



The Comet

The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

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“People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude.”
—John C. Maxwell

From the Head of School



The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and Us

Sustainable

sus·tain·able | \ sə-ˈstā-nə-bəl

: of or relating to a lifestyle involving the use of sustainable methods

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals are a collection of 17 interconnected goals designed to address global challenges we currently face. According to the UN, these goals “are a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.” Meeting our present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is at the heart of sustainable living. The 17 goals are:

No Poverty
Zero Hunger
Good Health and Well-Being
Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
Quality Education
Clean Water and Sanitation
Decent Work and Economic Growth
Reducing Inequality
Affordable and Clean Energy

Sustainable Cities and Communities
Climate Action
Responsible Consumption and Production
Life Below Water
Life on Land
Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
Gender Equality
Partnership for the Goals

Many of us are familiar with the 17 SDGs, however, lesser known are the related topics. Examples of related topics are:

Sustainable tourism
Chemicals and waste

Sustainable transport
Trade

Continued on next page

DATES TO REMEMBER



June 2021

- 14-15** (G5-G11) Cross curricular days
- 16** (S) Secondary awards assembly
- 16** Last day of school for students (Half day for students)
- 16** (K1-G11) Semester 2 reports issued
- 16** (K1-G3) After care not available on this day
- 17-Jul 2** Office open
- 21-Jul 2** Summer program session 1

July 2021

- 3-Aug 1** School closed

August 2021

- 19** (K1/K2/K3) Parent welcome night (*Online)
- 23** First day of school for all students
- 23** (K2-G3) After care begins this week
- 24** (G6-G10) Mathematics diagnostic testing
- 25** (G1-G5) Parent welcome night (*Online)
- 27** (G6-G12) Parent welcome night (*Online)
- 27** (G12) University information night (*Online)
- 28** SAT@KIST



PYP | MYP | DP

KIST Learning for Life KIST Learning for Life KIST Learning for Life

Continued from previous page

The beauty of the SDGs and related topics is that every one of us can contribute, and all contributions, big and small, can make a positive impact. As role models for our children, we have the ability to instill the importance of the SDGs in our families. Involving our children in family decisions is a great way of helping our children learn about the SDGs and apply them to their lives. As families we can reflect on our family choices together.



Sustainable travel: How do we travel as a family? What type of vehicle do we drive? Is it necessary? Is it fuel-efficient? What is our environmental impact?



Chemicals and waste: How much garbage do we produce as a family? How many aerosol cans do we dispose of? How many batteries do we dispose of? Are these necessary? How can we limit the number of chemicals we use?



Sustainable tourism: How can we ensure we are responsible tourists? Do we support local businesses and the promotion of local culture? Do we purchase local products?

The development of compassionate individuals who make meaningful contributions to our global community is an important component of our mission at KIST, and we hold the belief that we can all make a commitment to living sustainably. While on summer vacation we usually have more time with our children than during the school year. This vacation is a wonderful opportunity for us to involve our children in family decision making, and reinforce how our actions can have a positive impact on our world.

Please stay safe and I wish you all a wonderful summer vacation.

Kevin Yoshihara Ed.D.
Head of School / Elementary School Principal



New School Uniform

We are very excited to announce that KIST will be transitioning to a new school uniform between the upcoming 2021–22 school year and the 2023–24 school year (over a three-year period). Our new supplier, Top of the Class School Uniform, was selected with the needs of the KIST community in mind with particular importance placed on the following areas:

- They have **outstanding customer service**. From May, all uniforms can be ordered on their [online store](#). Payment can be made by Paypal, credit card or bank transfer, and orders can be delivered within one business day. You can find more information about how to order [here](#).
- Their products are **very high quality**. They do not spend money on marketing or retail space and so they can spend more on eco-friendly fabrics and experienced garment makers and staff.
- They have a **fitting specialist** who can assist with questions on sizing in English and Japanese.

Top of the Class is a well-respected uniform company that serves many of the schools in the Japanese international school community and is particularly known for their dedication to environmental friendliness and ethical practice. They were also chosen for their strength in the following areas:

- It is an **eco-friendly company**. Sustainable fabrics such as bamboo and recycled fleece are used in the uniforms, and all packaging is made from recycled paper. You can read more about their eco-initiatives [here](#).
- It is an **ethical employer**. Unlike many clothing companies, Top of the Class does not subcontract. They work with small factories and workshops where people have fair pay and ethical employment conditions. You can read more about the company's principles [here](#).

Overall, we are proud to offer their environmentally and ethically conscientious uniforms to the KIST community, and feel this sets a wonderful example for our students in line with the IB concept of "action," towards making the world a better place.

The new uniform has been designed to be stylish, comfortable, practical, durable and affordable—in fact, the **prices are significantly lower than the current uniform!** The designs will be released in the near future, but please see a sneak peek at the new Secondary pinstripe blazer, G1–G12 blue sweater, and K1–K3 navy blue skort (all skirts will now have shorts underneath for comfort and ease of wear!) below.

We hope that the new online system will make the uniform ordering process easier and simpler for parents, and that students will enjoy the stylish new items made of durable, high-quality fabric!



Follow KIST on Social Media!



The continuing COVID-19 situation has been difficult for many reasons, including its impact on our sense of school community. With family members not allowed on campus, extracurricular activities cancelled, and strict social distancing guidelines, it's easy for us all to feel isolated.

If you're feeling a little disconnected from the KIST community, why not check out the KIST social media channels? Our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts are updated several times a week with snapshots of school life from K1 to Grade 12. Recent posts have ranged from reports of events such as ECE Cross Country and G6–G11 students' participation in the KPASS Math Field Day to glimpses into daily life at KIST, like the G9s' outdoor physics experiment or the G2s' Unit of Inquiry pop up card activity about world landmarks.

We also share content from student-run accounts for the SRC and service activities such as The Green Team, The Rainbow Project, and Sustainable Superheroes in our Instagram Stories, and retweet content about our staff and students' activities and successes from other accounts on Twitter. With so much new and exciting content shared each week, we hope that you'll take a moment to follow us so that you don't miss anything!

You can find us on each platform at the links below:



Facebook

(k.internationalschooltokyo)

<https://www.facebook.com/k.internationalschooltokyo>



Instagram

(k.international.school.tokyo)

<https://www.facebook.com/k.internationalschooltokyo>



Twitter

(KIST1997)

<https://www.facebook.com/k.internationalschooltokyo>

We would love to hear from you in the comments, as well! We welcome you to share your support for the achievements of your children, friends and classmates in each post!

We hope, with vaccinations beginning to reach the population of Japan, that soon we will be able to resume all of our activities in full swing and welcome all KIST families back to campus. But for the time being, we look forward to engaging with you on social media!



Miranda Liu

Admissions and Communications Officer /
Social Media Administrator

G9s enjoyed the warm spring weather while modeling the motion of a satellite moving around the Earth during this scale Physics experiment!



K1–K3 students enjoyed some exercise during the ECE Cross Country event!



For their Unit of Inquiry, "Where we are in place and time," G2s read text about a landmark of their choice, paraphrased the relevant information, and presented it on a pop-up card with their own artwork of the landmark!



Six KIST G6–G11 students placed 1st through 3rd in their grade level category at this year's online KPASS Math Field Day, and another seven just narrowly missed the podium, coming in 4th.



PYP News

Preventing the dreaded 'summer slide'

After a long and difficult school year, most of us just want to kick back and relax. Whatever you decide to do during the summer vacation, nine weeks is a long time! Even with the Summer Program, the extended break can often bring on the dreaded 'summer slide', which is when a child forgets many of the things that they were taught in the previous school year, and can spend August and September playing catch up. While I fully recommend our excellent summer program, there are also several things you can do to help prevent summer slide that do not involve expensive materials or tutors.



Setting up a daily schedule which includes as little as 20–30 minutes of guided practice can really work wonders, and being involved in your child's learning can also be a very rewarding experience. It is important that this is non-negotiable and **EVERYONE** (this includes you) sticks to the plan. As a parent myself, I know how hard this can be, but trust me...it is worth it.

Here are some simple things you can do:

- 1 **Read!!!** – 20–30 minutes of reading (aloud for younger children) each day. You may want to set a challenge (e.g. read 100 short stories over the summer).
- 2 Work on **reading skills** such as phonics, blending and segmenting with younger readers and, for older children, discussing books/chapters, asking questions or making connections to other stories or your own lives.
- 3 **Write!!!** – This could be anything from writing letters and simple words with chalk or paint to keeping a diary or writing full stories.
- 4 **Math** is all around us. There is so much mathematical language in our everyday lives. Take your child to the supermarket, putting them in charge of the shopping list; or do some cooking, allowing them to measure out the ingredients. Multiplication facts are always crucial, so regular practice with these is also very helpful.
- 5 **Problem solving** – Have your child engage with puzzles or brain teasers. Jigsaws and model-making are also fantastic ways to get the brain going.
- 6 Develop a **new skill** – Learning does not always have to be school-based and developing a new skill can be a wonderful challenge for children of all ages. For younger learners, these skills could be as simple as fastening the buttons on their school shirt or tying their shoelaces; for older children, they could develop their typing or coding skills.
- 7 Spread some **kindness**. Simply doing nice and helpful things can also be hugely beneficial for everyone.



While it is very important to recharge our batteries over the summer, we also need to be thinking ahead to the next school year, and that is why every bit of learning helps. Just try to do a little bit of something every day. For some more detail on these ideas, you could have a look at this site:

<https://coffeeandcarpool.com/its-not-too-late-to-prevent-summer-slide/>



Enjoy the break and see you all in August!

Oliver Sullivan
PYP Coordinator



Sakura Medal Japanese Book Report Contest



Once again this year, KIST students participated in the 12th Annual Sakura Medal Book Report Contest, held by the Japanese teachers at international schools around Japan. This year, a total of ten KIST students submitted works; five in the "Lower Elementary" category, and five in the "Upper Elementary" category.



Hiroyoshi (G5B) and Mana (G5B) with Dr. Yoshihara

We would like to give special congratulations to **Mana (G5B)**, who won a prize for excellence in the Upper Elementary category, and **Hiroyoshi (G5B)**, who won a prize for effort in the same category.



Lower Elementary	Upper Elementary
Sakurako (G3B)	Han (G5A)
Cain (G3B)	Hiroyoshi (G5A)
Kei (G3B)	Mana (G5B)
Isabella (G3B)	Ryan (G4A)
Mirei (G2A)	Kurumi (G4B)

Parental Controls for Devices and Apps

As our children grow older, they begin to be more independent in their use of technology. For parents, it can be difficult to determine exactly how much time children are spending on their device(s), what content they are exposed to, who they are communicating with, and how their data is used.

We recommend all KIST families to watch the documentary [Social Dilemma](#), which is currently available on Netflix. It explores the human impact of social networking on young people and the dangers of addiction. It also explores how companies that own social media apps may monetize their users' data and how young people can be manipulated through targeted content and advertising as a result.

What controls are there?

Apple, Android and Windows have features that allow parents to set up some form of parental controls, but third-party software such as Norton Family, Kaspersky Safe Kids and Qustodio, can provide even more options.

We have put together a guide about some of the parental controls currently available. These controls can range from monitoring or setting time limits on a child's device, to restricting certain apps or content.

Please see our review of parental controls on the PSL IT Support Page at the link below:

[Web PSL IT Support Page](#)

Common Sense Media also has an informative article on their website at the link below:



[Web Ultimate Guide to Parental Controls](#)

Some tips on setting parental controls

- Be honest with your child about the purpose and use of parental controls. Be aware that setting parental controls may become a source of friction.
- Discuss and set reasonable targets and boundaries together (e.g. hours of use, which apps are age-appropriate, what would be inappropriate use of their devices).
- Encourage children to be in the room with you when using their devices.
- Be aware that children may find ways to get around any controls you set.
- As many of the popular apps have limited parental controls, or privacy settings that can be easily changed, third-party parental control software has become a popular solution (e.g. Norton Family, Qustodio, Kaspersky Safe Kids).

If you have any questions on the above content, or would like any advice, please contact the IT Support Team in the main office, Mr. Tim (MYP Design teacher), or Ms. Cobbs (Elementary ICT teacher).

IT Support Team
it.support@kist.ed.jp

Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

On April 8 and 9, 2021, students from Grades 4 to 11 created a medley performance of the songs from Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's **Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat**.

The school orchestra (conducted by G11B Daigo) provided accompaniment as students shared choreography and vocal performances.

This performance will be available to view online as part of the end-of-year concert activity.



A Safe Place



“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.”

—Leo Buscaglia

Working in the elementary school brings one face to face with children who are struggling to understand the puzzle of human relations and socialization. Students, who are not yet fully formed in their growth both physically and mentally, often run up against questions and situations for which they have no experience or preparation. This situation can cause feelings of frustration, loneliness, and outright confusion about one's life. Where do you turn when you are not even sure what the problem is? From whom do you ask for help when you don't understand what kind of help it is that you need? This is a problem that can lead people to believe that there might not be any solutions or options for help.

Luckily, schools often offer the services of someone who can help struggling young learners. These people have been trained to recognize certain responses to the trials that pop up in a student's daily life. They take

many forms, some are called councilors, others might be known as Student Care Coordinators, others yet might be in the form of a doctor or nurse. Regardless of the title they work under, they all have the same objective in mind: to relieve suffering and help people understand their own feelings in order to find some peace of mind and freedom from the confusion that growing up can conjure.

At KIST, both the elementary school and the secondary school have people in positions who can help students make sense of their feelings and find some relief. Our Student Care Coordinators and school nurse are here to help. If you ever feel that there is some issue from which you feel sad, confused, angry, or have any uncomfortable mental or emotional state, please talk to your teacher or come directly to Mr. Bradley in the elementary school or Mr. White, Mr. Cowe, or Nurse Yukiko in the secondary school.

Help is only a question away...

Clay M. Bradley
Elementary School Vice Principal/
Student Care Coordinator (Elementary)



Early Childhood News

Hello KIST families! It is hard to believe that this is the last issue of *The Comet* for the 2020–21 school year. This year was not an easy year for any of us, but we did our best against an invisible enemy we have never faced before.

Our Spring Concert was a prime example of how we came together to tackle the new difficulties we have been facing due to COVID and overcame obstacles together. The wonderful performance the children and staff created collaboratively showed how creatively we can work together with our children to make them proud of themselves and share their hard work with their families safely. We want to give a shout out to the Art team, as this would not have been possible without their contributions, as well! I hope you all enjoyed watching the awesome performances by the P0 (our youngest class) to K3 children just as much as I did.

While sadly, we could not have as many live events and activities this year as we would have in a normal year, looking on the bright side, I am pretty sure all our young children enjoyed this year better than the year before, when we required them to sit in front of the computer for so long!

Lastly, as an early childhood practitioner and also a mum of two children, I want to express my sincere gratitude to all of our KIST families' for their efforts in supporting us.

Thank you...

- ◆ ...for your continued support of your child's learning, whether by distance learning at home or in person at school.
- ◆ ...for keeping an eye on your child's health condition.
- ◆ ...for being creative to reduce stress for your child during this difficult time.
- ◆ ...for preparing healthy meals for your child.
- ◆ ...for maintaining your child's daily routine.
- ◆ ...for following our school safety measures.

...and the list goes on! Without your support, we would most likely not have been able to enjoy the entire school year together, in person.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer holiday, and I am looking forward to welcoming all you back to school during the 2021-2022 school year...with less restrictions, we hope!

Eri Ozawa
Early Childhood
Coordinator (K1–K3)/
K2A Teacher



K1 Homes and Pajamas

As part of the K1 unit, 'Sharing the planet,' focusing on homes, we have been learning about different types of homes. The students acquired knowledge of the different types of homes that can be found around the world such as treehouses, mud houses, bungalows, island houses, mansions, castles, stilt houses, igloos, yurts, teepees, houseboats, glasshouses, motor houses, cave houses, underground houses, and even container houses. The favorite home for most of the K1s is the **CASTLE**!



We used a world map to show where we live here in Japan. Upon looking at the world map, the students became aware of the countries where their grandparents live. Some of their grandparents live in Australia, the UK, the USA, China, Korea and different parts of Japan.

One fun and enjoyable activity that the students took part in was to make their own homes at school while in their pajamas. The students brought bath towels or blankets from home. In our classrooms, the students used tables, chairs, mats, racks, and everything they saw in the classroom to create their own home. They even used pegs to decorate their homes. The K1As named their own homes, while the K1Bs made their own forts.

Below are the names of the homes the K1As made:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Anika: "Glasshouse" | • Sebby: "Mudhouse" |
| • Mio: "Castle" | • Mandar: "Bungalow" |
| • Runxi: "High-rise building" | • Yuri: "Castle" |
| • Miro: "High-rise long tower" | • Arisa: "Castle" |
| • Kai: "Mansion" | • Haru: "Castle" |
| • Xiaoyu: "Castle" | • John: "Treehouse" |
| • Lola: "Castle" | |

To make the day more exciting, we wore our **pajamas**! The students wore patterned pajamas and showed off by walking on a ramp while everyone cheered and clapped. The students talked about the pattern on their pajamas as part of mathematics, learning how to make patterns. When the students finished building their homes, they enjoyed watching the movie, *The Lion King*, while eating popcorn.

Claire Yoneyama
K1A Teacher



Elementary ELS

Inspire writing with wordless books

We are incredibly proud of the amount and quality of writing that our students have done this year.

Over summer, if you are looking for a way to keep up the writing at home, wordless books and comics with empty speech bubbles can inspire storytelling.

Children can use these in many ways, including by first telling the story orally, and by telling the story in more than one language.

The elementary library has many wordless picture books to borrow, which you can find by searching "wordless picture books" in Destiny ([Destiny Discover Search](#)).

There are also sites where you can view some wordless books online for free:

Web [Free Kids Books | Wordless](#) (some links to the pdfs don't work, but most do, so keep persisting)

Web [Payer-Smith Books | Wordless](#)

And here is a site listing recommended wordless books (not available to read for free online, but many of the books recommended are in the elementary library):

Web [Children's Library Lady | Wordless](#)

For blank comics, Pinterest has many that you can find by searching for "pinterest blank comics".

Lastly, as strong home languages are the crucial foundation from which to develop additional languages, any activities your child does over summer that develop vocabulary and literacy in your home languages will help their English, too.

Wishing you a safe and sunny summer!

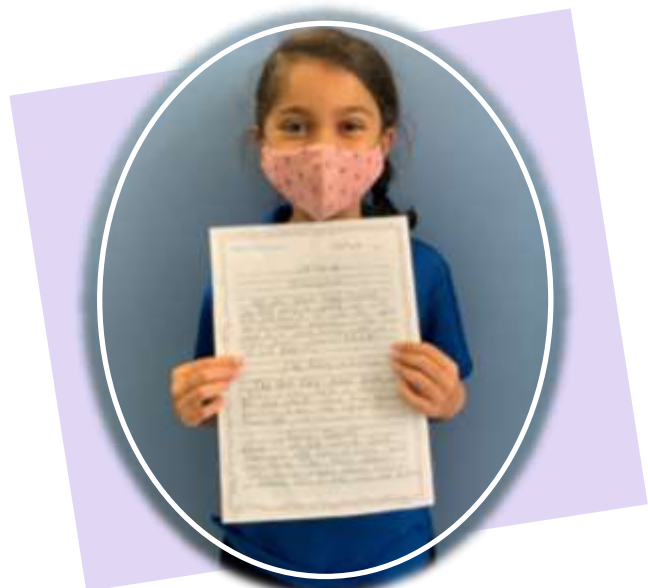
Rachel Parkinson
Elementary ELS Coordinator/
G3 ELS Instructor
rachel.parkinson@kist.ed.jp



G3A's **Takafumi** (pictured above) and **Chikara** (not pictured) each published a book for their classroom that included a series of short stories based on wordless comics. First, they added speech to the comic, then wrote a short story to create the characters and events in detail. They also used infographics—with only brief text such as labels and captions—as sources to write a series of information reports.



G2 students have recently written incredibly detailed information reports, and thoughtful letters from their role models. Here some of the G2A students show one of their pieces of writing.



G2B's **Kaitlyn** with her newly published information report full of particularly interesting facts about car racing.

KIPS News

From the P1 classroom...

Greetings from P0—P1!

Summer is approaching, and currently, we have entered term 7. In this term, we are learning about different modes of transportation in relation to our theme, "A Day Out". The children enjoy singing and dancing to different songs related to going on outings. The teachers also set up pretend sites to "go out" to inside the classroom, which helped the children to learn through playing. Recently, the children have been introduced to the "Parachute" activity. The children enjoy joining in with the teachers to shake the parachute and are encouraged to improve their talking skills.

Time flies, and soon a new school year will begin! We are amazed to think that we will soon be promoting the P0 children to P1 and the P1 children to P2. The children have all grown up socially, physically, and emotionally, and the development that they are making has been tangible. The younger children who used crawl to get around and required being fed by the teachers can now walk and are learning to eat by themselves. Some of the older children have started making simple sentences to express themselves in words such as, "More please," "No thank you," "Let's go," and "It's sunny." We are looking forward to seeing their growth next year, too!



Rinkal Sharma
P0—P1 Teacher



From the P2 classroom...

We welcomed two new friends to P2 since the last issue of *The Comet*, so although we began the school year with seven children, we are ending it with nine. This year, we were so busy with COVID prevention and safety measures while helping the children learn and play that the year went by in the blink of an eye! The P2 children have grown up so much since the beginning of the year, and we have had a wonderful time watching them gain more skills and confidence as the year has progressed.

The children have become able to do so much without help; now, they do everything from playing with and getting along with their friends to changing clothes to eating and going to the toilet by themselves! During morning circle, when we check the month, day and date, and talk about whose lessons we will have today, the children answer confidently and loudly. Each child has a turn to be "Today's Leader" every nine days, and on that day, the leader checks the weather for us. The children get so excited to be the leader, they constantly ask, "is it my turn tomorrow?" and stand proudly in front of the class to do their job when it is their turn. They are so grown up now!

Each day, we have different lessons in Language, Art, Music and Movement, and Japanese. During these lessons, each child pays close attention and actively participates, and they all enjoy learning new words, moving around, and touching the objects we're learning about. Although, due to COVID, the Spring Concert had to be recorded at KIPS rather than performed live, the children worked hard to practice their numbers and really enjoyed dancing for the camera. We are always surprised and amazed at the flexibility of these young learners as they try out the brand-new things that they learn and experience right away. It has been our pleasure working and playing together with your children to give them a fun and meaningful experience at KIPS for the past year!



Yoshimi Machida
P2 Teacher



MYP News

MYP students explore the transition to IGCSE

The current Grade 8 class will end their time in the MYP in June. Over the course of the past three years, the students have investigated a range of concepts while building the necessary skills to take on new challenges.

In April this year, the G8s participated in a seminar with current G9s. Led by **Shota** (G8B), the G9s—**Shaunak** (G9B), **Stephanie** (G9B), **Remi** (G9B) and **Han** (G9B)—provided insight on their experiences in taking on their IGCSE courses this year. Mr. Dayaram, an experienced IGCSE Science teacher, also offered his perspective on the transition.

The message from the G9s was that there is definitely a period of adjustment to the new program, but they felt that they were prepared to take on this new set of challenges.

A common theme that emerged from the G9s—reinforced strongly by Mr. Dayaram—is that IGCSE students need to quickly develop systems for managing the amount of content covered in many of the IGCSE courses. In the Science courses (all

students study Biology, Chemistry and Physics) and again in the Humanities courses (where students choose from among several options), students are called on to prepare and revise concepts quickly. Mr. Dayaram mentioned that students who succeed in IGCSE will work on units *before* they officially begin in class.

The G9s also shared with the G8s their experiences with exam-style assessments. Going back to revise past content to consolidate understanding becomes much more of a requirement in IGCSE courses. This is particularly true given that the actual IGCSE exams happen in the second year of the program.

In the end, the G8s benefited from the discussion. They spoke about their sense of growing confidence and excitement about moving into the new program next year.

Robert White
MYP Coordinator



Leading the seminar—Shaunak, Stephanie, Shota, Remi, Han and Mr. Dayaram



Secondary ELS

Keeping your language fresh during the summer vacation

At KIST, students are in an immersive English environment throughout the school day. A challenge of language learning is keeping up English skills over a long period outside of this immersive zone, say during the upcoming summer vacation. While the idea of language study during the holidays may appear to be the nadir of summer vacation fun times, rest assured there are ways to keep up English that won't interfere with one's relaxation.

Mirror reading



Do you have a favourite book in your home language? Do they publish that book in an English translation too? Brilliant! Have you ever considered

reading them both AT THE SAME TIME?

Before you begin, skim read your book and highlight any words you do not know. Make a list of these and their definition, continuing to add new words as you read. You may wish to do this chapter by chapter depending on the length of the book. Highlight words that you have already defined on your list in a second colour, this will save you looking up the word each time and give you a sense of vocabulary frequency.

Depending on the complexity and length of your chosen text, this may take some time and more than one pass at reading. Recently completing this project myself, I gained both invaluable insight into the cultural nuance of my target language and improved reading speed.

You know what you like...go with that

I know this is not the first time I have said this, and I will say this again: read, watch and listen to texts in English that are within your sphere of interest. Forcing yourself to study English that is completely irrelevant to your life is demotivating at best and torturous at worst; don't do it.

Keep contact (responsibly)

It looks like it might be yet another physically distant summer vacation, but this is all the more reason to keep in contact with your friends from school (in English). You can use phone, e-mail, snail mail, slam poetry, slant rhyme rap battle to name a few modes of communication. It will keep you connected and your English skills will stay on point.



Have a relaxing summer and remember to wash your hands.

Jade Bonus
Secondary ELS Coordinator



Writing from Experience

KIST teacher, Madeline Horan (MYP/DP English Language and Literature), has received honorable mention in the third annual Kenyon Review Short Nonfiction Contest for a story she wrote about northern Japan entitled, "The Quiet Limit of the World." The *Kenyon Review* is often considered to be one of the best literary magazines in the United States. When she received notification of her achievement recently, she was told that the judge, writer Roxane Gay, admired her writing.

Ms. Madeline said of her experience:



Ms. Madeline at Lake Tazawa in Akita, Northern Japan, the region that inspired her writing.

“I was so surprised to be among the selected. I have been writing this piece since I lived in a small town in Akita on the JET Programme (2012–15). There, I watched my town and school lose people every year, and I found the quiet resignation that people endure in the face of extinction heartbreaking. I hope to continue to polish the piece and one day honor the community I love so much. I look forward to doing more writing this summer!”

Our KIST Mission in Action

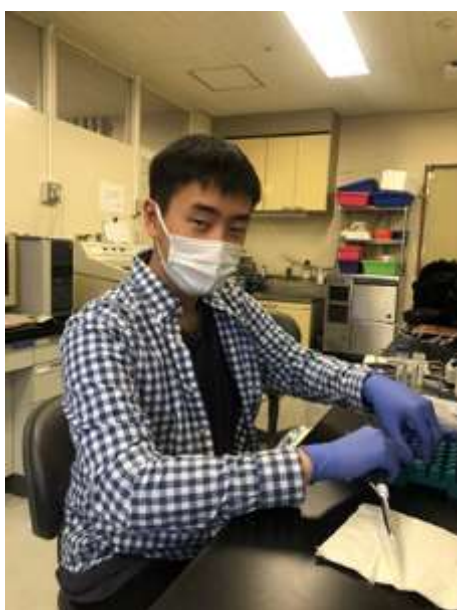
KIST aims to: develop competent, academic and compassionate individuals who make meaningful contributions to our global community.

Has your research ever been published? Research at a level for publication most often involves post-graduate level university students and their mentors. We are proud to report that recently a group of six KIST G11 students (**Eleina, Kishore, Rei, Shiro, Stephen and Sunny**) had the opportunity to get involved with cancer-related research under Dr. Ko Sato and Dr. Anna Sedukhina. Their team's work was recently published in a major scientific journal called *Scientific Reports*. [CLICK HERE FOR THE ARTICLE](#)

The students even put together a short video explaining the project. [CLICK HERE FOR THE VIDEO](#)

On the following page is a firsthand perspective from Rei and Eleina on this two-year journey that had them working hands-on with cutting-edge science.

SPECIAL THANKS to Drs. Ko and Anna for their support and for this opportunity!



Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Rei (G11A)



Although we were initially planning to go to an internship at a local hospital, it was canceled due to COVID-19 and we ended up writing a research paper instead. I thought that I would be able to utilize my hobby of programming in this project as well; however, I was quickly disappointed as most of my work at the start involved sorting excel spreadsheets which took ridiculous amounts of time to load because of their size. Luckily, I was able to program once I was done processing the data, or at least that was what I thought at first. As it turned out, a lot of the analysis was typing a little bit of code, pressing enter, and waiting hours—sometimes even days—for the code to finish running.

To me, what was thrilling more than analyzing the data was discussing with Dr. Ko the vast possibilities of using big data to aid in medical research. I was surprised to hear that there was quite an overlap between doctors and technicians, and I would imagine that the overlap will only increase in the future as more data becomes available.

I immediately began to wonder whether it was possible to use machine learning to identify and learn different patterns in the data to speed up the analysis process. I felt that if the analysis took less time, a lot more people would be interested in trying it out, which would result in more discoveries being made. Although I currently lack the skills to try out my ideas, this unique experience had greatly benefited me by broadening my views and opening up new possibilities for what I wanted to do in the future, and although I was initially underwhelmed by the analysis process, I am very glad that I was able to try it out and gain a new experience.

Eleina (G11B)



For this research paper, half of the group focused on data analysis and the other half—including myself—focused on the clinical aspect. Although the whole process was extremely challenging, taking part in it was a valuable and exciting experience!

The data analysis team processed data using the TCGA database and it was concluded that the overexpression of the gene GRB2 linked with lower survival. Our job was to confirm the findings from more than 100 clinical biopsy samples from actual prostate cancer patients. In order to do this, we needed to measure if the GRB2 protein was overexpressed in the cancer cells. Not only was it such a rare opportunity to see real cancer cells underneath a microscope, but there was so much to learn: we had no idea how we were going to measure substances so miniscule as specific proteins.

Almost every single concept used seemed groundbreaking to us. I remember Dr. Ko chuckling at our reactions as he explained the process of immunohistochemistry—the application of antibodies binding to specific proteins and thus staining the biological tissues—and various chemicals which we never heard of prior. Since we had to handle valuable biopsy samples and scientific equipment, there was a lot of responsibility which came with the procedure of successfully staining the cancer cells. It was extremely satisfying to see the biopsy samples gradually turn the intended brown color, indicating the presence of the GRB2 protein which we were looking for. As an extension, we also investigated and experimented with possible target treatments for prostate cancer using GRB2 inhibitors to stop the gene from overexpressing to prevent cancer cells from developing more. I was able to witness the thought process of how possible treatments for diseases are made.

Dr. Ko mentored us along the way, teaching us the complex mechanisms behind the laboratory processes we used and what the life of a scientific researcher was like. Encountering this professional world of science has further inspired me to take on scientific research when I enter university. My first time in the laboratory at St. Marianna University still seems like yesterday. I have learned so much over the past two years and I am extremely grateful for this opportunity.

G8 English Makes Romeo and Juliet Their Own

Though Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* has long been taught at KIST, it was traditionally a Grade 9 text. With the shift to the IGCSE curriculum, it was necessary to move this unit into Grade 8. While *Romeo and Juliet* is often considered one of the most accessible and relatable Shakespeare plays for teens—and therefore often serves as an introduction to his works—the language can certainly be intimidating. This spring, the Grade 8 English teachers (Ms. Hirakawa, Ms. Madeline, Mr. White) used aspects of the Folger Method of teaching Shakespeare, which focuses on helping students realize how much of Shakespeare's language they already can understand, moving gradually from word to line to sentence to scene. The method also encourages rigor by resisting paraphrase or "dumbing down" the original language.

Students began the unit by focusing on tone and stress with the single-syllabled "O," then experimented with saying one sentence while varying stress to dramatically change meaning.

Next, students played with delivering famous lines and using Shakespearean compliment and insult generators to help them gain confidence and understand that his language can be used in fun, vibrant ways, not just in abstract analysis.

Students also learned to anticipate the play's core meaning by performing a 5-minute *Romeo and Juliet*, which introduced them to pivotal and meaningful lines, then watched clips from the 1995 Baz Luhrmann film,

the 1968 Zeffirelli film, and the more recent 2013 film to see how the same lines could be interpreted in radically different ways. Throughout, students learned how to cut lines, as directors do, to highlight meaning; to use movement to show a change in thoughts or character; and to vary their tone, stress, intonation, and pacing.

All of the techniques learned came into use when students were invited to give a summative performance of a chosen scene in pairs. They edited the script to fit their intended theme/interpretation, memorized their lines, and performed it for the class.

At the start of the unit, students did a "chalktalk" on what they knew about Shakespeare and *Romeo and Juliet*, and at that time, the impression from the students was overwhelmingly negative. However, during a post-unit reflection, the students viewed Shakespeare and the play much more positively. Our hope is that they learned that Shakespeare has such an incredibly broad range, in verse and in theme, that all students can find something they relate to, learn from, and enjoy in his work. This strong foundation prepares students to move into their IGCSE and DP English Shakespeare studies with knowledge, confidence, and skill.

**Madeline Horan and
Steven Otis**
Secondary English
Teachers



ROMEO + JULIET

Hokusai Ambassador Project

We are excited to share with you about a group of KIST students who have contributed to the local community! Working together with the Sumida Hokusai Museum, KIST graduate, **Yui** (Class of 2020), started the "Hokusai Ambassador Project" as an IB Service project in 2018. The goal of this project was to make the museum more accessible to foreign visitors and to help spread an appreciation of the Japanese artist Hokusai and his works.

Now, through the efforts of several generations of KIST students, the museum has released a video in English by **Shota** (G8B) introducing Hokusai and his works, and French information booklets are now available for guests to use at the museum!

We are so proud to see KIST students using their linguistic talents to share Japanese culture with visitors from around the world. While unfortunately, the museum is currently closed due to the COVID situation, please drop by once it reopens!



Snapshots of the video created by Shota (G8B)



French translation by Yui (Class of 2020)

Watch the video here:

Web

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsSK-VtTqik>

Find out more about the Sumida Hokusai Museum here:

Web

<https://hokusai-museum.jp/?lang=en>

Interview with Shota

How did you become involved in the service?

I made a promotional video for the Sumida Hokusai Museum. It is mainly about the fun activities that you can do in the museum, as well as a little bit of the basics, such as who is Katsushika Hokusai. I helped a local community to benefit from my work.

What are you most proud of?

I am quite proud of simply getting my video chosen as the one to use. I remember taking my time and effort to make this product. I carefully analyzed other promotional videos to implement techniques in my own one. I also worked on this outside of class as well. So I guess my work paid off.

What technical challenges did you experience?

This whole project took pretty long to make. In G6 Design class, I was introduced to a new film-making software. It took me a good amount of time to get used to the features. There were many times that I had to do some tedious work. After I showed my initial video, the people from the museum told me to fix some things. Eventually, I also had to make the whole video again because of some technical issues. But hey, I did it!

How has this service helped you grow as a person?

As mentioned already, this took a lot of time. For sure, I became more persistent. Also, I had the opportunity to actually talk with the people from the Hokusai Museum, so that helped me develop social skills. It was a new experience for me to formally talk with an adult.

Web

Watch the video:

<http://bit.ly/hokusai-museum>

Interviewed by Mr. Tim



G12 Visual Arts Exhibition

On March 20, the Grade 12 DP Visual Arts students held their end-of-course exhibition in the school gym. The exhibition was one of the three assessed components of the course, consisting of the students selecting and organizing their exhibition to highlight their journey in visual arts. The works reflected each student's hard work, individual creativity and style. Congratulations Grade 12s!



Andrew DiBella
DP Visual Arts Teacher



Secondary SRC



L>R Heet, Mr. Knuchel (Advisor), Kishore, Eleina, Armaan (Absent: Tatsunori)

Hello! We are the new Executive members for the Secondary SRC: President, **Kishore** (G11B); Vice President, **Tatsunori** (G11B); Secretary, **Heet** (G10B); Treasurer, **Armaan** (G11A); and Public Relations Officer,

Eleina (G11B). We are excited to share the variety of events and campaigns which we hosted during semester two to engage the student body! In the past few months, we have made some drastic changes to freshen up our image. Most notably, we arranged a school-wide logo contest where over twenty logo designs were submitted by talented designers from a range of grades. The student body voted on the new logo by **Stephanie** (G9B) which features a vibrant, stunning comet—the KIST mascot—and the initials of the Student Representative Council. We are delighted to proceed on utilizing this meaningful logo to represent us.

The Valentine's season was a kickstarter for organizing a multitude of events. We played the role of cupid and exchanged gifts such as roses, chocolates, and messages between students and their friends/special

someone complemented with two competitions: The Chocolate Guessing Contest and The Love Letter Contest.

The main objectives of the new Executive board are to reestablish the SRC's presence within the student body as well as heighten our collective school identity—our school spirit! In order to do so, we put in an extensive amount of effort into reviving the KIST house system (Red, Yellow, Green, Blue). The SRC organized a Two-Day Spirit Free Dress Day and used it as the first opportunity to reward house points for participants. The school flourished with students in free dress—athletics clothes for the first day and warm and cool colors for the second. House points are:

1st: Yellow	5600
2nd: Red	5400
3rd (tie): Green and Blue	5300

We have received a very enthusiastic response from the students saying that the SRC has been more active as ever before! The SRC will continue to hearken to the student's ideas and create a positive and supportive environment for the students. Please continue to stay safe and healthy!

Eleina (G11B)
Public Relations Officer





WHO ARE WE?

We are the KIST HEART Club. "HEART" stands for "Help Empower and Assist Refugees Today". We are a group of Grade 8 students and teachers from K. International School in Tokyo.

Members:

Heads (teachers): Ms. Snow and Ms. Kanoka

Directors: G8A Feiru and G8A Miki

Secretary: G8A Dawon

Communications: G8A Ashmita

Treasurer: G8B Kavin

Other members: G8A Aadya, G8A Anika, G8B Arham, G8A Aryan, G8A Eujin, G8B Jiayin, G8A Mano, G8B Pramiti, G8A Zoyan and G8A Yi Ming

Members of Publication Group: G8A Aadya, G8A Anika, G8A Ashmita, G8A Eujin and G8A Miki

IT GROUP



This group is in charge of online creations for our groups such as videos or websites. Their goals are:

- Spread awareness by creating websites and videos to present our club.
- Explain our purpose
- Displaying information to get more people to help the refugees.

Members: G8A Yi Ming, G8A Aryan



HELP EMPOWER AND ASSIST REFUGEES TODAY

Our logo

WHAT DO WE DO?

What we do is help Syrian refugees.

As you may know, Syria is experiencing a huge civil war due to the Arab Spring revolution. The war is causing shortage of shelters and food for Syrians. The whole country is torn apart. The revolution started from 2011 in Syria, and is still continuing until now. Many civilians have been forced out of their homes to different countries.

A refugee is a person who had to flee from their country due to war, persecution or a natural disaster.



More than 5 million refugees fled Syria since the war broke out. They now live in different refugee camps in different countries. Many of them are suffering through the poor facility and maintenance of the camps. This is where we came in. We help with donations and funds for the Syrian refugees. We also are working with humanitarian Jordan Hattar.

MANGA GROUP

This group is in charge of creating manga, which is a Japanese graphic novel. They are also in charge of creating animated videos from stories about refugees. Since manga is very popular in Japan, this will help spread awareness here. Their goals are to:

- Create our service group website and send it to our school by an E-Communication to spread awareness.
- Post animated videos of stories of refugees in YouTube, KISTv and in our website.
- Draw manga for students to read from stories from the REI organization in Japan.
- Making posters and infographics of data.

Members: G8B Jiayin, G8A Zoyan, G8B Dawon



FUNDRAISING GROUP

This group is in charge of raising funds for donation in our school. There is not much action in funding now since we are spreading awareness about HEART right now. Their goals right now are too:

- Create a little pop-up shop in our school where we will be selling merchandise that include our logo to spread more awareness on refugees and HEART.
- Raise money by selling items in a shop in our school called the K-shop, where many students come to buy snacks.
- Money that we will raise will be donated to refugees and to the REI organization.

Members: G8A Feiru, G8B Kavin, G8B Arham, G8A Mano, G8B Pramiti

WHAT HAS INSPIRED US TO START THIS CLUB?

In our Grade 8 Individuals & Societies class, we learned about how revolutions took place. Later on, we looked case studies such as the Russian Revolution. Later, we moved on to the Arab Spring revolution. We watched a documentary, whom Jordan Hattar was a part of, about Syrian refugees located in the Za'atari Camp in Jordan. Until now, more than 600,000 refugees are staying in Jordan. We observed the lifestyle of the refugees and their kids and what they learn and do. What we noticed about them was that they miss their homeland, Syria. Every night they watch the news on Syria and the war. Syrians are treated brutally by the government. In the documentary, one refugee told his experience of interrogation by the soldiers, which was life-threatening.

After watching the documentary, we created a list of questions that we were going to ask to Mr. Hattar in our online Zoom discussion in school. After the discussion, our teacher, Ms. Snow, came up with an idea to start a service in our school to help Syrian refugees. We talked about that to Mr. Hattar about our idea, and he showed support of it.

After the discussion, we started to send emails about our participation of the club to Ms. Snow, and then the group was made. We had our first meeting on Thursday, April 1st, and the KIST HEART Club was born.



KIST HEART Club!



Our Zoom Meeting with Jordan Hattar

Let us hope that one day the war will be over and all the refugees will be free again!

Article created by: G8A Ashmita

OUR PROCESS

Right now, we are focusing on spreading awareness to our school about our club. After spreading awareness, we will focus on donations and funds for the refugees. To spread awareness, our club is divided into 4 groups:

- Publication
- IT
- Manga
- Fundraising

PUBLICATION GROUP



This group is in charge of spreading awareness of the issue of Syrian refugees and our club to a community. Here are our goals for now:

- Spreading awareness of our issue to the whole school. This will include presentations to the other grades such as grades 1-5 and sending E-Communications to the school.
- Design T-shirts and make bracelets to be sold to the school community to spread awareness and create profit for the fundraising group.
- Plans for KIST families to connect and support the refugees. Includes emails with organizations who connect with refugees.

Cybercrime

How we can protect ourselves

Identity theft, ransomware and other types of cybercrime are a growing problem all over the world. We would like to share some tips on cyber security that may help to keep your device and online accounts safer.

Protect your devices

Here are some simple tips to help protect your devices from malware:

- Use anti-virus and malware software.
- Make sure your firewall is on.
- Keep your browser, software and operating system up to date.
- Use an anti-phishing toolbar on your browser.
- Only install apps from trusted sources.
- Use secure Wi-Fi networks.

Password security

Having one of your accounts hacked can be a very unpleasant experience. KIST sets up every Office 365 account with a secure password. For security, your KIST O365 password should not be used for any of your personal accounts.

Try to avoid becoming a victim by managing your personal passwords wisely:

- Make strong, long passwords:
 - ⇒ 12–15 characters
 - ⇒ You could use a phrase that is easy for you to remember, but hard to guess
 - ⇒ Include numbers and symbols
 - ⇒ e.g. i\$likeLOngwalks
- Don't use the same passwords for important accounts.
- Avoid using variations of the same password.
- Never share your password.
- Use multi-factor authentication where possible (a code sent to your phone, fingerprint, PIN number).
- Consider using a password manager.
- Think carefully before using the Facebook/Google single sign on option to create online accounts.

Phishing e-mails

Phishing e-mails aim to trick you into providing passwords or other sensitive information that can be used to access your accounts or steal your identity. The e-mails may appear to be from a real company, like a bank, Amazon, Google, Microsoft, PayPal, a company you do not know—or even someone from KIST! They might say there is a problem with your account, so you need to log on to fix it using a link they provide. They might try to make you take urgent action. The website you are taken to will be fake and any information you enter will be collected to use against you.

Here are a few tips to avoid becoming a victim:

- Be suspicious of unexpected or unusual e-mails, even from well-known companies.
- Check who the e-mail is addressed to. Often these e-

-mails are not addressed to you correctly.

- Watch for spelling and grammar errors.
- Stop and think carefully before clicking on any link!
- If in doubt, do not click on any links. Visit or call the company using the official website/phone number.
- Try hovering over the links. Sometimes it is clear that the URLs are not related to the company.
- Never open files from unexpected e-mails, even O365 documents, jpegs or pdfs. They may be malware. It is rare for legitimate companies to send attachments.
- As a rule, do not enter any personal information when it is requested by e-mail.
- Do not reply to any suspicious messages but report it as phishing or spam.
- If you receive a suspicious e-mail to your KIST e-mail account, please contact it.support@kist.ed.jp with the details or a screenshot. We can investigate and make efforts to block the sender.

For more information about phishing and how to protect yourself, visit <https://www.phishing.org/>

Blackmail scams

Another type of e-mail scam we sometimes see will demand money from you. They may say that your account has been hacked and try to blackmail you into sending money. Some "spoof" e-mails might even look like they were sent from your own KIST e-mail account!

You have probably not actually been hacked. If you receive such an e-mail to your KIST account:

DON'T...

- Do not panic.
- Do not reply.
- Do not open any attachments.
- Do not send any money.

DO...

- Report the e-mail as junk/spam.
- Take a screenshot and e-mail it to IT Support to investigate.
- Ask IT Support to change your O365 password if you are concerned.
- Follow the password security advice above and only use your KIST password for your school O365 account.

What's your Phishing IQ?

Here are some short online quizzes—see if you can spot the difference between a phish and the real thing:

- <https://phishingquiz.withgoogle.com/>
- <https://www.opendns.com/phishing-quiz/>
- <https://www.sonicwall.com/phishing-iq-test-landing/>

IT Support Team



Math Department News

Wonderful achievements by KIST students at math events

KPASS Math Field Day

On March 9, 2021, twenty-six students from Grades 6 to 11 participated in the online KPASS Math Field Day event. There were over 250 students from twelve international schools in and around Tokyo.

The following students represented KIST on the podium in the individual contest:

Stephen (G11A): **1st** in G11 category
Dawon (G8B): **2nd** in G8 category
Jiayin (G8B): **3rd** in G8 category
Fumie (G8B): **3rd** in G8 category
Mamiko (G7B): **2nd** in G7 category
Saku (G7B): **3rd** in G7 category

We also had many students who missed the podium by just one mark and came 4th. They were: **Amey** (G10A),



Gi Jeong (G10A), **Heet** (G10B), **Tomoko** (G10A), **Kaito** (G9A), **Shaunak** (G9B) and **Jiani** (G7B).

In the Energizer round, two Junior teams and three Senior teams containing KIST students managed to reach the top 3.



University of Waterloo math contests

On February 24, twenty-four students in Grades 9 to 11 participated in the annual University of Waterloo math contests. The Pascal, Cayley and Fermat contests were written by a total of 35,153 students worldwide. The top three scores per school count for a team score, which is then compared to other schools. This year, all three teams from KIST made it to Honor rolls.

The results were:

- Grade 9 Pascal team (**Kaito, Haruto, Shaunak**): 41st (top 6.4%)
- Grade 10 Cayley team (**Amey, Gi Jeong, Saanvi**): 28th (top 4.6%)
- Grade 11 Fermat team (**Shiro, Stephen, Anish/Sunny**): 39th (top 6.4%)



I would also like to give an honorable mention to those who scored among the top 25% of international participants. They will be receiving a Certificate of Distinction for their outstanding achievement!

Certificate of Distinction winners with Honor rolls:

- Amey** (G10A) – top 1.9%, top in school
- Gi Jeong** (G10A) – top 3.7%
- Shiro** (G11B) – top 3.8%, top in school
- Stephen** (G11A) – top 5.4%

Certificate of Distinction winners:

- Grade 9: **Kaito** (top in school), **Haruto, Shaunak**
- Grade 10: **Saanvi, Jason, Sara, Tomoko, Bubble, Archita, Heet, Johan**
- Grade 11: **Anish, Sunny, Yiling, Rei M. and Shriyan**

Congratulations to all the participants, and best wishes for future achievements!

Nanami Sakuma
 Secondary Subject Area Coordinator—
 Mathematics



Library News

Happy summer reading!

When kids read over the summer, they are more likely to have leapt ahead when they return to school. This is often called the "summer leap," and we have made it a priority to encourage your reading and spend a wonderful summer improving your life by improving your reading skills.

Here are a few ideas and recommendations to help you keep the reading momentum going all summer long:

Harness the power of choice!

Try to pick out your own books—visit a local library or bookstore and choose a book to read. But don't hesitate to seek help if you need it!

Have a reading goal

Set a goal and see how many books you can read in one summer—Be a reading role model every day with a favorite picture book, comic book or even a newspaper article. Everything counts. There are many places to help you discover new books. The most popular ways for students aged 6–17 to get reading help over the summer include:

- Visit a library with parents/siblings
- Pick books from the local library or book fair
- Take books on trips and vacations

myON

KIST also has a free summer subscription to myON, an online database of 6000-plus electronic books and 5000-plus articles. You can use this service from any device. Details have been sent to all families via E-Communications.



Learn how to use myON with three introductory videos that are available at the link below:

Web <https://help2.renaissance.com/myON/get-started>



Scholastic summer reading recommendations

Web <https://www.scholastic.com/parents/books-and-reading/book-lists-and-recommendations/summer-young-adult-books.html>



Mrs. P.

Kathy Kenny is an American actress, professional storyteller and famous for her inspirational titles "Queen of your own life" and "101 jolts of Inspiration". Classic children's stories are also brought to life by Mrs. P. You can find online learning lessons and many interesting activities here.

Web <http://mrsp.com/>

Open Library

Open Library is an open, editable library catalogue, working towards building a web page for every book ever published. Read, borrow, discover a wide range of collections and more...It's just one click away.

Web <https://openlibrary.org/>

2021 Sakura Medal winners

English books

- **Picture books:**
The Panda Problem (Deborah Underwood)
- **Chapter books**
Ninja Kid (Ahn Do)
- **Graphic novels**
Guts (Raina Telgemeier)
- **MS books**
White Bird (R.J. Palacio)
- **HS books**
A Good Girl's Guide to Murder (Holly Jackson)

Japanese books

- **Picture books**
パンどろぼう (柴田ケイコ)
- **Chapter books**
ラストサバイバル 最後まで歩けるのはだれだ！？ (大久保 開)
- **MS/HS books**
世界は「」で満ちている (櫻いいよ)



Michael Davignon
Secondary Library Supervisor



Staff 10!

In this month's *Staff 10!*, we are pleased to present **Edwin Gombya** who joined us in August 2018 as an Economics teacher in the Secondary School. This year, he is also the homeroom advisor for Grade 12B.



*Mr. Gombya—Thinker.
Lifelong learner. Mt. Fuji
lover. Father. Teacher.*

1) Tell us something interesting about your hometown.

I'm from West London, UK.

From a town called Hounslow. Hounslow West to be exact. This town is very close to Heathrow airport and when I was growing up, the planes taking off from Heathrow flew above our house and you could literally see their tyres as they gradually disappeared inside the plane. The noise the planes made when they flew over our house was deafening.

2) What is your favorite place in the world?

I've visited many places around Mt. Fuji and I find this mountain to be incredible, magical, god-like and overwhelming every time I come close to it. There's something very spiritual about it. I love the way its perfect structure dominates and towers over everything and how its landscape changes from being barren during summer to being snowcapped in winter.

3) Who would you like to meet if you had the chance and why?

I would like to meet Jesus Christ. I was raised as a Christian—more accurately as a Protestant—and although I've grown out of this religion, I would like to meet him and ask him whether he actually did the many things that people say he did, like walk on water. And why is there no record of his existence from the ages of 12–29? Where was he? What did he actually get up to? So many questions.

4) Do you have any special skills or talents?

I can speak three languages and some basic Spanish. I'm also a versatile teacher as I can teach a variety of students and subjects such as Business Management, Economics, English and I&S.

5) Please share a little-known fact about yourself.

I once lived in Nagoya and attended karate classes for two years. During this time, I competed at a famous venue in Tokyo and, despite my low belt ranking, I managed to defeat two of my opponents, one of whom was a black belt that went on to win the tournament. My sensei gave me lots of praise and said that I had shown lots of fighting spirit. So I decided to get a tattoo on my leg of the Japanese word for fighting spirit (Toukon = 闘魂).

6) What is your most prized possession?

It's got to be my children, hasn't it? My twin girls? I wouldn't swap them for anything. But as I share them with my wife, they're not just mine, are they? Personally, I think my most prized assets are the positive comments I have received over the years from students on how my teaching has inspired and influenced their thinking about their further studies and life in general. It's this feedback that makes teaching such a noble profession.

7) Which IB learner profile attribute do you most closely identify with and why?

Thinker—I like to think about my actions and the actions of others a lot and try to make sense of it all. This helps me to come to a more balanced conclusion on many issues about myself and the world I live in. I also believe it's this learner profile attribute, along with **reflective**, that enables me to have a centric perspective on world issues.

8) If you could live your life again, would you do anything differently?

Yes. In my first year at university, I would not spend \$2,000 on my first car. Instead, I'd invest it in Amazon or Bitcoin. I got a lot of joy out of that car but regrettably it didn't make me a millionaire.

9) Is there anything you are trying to learn/improve about yourself at the moment?

I truly believe in lifelong learning. I've been playing football since I was ten years old but still can't do keep ups comfortably. Also, as I grow older, I'm learning new things about my body (aches and pains and wellbeing), my mind (love and hate) and my spirit (mentality, attitude and beliefs).

10) Do you have any special message for your fans?

Yes. Smile as often as possible. Say good morning. Say sorry. Say thank you. Have an opinion. Never let your schooling get in the way of your education. Most important of all, go for it. Just do it! Why not?

Athletics Update

It was very unfortunate for students, but we were only able to have a few weeks of practices for some sports as the Spring season was sandwiched between two states of emergency. Both the ISTAA league and Kanto Plain league cancelled games between schools during these times.

Looking toward the Fall season, KIST will include two teams in the Kanto Plain league that will be participating for the first time: Varsity Girls' tennis and MS Girls' volleyball. These teams will join our Varsity Boys' tennis, MS Boys' football (soccer), HS Boys' and Girls' volleyball, and the X-Country teams in participating in Fall sports.



Dennis Ota
Athletics
Coordinator



Nurse's Notes

Children's eyesight

Why are regular eye checks important for children?

Vision continues to develop from birth to around 8 years of age. Children may not tell their parents if they have vision problems because they may think the way they see is the way everyone sees. Because of this, regular eyesight checks are essential. These checkups can help uncover any abnormalities, detect eye diseases early, allow children to receive effective treatment promptly and help preserve eyesight long term. In particular, children who wear prescription glasses or contacts should have annual checkups by an oculist or an optician to screen for vision changes. It is recommended that parents begin regular eyesight checkups for their children when they reach around 3 to 5 years old.

Effects on academic progress and school life

Around 30% of Elementary students and 50–60% of Secondary students have problems with their eyesight. If left unidentified and untreated, these can have a negative impact on their learning outcomes and development. Problems with vision can impact a child's ability to read textbooks, copy notes from the blackboard, participate in sports and other school activities, and interact socially with friends and classmates. These factors might lead to social issues and behavioral problems in school.

Please visit an eye clinic if your child displays any of the following symptoms:

- Regularly rubbing eyes
- Extreme light sensitivity
- Trouble concentrating
- Poor visual tracking (following an object with the eyes)
- Abnormal alignment or movement of the eyes—this includes the eyes not pointing in the same direction and crossed eyes (after 6 months of age)
- Chronic redness of the eyes
- Chronic overproduction of tears/eyes constantly "tearing up"
- Being unable to see objects at a distance
- Having trouble reading the blackboard
- Squinting
- Difficulty reading
- Holding screens, books and other handheld items with text close to the face
- Complaining of headaches and eye strain
- Problems with hand-eye coordination (e.g. struggling with ball sports and games)
- Being unusually clumsy

Short-sightedness

Short-sightedness is a common condition of the eyes that causes distant objects to appear blurred, while close objects can be seen clearly. The cause of short-sightedness is overgrowth of the eyeball, causing it to become too long from front to back. As a result, light rays focus in front of the retina at the back of the eyes, rather than focusing directly on the retina itself. This condition usually begins to develop from 6 to 13 years.

How do children develop short-sightedness?

- Heredity is one factor: if both parents are short-sighted, there is a greater risk that their child will be short-sighted too.
- The prevalence of short sightedness is increasing worldwide. Studies indicate that children focusing on nearby objects, such as smartphones, computers, TVs and books, and studying for long periods may be up to five times more at risk of developing short-sightedness than those who do not.

Tips to protect your child's eyesight

- Eat nutritious food: Fish (Omega-3 fatty acids), green vegetables (carotene), eggs (vitamin A), carrots (beta-carotene), nuts (vitamin E) may prevent or reduce the onset of short-sightedness.
- Encourage daily outdoor play: Spend 60–90 minutes a day outdoors so that children can train their eyes to focus on distant objects and relax their eyes. Daylight is effective in preventing progression of short-sightedness.
- If your child is busy with his/her studies, taking a short break for a walk in the local park and/or spending some outdoor time with family for a short while on weekends can make a difference in the progression of short-sightedness.
- Protect your child's eyes from sun damage: Encourage your child to wear a hat and sunglasses on sunny days, and try to stay in the shade.
- Encourage children to rest their eyes for 5 minutes per hour when studying or focusing on a visual task.
- Encourage good posture, appropriate viewing distance and proper room lighting when your child is focusing on nearby objects.
- Make sure to get regular eye checkups at an eye clinic.

Yukiko Yamazaki
School Nurse



Reference:

Jonathan H. Salvin, MD. (June 2014). *Your child's vision. Kids health*. Retrieved from <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/vision.html>



University Guidance News



PSAT 8/9 information

This year was the first time that KIST students participated in the PSAT 8/9 exam. The PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT) has been used historically by our Grade 10 and 11 students. Why did we decide to introduce another exam to the KIST community and what does this mean going forward?

What is it?

- The PSAT 8/9 is a preview for the SAT that is designed for students in Grades 8 or 9 to give an indication of how "college ready" they are at their current age.
- **In the US**, this test is used to help diagnose areas of improvement that may be necessary for students in schools that do not have standardized curriculum/testing in place.
- **At KIST**, because we use standardized curricula (IGCSE/IB), the PSAT is used mostly as a preview and early preparation to upcoming SAT exams.

Why offer it?

- The recommendation from our counseling team for students wanting to consider US applications in the future is to take the SAT exam. However, these exams are only offered once every few months and therefore, extra preparation time becomes valuable.
- Most students in the past have taken the SAT three to four times to get the score they desire. When asked, students often mention sitting the first exam just to "see how it is". This is not the best use of time or money. Giving students the chance to have an earlier preparation exam means they will not sit a "see how it is" SAT anymore and can prepare more efficiently. Getting desired SAT results earlier gives more time to focus on school and enjoying more free time.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Is this test the EXACT same as the real SAT?

A: No. However, the format and length are similar. The level of difficulty also increases when moving from PSAT 8/9, to PSAT/NMSQT, and finally to the SAT. You can see the below chart for a better comparison.

	PSAT 8/9	PSAT/NMSQT	SAT
What is the maximum score?	1440	1520	1600
How long is it?	2 hrs. 25 mins.	2 hrs. 45 mins.	3 hrs.
# of Reading Qs	42	47	52
# of Writing Qs	40	44	44
# of Math Qs	38	48	58
Who will take it at KIST?	All G9	All G10 (optional G11)	Optional for all students
Can this be used to apply for universities?	No	No (but US citizens may receive a scholarship)	Yes

Q: If this test is an easier version of the SAT, how does it help?

A: Taking two preview SATs before sitting the real one will give students familiarity on how the test operates, eliminating the need to go into the real test "blind" for the first sitting. Also, it provides a login to the [Khan Academy](#) resources provided by the SAT provider, College Board, to give extra practice for the real exam when that is taken (suggested to prepare and take for the first time

in the summer following Grade 10).



Q: What if we never plan to sit the SAT or apply to the US? Is this a waste?

A: While the value is greater for those planning to sit the SAT or consider US universities, it is not a waste of time for other students. This provides what may be their first experience with a formal standardized test setting, which should mentally prepare them for their upcoming IGCSE exams later that year. Plus, if plans change and families decide to consider US applications, it makes preparing for SAT later than planned still possible and not an overwhelming task.

Q: What should we be doing now if we are currently in Grade 8/9/10?

A: **Grade 8** – Will take the PSAT 8/9 in April 2022. You do not need to prepare in advance
Grade 9 – Will take the PSAT/NMSQT in October 2021. You will be given some practice booklets in advance of the exam to help you prepare.

Grade 10 – Practice SATs are completed for most of you. US citizens may want to take it one more time in Grade 11 for scholarship consideration. Otherwise, [this summer is time to prepare for the SAT](#) if you like. The next test is August 28, 2021 and can be registered by [clicking here](#).

April 2021 results

The test was taken by the current Grade 9 class in the morning of April 21st. They were instructed that they did not need to prepare or study in advance and performed well!

Grade 9

Mean total score (KIST): **1201** (1440 max)
 Mean total score (Global): **905**
 Mean Reading/Writing (KIST): **538** (720 max)
 Mean Reading/Writing (Global): **466**
 Mean Math (KIST): **663** (720 max)
 Mean Math (Global): **438**

Key takeaways

- The KIST average was almost **300 points higher** than the global average.
- **All** KIST Grade 9 students were above the **80th percentile globally**.
- 75% of the was class above the **90th percentile**.
- **100%** of KIST Grade 9 Students met the benchmark for College Readiness in the **Math Section**.

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Online virtual graduate forums

Our online virtual graduate forums came to a close this month. We had an excellent collection of KIST graduates from all around that world speak about life after KIST and how the IB DP prepared them for their next steps. Some graduates were just beginning their university lives, others have entered the workforce, one is even working towards a PhD!

Date	Name	KIST Class of...	Forum language	Undergraduate university
April 19	Aska	2018	English	University of California – Davis, USA
April 26	Tatsuya	2015	Japanese	Truman State University, USA
May 10	Ayan	2019	English	UC Santa Cruz, USA
May 17	Jamie	2015	English	Nagoya University
May 24	Yurika	2018	Japanese	University of Tokyo
May 31	Yuki	2019	English	Imperial College London
June 7	Chae Hyun	2019	English	University of Tokyo
June 14	Motoi	2016	Japanese	NYU Abu Dhabi



Tatsuya – KIST Class of 2015
(University of Colorado – Boulder – Astrophysics PhD student)



Aska – KIST Class of 2018
(UC Davis – Comparative Literature/ Cinema Digital Media double major)

If you missed the sessions, we hope to arrange more in the future, so please keep watch!

Summer is coming!

Once again, it seems we will be facing a summer where most of us will not be travelling, and high school summer programs are all remaining online if available. For those not sure of what they should be doing, I highly suggest re-reading the university guidance article posted in the [June 2020 issue of The Comet](#) as the advice is also very relevant for this year. A few highlights of suggestions:

- Participate in online university fairs, tours and meetings
- Join an online class or summer program
- Begin studies for standardized tests (SAT)
- Do an online English test/interview such as Duolingo (Grade 11 students)



Summary

It has been an unprecedented year once again and while there have been struggles, we have also been met with great success with Grade 12s achieving some excellent results (more to come on that in our next issue), and those in younger grades looking very impressive from the university preparation standpoint. As always, our counseling team is on standby throughout the summer months for any questions that come up. Please send an e-mail to thomas.waterfall@kist.ed.jp and/or schedule a virtual meeting through Cialfo (G9–G11 students and parents). Have a great summer!

Thomas Waterfall
University Guidance Counselor

