黑板上贴着七张照片：记一次秋收班会

星期三下午最后一节课，铃声响过，班主任王老师没有翻课本，抱着一摞照片走进了教室。黑板上早写好了六个大字：走进秋收，主题班会。我们还没反应过来，班长已经举着一沓卡片站在讲台边，说第一关是秋收知识问答。

第一张卡片就难住了半个班：稻谷是从什么时候开始黄的？小军抢答六月，王老师摇头。后排的田小禾慢慢举手，说她奶奶讲过，处暑之后稻子才低头，早的八月底，晚的要到十月。她奶奶在村里种了四十年田，她每年秋天都去田里捡稻穗。教室里安静了一会儿，然后掌声响起来。第二题问玉米收回家为什么要挂在屋檐下，第三题问一亩水稻大约能打多少斤谷，答对的人越来越多，答错的人也没人笑，因为大家都真的在学。

第二关是看照片。王老师把照片一张一张贴在黑板上：金色的稻浪、堆成小山的玉米、割稻的人弯着的背、晒谷场上爬着太阳的谷子。有一张照片上，一个老奶奶蹲在田埂上，手里捧着一把稻穗。王老师说这是她暑假回乡下拍的。照片贴到第七张，我们班的李多多忽然小声说，这个晒场跟我外婆家一模一样。全班都笑起来，可王老师没让笑停，她说：对，秋收就在我们每个人的外婆家。

最后一关，王老师没出题，只端来一个盘子，盘子里是一层撒在桌上的米粒。她让我们看三十秒。三十秒里没人说话。然后她说，这就是昨天中午教室里扫出来的，还没踩脏，已经扫出来了。她讲了我们班午餐倒掉的半桶饭，讲了一粒米从秧苗到饭碗要过的十八道工序，讲完只说一句：这节班会课，就记住一件事——碗里的饭，配得上被吃完。

下课铃响的时候，黑板上七张照片还贴着。放学路过教室，我看见值日生把最后一张桌子擦得特别干净，桌上那几粒米，不见了。

Seven Photographs on the Blackboard

On Wednesday afternoon, in the last class, the bell rang and our homeroom teacher Miss Wang walked in with a stack of photographs instead of opening the textbook. Six big characters were already written on the blackboard: Walking into Harvest, a themed class meeting. Before we understood anything, the class monitor was standing by the platform with a pile of cards, announcing that the first round was a quiz on harvest knowledge.

The first card stumped half the class: when does the rice begin to turn yellow? Xiao Jun blurted out June, and Miss Wang shook her head. Tian Xiaohe from the back row raised her hand slowly and said her grandmother had told her that the rice bows its head only after the End of Heat, the early fields by the end of August and the late ones not until October. Her grandmother has farmed in the village for forty years, and she picks up fallen rice ears in the field every autumn. The room was quiet for a moment, and then applause broke out. The second card asked why corn is hung under the eaves after being brought home, and the third asked how many jin of

grain one mu of rice can give. More and more hands were right, and nobody laughed at the wrong answers, because everyone was truly learning.

The second round was looking at photographs. Miss Wang pasted them on the blackboard one by one: golden waves of rice, corn piled into little hills, the bent backs of the people cutting rice, and grain crawling with sunlight on the drying ground. In one photo an old woman squatted on the ridge of the field holding a handful of rice ears in her palms. Miss Wang said she took it when she visited the countryside that summer. When the seventh photo went up, Li Duoduo of our class whispered that the drying ground looked exactly like the one at the home of her grandmother. The whole class laughed, but Miss Wang did not let the laughter end. She said: yes, the harvest lives in the home of every one of our grandmothers.

In the last round Miss Wang set no question. She only brought a plate with a layer of rice grains scattered on it. She asked us to look for thirty seconds. Nobody spoke during those thirty seconds. Then she said this was swept up from the classroom floor at noon yesterday, not yet stepped on and dirty, already swept up. She told us about the half bucket of rice thrown away at lunch, about the eighteen steps a grain of rice passes from seedling to rice bowl, and ended with one sentence: in this class meeting, remember one thing. The rice in your bowl deserves to be eaten up.

When the school bell rang, the seven photographs were still on the blackboard. Leaving school past the classroom, I saw the student on duty wiping the last desk very clean. The few rice grains on that desk were gone.