一张沾泥的照片

老师们、同学们：早上好！我讲话的题目是《一张沾泥的照片》。

请看我们六二班教室后墙上的那张合影：三十几个人挤在菜地边，一个个手上带着泥，中间举着几根洗干净的白萝卜，笑得眼睛都眯了。照片上还有几个泥点，谁也没擦。今天，我就讲讲这张照片是怎么来的。

九月，学校把操场边的种植园分给各班，我们六二班领了东头那一畦。周老师拿来一袋萝卜种子，问谁敢接手。全班的手唰地举起来。那天下午，男生轮流抡小锄头翻地，土块砸在鞋面上也不喊疼；女生把土坷垃一块块捏碎，地整得平平的。种子埋下去以后，班里排了值日表，早中晚各一次浇水，风雨无阻。

十月里，萝卜叶子疯长，根却不见粗。周老师带我们去请教学校花房的孙师傅。孙师傅蹲下一看，说：叶子长得欢，是水浇多了肥少了，根光顾着长叶子，忘了往下扎。我们照着改了，少浇水，把周老师从家里沤来的肥液埋进土里。半个月后拔出一棵看，萝卜有手指长了，全班围着欢呼。

十一月末，那一畦萝卜收了六十七根，最大的有胳膊粗。我们把它们洗得白白净净，送到学校食堂。晚饭时，餐桌上出现了萝卜炖排骨。那天食堂的窗口前排着长队，好多同学说，这萝卜格外甜。我们班的同学互相看一眼，都笑了——那甜里，有我们两个多月的浇水和等待。

照片就是收萝卜那天拍的。周老师说，泥点别擦，那是奖章。我想，这张照片还告诉我们两件事：其一，粮食和菜不是货架上长出来的，是一畦一畦种出来的，所以每一口都该被珍惜；其二，世上没有白流的汗，萝卜记得每一瓢水，我们也该记得帮过我们的孙师傅、周老师，记得食堂里忙碌的阿姨。

同学们，学校还有一百多盆绿植没有主人，花坛里还有空着的一角。我代表六二班向全校倡议：各班认领一棵树、一丛花，做它们的值日生；每人每天做一件家务，向父母道一声辛苦；一日三餐珍惜粮食，把光盘当成最神气的样子。

让我们都拍一张沾泥的照片，把劳动和感恩留在小学的时光里。我的讲话完毕，谢谢大家！

A Photo Stained with Mud

Dear teachers and fellow students: good morning! The title of my talk is: A Photo Stained with Mud.

Please look at the group photo on the back wall of our Class 2, Grade 6: more than thirty of us crowded beside the vegetable plot, mud on our hands, holding up a few washed white radishes in the middle, smiling so hard our eyes squinted shut. There are still mud spots on the photo, and nobody wiped them off. Today, I will tell you how that photo came to be.

In September, the school divided the planting garden beside the playground among

the classes, and our class took the plot at the east end. Teacher Zhou brought a bag of radish seeds and asked who dared to take it on. Every hand in the class shot up. That afternoon, the boys took turns swinging small hoes to dig the ground; lumps of dirt fell on their shoes and nobody cried out. The girls crumbled every clod one by one until the bed lay flat. After the seeds went in, the class made a duty roster: water once in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, rain or shine.

In October, the radish leaves grew wildly, but the roots stayed thin. Teacher Zhou took us to ask Master Sun, who tends the school greenhouse. He crouched down, took one look, and said: the leaves are having a party because there is too much water and too little fertilizer; the roots are busy with the leaves and forgot to dig downward. We changed our ways accordingly, watered less, and buried the fertilizer liquid Teacher Zhou composted at home into the soil. Half a month later, we pulled one up to look, and the radish was as long as a finger. The whole class gathered around and cheered.

At the end of November, that plot gave us sixty-seven radishes, the thickest as wide as an arm. We washed them snow-white and delivered them to the school cafeteria. At dinner, braised pork ribs with radish appeared on the menu. The line at that window stretched long that evening, and many classmates said the radish was especially sweet. The students of our class glanced at one another and smiled. The sweetness held more than two months of our watering and waiting.

The photo was taken on harvest day. Teacher Zhou said: leave the mud spots, they are medals. I think this photo tells us two things as well. First, grain and vegetables do not grow on supermarket shelves; they are grown plot by plot, so every bite deserves to be cherished. Second, no sweat is ever wasted. The radish remembers every ladle of water, and we should remember Master Sun who helped us, Teacher Zhou, and the aunties busy in the cafeteria.

Fellow students, the school still has more than a hundred potted plants without an owner, and there is an empty corner left in the flower bed. On behalf of Class 2, Grade 6, I propose to the whole school: let each class adopt a tree or a cluster of flowers and become their duty keeper; let each person do one household chore a day and thank our parents for their hard work; let us cherish the food in our three daily meals and treat a clean plate as the proudest look of all.

Let each of us take a photo stained with mud, and keep labor and gratitude inside our primary school years. That concludes my talk. Thank you, everyone!