

Expanding future possibilities

Hirakû

24

Cover picture: "Fun Christmas"

Children are decorating a huge Christmas tree,

while many Santa Clause and reindeer are floating down from the sky.

Are they starting the preparation of the gifts they will deliver to the children's homes?

What presents will you get for Christmas this year?

**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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★My Stepping Stone

★Infinity Global Elementary School's
"Money Education" class

★People & Culture

★Grad Club "Interview with
graduate students"



日本の心と、英語の力。Kinder Kids inc.



My Stepping Stone (File4)

Kinder Kids was the start. Introduction of graduates who through their efforts opened new doors.

Passed the EIKEN Grade 1, and achieved 960 points on TOEIC. Studied as an exchange student at the University of Toronto. Started an English school while still a student.



Currently, runs an online English conversation school that she started with her friend.



The habit of doing homework carefully from an early age has improved her ability to concentrate when studying.



My Memories at Kinder Kids

I enjoyed the monthly field trips we had at Kinder Kids before the school had a playground. I was fascinated by the scenery and sights that I could not see when in the classroom. I also became interested in outer space through theme-based learning classes, and “to actually see Jupiter and Saturn with my own eyes!” became my first dream. I also wrote about this dream on my elementary school application form.

WSC, a worldwide English competition

During my senior year of high school, I participated in WSC, World Scholar's Cup 2019, a comprehensive English-language competition for middle and high school students from all over the world, and made it to the world final held at Yale University. It was an enjoyable and meaningful experience for me to interact and compete with such unique and smart students. After the WSC competition, I joined the English Club at the University and participated in English debate activities. The experience at WSC broadened my horizons and I realized how small a world I had been living in and which convinced me to study abroad at the University of Toronto.

The University of Toronto, one of the best universities in the world.

The University of Toronto is one of the best universities in the world, so it was difficult to keep up with the classes. I just spent my entire time studying, even on weekends. Most of the students were overwhelmingly smart and set high standards and goals for themselves. I thought this was very different from Japanese university students. It was hard not to fall behind, yet it was a stimulating experience.

My future goals

I am interested in education-related business opportunities because I gained experience by volunteering at a Children's Cafeteria (Kodomo-shokudo), and currently run an online English conversation school. At the request of a learning support organization, I also teach English to children with developmental disorders. It is still a dream, but I would like to create a school that supports children who find it difficult to adapt to existing schools.



S.H. meet with Kimiko Nakayama, CEO, and the manager of at that time at Nishinomiya School.

Message from her mother

Thanks to Kinder Kids, my daughter gained not only an education but also gained language skills and a global perspective.

There weren't any Eiken preparation classes when my daughter entered Kinder Kids, but some enthusiastic parents were getting together to form a study group for the Eiken. However, it was hard to prepare for Eiken on our own, so we asked if Kinder Kids could offer Eiken classes. Our request was granted, and that's how Eiken preparation classes started. Also, music classes for learning Japanese songs were started at parents' request. This kind of flexible and speedy response is not common in most Japanese kindergartens.

I wanted my daughter to go to Kinder Kids because I was interested in English language. **As a result of going to Kinder Kids in addition, she not only can speak English but also has grown up to be a person with an international way of thinking.**

【Profile of S.H.】

S.H. graduated from Kinder Kids Nishinomiya School in 2008. She passed the Eiken Grade pre-2 test in her first year of elementary school and the Grade 1 test in her third year of high school. In her last year of high school, she participated in the "World Scholar's Cup 2019", a comprehensive competition in which junior high and high school students compete in English. Her group won the Japan Round and the Sydney Global Round and advanced to the world finals held at Yale University. She also was awarded an individual prize in the writing category. From Sep. 2021 to May 2022, she studied at the University of Toronto as an exchange student. From May 2022 to Oct. 2022, she participated in the fourth "Ambassador's Youth Council", a program to encourage students to be leaders in a global society, organized by the Consulate-General of the United States in Osaka-Kobe. Currently, she runs an online English conversation school.

【What is The World Scholar's Cup?】

The World Scholar's Cup (WSC), is an international academic program in which 3 member teams compete against each other in quizzes, debates, paper tests, and essays on six subjects: science & technology, history, literature, art & music, social studies, and another subject that changes every year. More than 15,000 middle and high school students from over 65 countries participate. Teams that advance from the Regional Round to the Global Round and achieve a high score in the Global Round are eligible to participate in the finals (Tournament of Champions) at Yale University. The first Regional Round in Japan was held in 2012. This competition provides an opportunity for middle and high school students from around the world to interact, and deepen their international understanding.



She competed in WSC as a high school student and made it to the finals.



009 Graeme Wilkinson

From Dunedin, New Zealand

K1 Class teacher, Nara Tomigaoka School

Dunedin, famous for its university and nature

I am from the South Island of New Zealand which is basically mountains, farmland, vineyards, and orchards with the occasional small town every couple of hours in between. My home town is Dunedin which is famous for its university. A lot of students throughout New Zealand come to Otago University to study. Dunedin has a Scottish heritage and has numerous sandy beaches with penguins, seals, and the occasional whale sighting.



Lost in skyscrapers!

I was interested in martial arts, anime, temples and shrines, food, and culture. So, I thought, from a country with a small population and lots of nature, why not see the opposite? So off I went to Japan and here I am still here. I got lost on my first day exploring the city. I was so used to using landmarks like "there is a mountain over there", or "the ocean is that way", or "I can see the entire town if I stand on a hill", that when surrounded by skyscrapers in Osaka, I had no idea which way was which. It was an amazing experience to get lost though, especially when I was not able to speak the language at the time. Exploring this way I found random shrines hidden amongst massive buildings and tried to communicate with people without the aid of a language. It was fun.

Pavlova, a traditional NZ summer sweet

Pavlova is a traditional cake served during the summer and Christmas in New Zealand and Australia (in NZ we top ours with kiwi fruit and strawberries!). It is a really sweet meringue that is crunchy on the outside but soft in the middle. Try to bake one in Japan during winter, not during the humid summer. It's delicious!



Scan the QR codes to check out recipes on YouTube (as of November 2022)

Writing and publishing children's books

Before joining Kinder Kids I had already worked for years teaching children both in Japan and New Zealand. I did however learn a lot about reading and phonics at Kinder Kids. Kinder has a strong reading and writing programme. I started to research more myself to better support children in their speaking and reading. Ultimately, it led me towards developing my own books to help support first-time readers and make that transition to reading for the first time as easy as possible for children. Currently, I write and illustrate decodable reader books that are published in the US for emergent readers and children with additional reading needs.



010 Thor Helgason

From Vancouver, Canada

Education Div., Head Office

Canada: a country with a lot of creative people

Something about Canada that people don't often realize is that we have produced many successful creative people despite having such a small population. Often when people learn that Canadian artists are in fact Canadian, they are astonished and tell me that they thought they were American! Canadian culture has a lot in common with America so it can be difficult to tell where we are from simply from our accent as it's very similar and in some cases the exact same! How many of these artists did you know were Canadian? William Shatner, Phil Hartman, Shaniah Twain, Celine Dion, Avril Lavigne, Michael Buble, Mike Meyers, Deadmou5, Jim Carey, Alanis Morissette, Justin Bieber, Drake, The Weeknd, Pamela Anderson, Michael J Fox, Matthew Perry, Seth Rogan, Keanu Reeves, Ryan Gosling.



In awe of the Japanese passed-down traditions.

Every friend growing up had at least one grandparent who had emigrated to Canada. And more often than not, both sets of grandparents did not come from the same country. I remember coming to Japan for the first time many years ago, I was in awe of the culture immediately. It was clear that this was a place where traditions had been passed down for hundreds of years, continuing down family lines to the generation below them.

Acting and modelling as an exciting secondary occupation

Something I am really appreciative of is the flexibility Kinder Kids has afforded me over the years, to continue to pursue other passions and interests outside of work. Acting and modelling is something I began while going to University and I've been able to continue doing it from time to time even now. Through modelling, I have been able to travel the world and make connections with many creative people so it has been an incredibly enriching experience. Before Covid, I did a really exciting commercial for Japan Airlines (JAL) in Singapore and recently I appeared on the NHK morning drama, Come Come Everybody.

Poutine, addictive taste

Poutine is a dish that originated in Quebec made of french fries and cheese curds topped with brown gravy. It is such an important soul food in Canada and there are even events such as "Poutine Week" and "Poutine Festival" where chefs compete to make their own unique poutine. It is delicious!



Scan the QR codes to check out recipes on YouTube (as of November 2022)

Introduce my country!





Infinity Global Elementary School's "Money Education" class has finally started!

Money education classes with professional instructors started in September. Infinity International Elementary School's money education is an original program based on the teachings of Hideyuki Sugawara, an international business professor, and arranged by Hiroki Sato for children to easily understand. Here is a brief introduction about the money education class.



During the first class, students experienced spending and receiving money in the school's original "shopping game." Students make two groups; store clerks and buyers. The buyers have ten one-yen on hand and pay the store clerks for shopping cards or choose work cards and earn money. For example, "buy a ring and pay 3 yen", "develop a new medicine and receive 2 yen", and so on. When you draw a "Bonus card", you will receive extra income if the conditions are right. Some children buy things after making some more money, while others don't work until their money runs short. You must work and earn money to go shopping. Everyone was really absorbed in the shopping game. "How do you make money?" Mr. Sato asked, "By working!" the children replied.



He asked another question that even parents might have trouble answering "Why do you get paid when you work?." The answer given to the troubled children was, "You can get money when you make someone happy." Money education had just started, but **the children learned that money was a sign of gratitude.** Children were given homework to ask the following questions to a family member by the next class,

- ①What kind of work do you do? ②Where do you work? ③Who are you making happy?

We asked Professor Sugawara and Mr. Sato about the features of their money education classes and what they want the students to learn through their classes.

What do you expect your students to learn through money education?

- Money is a sign of gratitude, and the most important thing is to help others.
- Knowing the value of money is a good investment in yourself.

What makes your money education classes different from other classes?

While most common money education classes focus on financing, we teach children that studying money is a self-investment, and that money comes by making others happy.

We are deeply concerned that the difference in money education between Japan and the U.S./ Europe will widen more and more since Japanese public elementary schools don't teach about money. Just as there are rules for sports, there are rules for money. Many people lose money because they don't know the rules. We want many children **to learn the rules of money, so they can use it wisely and realize their dreams.**

After the class, "It was just so much fun!" they said with a sparkle in their eyes. Professor Sugawara, who usually teaches university students, had a great time playing shopping games with the children. Teachers would love to study together with the children.



Hideyuki Sugawara, Ph.D

Faculty of Business Administration, Hokkai-Gakuen University

Professor Hideyuki Sugawara received his doctoral degree in Commerce from Waseda University. He had conducted research at Stanford University and the University of Washington, both are centers of innovation, and established the "Science of Coaching".

He is also an international business administration scholar, academic coach, and social entrepreneur who takes on the challenge of tackling global poverty.



Hiroki Sato

Financial Planner

Hiroki Sato worked for a major financial institution after studying under Professor Sugawara at Hokkai-Gakuen University. He started his own business to provide support to help his clients realize their dreams.

He specializes in risk management for corporate management, and inheritance and business succession planning.

Interview

Interview with graduate students

Meet two Super Kinder Kids, a brother and a sister who attended Kinder Kids school and Kinder Kids program from age 1 until graduating from high school.

K.I. and C.I. are graduates of Kinder Kids Higashi Osaka School.

Both enrolled in Kinder Kids at the age of 1 and moved on to Grad Club until they graduated from high school, a total of 18 years studying at Kinder Kids.

They are now medical students, and both also work part-time at Grad Club as members of Kinder Kids.

We interviewed these two "Super Kinder Kids"



► What is your most memorable memory at Kinder Kids?

(K.I.) I was very active when I went to Kinder Kids, and I still remember how much I wanted to go to the park more often.

(C.I.) I remember I loved going to Kinder Kids and having fun every time. I had many experiences that Japanese kindergartens can not provide, such as playing games and dancing during circle time, Christmas concerts, Halloween parties, and studying English and Math.

► Tell us the best thing about studying at Grad Club until high school?

(K.I.) I think it was good that I could use what I studied by talking with a native English speaker every week.

(C.I.) I had English conversation classes until junior high school and had some opportunities to speak English. However, in high school, English classes are only to prepare for college entrance exams, so I was glad that I could have conversations using practical English in Grad Club once a week.

► Why did you decide to work part-time at Grad Club, and tell us how you feel working there.

(K.I.) I often speak with native English speakers at university, but I wanted more opportunities to speak English, so I decided to work at Grad Club. I enjoy spending time with the Grad Club students, remembering how I used to be just like them.

(C.I.) I wanted to speak English more often because I study only grammar and TOEIC in university's English classes, the same as the classes at high school. All my stress melts away while I enjoy working with the children, and also remembering the great times I had at Grad Club.

► What are your plans for the future?

(K.I.) I want to become an emergency physician and be involved in emergency medical care in Japan.

(C.I.) I want to make the hospital a place to relax for Japanese and foreign patients and be a doctor that patients can rely on.



Grad Club
Creating bilingual young adults



Older brother
K.I.
Nara Medical University
the Faculty of Medicine
2nd year
Higashi Osaka
School
Graduate



Younger sister
C.I.
Fukuoka University
the Faculty of Medicine
1st year
Higashi Osaka
School
Graduate



We look forward to the day when both of them become great doctors!