national sport of Japan is *sumo* in Japan. But few people have ever watched live *sumo*.

Yoshiko: That means *sumo* is not so close to all of us, doesn't it?

Junichi: By the way, do you think that American children know about *sumo*?

Kazuhiko: No, I don't think so. If they knew about it, they would answer some *sumo* wrestlers' names, for example, Wakanohana and Mainoumi.

Yoshiko: Listen! Let's go to the USA and get a chance to talk about sports with the children there, shall we?

Kazuhiko: That's a good idea! This summer my father is going to stay in the USA for two weeks. I'll ask him to take us then.

Yoshiko: I cannot speak English.

Junichi: Don't worry. When I was a little child, I lived in England. I have been studying English since then. No problem. Leave it to me.

Kazuhiko: O.K. We'll do it. Now I am thinking of the national sports. What on earth is the national sport of the USA? Baseball? Basketball? Or football?

Yoshiko: Let's survey about this question in the USA.

So, therefore, the three decided to go to the USA.

SECTION II

☆The trip in the USA to give a presentation of *Sumo*☆

Three Japanese children, Junichi, Kazuhiko and Yoshiko, visited the USA during their summer vacation, and they gave the children in the USA a presentation of *sumo* in North Carolina and Minnesota, because they wanted the children to have a good understanding of *sumo*.

★In North Carolina

25 students at Nash Central Junior High school attended the presentation and listened to the explanation very eagerly. Each of the three children had a role. The role of Junichi was to explain *sumo* in English. Yoshiko prepared some videotapes and materials to show. And Kazuhiko actually performed *sumo*.

Junichi had not slept well for three days in order to write an English script for the presentation. The three read some books on sumo written both in English and Japanese, and discussed how they should explain it to the children in the USA, so that they would understand *sumo* very well. At last they made the script. This is the script.

Do you know *sumo*? I think almost all of you don't know. But in Japan it's very hard to find the people who don't know *sumo*. *Sumo* is the national sport in Japan, so it is very popular, especially for the elder people. The older the Japanese get, the more we are interested in *sumo*. In the other words, *sumo* is not so popular for young people. Few boys want to be a *sumo* wrestler when they grow up. Many boys in Japan want to be soccer or basketball players.

Now I'll tell you the origins of *sumo*. *Sumo* has a very very long history. It is an ancient sport dating back some 1,500 years ago. Its origins were religious. The first *sumo* matches were a form of ritual dedicated to the gods with prayers for a bountiful harvest, and were performed together with sacred dancing and dramas within the precincts of the shrines. The *sumo* ring is called *dohyo* and takes its name from the straw rice bag which marks out its different parts. The *dohyo* is constructed of a special kind of clay. The bout is confined to an inner circle a little over 15 feet diameter.

A bout is won by forcing the opponent out of the inner circle or throwing him in the *dohyo*. The *rikishi* who touches the ground with any parts of his body, his knee or even the tip of his finger or his top knot,

loses the match. Basically there are four winning techniques as following.

1. Basic techniques (thrusts)
2. Throwing techniques (Nagewaza)
3. Tripping techniques (Kakewaza)
4. Twisting techniques (Hineriwaza)

Striking with fists, hair pulling, eye gouging, choking and kicking in the stomach and chest are prohibited. After this explanation I'd like you to actually take part in *sumo*. Please remember these rules.

By the way, do you know *judo*? *Judo* is also a Japanese traditional sport and it is an international sport now. For you *judo* may be more well-known than *sumo*, I think. Why did *judo* become international? Why didn't *sumo* become international? In my opinion, that's why there's a big difference between *sumo* and *judo*. What is that? *Judo* has weight limits just like boxing and western wrestling. But in *sumo* there are no weight limits, so it is possible for a *rikishi* to find himself pitted against an opponent twice his own weight.

Do you understand the outline of *sumo*? I'm afraid that you have a lot of questions. But people say, "Seeing is believing." Now I'll show you a video of *sumo*.

《*SUMO* A Fan's Guide by Mark Schilling The Japan Times》

This presentation drew attention there, and the three children were introduced in the local news on TV that evening.



★In Minnesota.

The three children gave the presentation to the 25 members of Youth Express program at Concordia College in St. Paul. Youth Express is a program designed to provide young people with education and cultural opportunities, work experience, and leadership training outside of the normal school environment.

A video Yoshiko had recorded and edited was well received there. The video showed the matches of the last day of the *Nagoya* Grandtournament which

was held just before the three children left Japan, and they could listen to English announcements. There were cheers from the students when *Musashimaru* from Hawaii defeated *Wakanohana* and *Takanohana*, and won the championship in the video.

Then they went out and experienced doing *sumo* on the grass. Almost all the children challenged Junichi and Kazuhiko cheerfully. But they could not defeat Junichi and Kazuhiko whose bodies are smaller than theirs. This was the first time to try doing *sumo*, so they tried to throw the opponent, not to thrust him out of the *dohyo*. It seemed that they couldn't understand very well the differences between *sumo* and western wrestling.

During the presentations the children asked many questions. It was very hard for the three to answer the following questions, because they had to explain not only *sumo* but also Japanese traditional culture.

- ◆Who began *sumo*?
- ◆Why do *sumo* wrestlers throw salt?
- ◆Why do *sumo* wrestlers repeat *shikiri*?
- ◆What does *tegatana* mean?
- ◆Why do *sumo* wrestlers wear *sagari*?
- ◆What is the *dohyo* made from? etc.



Only in Japan *sumo* wrestling developed as the national sport, but we can see the origin of *sumo* wrestling all over the world.

It is very surprising that two fighting men's statues made from bronze were discovered when the 3,000 B.C. ruins of ancient Babylonian were unearthed, and the statues were *mawashi*, *sumo* belt. We can see some wall pictures of the fight like *sumo* in the cave at Nile, Egypt. They were drawn in 500 B.C. And a life of Buddha says that he actually did *sumo*.

People all over the world instinctively used to fight like *sumo* to show their own power, and in Europe the fight became western wrestling or boxing. In China it became *kenpo*, and in Japan it became *sumo*.

Nihonshoki says that the first *sumo* was held at the Imperial Palace in 642. *Sumo* seemed to have a relation with the festival which predicted the coming harvest of the crops among the general people. But among the nobles it developed as the ceremony at the shrines, and among the *samurai* it developed as one of the ways to train themselves. Then professional *sumo* wrestlers appeared about 300 years ago. So the peculiar action and manner in *sumo* has a relation to Japanese above-mentioned history and culture.

Rikishi, *sumo* wrestlers, repeat *shikiri* several times in four minutes, and

throw salt each time. Throwing salt is done to purify the *dohyo*, in other words, *rikishi* pray to the gods of the *dohyo* not to be injured during a bout by throwing salt. Salt works for disinfection and sterilization, and it prevents maturation. More than 600kg salt, 40kg per a *rikishi*, is used in a grand-tournament which has 15 days. The Japanese often use salt to purify something, not only in sumo. *Tegatana* performed by a winner after a bout express the thanksgiving for three victory gods. *Tachiai*, the beginning of a bout, is one of the most important things on sumo, so *rikishi* repeat *shikiri* to adjust the timing to start fighting. *Dohyo* is constructed of clay, but it is very remarkable that *tawara*, a straw bag, is used to separate the inner circle from outside of the *dohyo*. *Tawara* is the bag for rice. This shows how the Japanese wish for a rich rice harvest.

At the grand tournament many unique and amazing prizes for the winner. For example,

- ★ gasoline for one year from the UAE
- ★ 10,000 bars of soap from the soap company
- ★ 1,500 one litre bottles of orange juice from the vegetable and fruit alliance in Ehime prefecture
- ★ 5,000 eels
- ★ one cow

Needless to say, 30 straw bags full of rice are given. The sum weight of them is about one ton.

◆After the Presentation of *Sumo*◆

Junichi: I was very satisfied because all the students eagerly listened to our explanation.

Yoshiko: I think so, too. But more students know about *sumo* than I expected.

Kazuhiko: Yes. They said that they have even watched it on TV once or twice.

Yoshiko: Some of the people who didn't know the word, "*sumo*", could recognize when we showed them the pictures of *Akebono* and *Wakanohana*.

Kazuhiko: Almost all of the people we interviewed in the towns knew about it.

Junichi: But some of them think that *sumo* is the same as American professional wrestling. One boy asked me, "When will *yokozuna*

come to the USA and have a bout?"

Kazuhiko: *Sumo* is very impressive for them because of remarkable figure of *rikishi*. But the rules are not well known.

Yoshiko: *Sumo* has been performed abroad, of course in the USA. Why doesn't *sumo* become famous and internationalize?

Junichi: I don't know why. But the people who are interested in Japan know *sumo* very well, and we met a man who has watched live *sumo* at *Kokugikan*. Even we have never seen it live.

Kazuhiko: I remembered. How vexing!

Yoshiko: What was so vexing?

Kazuhiko: I lost the last match in Minnesota. I lost only once.

Junichi: I won all the matches. The students are bigger than I. Why could I always win?

Kazuhiko: Maybe they don't know how they could better use their power.

Junichi: I agree. They always tried to throw the opponent, not to thrust.

Kazuhiko: I don't know any other fights whose rule is that the player will win when he thrust the opponent out of the ring.

Junichi: It sure is. This seems to be the special rule only *sumo* has.

Yoshiko: Both of you are strong. That's why your equilibrium is low, I think.

Junichi: I know my legs aren't so long.

Kazuhiko: Me, too. Leaving it, I felt at ease as we could win. Because we were the instructors.

◆A Talk by Mr. Rick Logo, A Cousin of *Akebono*, *Yokozuna*◆

Yokozuna, *Akebono* is my cousin. Both of us, of course, are from Hawaii, and he is as old as me. So I know him very well. We were football players until we graduated high school.

I am very happy now because my cousin was promoted to *yokozuna* and is active in *sumo*.

What? You mean I had better be a *sumo* wrestler, too? Absurd! I will not be able to endure that hard training. I've heard from *Akebono* how hard they must train.



SECTION III

☆What's the national sport of the USA? A heated argument in a sport shop.☆

Junichi, Kazuhiko and Yoshiko visited Minnesota and asked people there about the national sports of the USA. About half of them answered that baseball is the national sport, and the rest answered football or basketball.

When the three Japanese children visited a small sports shop and asked two clerks about the national sport of the USA, they began a heated argument as follows:

Joe: What's the national sport of our country? Off course, football!

Bob: No. Baseball is the national sport of our country.

Joe: Absolutely not. Football is the national sport. The football stadium is always full of spectators, which just goes to prove it.

Bob: World Series baseball is always full of spectators.

Joe: World Series? Only seven games at most. The tickets for football games are always sold out. It is very difficult to get tickets.

Bob: Think of the number of games. Each football team plays only 17 games, but each baseball team plays 162 games in a season.



Joe: You know. The Metrodome has 63,000 seats during football games, but only 55,000 seats during baseball games. And the parking fee for football games is higher than for baseball games. Did you know that?

Bob: Such talk is completely out of the question. Do you know how many baseball fields there are? About 1,750 fields in this metropolitan area.

Joe: How about football fields?

Bob: There are only 500 fields. Let's compare the number of leagues. This area has about 100 baseball leagues, and 800 baseball teams for children. On the other hand, there are only 20 football leagues.

Joe: That's why people have to prepare many kinds of kits to play football.

And the strategy of football is more advanced than baseball.
Bob: That means everyone cannot play football. Such a sport can't be called
a national sport. Baseball is much more popular than football.

This argument lasted for a long time, and the three became lost for words.

SECTION IV

☆The trip in the USA to watch baseball games(in North Carolina)☆

Junichi, Kazuhiko and Yoshiko discussed the national sports of the USA.

Junichi: Whatever you may say, I think baseball is the national sport of the USA. I interviewed a lot of people, and most of them answered that baseball is the national sport.

Kazuhiko: I know. But it seems that the American idea of national sports is different from the Japanese view.

Yoshiko: That's right. In Japan, the national sport means that the sport represents the tradition and history of the nation. But in the USA it means the sport which is the most popular sport, or the sport which a lot of people enjoy playing and watching.

Junichi: Anyway we came all this way to the USA. Let's go to watch a baseball game.

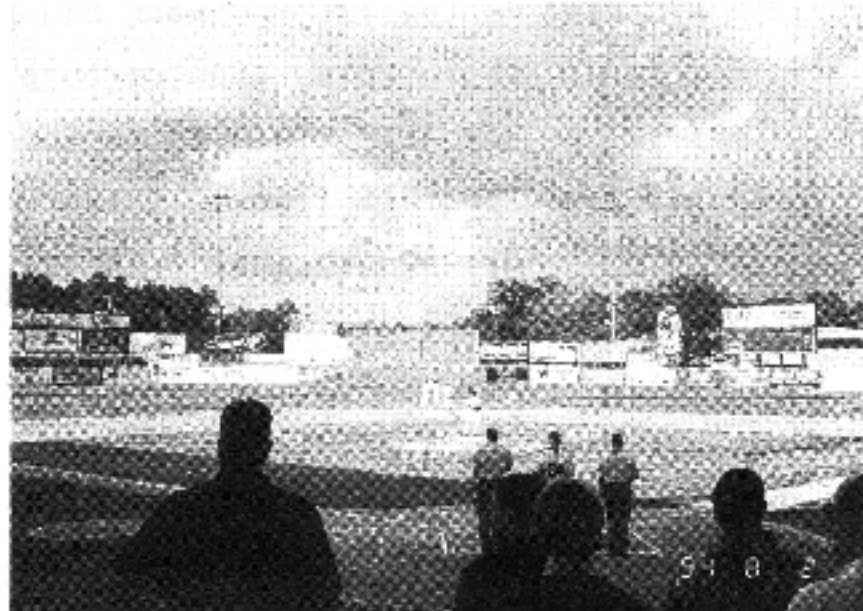
Kazuhiko: Yes, let's. It may be difficult to get the tickets for the major league, but a double A league team called Kinston Indians is near Greenville, and there is a game tomorrow. Shall we go?

Yoshiko: That's a good idea. Let's go!

The next day the three Japanese children went to Grainger Stadium, the home ground of Kinston Indians. The admission fee is 4 dollars. The stadium has only one entrance. The three imagined a very small stadium in a rural district, but they were very surprised at the atmosphere when they entered the stadium. The spectators were very enthusiastic.

Although it was Monday, there were more than 600 spectators and they really enjoyed the game. The stadium has a seating capacity of about 2,000, and all the seats are solid and wide. The Indians used the dugout on the third base side, so most of the spectators sat in the third base side seats and cheered the Indians. According to information on the ticket, this game was supposed to begin at 7:00 pm, but there was a doubleheader game and each game had 7 innings. The first game began at 6:00 pm. There was a box seat for the announcer behind the back net. The spectators could hear music at each interval of pitching during the Indians' batting side, and they clapped hands to the music to cheer the Indians. And there were also various attractions during the change of the batting and fielding sides, and the spectators enjoyed them very much. For example the children suddenly stood up and began to cry in loud voices. The

child who cried in the loudest voice could win a pizza. The three Japanese children were surprised at the shouts of all the children, heard all over the stadium. During the change of the batting and fielding sides, boys began to change their clothes to baseball uniforms. If they were able to change their clothes in the time limit, they could win hamburgers. The spectators warmly cheered them during this attraction.



In Japan the spectators of the farm teams' games don't cheer and show enjoyment like the American spectators do, and there are no attractions during the game. The farm teams' game are only very minor, but in the USA, the spectator of minor leagues' eagerly cheer their favorite team and enjoy the games. In return, the teams give fans some exciting action. This is the big difference between Japan and the USA.

Junichi: Amazing! This is a game of double A league, but the spectators are very enthusiastic.

Kazuhiko: I agree. This would be incredible in Japan, but as we expected the USA is the home of baseball.

Yoshiko: Hey! This is a valuable opportunity, so why don't we interview some spectators?

Junichi talked to an old man sitting next to him.



Junichi: Excuse me. What's the national sport of the USA?
An old man: Of course, baseball.
Junichi: Why do you think so?
An old man: Because everyone can play it.
Kazuhiko: Some Americans say that football is the national sport.
An old man: Football? Too much equipment to play it. If there is a field, there is no problem to play baseball.
Junichi: How many times do you come here in a year?
An old man: About 25 times. I have an annual reserve seat.
Junichi: By the way, what's the national sport of Japan? Do you know?
An old man: Yes, I do. The wrestling big men do it. What do you call it?
Yoshiko: Sumo.
An old man: Yes, I remember.
Kazuhiko: The most famous baseball player in Japan is Sadaharu Oh. Do you know him?
An old man: Sorry, I don't know him.

At this time the stadium announcer began an announcement.

An old man: Listen! This announcement is introducing you.
The three: Really?

The announcement was as follows:

We have some special guests today. Three Japanese children came here all the way from Japan. They would like to ask you some questions about baseball in America. When they ask you, please answer the questions with pleasure.



The three children were given a big hand immediately. They stood up and waved their hands in response to the hearty welcome.

Yoshiko: I am very excited. All the spectators are giving us a big welcome.

Kazuhiko: It's very surprising to be specially introduced by an announcement.

Junichi: I have to interview them with an air of eagerness. Hey! The people over there are calling us.

Yoshiko: The people over here are calling, too. We are busy now.

Kazuhiko: This is really America!

The three became very busy, but they were very happy.

☆The trip in the USA to watch baseball games(in Minnesota)☆

The next place the three Japanese children visited was Minneapolis in Minnesota. Baseball is very popular there, and the Metrodome which is the home ground of Minnesota Twins is located in this city. The Metrodome is the model for the Tokyo Dome.

◆Taking part in the softball game◆

Mr. Paul V. Sherburne guided the three in Minneapolis. He is the executive director of Japan America Society of Minnesota. As soon as Mr. Sherburne shook hands with them, he asked them,

Mr. Sherburne: Do you like playing softball?

Junichi: Yes, I do. I often play it.

Mr. Sherburne: I play softball with my friends every Sunday. Will you join us?

The next day Junichi and Kazuhiko went to play softball, worrying about how well the other members could play. Mr. Sherburne took them to a field which is used for both baseball and football. The two Japanese expected that all the members would come in their great uniforms. But the members who trickled into the field didn't wear uniforms. They were only wearing T shirts and short pants. The ages of the members were from 16 to 50, and only 11 people, including Junichi and Kazuhiko, took part in the game. They began the game with special local rules. Batted balls which went to the right side of second base were foul balls.

Some of the batting team's members played catcher, first and second baseman.

Junichi: These rules are very interesting, aren't they?

Kazuhiko: Let's play, anyway. All we have to do is to play baseball, so I don't have to speak English.

But the two Japanese children had to change their opinions, as soon as the game started. They played very hard. Some of them did head sliding, and some did fine plays. It became an enjoyable game. Junichi and Kazuhiko found out how much they enjoy playing softball and how much they love softball.

Junichi: The Americans are really cheerful.

Kazuhiko: They heartily enjoy playing softball. There were no troubles. Enjoying softball is the most important thing for them. No matter what the rules are.

Junichi: Whenever we play softball in Japan, someone umpires. Keeping the rules is very important, and sometimes we have troubles.



Mr. Sherburne told them that they always enjoy softball like this. Junichi and Kazuhiko had a very good time because Mr. Sherburne and his friends treated them as if they had been members of this team for a long time.

Amazing number of sports facilities

The metropolitan area around Minneapolis has a great many sports facilities as following:

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Baseball fields | 1,750 |
| Basketball courts | 500 |
| Football fields | 50 |
| Ice hockey rinks | 50 |

Citizens of this area can use these facilities freely.

◆At the Metrodome◆

The next day, the three Japanese children, Junichi, Kazuhiko and Yoshiko were taken to the Metrodome by Mr. Sherburne. In the morning they joined the tour to observe the facilities of the Metrodome, and in the evening they watched the game between the Minnesota Twins and the Boston Red Sox. During the game they had many chances to interview spectators.

After the game:

Junichi: How wonderful! The atmosphere of the major league was great.

Kazuhiko: Yes. But we could see some vacant seats. Almost all of the spectators came by car.

Yoshiko: More than 90% of the spectators came by car. This is very different from Japan.

Junichi: There are many parking areas in the vicinity, with a capacity of about 15,000 cars. If three people come in one car, almost 50,000 spectators are able to use these parking areas.

Kazuhiko: The admission fee for the infield reserved seats is 11 dollars. This is about half of the fee in Japan.

Yoshiko: But we couldn't find any differences about the shops and the services for fans. This is natural because Japan has imitated the USA.

Junichi: Didn't you notice? There is a big difference about the service for fans. The spectators can even get foul balls here, but the spectator in Japan cannot get foul balls. They can only get home-run balls.

Kazuhiko: That's why all the children have gloves with them.

Yoshiko: I was very surprised at the parade of the boys' baseball teams around here. I was amazed by the number of the teams.

Junichi: I've heard that there are about 100 baseball leagues for children. So there are about 800 teams.

Kazuhiko: The spectators are also given something to enjoy in addition to the game itself, such as the attraction at the Grainger stadium.

Yoshiko: I asked some spectators about national sports. Almost all of them said that baseball is the national sport of the USA. I could have predicted this answer even before I asked them.

Junichi: If we asked spectators of football, almost all of them would say that football is the national sport. But I have noticed, during my stay in the USA, how much people love baseball.

Kazuhiko: I am not convinced that baseball is the only national sport of

the USA, but I can say that baseball is the most popular sport of the USA.

Yoshiko: I strongly felt that the American way of thinking about sports is different from the Japanese view. People in the USA play and watch sports to enjoy and complete their lives. There are also attractions during the games, and people in the USA enjoy games as individuals. On the other hand, the spectators in Japan obey the leaders and don't enjoy it as individuals.

Junichi: That's right. People in Japan play sports to train themselves, not only for pure enjoyment. In regards to *sumo*, many people cheer the wrestler who has made a great effort, and they supported *sumo* wrestlers' income.

Kazuhiko: People say that the national sport of Japan is *sumo*, but few people actually take part in *sumo*. Most people enjoy watching sports without actually playing them.

Junichi: Hey! I've found the common point between baseball and *sumo*.

Yoshiko: What is that?

Junichi: It is a very rigorous process to become one of the famous athletes. Many boys enter the stables of *sumo* every year, but a small number of them can be promoted to *sekitori*. And only one in hundreds of *sumo* wrestlers can become *ozeki* or *yokozuna*. Even if a champion of amateur *sumo* becomes a professional wrestler, it is very hard for him to be promoted to *juryo*.

Kazuhiko: Major league players have a rigorous process just as *sumo* wrestlers do. Few rookies from high school are able to play in the major league. No matter how well a rookie plays, he has to play in the double A or triple A league.

Yoshiko: I didn't understand very well what you just said, but I understood that the representative sports of Japan and the USA have something in common.

Junichi: Do you remember that all the people stood up and sang the national anthem of the USA gazing at the Stars and Stripes before the games?

Kazuhiko: We did, too, when we went to watch double A league.

Yoshiko: How about in Japan?

The survey of the three Japanese children finished with this watching this major league baseball game. What do you think or how do you feel, after reading this article? Were you surprised at what the three said? Did you sympathize

with their experience?

Sports don't have a border, but the ways of thinking about sports are different in each country, just as the history and traditions are different.

Let's talk about this point with your friends in the classroom.

You will surely be able to notice what you haven't known before about your country's culture. And through the experience you will be able to understand the ways of thinking of other countries' people.

The most important thing in order to understand each other, is to understand your own country first.

