

## A QUEST FOR INTERNATIONALISATION

足利市立教育研究所 Debbie March

*The late 20th century has witnessed the emergence of an Industrial giant. Both economically and politically, Japan has made its presence known, and is a major player in issues concerning the world, at large. However, despite its economic and political involvement, Japan is a country that is culturally self-sufficient, and clearly a manifestation of homogeneity. Japan's International exposure and societal enclosure have successfully co-existed. But, in recent times, Japan has discovered a need for societal change in the form of Internationalisation.*

*Japan's quest for Internationalisation has taken many forms, the most dominant being the recent influx of foreigners. As a member of this brigade whose task is to "transform a nation", I was intrigued by Japan's fascination with foreigners. But, I believe it is necessary for this fascination to gradually turn to acceptance for long term benefits. AETs are teaching Western forms of social interaction and the English language nationwide, but it is certainly evident that the latter will not have a lasting effect until the West becomes accepted into Japan's social framework.*

*Considering the early teens are a child's formidable years, the presence of AETs in the school system will most certainly make a difference. By the time a child reaches adulthood, he will be more accustomed to the presence of Westerners—the latter becomes less of a novelty and more a part of daily life. In the past decade, International awareness has certainly increased among Japanese youth, so we should nurture this acceptance, by continuing Internationalisation via the school system.*

*Change is a condition that manifests itself when we substitute our present*

situation for another. The concept of change, via Internationalisation, is a positive step towards building on current ideas and developing global awareness. The presence of foreigners in the school system will certainly aid in the achievement of this objective.