

Let's make a 4-panel cartoon
Examples of quotes

1. It's such a beautiful day!!
2. You're very popular with the butterflies!
3. Oh...They really like you...
4. He must be a very yummy apple...

We look forward to
your ideas!

"Hiraku" provides useful information
and the latest news related to
English and childhood education.

- Your recent interests
- Topics you want us to cover
- New content etc etc...

If you have ideas to contribute,
please share these with us!

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Hirakû

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Expanding future possibilities

Hirakû

15



What is required for education now? People & Culture

Kids living around the world 4 Passed Level Pre-1 in the fifth grade on his first try!

Heart to Heart Let's make a 4-panel cartoon



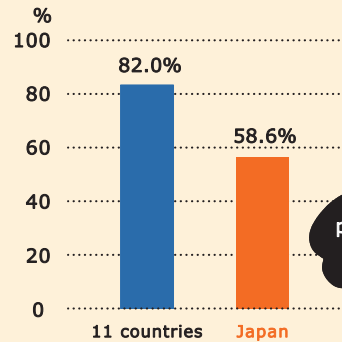
What is required for education now?

In February of this year, the SPRIX Research Institute released, according to research from all over the world, interesting data on the actual situation of Japanese education.

The results showed that the percentage of children who answered "they don't enjoy studying" and "they don't know or have not decided what they want to do" was the highest in Japan out of 11 countries.

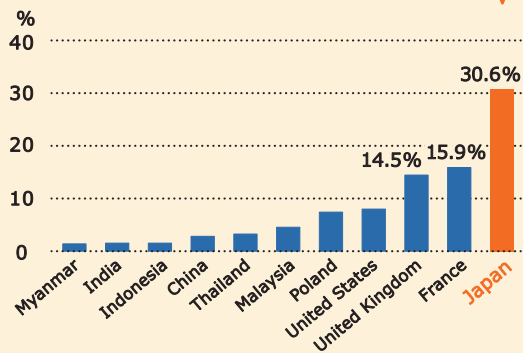
Research by Sprix Research Institute for Basic Academic Skills
Survey area: 11 countries (Japan, U.S., China, India, U.K., France, Poland, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar)
Target age: 6-15 years old (11,000 people)
Research period: August-September, 2020

Less than 60% of children enjoy studying



Lowest percentage among 11 countries

Japan had the highest percentage of children who do not know what they want to be



About 30% of children in Japan answered "they do not have or have not decided on a career they want to pursue" We need to give children more opportunities to think about their future and acquire the ability to look ahead. Dreams and aspirations motivate children to study ★



Feature Story

Giving children opportunities to enjoy studying

Forced or compulsory guidance may have a negative effect on children's motivation. It is important to provide many opportunities for children to experience the joy of learning and to encourage them to want to study. In particular, elementary school is the first place to teach the basics and the joy of learning to children who just started their schooling, so it is crucial to be enthusiastic in your teaching.

Four tips to make children enjoy studying

- 1 Nurturing a sense of accomplishment**
 The key is achieving small goals one at a time
- 2 Studying at their own pace until they have gained their level of understanding**
 Each child has their own strengths and weaknesses, and their level of understanding is different. It is important to work with them until they develop a habit of studying and not giving up.
- 3 Encouraging independent study of things they are interested in**
 If they like games, study programming. If they like insects and dinosaurs, study biology. Eventually, when they connect what they are interested in with what they learn, they will find the true joy of studying.
- 4 Having a dream**
 Having a dream is one source of motivation for learning. They will start thinking about what kind of study they need to do to achieve their dream or how that knowledge will be useful. This will change their view of studying.



Think like a child

In the revised Courses of Study for 2020, the introduction of active learning (independent and interactive deep learning) was recommended. When we enter the real world, we will have to deal with things that are different from what we have studied in school, and for which there are no absolute answers. There is a need for evolution in the field of education to find ways to nurture the thinking skills that form the child's foundation for their future. In response, an increasing number of schools are introducing inquiry-based learning and PBL* into their classes.

Under the slogan "Think like a child," Kinder Kids is developing curriculum that can help to draw out the intellectual curiosity from a child's perspective.

*PBL...Project Based Learning

A meeting of the Kinder Kids Education team





001

Igor Melik

From Krasnodar, Russia

Grad Club Division / Head Office

Even if it's a part of Russia, the temperature is more like Japan

My hometown is located in the south-west of Russia. There are five large cities in the country, and I grew up in a city called Krasnodar in the Kuban Oblast. Russia is a country with a strong image of extreme cold, but it is a country that stretches horizontally from Eastern Europe to Northern Asia, so the climate varies greatly from region to region. In the area where I lived, the temperature was about 1 to 5 degrees Celsius in winter, which is similar to Japan. In addition, the humidity is low and comfortable.

What I love about my country

I was surrounded by the history and traditions of the Kuban Oblast (Krasnodar) until I graduated from university. The agricultural economy, which has been practiced for generations is still thriving and surviving the transition to a market economy. The amount of grain produced in this area is among the highest in Russia. The vast agricultural landscape is very picturesque. This is also the region where the world-famous Cossack culture is still flourishing. The Cossack dance has been passed down from generation to generation mainly in this rural area. That dance costume is like the kimono of Japan, which is not now worn in daily life, but can be seen at national festivals and events. Although it is not well known in Japan, Krasnodar is also a popular tourist destination along with Moscow and St. Petersburg. Once you get out of the city center, you can enjoy the bright and lively city with its futuristic atmosphere and many buildings that still show historical traces.

Childrens' comments such as "I did it!" "This is fun!" motivates me



Nostalgic local flavor of "Kvass"

A drink called kvass has deep roots in Russian history. Since ancient times, this was a common drink at home and taken when doing farm work on hot days, and is still made at home today. The ingredients are simple: rye bread, dry yeast, sugar, and water. The taste may seem different to some people but if you get a chance, try a glass of Kvass!

It is an excellent healthy beverage made by fermenting rye bread, and is good to survive the summer heat!



Many recipes are introduced on YouTube. Find your favorite recipe and try making it!



It contains a very small amount of alcohol

However, in Russia, children enjoy drinking it as a soft drink



002

Anna Malpas

From Northampton, United Kingdom

Human Resources Division / Head Office

A little-known language in the UK

Do you know that the United Kingdom actually has 14 indigenous languages? When most people think of the UK, the first thing that seems to come to mind is the royal family and afternoon tea. Also, one of the things that make our culture unique is the diversity of our languages.

In addition to English, there are many other languages that are still alive in many parts of the country. For example, Welsh, Scottish, and Irish are used as the primary languages in a number of UK homes, and Cornish is acquired as a second language.

Today there are many ongoing language revitalization projects. This is a precious local culture that has been cultivated over a long period of time. This is an effort by indigenous people to introduce the diverse communication styles that once flourished along with the language. I think it is a wonderful activity.

Learning about the diversity in our own countries is a great way to appreciate just how interesting and varied the world can be - and that is something we should all be striving for. I believe that we can pass on these cultures to the future if we all make an effort to do so.

Bilingual staff working in a department that promotes diversity in the workplace



Temporarily Returning to the UK on a fellowship program

I came to Japan soon after graduating from high school. While learning Japanese at a language school, I studied for university entrance exams. At the time, I was interested in philosophy, but at Doshisha University, I majored in anthropology. I was fortunate enough to be able to participate in a training program at the British Museum in my home country, which is a good memory. It was very strange to be in my hometown as an exchange student. The city I was once familiar with looked fresh and new.

Feelings about living in Japan

Several years have passed since I came to Japan. I am now living in a place rich in nature, a little away from the hustle and bustle of Kyoto. When I go home, my dog, who is my greatest comfort, is waiting for me. We have both become accustomed to life in Japan, and every day I am grateful for this warm and relaxing environment.

On my days off, we often go exploring in the beautifully landscaped Kyoto's Imperial Palace parkland, enjoy long walks by the river, or take in the view from the top of Daimonji.



Introduce my country!

Kids living around the world 4

Another Kinder Kids' friend has left for overseas with his family. R.M. studied at Nara Tomigaoka School from the spring when he was three years old to December when he was six years old. At the end of the school year, three months after he moved to Hong Kong, we received a heartwarming email from him to his friends and teachers who were supposed to graduate with him. After having been in the compulsory quarantine period when moving to Hong Kong and overcoming the third wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, we now asked the mother how R.M. is doing since he has just started his first year of elementary school overseas.



Father working in Hong Kong and the family reunion! Leaving for Hong Kong excited about a new place

— What did you consider the most important thing when choosing an international school?

Among international schools, we heard that at schools with many Chinese students, Chinese is spoken during the break and at schools with many Japanese students, only Japanese students talk with each other. In order to avoid wasting the English our child had learned at Kinder Kids, we chose a school that did not have such an environment, and focused on an environment with many students who spoke English as their first language. At the school we chose, the principal and other teachers are very friendly and often talk to us. The school has a friendly atmosphere and my son seems to like it.

— Please tell us how your child is doing now in school.

After the first class in Hong Kong, my son said with a smile, "I understood everything!". I remember how relieved I was. Even though he is not a native English speaker, he received a perfect score in almost all of his classes. The teacher has given him clear tasks to work on for the next step, and he is again working hard with that goal in mind.

He has not had any trouble with mathematics either. I was surprised to see that even though he was still at the K3 level when he started school, he was able to understand and solve math problems in the first grade of this international school with only the knowledge he was taught in Kinder Kids Numeracy.

After we went abroad, I realized how well Kinder Kids' teaching materials and programs are designed. Now, he is at a level where he can smoothly enter a learning environment in English overseas.



The giant statue on the main street that he sees every day. He always wondered what these big hands were.... One day, in a Chinese class before the Chinese New Year the teacher taught him that Chinese fold their hands in the traditional Chinese New Year greeting. He finally found out what this giant statue represented! Now it's his favorite pose. When we visited a famous tourist spot we met a popular movie star in Hong Kong and he asked his father for an explanation and posed for a picture. We are enjoying the different cultures in our daily life.



Dear Graeme Ikuyo everyone
Hello! How are you? I am doing very well in Hong Kong. It is warm here, I stayed at the hotel for three weeks for quarantine.
My new school is American International School. I am grade 1. After Lunar New Year, I started going to school by subway with Nazami on Monday, Tuesday and Friday. I was so excited to meet my classmates. I take classes online on Wednesday and Thursday. I like math and science. I have mandarin class, too. My homeroom teacher is Ms. MacRae. She is very kind. My

classmates are great. I play with my friends, Ethan and Dan at recess. My school is very fun.
Thank you Graeme and Ikuyo! I was happy to be in your class. Your lesson was the most fun. K3 is the best class!! I will remember you!! I love you. I love K3!!!
love Kinderkids Nara Tomigaoka
from

R.M.'s letter to his Kinder Kids friends and teachers

From Hongkong



Interview with the mother now living in Hong Kong



Overseas Education Today

About the private school in Hong Kong



English

Children had a writing class where they had to either agree or disagree with a certain topic and write down a number of reasons from different perspectives. There was also an assignment to introduce their own collection and take their favorite one and explain in detail why it is the best and what makes it different from the others.

In the "Talk Back" class, they practiced debate-like exercises where they had to think of reasons to make a point. There are some overlaps with Kinder Kids lessons, and I think this is the basis of his current learning.



Mystery Science

Children have weekly experiments. For example, they did an experiment to see how the human eye adapts to light. First, they made a rectangular box out of paper with a hole punched in one side and English words pasted on the other side to see how the words looked in the dark box. Finally, they had to write a report and submit it.

Online Introduction

Now children go home every day after finishing the morning classes and have online classes in the afternoon.

They use the school's special software to take classes and submit their homework. At first, we didn't know how to use the software and it was hard until we understood how it worked. Each student is assigned an account, and each day the class teacher and the specialist subject teacher send him emails about classes and homework, so checking his emails has become a daily routine.

The school is unique in that the content of the classes is tailored to the individual's ability. The teachers check each student's understanding and comprehension, they also offer level-based classes in small groups of about five students.



Passed Level Pre-1 in the fifth grade on his first try!

Q&A Interview with H.K.



Grad Club
Yokohama School G6 student

How do you feel now that you have passed Level Pre-1?

During the course of my studies, there were times when it was difficult to understand and I almost gave up, but I worked hard until the end and was very happy that my efforts paid off.

When he was about to give up, his mother said, "Even if it's hard now, it's only until the exams are over." Thanks to her words, he was able to focus on the goal ahead of him, became positive that he would do his best and he was finally able to achieve his goal.

Do you have any recommended workbooks?

I recommend the Obunsha's "Do it in 14 days! Second Part of Eiken Level Pre-1 Interview Questions".

The good point of this book is that it explains the key points and commonly used phrases for various types of questions.

How many Eiken levels have you passed?

I have passed Level 3 when in Kinder Kids K3 class, Level Pre-2 in Grad Club G1, Level 2 in G2, and Level Pre-1 in G5. When I go on to junior high school, I will aim to pass Level 1.

What did you do to prepare for the Level 3 test?

I didn't do any special preparation. I was in K3 at the time, and I took the test only by studying English at Kinder Kids.

What did you do to prepare for the Level 2 test?

I used the workbook from Obunsha and only prepared for the second interview. In addition to elementary school English, I continued studying English at Grad Club's Saturday Class.

What did you do to prepare for the Level 1 test?

For both the first and second tests, I used the workbooks from Obunsha and studied at home.

Level Pre-1 is about the same as the English level of a second or third year university student. It tests the ability to use English naturally, as well as mastery of the basics of English. There are also a lot of technical terms used about currently relevant topics, so it takes a lot of effort for younger test takers. We interviewed H.K. (a 6th grade elementary school student who graduated from Kinder Kids and achieved Level Pre-1 through Grad Club) and his mother.

How did you prepare for the Level Pre-1 test?

I took a combination of Level Pre-1 preparation classes at Grad Club. After each week's lesson, I looked up the meaning of any words I didn't understand and added them to my vocabulary book. In the end, I had about 800 words.

What do you think was the best part of attending Grad Club?

I have been participating in Grad Club since G1, and the reading and writing lessons that we learn in the regular classes are very good and are applicable to the Eiken Test. Also, I felt that my listening skills improved during the study tour to Australia that I participated when I was a G4 student.

The elementary school he attends is very dedicated to language education. They have original textbooks and a lot of class time. Even so, he told us that it was thanks to Grad Club that he was able to improve on the English skills that he developed at Kinder Kids.

Do you attend any other cram schools or any other kind of schools?

No, only Grad Club.

Do you watch or listen to anything to improve your English?

I watch Sponge Bob, Toy Story and other movies in English.

Please give a message to your friends who are going to take the Eiken test!

As I advanced up the levels, I felt that writing was particularly difficult. I think it is a good idea to keep practicing so that you can write your own opinions in English. The more effort you put in, the better results you will get. Believe in your own ability and do your best!

How did you prepare for questions related to social and current events, or labor problems?

I tried to increase my knowledge by watching the news on a regular basis and tried to express my thoughts on various social events.

At home, we rarely turn on the TV except for news programs. He watches the news with his father and mother. He listened to their comments, and now H.K. has started to express his own opinions.

What is your favorite thing to do or what are you into?

Although it is not in English, I like reading, and I read about 100 books a year. Among them, I enjoy reading mysteries and adventure novels.

H.K. attends a difficult-to-enter private elementary school. He won the top prize in the school's essay contest. In the future, he would like to be a novelist or get a job using English.

Mr. Jay (Joseph Olivias), who teaches H.K.'s class, gave us his impressions of H.K.... He is an excellent student who always does well on his homework and is a reliable student.

Mr. Jay was impressed with H.K.'s willingness to not only give answers but also add his comments. Also, Mr. Jay told me that H.K. must love English.

Heart to Heart

How much can we do about the problems that keep coming up—
Heartful communication always leads to solutions.
Kinder Kids Episode about
true feelings between parents and staff.

episode 01



Many of our staff has experience in raising children. Even if we have never raised children before, we still can use a variety of services in our daily lives. We, Kinder Kids, receive a wide variety of requests from parents, and most of them are things that we can relate to. What we can do, how much we can do, and how we should handle these requests are what we are most concerned with.

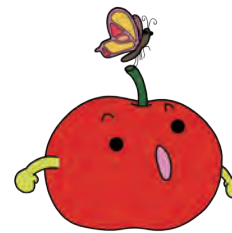
Last year, when we sent out a notice to one of our Grad Club classes that they would be switching from classroom lessons to online lessons, we received a phone call from a parent who was very upset about this change. From the phone call, we felt that we did not thoroughly consider the thoughts and feelings of parents, so we immediately conducted a parents survey and had many internal discussions. In the end, however, we had to again announce some bad news. After the announcements, we found that some of them still could not understand our decision. Honestly speaking, I was at a loss for words and thought "I can't do this anymore no matter what they say". However, from the perspective of a long-time user, they expressed their

gratitude for the high level of English and their child had been able to maintain through the integrated education of Kinder Kids and Grad Club. They also told us about the lack of classes that meet their child's current high level of English. As I kept listening to their comments, I began to wonder if there was anything more we could do. After I said, "I'll think about it again," and hung up the phone, I received another call back from a parent. It's easy to say you can't do it, but I was glad that you listened to my story and tried to find a way to do it. I like that about Kinder Kids", she said. I was so happy to hear this unexpected positive comment that it touched my heart and made me feel very happy.

In the first call, there was no room for me to think about regaining their trust, and they just told me off. I think we moved too fast without fully considering how the parents may feel and their understanding about the situation.

I realized that I had left behind the enthusiasm and consideration that should have been more important to me. It was an experience that I will never forget, and one that will continue to motivate me in my work.

The challenges we face are becoming more diverse and difficult, but in retrospect, there are things we can reflect on to find solutions. In the midst of everything that is happening, I will continue working hard every day.



Angry Apple

Let's make a four-panel comic

By PHONICS GARDEN

This is a four-panel cartoon with simple pictures and dialogues, but with a story and a punchline at the end that will make you laugh. Let's enjoy the world of cartoons with your child! Put the four sentences below in the correct box to complete the four-panel cartoon.

Popular : にんき



Pilot Penguin

1

2

3

4

- "It's such a beautiful day!!"
- "Oh...They really like you..."
- "He must be a very yummy apple..."
- "You're very popular with the butterflies!"

Reference the back cover for dialogue examples