

2017 International Essay Contest for Young People

【Children's Category – 3rd Prize】

If We Are Kind (Original in Japanese)

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I think of nature as having human feelings. If we treat nature kindly and with care, it will give us clear skies and clean air. If we mistreat nature, it will get angry, and thunder and lightning will descend on us. If nature is sad, acid rain will come falling down.

When I was little I used to go to a park near my grandma's house. While my grandma and I walked through the tunnel of trees and bushes, I thought, *Why do the trees seem so friendly?*

Whenever I look at a tree, I want to capture it in a drawing or a photo. And when I do, I feel that my own heart has become kinder, too. Every tree seems friendly to me—not only the trees at the park I went to with my grandma, but also the trees in front of the train station, the cherry blossom trees at school, and so on. I think this is because trees are part of nature. Since I am kind and caring to nature, I think nature is kind to me.

However, I saw on TV that representatives from around the world were meeting to discuss the destruction of nature caused by global warming and other problems. I studied global warming in grade 5, and I was frightened to learn that if global warming progresses, nature will disappear, and human beings and other creatures will be unable to live on earth.

If nature has human feelings, right now I think it is angry and sad. I think people should be kinder to nature.

So, in what ways can we be kinder? I thought and thought about this.

First of all, I think it's important to know how beautiful nature is. When people think, *I love nature!* they will probably be more considerate towards nature. Then, they will put that kindness into practice. They will start thinking, *I'm doing this for beautiful Mother Nature*, and that mindset will continue for a long time. I think everyone will understand what they

ought to do, and how to do it. They will come up with new ideas and solutions. One example is the lottery. The lottery company could use five percent of its profits to plant trees, or contribute to lectures that let people know how beautiful nature is and that we should care for nature.

I think school is important, too—learning about nature at school. In addition, it would also be good to have group discussions about global warming. Today's elementary school, middle school, and high school students will all be adults in 20 years. If they are kind and caring to nature at that time, then nature will be protected. On the other hand, if we do not learn about nature, then the earth could end up ruined and uninhabitable. Therefore, we should be made to think about nature and the environment at school.

I also think about how we will sustain nature in the future. Perhaps we will make nature artificially, through scientific development. In that case, would it really be nature? To preserve nature as it is today, we ought to be kind to it.

Why should we be kind to nature? Because if we are kind to nature, nature will share its resources and allow us to appreciate its beauty.

I hope the gentle trees at the park that I went to with my grandma will always be there. For that, I would like to do what I can.