Lesson 3

Hatching the Egg of Hope

For Miyazaki Kensuke, art is a way to share happiness with people all over the world. He sees life as a journey to discover an answer to the question: Who am I as a person and as an artist?

I’ve always loved painting. During a spring break in high school, I visited Belgium for two weeks. I spent my time painting on the streets. People who passed by seemed happy to see my work, even though I couldn’t understand their language. I realized the power of art to bring people together.

In college, I had a dream. I wanted people all over the world to recognize me as a great artist. After graduating, I went to London to become famous.

In London, I lived and worked part-time in a guest house. I didn’t have much money. No gallery accepted my paintings.

My street artist friends and I thought it was cool to look angry. They were expressing their anger at social injustice, and their anger was real. But I was from an ordinary family living an ordinary life. I wasn’t angry at all.

I was in London for two years, but still I wasn’t a famous artist. I decided I had to find a different way of expressing myself.

In London, I happened to watch a TV program about a school for orphans and street children in Nairobi, Kenya. The children looked unhappy. I suddenly felt an urge to go to Kenya and paint something for those children.

It wasn’t easy, but finally in 2006, I got to Kenya, found the school, and was able to paint for the children. I painted an angry dragon. I was happy with it, but a teacher complained, “The children are frightened by the dragon. Some of them refuse to come to school.” The children thought that it was a big snake. They did not know that dragons are imaginary.

I asked them, “What would you like me to paint?”

“Lions!” “Baobabs!”

I asked the children to help me, and we had a lot of fun painting together. According to the teachers, the children became more active than before.

That was a turning point in my career. Creating happiness through painting in collaboration with others is my thing. I made up my mind to do a painting project every year in different parts of the world.

In 2011, after the Great East Japan Earthquake, I joined a volunteer group in Sendai. Because schools were closed, children had nothing to do. They looked bored. I thought my painting project might cheer them up. I started working with these children. We painted the walls of a school.

A barber in Ofunato, Iwate, asked me to paint a sign for his shop. I not only made the sign but also painted his whole shop in bright colors!

I had doubts about the usefulness of my art project, but I did not want to think that art has no power in the face of disaster. Money and supplies that people donate can be of great help. But working together on a painting and sharing the joy of creation can also help. People can laugh and smile even in the worst conditions.

In 2017, I found myself in Mariupol, Ukraine. A war was going on. It was a very dangerous place. People were dying every day. I saw shell holes everywhere and buildings destroyed by bombs.

Mariupol was not a safe place for an art project. But to my surprise, when I started painting, children came out of nowhere to join me.

We painted a big mitten. The idea is based on a popular Ukrainian story, The Magic Mitten. In the story, one snowy night, an old man drops his mitten. A mouse, a frog, a rabbit, a fox, a wolf, and many other animals climb into the mitten to stay warm.

In our painting, you see people from all over the world sharing the warmth of a huge mitten. It is decorated with Easter eggs which represent life and hope. Our painting shows that people’s warm hearts can hatch the egg of hope and bring a peaceful life to us all.

I still do not have a clear answer to the question: Who am I as a person and as an artist? But one thing has become clear: my art has the power to make people “super happy.”

**First Reading**

Read the following sentences. If the statement is true, mark it "T." If the statement is false, mark it "F."

1. People in Belgium seemed happy to see Miyazaki's paintings. (　T　)

2. In London, Miyazaki thought it was cool to look angry. (　T　)

3. Miyazaki became famous while he was in London. (　F　)

4. A school in Kenya invited Miyazaki to paint something for children. (　F　)

5. Miyazaki was happy with the dragon he painted. (　T　)

6. The children and Miyazaki enjoyed painting together. (　T　)

7. Miyazaki thought his art project in Sendai might cheer the children up. (　T　)

8. The barber asked Miyazaki to paint for his whole shop. (　F　)

9. In 2017, Mariupol was not a safe place. (　T　)

10. Miyazaki was surprised when many children came and helped him paint. (　T　)

11 Easter eggs represent world peace. (　F　)

12. Miyazaki found a clear answer to the question, “Who am I as a person and as an artist?” (　F　)

WPM

the number of words : 730 words／time ( ) × 60 × the number of the right answers of T/F questions ( )／12 questions

Your WPM = \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Second Reading**

Answer the following questions.

Q-1 How does Miyazaki Kensuke see life?

He sees life as a journey to discover an answer to the question, “Who am I as ast?”

Q-2 What were Miyazaki’s street artist friends expressing through their work?

They were expressing their anger at social injustice.

Q-3 After being in London for two years, what did Miyazaki decide to do?

They were expressing their anger at social injustice.

Q-4 Why did some of the children refuse to come to school?

Because they were frightened by the dragon in the painting.

Q-5 Who did Miyazaki ask for help with the painting?

He asked the children at the school.

Q-6 How did the children change when they painted together?

They were expressing their anger at social injustice.

Q-7 Why were the children in Sendai bored?

Because schools were closed after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Q-8 What did Miyazaki do for the barber in Ofunato?

They were expressing their anger at social injustice.

Q-9 Both East Japan and Ukraine suffered from disasters. What were they?

They were earthquake and war.

Q-10 What did Miyazaki and the children paint in Mariupol?

(They painted a big mitten based on a popular Ukrainian story, *The Magic Mitten*.

Q-11 What does the painting show us?

They were expressing their anger at social injustice.

Q-12 What is one thing that has become clear to Miyazaki?

His art has the power to make people “super happy.”

**New Words and Phrases**

hatch to apply heat artificially to hasten the birth of a bird or other animal from its egg

share ～ with ... *e.g.* I shared a room with my sister.

Belgium ―

spend ～ V-ing *e.g.* I spent two days (in) writing a paper.

pass by ～ *cf.* The express train passed by the station without stopping.

even though ～ ≒ although ～

bring ～ together *e.g.* The Olympic Games bring people together from all over the world.

recognize to know somebody/something is true or important

graduate to finish school, college or university education

part-time working during only a part of the regular working time

work part-time ≒ have a part-time job

guest a visitor received and offered food, a bed, etc. in a person’s house, in a hotel, etc.

a guest house ≒ a small hotel

gallery a building where paintings (and other works of art) are shown

anger a strong feeling of displeasure, often leading to a desire to hurt or stop the person or thing causing it

injustice lack of justice or fairness

ordinary average, usual, or not different

live a ～ life *e.g.* My aunt lives a happy life.

happen to ～ *e.g.* I happened to meet her on the train.

orphan a child whose parents are both dead

Nairobi ―

urge a strong wish or desire to do something

dragon a large imaginary animal with wings and a long tail that can breathe fire

be happy with ～ ≒ be satisfied with ～

frighten to make someone feel afraid

refuse not to accept something

imaginary not real; existing only in your mind or imagination

baobab a tropical tree with a very thick trunk

according (according to ～) as said by someone or in some publication

according to ～ *e.g.* According to the newspaper, it’s going to rain tomorrow.

turning (a turning point) a time when an important change happens

a turning point ≒ a moment which changes *one’s* life

career an occupation or profession that you continue through life

collaboration the act of working with others to achieve something, especially in science or art

in collaboration with ～ *e.g.* This building was designed in collaboration with several companies.

make up *one’s* mind ≒ decide

earthquake a sudden shaking of the earth’s surface

the Great East 東日本大震災

Japan Earthquake

cheer to encourage someone or to give them hope

cheer ～ up *e.g.* When he hit a home run, it really cheered the team up.

not only ～ but also ... *e.g.* I love not only dogs but also cats.

usefulness the state of being useful

in the face of ～ ≒ when you face ～

disaster a terrible accident such as an earthquake, a great flood, etc.; sudden or great misfortune

supply (pl.) equipment and provisions like food and clothing

donate to give money or goods to help a person or organization

be of help ≒ be helpful

creation a process in which someone makes something happen or exist

condition the particular state that something or someone is in

find *oneself* in ～ ≒ be in～

Mariupol ―

Ukraine ―

go on ≒ continue

shell a bomb shot from a big gun

destroy to damage something very badly so that it cannot be used or no longer exists

to *one’s* surprise *e.g.* To our surprise, we won the game.

nowhere no place

come out of nowhere ≒ suddenly appear

mitten a type of glove that covers the four fingers together and the thumb separately

be based on ～ *e.g.* His speech is based on his experience as a scientist.

Ukrainian of or relating to Ukraine or its people

warmth a comfortable degree of heat

decorate to make something more attractive

decorate ～ with … *e.g.* The room was decorated with flowers for my birthday.

Easter ―

represent to stand for, be a symbol for or example of

peaceful not fighting a war, or deliberately not being violent

super extremely