

Shine!

Shine! was produced by NHK based in Japan. **Shine!** gives children a happy and stimulating start to the day. Hosted by a lively girl named Ayame and a character called Telly Tree, it is packed with games, quizzes, cartoons, songs, and discussion topics that stimulate kids' senses, test their memories, and improve their language and observation skills. While helping kids wake up physically in the morning, it awakens them mentally and encourages them to see people and things in brand new ways. Ultimately, it helps kids accept, respect and interact with all kinds of people.

Shine! was one of the PRIX JEUNESSE INTERNATIONAL 2010 finalists in the “up to 6 Non-fiction” category.



Figure 1: *Shine!* is designed to wake children in the morning.



Figure 2: What time is it?



Figure 3: Where is number two?

International experts' opinions

Almost all the international experts admired the program and found it “an energetic show!” (female expert, USA), “a wonderful show” (male expert, Germany) and an “inspiring show” (female expert, Sweden). They felt that the program was meant to target kindergarteners but perhaps even up to grades three or four in elementary school, though people of any age would enjoy it. “It is like one of those kinds of shows that have got the energy as well as the content” (male expert, Chile).

The intellectually entertaining program was aimed to wake up the minds of children in the morning so that they can have a fresh start. “It is kind of playful and disciplining at the same time – very, very successful mix” (male expert, Germany). “I found it very interesting – always loaded with a lot of information” (female expert, Ghana). “I thought that **Shine!** was very cleverly designed not to bore kids in front of the TV, especially early in the morning. I thought that was quite good; it wakes you up in a way” (female expert, Korea). “Yes, good ideas – that they suddenly travel across the generations” (male expert, Germany).

The program was like a wake-up call for children in Japan as it was telecast at 7 in the morning from Monday to Friday. “It woke me up” (female expert, UK). “For children, because at 7:00, in the early morning, everybody is busy: eating, washing, dressing – so that very short segment they can pick up any minute. It is very, very successful in Japan” (female expert, Taiwan).

The male expert from Japan who was one of the producers of the show explained, “My main concept is the physical wake-up. The other concept is waking up the mind. Waking up in the minds means



Figure 4: Enhancing children's memory of a route.



Figure 5: There are different ways that people imitate animal sounds.



Figure 6: Are they black stripes on a white body or white stripes on a black body?



Figure 7: Two men show different ways of sorting balls.

to recognise the difference of each other: to see and understand the other people and animals. The whole concept is based on these two ideas.”

The program allowed children to see things from different perspectives which stimulated their brains for flexible thinking. “I thought that it was quite a nice idea to train memory and the ability to observe things. Both things are very important things to learn” (female expert, Sweden). “It makes you think in another way. It is so obvious, but it is very nice for children, I think” (female expert, Denmark).

The program consisted of various puzzles, animations and songs that children could discuss amongst themselves. “Specifically with the zebra – that you can see black and white or white and black. For me, that was so wonderful to understand that it is up to you; there is no right or wrong way. I really appreciated that” (female expert, South Africa). “Yes, I enjoyed it – the puzzles were really good; it gets your brain going. It was a wide range of information” (female expert, UK). The international experts also felt that the Japanese preschoolers were smarter than their western counterparts. “I thought that preschoolers in Japan must be a lot smarter than they are in the UK. They were able to tell the time. I just thought – over there they just may be way ahead” (female expert, UK).

They also admired the different characters and games that appeared in the program. “The thing that I really liked about **Shine!** was just the design of having this crazy tree with this crazy car in it, with this kid with the funny thing on his head. It was just really surprising to me and very fresh and full of life. I really found myself kind of glued to that kid and that weird TV character. I liked that” (male expert, USA). “I had two favourite parts: the one story with the little girl and the umbrella; it was really touching. So, I liked that one. I also liked very, very much the funny story about the balls – when the guy was talking about that. That was really nice” (female expert, Germany). “I thought the ball things was genius. It was one of the most amazing segments that I have ever seen for kids. I thought it was so smart how they developed it” (male expert, Chile).

They also admired the characters and the directing of the program. “The child was very animated and energetic, and the music was very techno” (female expert, USA). “I like it very much because of its generosity in sets and casts, and the kid was very brilliant. I think that is a new one in Japan maybe – that they have a kid who is so strong in such a beautiful set that everything can go on from those three. I thought it was marvellous” (female expert, Denmark).



Figure 8: A girl and a boy shared an umbrella.

Many international experts discussed the pace of the program which was quite uneven in their opinion: “I couldn’t follow... Maybe it was meant to train your ability in the morning to just wake up” (female expert, Sweden). “In the beginning I was a bit appalled at the pace and colour and sound, but then it changed totally: after awhile I was fascinated” (female expert, Germany).

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