

Interesting way to raise money!

Kagawa teacher provides proceeds of English board game to UNICEF

By MARY MARGARET CRAPPER

Regional correspondent

SHIROTORI, Kagawa Pref. — When Brett Wilcox read an article that said 40,000 children under the age of 5 die every day, he cut the story out and read it daily until depression forced him into action.

"I decided to focus on what I can do, not what I can't do," Wilcox said. He used his knowledge as an English teacher to develop a board game for learning the language. The proceeds from sales of the game go to UNICEF.

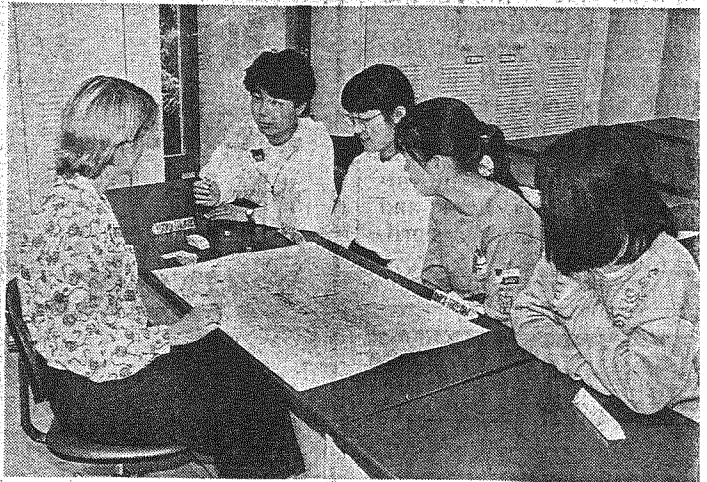
"By supporting this game, you are not only helping Japanese students learn English, you are also helping children all over the world," he said.

Wilcox, a Utah native, has been teaching in Kagawa Prefecture for almost two years. He arbitrarily chose UNICEF with hopes that more people would buy the All English game with the knowledge the proceeds will go to such a famous organization.

So far, Wilcox has collected ¥1.3 million for UNICEF. He hopes donations climb to ¥2 million by July.

The game sells for ¥2,000 and Wilcox will forward half of this to UNICEF. The remainder covers shipping and materials. About 1,600 copies have already been sold throughout Japan.

Wilcox spent about eight months and ¥660,000 to produce the first 1,000 boards of All English, which came out



STUDENTS PLAY the board game All English in an Osaka language school. PHOTO BY KIMIO IDA

six months ago.

Two-thirds of the initial production costs were donated by Sekai O Shirokai, an international development group based in Kagawa Prefecture.

Wilcox has received support from other corners as well. Art students at his school did the graphics on the board, and the printer is producing the game on a non-profit basis.

Many of the terms used in the game came from the Ministry of Education's word list designed for students in junior high school. Players race to the finish line by answering yes/no or logic questions when they land on the board's 248 spaces.

Altruism to aid the world's children was not the sole impetus for creating All English. Wilcox has a degree in educational psychology and

enjoys developing learning materials.

"Learning a foreign language is like a death sentence in Japan. This game tricks students into learning English because they are having fun," he said.

Although there are many such games on the market, Wilcox said making this game has given him "the confidence to say, 'Hey, I can do this, I can create games.'"

He is now leaning toward the commercial end of creating games and is currently designing a board game for beginners.

The game can be ordered by filling in a mail order form at any post office. The account name is All English, and the account number is Tokushima 8-7013. Wilcox can be reached by telephoning (0879) 24-3827.

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