

Omiya: March Peer-To-Peer Dialogue Journals

By Steve Connolly

The presenter first explained how to administer a peer-to-peer dialogue journal in English. There are few rules: using names, school names, and Japanese are forbidden. The supervising teacher neither sets minimums or maximums for the journals, nor corrects or responds to them. What teachers emphasize on this project is to make sure that students enjoy the weekly exchanges with their partners. The participants at this presentation enjoyed the students' entries with pictures and messages expressing the students' interests and anxieties.

To investigate the pedagogical efficacy of the peer-to-peer dialogue journal, four sets of data were collected and analyzed: the journals themselves, a free-writing quiz, a free-speaking quiz, and surveys. Linguistic improvement was not significant in the journals themselves, however, the journal participants outperformed the non-participants on the free-writing and free-speaking quizzes. Based on written surveys completed by the participants, the vast majority of the participants enjoyed the activity. Mr. Connolly concluded that the secret journal provides a motivating means for authentic communication in English and a potential for linguistic improvement.