

対象：3年生（421語）

弘前人の努力の結晶：世界一のさくら

The fruits of the wisdom, passion, and continuous effort of the people in Hirosaki:

Cherry Blossoms in Hirosaki

世界中から観光客が集まる、弘前さくらまつり。北国の春を豪華に彩る弘前のさくらには、さくらを愛する多くの人の熱い思いがこめられている。

Hirosaki Park is one of the most famous tourist sites for cherry blossoms in Japan. More than two million people, even from foreign countries, come to see cherry blossoms during Golden Week every year. People of the Tsugaru area celebrate the end of the long and severe winter. They feel happy among the full blooms of cherry blossoms.

There is a castle in the center of Hirosaki Park. It was first built in 1611 but was burned down by a thunderbolt in 1627. The present one was rebuilt in 1810. The most popular view is the castle framed by cherry blossoms from *Gejobashi* bridge. This scene symbolizes Hirosaki. Moreover, you shouldn't miss the night view of it. You can feel a mysterious atmosphere beyond the time.

By the way, do you know about the life of cherry trees? Cherry trees will weaken and the number of flowers become fewer when they have lived over 50 years. There are about 2,600 cherry trees in Hirosaki Park. Many of them, in fact, are over 100 years old. But they are still lively and can have horizontal branches and a lot of flowers. These old trees look more stable than young trees.

Then, why can old cherry trees in Hirosaki Park produce such brilliant flowers? The answer to this question is in the pruning technique. Hirosaki is the largest producer of apples in Japan, so the pruning technique for apple trees was well developed. Formerly, to cut cherry trees was considered a taboo. One day people who took care of cherry trees tried to use the technique for the apple trees to cherry trees. They wanted to recover old cherry trees. This original pruning method is called the "Hirosaki system." As a result, many old cherry trees have returned to health and show us beautiful flowers in spring.

Finally, you must not forget the people who protect cherry trees. Specialists called arborists, tree doctors, care for the cherry trees of Hirosaki Park throughout the year. In midsummer they have to give trees water to protect from the heat, and in

winter they try to remove heavy snow so that branches will not be broken. Sometimes they treat trees which have illness and problems. Tree doctors always worry about the cherry trees like their own children. If they continue to take care of cherry trees, they believe that the trees can live forever.

Yes, the cherry trees of Hirosaki Park are the fruits of the wisdom, passion, and continuous effort of the people in Hirosaki.

【 words & expressions 】

tourist sites : 観光地 even : ～でさえ are released from～ : ～解放される
severe : 厳しい full blooms : 満開 was burned down : 焼け落ちた
thunderbolt : 落雷 was rebuilt : 再建された symbolize : 象徴する
moreover : さらに mysterious atmosphere : 神秘的な雰囲気 in fact : 実際には
horizontal branch : 水平に広がる枝 stable : しっかりしている
brilliant : 見事な pruning techniques : 剪定技術 formerly : かつては
as a result : その結果 specialist : 専門家 arborist : 樹木医 wisdom : 知恵
passion : 情熱 continuous : 継続的な effort : 努力

1. 次の内容が合っていれば T を、まちがっていれば F を書いてください。

- (1) Most cherry trees in Hirosaki Park are young. ()
- (2) Cherry trees are usually dying in fifty years. ()
- (3) Tree doctors take care of cherry trees only in summer and winter. ()

2. 次の質問に英語で答えましょう。

- (1) Is the present Hirosaki castle the original one?

- (2) How many cherry trees are there in Hirosaki Park?

- (3) Do you want to visit Hirosaki?

Yes. → Why? _____

No. → What city do you want to visit in Japan?
