班会之前：一个城里老师的秋收备课

班会前一个礼拜，我都在准备那节「走进秋收」。说真的，我在城里长大，自己就没进过几回田，要带四十二个孩子认识秋收，我得先把自己教一遍。

我先去请教学校门口修车铺的老周。他从前在乡下种过十几年水稻，我蹲在他摊子边问了半个钟头：稻子什么时候黄，谷子晒几天才装袋，玉米为什么不许堆着不晾。他一样一样讲，还扯着我讲处暑、白露、寒露，说节气就是庄稼的日历。我拿手机备忘录记，他笑我：老师还做笔记。我说，我要讲错了，四十二个学生就错四十二回。

照片是我暑假在乡下表哥家拍的。表哥种了三十亩田，我跟着他下过两回田。挑照片那晚，我在手机里翻到一张表哥蹲在收割机边上吃盒饭的，饭盒搁在稻茬上，他吃得很快，眼睛还看着田。我把这张也打印了出来。还有表哥家的小女儿，才六岁，蹲在晒谷场边上用玩具小铲子铲谷，铲得比大人还认真。这张孩子们肯定喜欢。

问答卡片我做了三十张，最难的一张我留了答案没写：一穗稻子上大约有多少粒谷。我自己不知道，打算到时候让田小禾说她奶奶怎么数的。田小禾是我班上的孩子，她奶奶种了四十年田，她自己也捡了六年稻穗。班里就她最懂田，这节班会，她其实是我的半个老师。

爱粮那一环我原本想讲大道理，讲一半自己先脸红——昨天办公室倒的半桶剩饭还是我倒的。所以我改了主意，端一盘扫出来的米粒进教室，什么都不讲，先让他们看三十秒。有些道理，讲一百遍不如摆出来一遍。

班会那天很成功，黑板上的照片贴到放学都没人揭。我抱着一摞卡片回办公室，路上想：这节班会，先受教育的其实是我。明年秋天，我真打算带他们去表哥的田里站一站，让秋收从照片里走出来，走到他们脚边。

Before the Class Meeting: Lesson Preparation of a City Teacher

For a week before the class meeting, I was getting that lesson called Walking into Harvest ready. To be honest, I grew up in the city and have been into only a few fields in my life. To lead forty-two children to know the harvest, I had to teach myself first.

I began by visiting Old Zhou, who repairs bicycles at the school gate. He once farmed rice in the countryside for more than ten years. I squatted by his stand for half an hour and asked: when does the rice turn yellow, how many days must grain be dried before bagging, why may corn not be left heaped without airing. He answered one by one, and even pulled me into talking about the solar terms, saying the terms are the calendar of the crops. I recorded it in my phone, and he laughed: the teacher takes notes too. I said, if I teach it wrong, forty-two students will be wrong forty-two times.

The photographs were the ones I took at the home of my cousin in the countryside during the summer vacation. My cousin farms thirty mu. I followed him into the field twice. That night while choosing photos, I found one of him squatting beside the harvester eating a boxed lunch, the box resting on rice stubble, eating fast with his eyes still on the field. I printed that one too. There was also his little daughter, only six, squatting at the edge of the drying ground and shoveling grain with a toy shovel, more seriously than the grown-ups. The children would surely love this one.

I made thirty quiz cards. The hardest card I left without an answer written: about how many grains on one ear of rice. I did not know it myself, and I planned to let Tian Xiaohe tell us how her grandmother counts. Tian Xiaohe is one of my pupils; her grandmother has farmed for forty years, and she herself has picked up fallen rice ears for six years. In our class she understands the field best. For this class meeting she is really half my teacher.

For the grain-saving part I first meant to preach big principles, and stopped halfway with a blushing face. The half bucket of leftover rice thrown away in the office yesterday was thrown away by me. So I changed my plan: carry a plate of rice grains swept from the floor into the classroom, say nothing, and let them look for thirty seconds first. Some truths, spoken a hundred times, are worth less than placed before the eyes once.

The meeting went well, and the photographs stayed on the blackboard until school ended. Carrying a stack of cards back to the office, I thought on the way: the one truly educated by this meeting was me first. Next autumn I really plan to take them to stand in the field of my cousin, and let the harvest step out of the photographs and come to their feet.