



# The Comet

The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

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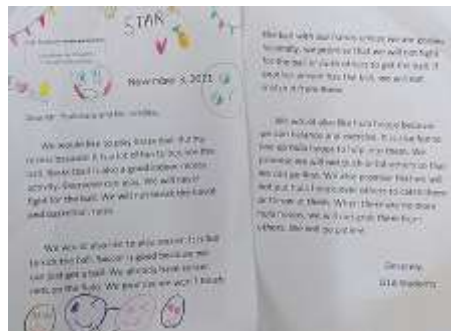
## From the Head of School

### Student voice

Student voice is a term that describes how students provide their opinions and ideas into what happens within their school and in the classroom. Ensuring that students feel that their opinions and ideas are valued by fellow classmates, school staff, and the wider school community is important in any school. Listening to and acting on student voice is important as it can increase student engagement, create and maintain a positive learning environment, build respectful relationships, and it provides opportunities for students to develop leadership skills and practice problem solving.

At KIST, our Student Representative Councils in both the elementary and secondary schools work to give classmates opportunities to share their opinions. Over the past year, our SRC have provided various opportunities for our students to share their voice. Last year, when we were considering changes to our school uniform, our SRC looked at samples and shared student opinions on various aspects of the new design. They organized the double free dress day which allowed each class to develop their own free dress theme. The changes to the house championship, which were made with the intent of further developing school spirit, were led by members of our SRC.

With the lifting of the state of emergency in Tokyo, many of our elementary school students felt it was time to resume the use of equipment at lunch recess. Mr. Bradley and I received a letter from our Grade 1A class stating their desire to resume the use of equipment at lunch recess. They further explained the types of equipment they would like, why these were good choices, and how they would use the equipment responsibly. Our Elementary Student Representative Council reached out to each class and surveyed our students on the types of equipment they would like to have at recess. They then presented the results of their poll to me.



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### DATES TO REMEMBER



#### December 2021

- 10 (G1-G12) Clubs program ends
- 10 (K3-G5) LEAP classes end
- 10 (K1-G3) After care not available
- 13-15 (G9-G11) Semester 1 examinations
- 16 (W) Winter celebration rehearsals
- 17 (W) Winter celebration
- 17 (K1-G3) After care not available
- 18-Jan 9 Winter vacation
- 20-21 Office open

#### January 2022

- 10 School resumes for all students
- 10-17 (G12) Semester 1 DP mock examinations
- 13 (G5) PYP exhibition explanation session
- 14 2022-23 Admissions applications close
- 21 (G6-G10) Mathematics diagnostic testing
- 21 End of semester 1
- 21 (S) Half day for Secondary students
- 24 Semester 2 commences
- 24 (K3-G5) Semester 2 LEAP classes begin this week
- 26 Japanese New Year Party (\*Tentative)

#### February 2022

- 1 (G1-G12) Semester 2 clubs program resumes
- 1 Semester 1 reports issued
- 7-10 2022-23 Admissions interviews



PYP | MYP | DP

Continued from previous page

Based on this student voice, I am happy to share that we purchased a variety of new recess equipment including volleyballs and soft American footballs, and recently resumed the use of equipment at lunch recess. This has provided opportunities for our students to move, play, interact in various groups, and generally have fun!

Listening to and acting on the perspectives and opinions of our students is valued at KIST, and our Student Representative Councils are critical in allowing us to do so. The members of our ESRC and SRC meet and complete their duties outside of class time, often before school, during break times, or after school. Their commitment to their fellow classmates and to our school is commendable, and we very much appreciate their efforts!

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



## New Face



Since the last issue of *The Comet*, we have welcomed a new staff member, **Taylor Draughn**, who has joined the office team as our Admissions and Communications Officer.

Ms. Draughn said:



*Hello everyone! My name is Taylor, and I am excited to be a part of the KIST community. You may see me around school taking photos of classes and events, so please say hello! I'm looking forward to meeting you all and working together this year."*



**Taylor Draughn**  
Admissions and Communications Officer

On behalf of the school community, we wish Ms. Draughn all the best in her new role.



## School Calendar 2022–23



To assist families planning overseas trips, the dates of school vacation periods for students and other important dates for the 2022–23 school year are listed below.

Families are asked to make arrangements accordingly to ensure that students are back in Tokyo ready to start school after each vacation period on the correct date. **The complete calendar will be distributed in June.**

- First day of school for students:**

**August 22, 2022**

- Autumn vacation:**

**October 22 – 30, 2022**

- Winter vacation:**

**December 17, 2022 – January 8, 2023**  
(Classes resume from Monday, January 9)

- Spring vacation:**

**March 25 – April 2, 2023**

- Golden Week vacation**

**April 29 – May 7, 2023**

- Last day of school for students:**

**June 14, 2023**

## PYP News

### United Nations Sustainable Development Goals x KIST Units of Inquiry

#### What are the Sustainable Development Goals?

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

The 17 SDGs are integrated—they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Countries have committed to prioritize progress for those who're furthest behind. The SDGs are designed to end poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls.

The creativity, knowhow, technology, and financial resources from all of society is necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context.

**Web** [United Nations Development Programme \(undp.org\)](https://undp.org)

At KIST, we aim to align as much of our programme of inquiry as possible with the UN SDGs as they connect directly with the IB's call for student-initiated action as well as our mission to develop compassionate individuals who make meaningful contributions to our global community.

Here, you will see just a few examples of the amazing work our students and teachers have been doing and how they link with the UN SDGs.

**Oliver Sullivan**  
PYP Coordinator



#### K2: Beaver dams

K2 have been learning about different cultures and their connections to the world. Here, students are making beaver dams in the playground.

#### Grade 2: Role models

Grade 2 have been exploring the beliefs and values of role models. They are learning that role models can be any age, gender, and can come from all walks of life.



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### Grade 3: Body systems

Grade 3 learned about the main body systems and how they are connected. They learned about the importance of staying healthy and maintaining a balanced diet and lifestyle.



### Grade 5: Migration

Covering all 17 of the UN SDGs, Grade 5 explored the causes and impacts of human migration.

## Follow Us on Social Media!

We are getting further along in the school year now, and with winter break coming up soon, all our students from K1 to Grade 12 are staying busy with class activities, extracurriculars and school events.

To keep up with what is going on, check out our official KIST social media pages, and don't forget to click follow so that you don't miss anything! We will be posting regular features that include snapshots of daily campus life; student group and club activities; the many achievements of our students, staff and the KIST community; and more! We would love to hear from you in the comments, so please show your support for our students in each post.

You can find our official pages by clicking the icons or scanning the QR codes to the right. All official school announcements and event information will continue to be sent to families through E-Communications, but we look forward to using our social media platforms throughout the school year to connect with the KIST community and international school communities across the globe.

**Taylor Draughn**  
Admissions and  
Communications Officer



Facebook



Instagram



Twitter



## Early Childhood News

Hello KIST families! How have you all been doing?

It's hard to believe that we are already in December and soon the winter holiday will begin! Since the last edition of *The Comet*, K1–K3 had a nice, big event together: the Autumn Festival in October, which was just before Autumn vacation. With COVID-19, it is challenging to have an opportunity for K1–K3 children to all get together for a big event, but it turned out to be a day where we could see a lot of smiles on the children's faces.

This year, the weather was not so good, so we tried something new: a parade inside the West Building from the 4th floor down to the 1st floor! Some children were especially excited to see their elder siblings in

their classrooms. This is our 2nd year holding this event, and teachers spent time creatively decorating their classrooms and preparing games and activities for the children to enjoy. Last year, we only had the event for a short time during the first and second periods, but this year, even though we expanded the event time until fourth period, time flew by because we were having so much fun.

Despite the many worries that we may have at the end of this year, I wish you all a lovely winter holiday with your loved ones.

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



**K1A**



**K1B**



**K2A**



**K2B**



**K3A**



**K3B**



## K1 'Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me'

As part of our unit, 'How we express ourselves,' the K1 classes used their imaginations to express their emotions and creativity through the arts. They have created many arts and crafts using different materials such as paper clay, recycled materials, bottle caps, egg cartons, colored tissue paper, paint, and brushes. They performed on the stage and showed their talents by singing and dancing. To make our unit more interesting, we read a story titled, 'Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me' by Eric Carle. The students were fascinated with the story which tells the tale of a girl who wished to reach the moon. She tried to grab the moon, but she was unable to grab it. Her father grabbed a very long ladder, placed it on top of a very high mountain, and reached the moon. As the moon got smaller, the girl eventually was able to hold and play with the moon.



To make the story more realistic, the K1s made a craft that portrayed themselves reaching the moon. They painted a big piece of paper with blue mixed with a bit of yellow and white. Then they cut a gray paper into a circle to make the moon. They used white tissue paper to decorate the moon to look like a crater. They used paper straws to make the ladder. They pasted stars around the blue paper to look like the night sky. We took a picture of each child mimicking reaching their arms up as though they were trying to reach the sky. Then they pasted their pictures on top of the ladder with hands stretched up, trying to reach the moon.

The students enjoyed creating art depicting the story and trying to get the moon.

**Claire Yoneyama**  
K1A Teacher



## Winter Celebration

During November, students from K1 through Grade 5 recorded parts for their winter celebration. These performances were linked as part of a global project called "All Together Now", involving several thousand schools and theatres around the world, all performing musical theatre songs as a means of reinvigorating participation in the arts. KIST student performances will be available to watch from December 17.



## Scarecrow Competition



**September 1 (Wednesday) – September 26 (Sunday), 2021**



The 24th Annual Scarecrow Competition was held by the Fukagawa Shiryokan-dori Shopping Street Cooperative Association in September. KIST students from G2 to G5 participated for the first time this year by making scarecrows as part of the after-school Japanese class during session 2 of the 2021 KIST Summer Program. The scarecrows they made were displayed for a certain period of time along the shopping street, and certificates were given to the students for their unique creations.

Thank you to all the students who played a role in helping to revitalize the shopping street.



## Elementary ELS

### Deepening skills during shared reading at home

We all know that there are so many reasons why time spent reading together with your child at home is time well spent. One of those reasons is that it can make all the difference in how successfully your child improves their reading and thinking skills. An issue that the KIST community is lucky to have is the issue of which language to read in at home. In *The Comet's* Elementary ELS article from September 2021, "**reading to your child in your native language**" was noted as a very important way to support your child's language and literacy development. In other words, lots of mother tongue reading will strongly support your child's success in both home language reading and English language reading, too.

A key point to add is that reading to your child is so much more effective when you ask questions and discuss the book together as you go. Some examples of questions to ask can be really helpful, and the Book Smart website (see link below) is excellent—except for being unfortunately only in English. In brief, they recommend two strategies by the acronyms of P.E.E.R. and C.R.O.W.D., and they give examples of questions and discussion prompts that show when and how to use the strategies.


If it is hard to find examples of questions and discussion prompts in your home language(s), we want to help. Early next year, the school will be conducting a

survey into home reading habits with the aim of learning how to support parents to do shared reading in your home language.

We really encourage you to participate by responding to the survey when it is sent out, so we can know what kind of support KIST families need for shared reading at home.

In the meantime, please see these links for more information on shared reading:

- Research on why reading in our home language is so important:

 <https://www.colorincolorado.org/article/why-reading-your-kids-your-home-language-will-help-them-become-better-readers>

- Information on how to do different types of shared reading with your child, with examples of questions to ask:

 <http://www.booksmartfamily.com/tips-for-parents-shared-reading.html>

**Rachel Parkinson**  
Elementary ELS Coordinator  
[rachel.parkinson@kist.ed.jp](mailto:rachel.parkinson@kist.ed.jp)



## Staying Positive

It's hard to believe that there is only one week of school left before the start of the winter holidays. It seems as if just moments ago we were all coming together straight from our summer holidays. Now it's time to think once again of relatives back in our home countries or elsewhere around the world. With the widespread vaccination rates in Japan, KIST families might have started to entertain, once again, the idea of traveling abroad. Just the thought of meeting friends and family brings smiles to the faces of young and old alike. I truly hope that the possibility of a visit is in the cards for those who are beginning to feel displaced or out of touch due to long separations from their loved ones.

The flip side of this positive feeling is the reality that the original COVID-19 virus is changing and has already reconfigured itself into yet another variant referred to as the "Omicron" virus. This new variant was first reported in South Africa and is seemingly on the move in quick succession to other countries. As countries around the world strive to combat another wave of the epidemic, quarantine lengths and country closures may surely affect our plans. I ask that all members of our community who plan to travel, check carefully with the appropriate embassies as well as Japanese re-entry procedures in order to have the latest information before striking out on holiday.

If your plans are altered by this new variant and you find yourself once again stuck in Japan, remember to keep a positive face on the situation. Adults with children should consider how this will affect

their well-being. It would be prudent to have some local plans as a back-up in the event that drastic measures come between you and your planned outing.

Simple outings and small gatherings with friends under safe conditions can bring the same relief that we seek in a grand outing. Children respond to love and friendship in ways that we older adults sometimes forget. Take a walk, visit the park, cook some festive holiday food, any of these and hundreds of other ideas will keep you emotionally and physically strong and ready for whatever life throws at us. Remember to stay positive!

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



## KIPS News

### From the P0/P1 classroom...

Hello everyone! It has been about three months since the school year started, and the children at KIPS are enjoying their time here each day. When the P0s first joined us, they often slept in their baby swings or on their backs and stomachs on the gym mats, but now they crawl around the room, hold on to things, sit upright and steady, and happily enjoy their surroundings. They also babble happily when teachers or other friends talk to them. The P1s are also increasing their language skills, going from one-word sentences to building up to two-word, then three-word sentences. Every day, they have fun in their verbal exchanges with their teachers and friends, and in taking care of their P0 friends.

I am in charge of Japanese classes again this year. At the beginning of class, our teachers cheerfully say, in Japanese: "Everyone in P0 and P1, douzo yoroshiku onegaishimasu!" At the start of the school year, the children would just stare back at them, but recently, the P1s have started to respond by saying: "Onegai shimasu."

During class, we use picture books and songs about seasons or those that match our term themes. At first, the children used to carefully watch the teachers who were reading or singing, but recently when reading, they call out the names of pictures and objects they know, and when a song they know is being played, the P1s join in by singing along and imitating the teachers dancing. When our P0 friends see this, they join in, too, by swaying along in their seats. We are pleased to see how much the children are growing each day. We also prepare large illustrations of the seasons for the children to understand easily, and we always try to speak slowly and carefully when giving explanations. Additionally, I hope to incorporate other aspects of Japanese culture and activities such as hand games so that the children can enjoy participating even more.

**Hitomi Hirakawa**  
P0-P1 Teacher



### From the P2 classroom...

It has been 13 weeks since the first day at KIPS. The P2 children have grown up in so many ways.

First, they started to build friendships and practice social skills. One morning, a child asked me at the entrance whether her friend was there already. She smiled when I answered "Yes." I started to see more children holding hands to play together and share fun experiences. It was so touching to see a child trying to help another child who was struggling to put her socks on by herself. The children are learning that friends are good to have even when their mommies and daddies are not around.

Secondly, the children have started to take responsibilities and to cooperate. It is perfectly normal for children to want to play more without limits. However, they are learning to stop playing and start cleaning up when they hear the clean-up song. They also know where to put their toys. When they forget, they help each other out. They are learning that being responsible and helping is fun, too.

Lastly, they are using English as a tool to communicate. During lunchtime, many of the children can say "Yummy" and "More, please" pointing at the empty plate. When the children were playing outside, one of them wanted to play with a kite that another girl had, and he was able to say, "I want to play with the kite." Most of the P2 children were not born in a native English-speaking environment. It is not easy to communicate one's needs in another language. However, they are learning to do so.

We are just into term 3, and the children have already grown this much! The sky is the limit for our P2 class. We hope the time the children spend at KIPS can provide them with tools to achieve their dreams in the future. Thank you always for your support and cooperation.

**Jina Lee**  
P2 Teacher



## MYP News

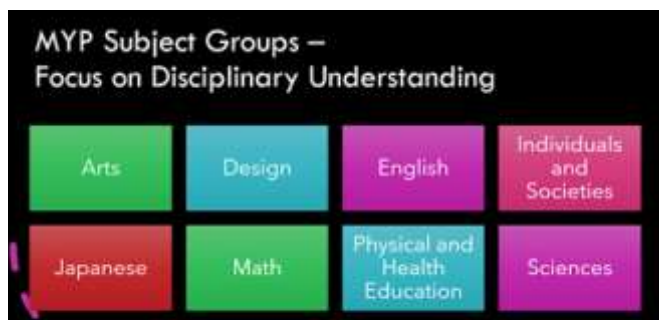
### Parents new to the MYP explore learning at KIST during online presentation

Starting a new school year, of course, can be a nervous proposition. This is especially true for students who are brand new to the experience. But the change doesn't only affect children. The transition to Middle School (or to KIST itself for new families) can be a big change for parents as well.

Each year, parents new to the MYP are invited to the school to explore key ideas about the approach to teaching and learning in the IB's Middle Years Programme. This year, because of COVID-19 restrictions, the session was held through Microsoft Teams.

Scheduled during the Japanese national holiday in September, the online session drew a large group of parents from across the MYP. The presentation had two large areas of focus—an overview of the curriculum structure for Grades 6–8 and an introduction to assessment in the MYP.

As MYP Coordinator, I took parents through the structure of the MYP itself, its basic framework—8 subjects exploring a list of concepts linked together by Approaches to Learning skills, the IB Learner Profile, and a dedication to international-mindedness.



*MYP subject groups*

Discussion moved next to the implementation of the MYP at KIST. Each school makes choices about the nature of delivering the program. These choices allow schools to find areas of focus that lead to the best outcomes for local circumstances. At KIST, for instance, we have made choices about the delivery of English, Math and Japanese that have an impact on students.

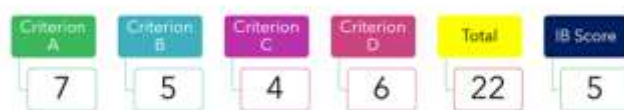
#### MYP Structure at KIST



*English, Math and Japanese at KIST*

With my help, parents reviewed the nature of assessment in the MYP. In particular, I asked parents

to think about how the MYP subject teachers are called on to use the relevant subject's assessment criteria and make judgements that are consistent. A point of emphasis for parents is to help encourage new MYP students to ensure that they're clear about what's being assessed and how they can improve the necessary skills required to show their best work.



*The mechanics of assessment in the MYP*

All in all, the online session allowed families to gain insight into the nature of learning in the MYP at KIST.

**Robert White**  
MYP Coordinator



## KIST Student Debater

This October, I was given a chance to be a student facilitator for the Koto-ku House of Representatives debate. Koto-ku had one of the largest number of candidates, so I was excited to hear the active debate with many perspectives. During the debate, candidates discussed issues such as COVID policies, aging population and tax rates. As a facilitator, I asked a question about the pros and cons of Japanese education and how they plan to improve it. Though I was nervous, I was glad that I could introduce a topic to the debate that was not yet discussed. Each candidate had various views about the education system and provided me with detailed approaches that I didn't know about.

Overall, I think it was a valuable experience to be able to bring my perspectives as a high school student and become involved with lawmakers that can affect the future of Japan. Using what I learned from this debate, I want to encourage students to become more involved and interested in local politics.

**Sara (G11A)**



## Secondary ELS

### Winter holiday fun time language development—"I can't believe it's still learning!"

We are all looking forward to the winter vacation: three weeks of festive cheer and alarm clock free wake ups are the calling card of this break. But did you realize that you can use this time to continue developing your language skills across all four literacy areas, too? Amazing!

#### Reading

##### In English

Whether it be books, magazines, or manga, winter is the best time of year to curl up with a good one. If your eye is towards language development, make sure you don't skip those unfamiliar words. Highlight while reading and be sure to check the definitions once you finish a passage or chapter. Once you think you have the definition down, reread and see how much deeper your understanding is.



##### In English and a second language

For bilingual and multilingual students, one of the great challenges is building vocabulary across languages at the same rate. One way to tackle this is to read the same text in different languages in tandem. Not only does this build word knowledge but it will also provide valuable insight into colloquial and idiomatic expression.

#### Listening

##### Binge that show

While we should all be trying to limit our screen time (your eyes will thank you) this winter holiday, on those days where the wind is just too biting, digging down into a much-anticipated series can pay dividends with language development. As it is likely that vocabulary is going to be oft repeated throughout, watching a series gives opportunities for new words to stick through repetition alone. Viewers can also use subtitles in their target language to help make further connections between the language heard and that which is read. Of course, students should be sure to only binge series that are appropriate to their age range.

##### Walk it out

One plus of Tokyo winters is rain...namely, the lack of it. As such, winter holiday offers a brilliant opportunity for the flaneurs amongst us to traipse the pavements under a clear blue sky. Every great walk needs a soundtrack. Should yours be songs with great lyrics, be sure to pay close attention to the literary devices used and steal a few for yourself. If tunes and pavements are not your thing, there are now podcasts on just about every single topic you could name. Find one that fits your interest. Given the repetition of vocabulary within specialist topics, one can build their technical vocabulary quickly while being interested and entertained. While we are on the topic of the spoken word, don't forget that audiobooks are also your good friend.



#### Speaking

##### Reach out

Spectacular for both our emotional wellbeing and language skills, be sure to keep in touch with your friends from KIST over the break. Make a phone call or catch up for an in-person meet up, just make sure to keep speaking in English when you can!

#### Writing

##### Pen to paper

Many people find the idea of writing intimidating. The idea of

committing words to paper or a computer screen is enough to cause inspiration to block and perspiration to flow. It does not have to be like that. As with any other skill, learning to write is one that can be practiced and mastered. Find a genre or style of writing that intrigues you and just do it. It could be journaling, poetry, zine making, lyric writing...the list goes on. Remember while you are building your skills you do not need to show your writing to anyone. Do be certain to practice both typing and handwriting.



**Fun fact:** Much of our understanding of spelling comes from the muscle memory in our hands, so be sure to work them out!



**Jade Bonus**

Secondary ELS Coordinator

## Digital Citizenship



### Grade 1, Unit 1

Each Grade 6 student produced a website that will inform you of the dangers that exist when using the Internet, and what actions you can take to avoid them. The content is for their fellow Grade 6 students, KIST students, and all parents.

Please visit the homepage below then click 2 to 3 links at random. We hope that you may learn something. Please ask a G6 student or Mr. Tim if you have any questions.

**Web** <https://bit.ly/KIST-Digital-G6-2021>

For every Design unit, students in G6, G7 and G8 must have a clear understanding of the question and what they must produce by the end of the unit. To help with this, students complete a GRASPS table. Below is an example from **Han** (G6A) for the Digital Citizenship unit.

#### Goal

- Inform people about cyber bullying and how to deal with it

**Role** (This provides useful insights into future university courses and careers)

- Website Designer

#### Audience

- Grade 6 students, the KIST community

#### Situation

- As a student

#### Product

- Digital citizenship can be a challenge for G6s and parents without access to meaningful and relevant information. Produce a website that supports and informs this target audience of a specific issue. Software: Adobe Spark Post, Adobe Spark Web.

#### Standards

- Criterion B: Developing ideas
- Criterion C: Creating the solution



**Timothy Smith**

Design Teacher

## Posting on Social Media

### Think before you post

In Quarter 2, Grades 6–9 are focusing on developing their awareness of staying safe online and considering how to support others with concerns they have. This article is designed to support families with one of the more difficult aspects of the online world: posting on social media.

One of the most common suggestions for talking to young people about posting on social media is to give them the advice: 'Think before you post'. However, this advice can be easy to give, yet difficult to apply in practice.

For example, if you were standing in front of a person and you were angry or upset about something, the likelihood is that you would hesitate for a second. Why?

Quite possibly, you are (or are not) close with the person, there is the potential for professional or personal repercussions, or you are within a group situation and are concerned about how it will be perceived by those around you. We hesitate as part of a subconscious process that allows our brain to run a scan of the potential outcomes and risk assess the situation.

We should try to consider:

- Past experiences
- Body language
- Familiarity with the person

However, even with this real time analysis, sometimes that thought, or opinion is still expressed. We apologize and reflect that making mistakes is human.

When behind the safety of the screen, online disinhibition takes effect. With this, there are two main aspects: **benign** and **toxic**.

Sometimes people may share very personal information, reveal secret emotions or fears, or even show unusual acts of kindness to people they do not know. This is **benign disinhibition**, and it is mostly harmless. This was often observed during periods of social restrictions where many people were struggling with diverse types of issues that were affecting their emotional

wellbeing. People went online, seeking help and support. As well as friends and family, complete strangers were trying to offer advice and guidance, in an attempt at showing empathy.

However, there can be hatred and anger that crosses the line, becoming offensive. This is **toxic disinhibition**; it can be very harmful, even illegal under certain circumstances.

Most of these posts are not meant to be harmful; it might be that someone has had a difficult day and is using the format as an outlet for their frustration. There could be issues at home and that person is facing difficulties with their mental health, or maybe the comment was insensitively worded or rushed.

The aforementioned 'think before you post/share' advice, whilst well intentioned, is extremely limited. It is not something children can always apply to their online experiences such as gaming or group chats; for example, games like Fortnite, Roblox or Minecraft, which are fast-paced and thrilling yet frustrating. Children freely admit to 'raging' at the difficulties faced with their games.

It is important to reflect that it can be difficult for an adult to hold back what they are thinking when behind a screen. What must it be like for a young person who is still developing a mature sense of impulse control?

It is important to understand that the theory of online disinhibition is not a reason nor is it an excuse for good or immoral behavior, it is simply one explanation of how things can go wrong. As much as we like to have solutions to problems we see, for issues such as these there is no single solution that will help. Much of this is about developing those invaluable critical thinking skills and primarily that is through lived experience.

However, the knowledge of aspects such as online disinhibition can help us when we are talking to children, young or old, at school or at home.



It can also help us to understand when things go wrong (falling out on LINE, or why children talk to people online they do not know, despite continually being told not to).

Therefore, it is important to understand the online lives of children: what they are doing, their motivations for doing it. It is why the most common 'keeping safe' strategy for parents and teachers is having a meaningful dialogue with children.

To help, we have provided a selection of questions to help instigate a conversation at home about posting and commenting. These are conversation starters for home but are also linked to the discussions being had in advisory classrooms. Importantly, try to apply it to the students' online lives, such as gaming or use of social media.

### Questions

- *Is "think before you post or share" an appropriate message? Why? Does it always work? (Think fast paced games or miscommunications to group chat messages).*
- *Have you ever posted something and then realized that you shouldn't have posted it? What did you do when you realized? If not, what would you do if it did happen? (Think delete, apologize if it is too late to delete).*
- *Do you think your emotional state can determine what you post? (Think fast-paced games, using social media when feeling down or upset).*

**Hannah Cowie and Matthew Archer**

Student Care Coordinators  
(Secondary)



## G12 Economics BOJ Excursion



On November 8th and 9th, 2021, the G12 Economics class visited the Bank of Japan (BOJ) located in Chuo, Tokyo. We received a one-hour tour of the bank, learned about its functions, discovered its rich history and explored its vast, grand architecture.

What exactly does the Bank of Japan do? The BOJ is the central bank of Japan, also called the bank of banks. It is the sole issuer of banknotes and loans them to commercial banks as well as the government. The BOJ plays a crucial role in the economy by conducting monetary policy to achieve price stability and sustainable economic growth. The bank does this by altering interest rates and controlling the money supply, such as enacting open market operations by selling or purchasing assets from financial institutions.

Although we learned about monetary policy and the role of central banks through our Economics class on macroeconomics, there was a lot of shocking information that we heard for the first time. Did you know that the BOJ facilitates over 100 trillion yen worth of transactions through its online system BOJ-net? Or that there are over 120 trillion yen in circulation right now?

After the explanation on the role of the BOJ, we were taken to the corridor of past governors. We were all immediately impressed by the grand interior, with paintings of each governor hanging on both walls of the hallway. We then entered the main hall, an octahedron room with an office where past governors worked. Although we did not visit the modern building where all the work is done nowadays, we heard music playing throughout the entire building at around 4 p.m. signaling everyone to do their daily exercise.

The highlight of the trip was when we went underground to visit the vast vault which had been used in the past to store banknotes. After entering the 90 cm thick, 25 tonne steel door, in front of us were numerous bundles of banknotes contained in plastic containers, each holding 60 million yen. There was also an old machine which automatically sorts damaged money at 500 notes per minute. On the ground, we could also see the tracks of a trolley system which was used previously to transport money.

Throughout our tour, we were able to gain insight into the rich history of the BOJ. The bank was built in 1882, after Japan suffered from inflation. The building had been damaged by the Great Kanto earthquake of 1923 and the Bombing of Tokyo in 1945, but both times, resumed operations immediately on the next day as its operations were too important to be stopped. Learning about the history of the BOJ really enhanced our understanding of Economics from a classroom setting to a wider context.

The Bank of Japan has been the witness of Japanese history and will continue to play an important role in the Japanese economy as economics becomes more important to the functioning of society and our daily lives. Visiting the BOJ was an extremely valuable and educational opportunity, and we're looking forward to our future trips!

**Stephen (G12A)**



As an extension to our in-class learning in economics, we also visited the Bank of Japan Currency Museum located in Nihonbashi, Tokyo. The Currency Museum was comprised of a display of different currencies and currency-related historical materials, which were collected and preserved by the Bank of Japan over many decades. Inside the exhibit room, the displays were positioned in a chronological order beginning from the Ancient Times (7th to mid-12th century), ending at the Modern Times (late 19th to 20th century). The displays showcased the evolution of the physical appearances—in terms of the material, shape and size—of the currencies that were circulating in the Japanese economy, while illustrating the changes in the way people viewed and valued money.

Examining the exhibits, we were able to learn that Japan issued its first coins in the 7th century, which were modeled on the metal coins that had been circulating in China. However, following various socio-economic changes including wars, regime changes and opening of borders between different countries, this has led to the constant replacement of currencies with new models that adapted to these changes occurring in Japanese society. At the end of the exhibit, we arrived at the display of the Modern Times, which illustrated Japan's employment of a new currency system and currency that is familiar to us today: the Japanese yen (¥).

This visit to the Currency Museum connects to our studies in economics as we are currently examining the role of the Central Bank in controlling the supply of the nation's money and stabilizing its currency to achieve a variety of macroeconomic objectives upheld by the government. As a part of this topic, we have discussed the significance of "money" and its influence on our society on both a local and global scale. Although fiat money such as banknotes may appear as something that has a value on its own, it is in fact an object that does not have any intrinsic value; however, our collective faith in money gives these objects a value that allow individuals to use them and engage in economic transactions. Visiting the Currency Museum was a significant opportunity as we were able to directly learn about the fundamental characteristics of money and the changes in the value that Japanese society held towards these different forms of money. This field trip provided me with a particular insight: as we progress into an era of digital currency growth, we will be required to re-evaluate the role of money and its relation to our culture and society today.

**Hanano (G12A)**



## HiGEPS Program at Saitama University



Eight students from G11 (**Archita, Devaj, Gi Jeong, Gun Hyuk, Heet, Jiaying, Reed, Tomoko**) and one from G10 (**Yudai**) are currently participating in a university-level science and mathematics program held at Saitama University, called the 'HiGEPS' (High-grade Global Education Program for Sciences) Program. There, high school students participate in seminars and lectures taught by experts in various fields of science, ranging from Chemistry, Physics, Information Technology, Biology, Astronomy to Mathematics. We are then tasked to compile a written report that includes a summary of the lecture, the answer to a prompt given, and any thoughts the students may have, based on the content covered. Thus, the program challenges students from an academic standpoint by covering topics that would usually be taught to first-year university students and offers students the opportunity to develop their critical thinking skills. In addition, it drives students to apply and create connections between prior knowledge and newfound knowledge.

Out of the 75 students partaking in the program, only 15 are accepted in the program's second stage, called the 'Advanced Course'. The second stage allows students to research with students and faculty members of Saitama University. Students then present the research conducted in seminars, online conferences, and scientific conventions held domestically in Japan and abroad. These experiences, such as university-level research activities, are especially crucial for high school students as it is an opportunity for students to conduct active learning to apply and deepen knowledge.

We hope to continue to try our best in the program and conduct research that makes a meaningful contribution to the academic world and the greater society.

### Reed (G11A) and Tomoko (G11B)



Archita (G11A)



Devaj (G11A)



Gi Jeong (G11A)



Gun Hyuk (G11A)



Heet (G11B)



Jiaying (G11A)



Reed (G11A)



Tomoko (G11B)



Yudai (G10A)

## IGCSE Science Lab Snapshot



The G9B IGCSE Physics students had an enjoyable lesson recently when they learned about the center of mass of an object. The lesson also provided an opportunity for transdisciplinary conversations involving geography and mathematics. It was a great learning experience both for the students and for me!

**Cesar Cely**  
Subject Area Coordinator—Science



## Visit from Holly Thompson

On Friday, 5th November, the author, Holly Thompson—whose novel *Orchards* is studied in the MYP at KIST—came to speak to Grade 8 students.

She gave a fascinating presentation explaining how she planned and wrote the novel. The story takes place in *mikan* groves in a small Japanese village, and we were amazed to discover that she had actually spent months working in *mikan* groves herself while collecting ideas for her book!



Students then had an opportunity to ask Holly questions about her writing process, and she gave some inspiring and practical ideas and tips for all the budding writers in the room. We were disappointed to learn that she was not a fan of the Harry Potter series; however, she went on to recommend some of her favourite Young Adult novels, many of which feature Asian settings or protagonists (please see the list of titles below).

The final session involved the students producing poems in pairs and small groups. Holly gave a few brief prompts to get the students' ideas flowing, and then off they went. It was amazing to see how original, creative and thoughtful the students' work was in such a short space of time, and there were many students desperate to share their work with the group afterwards. I hope you enjoy the few example poems!



We are very grateful to Holly for coming to visit (and for staying on after the session had ended to sign many students' own copies of *Orchards*!) Grade 8 were very enthusiastic and well-behaved, so they should be very proud of themselves. Fingers crossed we have persuaded her to write a sequel!

**Isobel Duncan**  
Subject Area Coordinator—English

### Holly's suggested reading list:

*White Rose* – Kip Wilson  
*Show Me a Sign* – Ann Clare LeZotte  
*A Wish in the Dark* – Christina Soontornvat  
*When You Trap a Tiger* – Tae Keller  
*The Weight of our Sky* – Hanna Alkaf  
*We Are Not Free* – Traci Chee

### Student poetry examples

When your heart speaks two languages  
How can I translate from one to the other?  
I cross the bridge to link, but fall into the abyss  
Clinging onto your warm words  
But you let go  
Leaving me suffocating in the grey ashes of pain  
Onions make me cry  
But they're also sweet and caring  
Cooking in the flames, lighting up my path  
Burning off burdens  
Floating on two languages, my heart speaks

When your heart speaks two languages  
You don't know what to say  
On one side you may want to express your deepest desire  
On the other you may be hiding from view  
One part of your heart can't understand the other  
And the other part may also not comprehend  
Now there is a division in the heart, so which side will you choose?  
The black or the red?  
The choice is up to you.



My heart is a blank space  
I eat food, noodles, like everyone else.  
So why does death come stealing my food?  
Why not eat it together?  
Sharing is the wonder of love.  
Stop killing the seed of love.  
Let it grow, even if it makes me cry.



## Athletics Update

### Fall season update

We were fortunate to be able to start up some of our athletics teams in the middle of September for in-house practices—these included MS Girls' Volleyball; MS Boys' Soccer; and JV Girls' and Boys' Tennis. By early October, we were able to start playing some league games, mostly with Kanto Plains league schools. Our cross-country team were also able to get practice up and running in early October. Though the Fall season was shortened, and KIST did not attend any tournaments except for the cross-country final, many students participated and hopefully enjoyed the experience.

- The **MS Boys' Soccer** team had 3 games against other schools and were a little overwhelmed the first 2 games but finished strong with a 3–3 tie vs ASIJ's B-team.
- The **MS Girls' Volleyball** team were overpowering in games vs CAJ and Columbia winning both games 2 sets to 0.
- Our **JV / HS Boys' and Girls' Volleyball** teams had some mixed results with Kanto and ISTAA schools. KIST had strong showings against most schools, losing some very close sets with CAJ and BST, were overwhelmed by an experienced Columbia side, but easily beat CIS and TIPS.
- The **JV Boys' and Girls' Tennis** teams had limited action with the boys crushing CAJ 5–0, and the girls winning 3–2 at CAJ but losing to Seisen 4–1.
- The **Cross-Country** team ran one race at Ajinomoto Stadium. Difficult circumstances prevented the team from starting earlier, however, the 6 KIST students who participated ran well in the JV races with **Ethan** (G10B) finishing in the top 10 and **Shota** (G9B) just outside of that in 12th place.

**Thank you to all the coaches for making the Fall season possible!**

### Winter season 2021–22

KIST has started up Winter season sports, continuing to follow school and Kanto league COVID guidelines. Games will start in December, and we expect a very busy month in January.

The following teams are participating in Winter sports in the Kanto and/or ISTAA leagues:

- MS Boys' Basketball (B Pool)
- MS Girls' Soccer (A and B Pool)
- JV / HS Boys' Basketball
- JV / HS Girls' Basketball

Members of the KIST community may view results, team rosters, schedules and other information on the KIST Athletics page in PowerSchool Learning.

**Dennis Ota**  
Athletics Coordinator



MS Boys' Soccer



JV Boys' Tennis



JV Girls' Tennis



MS Girls' Volleyball



HS Girls' Volleyball





**HEART**

HELP EMPOWER AND ASSIST REFUGEES TODAY



## Who are we?

We are the KIST HEART Club. "HEART" stands for "Help Empower and Assist Refugees Today". We are a group of G9 students from K. International School in Tokyo, whose goal is to Help refugees in Syria and around the world. We hope to Empower and Assist Refugees by providing them with their needs. All of us help contribute to the refugees so let us do it Today! We collaborate with other schools and organizations to ensure the maximum efficiency of our events. We also produce manga that illustrates the personal anecdotes about the struggles of the Syrian refugees. We hope to spread awareness about the current state of affairs and the refugee crisis to the school community.

## November 23rd Charity Stall

On November 23rd, we held a charity stall to collect funds for donations and to spread awareness to the entire school about our service. This was our first event to take action to help the refugees. We sold drinks such as hot chocolate, coffee, apple juice, and snack bags to the school community.

The total amount of money we were able to raise was ¥188,375! Thanks to your support, we are going to donate this to an organization in Japan called Refugee Empowerment International (REI). This organization works towards supporting people displaced by violence, persecution, and conflict.

**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR  
SUPPORT!**

Thank you for your generous donations and gifts to us. We are thrilled to have your support. Through your donation, we will be able to assist the refugees in Syria and continue working towards their empowerment and futures. You truly make a difference, and we are extremely grateful for your support!

## Library News

### Library Media Center



### What is the Sakura Medal?

The Sakura Medal books are chosen by international school librarians in Japan. The selected books represent diverse countries and cultures, with a focus on Japanese and Asian themes and authors. Included are popular and literary works to provide rich reading sources for students in Japanese international schools!

Here are my reviews of the three Sakura medal books I read recently.

**Shannon Goan**  
LMC Librarian



### Everything Sad is Untrue

—Daniel Nayeri

*A boy named Khosrou (who everyone calls Daniel) tells his stories...of escaping Iran, the histories of his family and country and...poop.*

"Mrs. Miller says I have 'lost the plot,' and am now just making lists of things that happened to fill space. But I replied that she is beholden to a Western mode of storytelling that I do not accept and that the *1,001 Nights* are basically Scheherazade stalling for time, so I don't see the difference."

I loved this book! So far, it is my favourite out of the Sakura Medal books I have read.

The personal history of a 5th grade Iranian refugee in America, his family's history and Persian history and culture are wonderfully woven together in a tale told in 'the tradition of the 1001 nights'. Also, there are lots of poop stories, philosophic musings, and sometimes poop stories and philosophic musings on the same page.



### The Things She's Seen

—Ambelin Kwaymullina

*Beth Teller died in a car crash, and is now a ghost helping her father solve a murder mystery in a small Australian town...*

This book is set in Australia, with Indigenous Australian characters, so I was very curious to read this one, and it did not disappoint! The mystery gets deeper and deeper, with a final twist at the end. There are some dark themes in this story, but the ending was ultimately hopeful.

Even though I am Australian, I don't know much about the culture of Indigenous Australians, so it was really interesting to see how the culture of the writers of this book influenced the novel, with its alternating prose and verse chapters.



### Dark Blade

—Steve Feasey

*Lann is an ordinary farm boy until he learns more about his past and is given a magic sword by the gods...*

I liked the basic plot and world of this book, but it felt like it wasn't detailed enough! I loved books like this when I was in junior high school so I was excited for some classic sword and sorcery fun, but I wish you learnt more about the world and characters.

The story moves very fast and doesn't spend a lot of time describing the world. I do think this would make it a quick and easy read for many people though!



*Continued on next page*

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## Elementary Library

### Read aloud sessions

Reading aloud is one of the most effective ways to improve fluency among the students, and it's also one of the easiest. To improve fluency during our read-aloud time, all we need are a few books and the undivided attention of students.



G5

### Sakura Medal book reviews

These books were read by students during the read aloud session.

**Priyanka BP**

Elementary Library Supervisor



#### Hair Love

—Matthew A. Cherry

This story is about so much more than just hair. It's about sickness, love, and the strength of family! It is such a great story, especially now during these challenging times! Seeing the characters persevere can teach kids to keep on going, no matter what, out of love for their family. Zuri learns that not hiding your true, unique self is the most important thing and that you should always be proud of who you are, and if something or someone is stopping you from doing so, ignore it and keep being your best, true self.



#### The Singer and the Scientist

—Lisa Rose

A look at a true-life but little-known event between Albert Einstein and a singer name Marian. A great way to learn about segregation of various people. It is a wonderful book about an unlikely but beautiful friendship in a world of discrimination between the singer and the scientist. The writing flows well when read aloud and the illustrations are delightful. This may be best for upper elementary school children as the content may be too heavy for younger children. It mentions racism and the persecution of Jews in Europe.



#### Bug Boys

—Laura Knetzger

The sweetest little big book I've read in a while. Each page is filled with love and charm. The artwork is simple and great to look at, too. Will entertain anyone who loves a good adventure with friends. It's bright, joyful and irresistible.



## Staff 10!

In this month's *Staff 10!*, we are pleased to present one of our longest serving staff members, **Claire Yoneyama**, who joined us initially in 1999 as a relief teacher in the Elementary School, before becoming a K2 classroom teacher in 2001. Celebrating 20 years of full-time service this year, she is currently the homeroom teacher for K1A.



### 1) Tell us something interesting about your hometown.

I grew up in the capital city of the Philippines, Manila, which is the most populous city in the nation. In the heart of Manila, I loved going to Intramuros, where I can feel the history of the Philippines being occupied and influenced by Spain from the 15th to 18th century. Intramuros is a place in Manila where the most influential and wealthy citizens of the Spanish colonial period lived. In Manila, Rizal Park—often simply called Luneta or Luneta Park—is the largest urban park. A monument of our national hero, Jose Rizal, is located in this park to commemorate his execution by the Spaniards.

### 2) What is your favorite place in the world?

I have traveled to a lot of different places, but the best place for me is the Philippines. There are more than 7,000 islands in the Philippines. Many islands are stunningly beautiful and great to visit. One of them is El Nido in Palawan. Palawan is known as the 'Last ecological frontier' of the Philippines. El Nido, or 'the nest' in Spanish, is located in the northern part of Palawan and has 64 islands and islets. And it is home to biodiverse ecosystems, stunning beaches, crystal waters, spectacular views, and magnificent limestone cliffs and formations. The locals are very hospitable and easy to communicate with.

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

Apart from my parents, who live healthily and safely in the Philippines, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, I would like to meet my mother-in-law if I have another chance. I consider her as my second birth mother, and she had the best heart of all. I had not seen her for more than a year due to the pandemic, and my heart broke when she passed away in a hospital that I could not even visit.

### 4) Do you have any special skills or talents?

I love dancing and singing. Even at this age, I still love dancing and am still very flexible, maybe more flexible than most others in my age group. I love to dance to Michael Jackson, Bruno Mars, and many more pop artists.

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

When I was a little girl, I was so energetic that my new friends would mistakenly think I was a boy. Every time my brothers would fight with their friends, I would stand in the middle and protect them by saying:

'Don't worry, I am here to fight for you.' I would show my skinny arms and tiny fists to his friends as if I had big muscles. And funny thing, that was my big brother!

### 6) What is your most prized possession?

My family is always my most prized possession, and nothing else can take their place. I am very family oriented. I was raised to show importance, commitment, and care within my family. Now that I have my own family, I feel the same way. I love my family so much that I cannot live without them.

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

**Communicator**, because communicating your thoughts and not just keeping them to yourself is vital to everyone's health and mind and maintains excellent relationships.

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

I am satisfied with who I am now and what I am doing. However, I'd like to do more while I am alive and kicking. For example, I will travel to all the places I haven't been to yet. I'd like to see more of the beauty of the world.

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

Throughout my life, my body has been very flexible, but I feel that this flexibility is diminishing, probably because of my age or by neglecting to do regular exercise. I am improving my body balance by attending yoga, especially 'hot yoga.' I feel great after each lesson. I am also trying to improve my sleeping routine. One thing I learned is to drink cold barley tea before going to bed. It contains the amino acid tryptophan and the chemical melatonin, which helps stimulate a good sleep.

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

Smile and greetings! I love greeting and smiling at people I know. Sometimes, I even smile at people I don't know and greet them by bowing my head. I think I got this (bowing) beautiful trait from Japanese culture. I feel young and healthy when I smile at and greet people.



The always happy and bright, Ms. Claire, leading the K1As in a lesson on how we express our emotions.

## Nurse's Notes

### Prevention and control of seasonal influenza

As we move through the month of December, the temperature is dropping, the air is getting drier, and it has become that time of the year when influenza is spreading. Seasonal influenza (the flu) is an acute respiratory disease caused by influenza viruses. In most years, flu outbreaks tend to occur from around December to March in Japan. Here at KIST, we will continue to work diligently to prevent the spread of infection from COVID-19 and the flu.

#### How does influenza spread?

- Infected people can spread the virus to others from up to 2 meters away when they cough, sneeze or talk.
- Less often, people might catch the flu by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, and then touching their own eyes, nose or mouth.

#### Common signs and symptoms of influenza

- Sudden onset of a high fever (over 38 degrees)
- Feeling feverish/chills
- Aching muscles
- Headaches
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Joint pain
- Fatigue and weakness
- Loss of appetite
- Vomiting/stomachache or diarrhea (These symptoms are more common in children than adults)

Symptoms for the flu and COVID-19 can be similar, so please consult your physician.

#### How to prevent the flu

- Annual vaccination is one of the best ways to protect yourself from serious complications of the flu.
- Regular handwashing with soap can help protect you from germs.
- Stay hydrated.
- Wear a mask.
- Gargling with warm salt water can help clear mucus from the back of your throat.
- Brushing your teeth gets rid of bacteria and keeps your mouth clean.
- Use a humidifier in a room to make breathing easier.
- Have a healthy and balanced diet.
- Getting good sleep can strengthen the immune system.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces and objects often that may be contaminated with the virus.



- Improve ventilation in living spaces by opening the windows for a few minutes.

#### What to do if someone in your family is infected with the flu

- Even if a diagnosis has not been made, please try to avoid contact as much as you can with those who have a fever or feel unwell.
- If someone in your household is infected with the flu, try to isolate the infected person in another room, where at all possible, to prevent the spread of infection in the home (if a young child is infected, try to minimize the number of adults who provide care).
- Good respiratory hygiene: cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing to prevent the virus from spreading. Put used tissues in a plastic bag and throw them away.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.

#### Flu treatment

- Rest: Get more sleep to help your immune system fight the infection.
- Gargle with warm salt water to soothe your sore throat.
- Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- Your doctor may prescribe antiviral drugs to treat flu illness. These medications can be effective in reducing the length of time you are unwell with the flu, the severity of symptoms, and reducing complications. Antivirals provide the most benefits when taken within 48 hours of symptoms developing.
- Avoid taking aspirin, as it can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye's syndrome in children and young people with the flu.

#### How long should I stay home with the flu?

According to school health and safety rules, you must keep your child at home for a minimum of 5 days after contracting influenza, as the illness can be infectious for up to 48 hours after fever has subsided.

Furthermore, if your child's fever continues to persist, please keep him/her at home for an additional 2 days (for G1–G12) or 3 days (for K1–K3) after the fever subsides. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

**Yukiko Yamazaki**  
School Nurse



#### Reference:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (November 2021). *Influenza (Flu)*. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

## KIST Community Association (CA)



**A big THANK YOU to all the parents who volunteered at CA activities from September to November!** We sincerely appreciate your continued support.

Details about the KIST Community Association can be found on the [KIST CA Page on PowerSchool](#).

### KIST Community Association

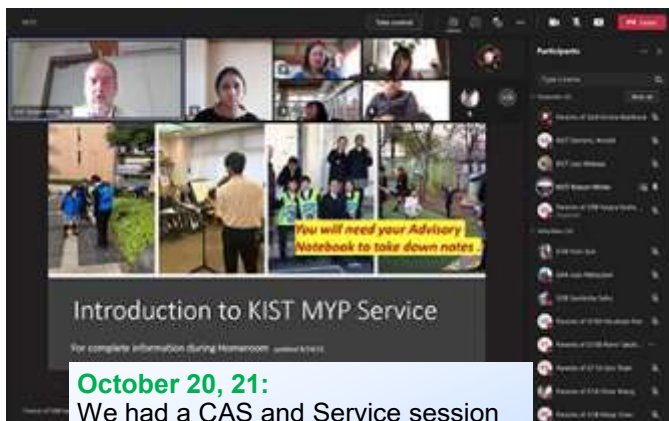
**October 8, 15:**

We supported the Koto Adopt Program for G6 students.



**October 16:**

We held a secondhand uniform sale.



**October 20, 21:**

We had a CAS and Service session with Ms. Wakasa and Mr. White. This was our first time to hold a CA event online!



**November 23:**

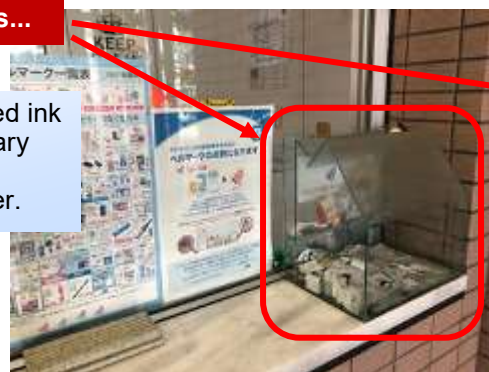
We collected used book donations from KIST families. Even though it was only for one day, we received donations of about 300 books. THANK YOU!!

### Reminder! – Bellmark collection locations...

Please drop Bellmarks, Tetra Paks and used ink cartridges next to reception in the Elementary building! We can only collect cartridges manufactured by Epson, Canon and Brother.



Tetra Paks must be opened, washed and dried. The CA sends these to the Bellmark Foundation at the end of the school year. Please be sure to include your child's name, grade and class.



## University Guidance News

### Catching up with graduates and awards

It has been a very busy time for KIST students, faculty and families in the secondary building. Our G12s have been frantically making their university applications, and the G11s are close to finishing their first semester in the DP. Classmates in lower grades are considering what classes they should take in future years and even trying to figure out exactly who they are. With all these things taking place, in this issue I want to take a step back and look at a few things that have been happening with our graduates as well as discuss the topic of awards and things current students can do to show themselves off.

### Show yourself off!

Each year during G9 advisory class, I pose a question to students: "What makes you interesting?" I am often met with the response of, "Nothing, I think I'm normal." This is quite common from students in high school. This is the time in life where being different is not exactly the top priority. Being an amazing soccer player is something everyone would like to show off. Being the student who is super interested in beekeeping during G9 may seem "weird;" however, when getting older, those **weird things are often the most impressive and interesting. Universities agree.**



Our first steps in trying to open students up to these ideas is a project done to show themselves off in one minute, similar to making a first impression. These same students that said they had nothing interesting to show off quickly demonstrated their skills in cooking and digital artwork. Some had obsessions with dessert searching or even with anything colored green. In the end, everyone had something to say that was unique to them. These are the areas we want to promote in our kids. **Embrace being different.**

### How does this relate to universities?

Universities want differences amongst their student body. They want to build a diverse class with faces from unique backgrounds, kids that have something new to offer. Therefore, there is a larger chance to be accepted as a female student in engineering than a male student. Similarly, you have a better chance to be accepted by a top school in Korea, if you are not Korean.



We cannot easily change our citizenship, gender or identity; however, we can show off other things about ourselves. As a student, if beekeeping is your passion, why not explore it more deeply? (Check out the [Ginza Honeybee Project](#) if that's you!) We live in one of the largest cities in the world. If there is an interest you have, a quick Google search will lead you to something you can do here to explore that. There is no right or wrong answer. I have seen star students who pursued sheep herding, women's rugby, and poetry.

### Academic awards

Some students have passions that mirror their academic interests. Recently we have seen more and more students participate in internships, competitions and events. These are some of the best ways to show off. Taking part in an in-school event is a great way to discover if you enjoy something. Building that into something outside school is what really sets some students apart in a crowded and competitive world.

### EHL Business Case Competition

Recently a KIST student, **Tomoko** (G11B), was able to show herself off by joining an online Business Case Competition with EHL, a top hospitality business and hotel management school in Switzerland. She was placed into a team with students she had never met, and their team was awarded 3rd place overall with more than 100 teams competing.



Tomoko's remarks:

- The competition required teams to come up with a business idea for an existing company and add a hospitality twist to their service.
- In Round 1, over 100 teams proposed their business idea.
- In Round 2, only 5 teams were chosen to advance to presenting their idea in front of a "board of inventors" (the judges panel of business experts).
- It was a great opportunity to learn more from real experts and think outside the box.
- She thinks it will provide a great addition to university applications (I agree!).
- **Tomoko's advice to classmates:** Keep applying for opportunities outside of school. You may have a chance to get in and have your work acknowledged too!

### Thomas Waterfall

University Counselor

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## KIST Graduate Corner



### KIST Virtual Forums—Winter 2021

Thanks to the success of our previous virtual forums, we have planned to make this an ongoing event. The sessions taking place during this winter are from some more recent graduates, with more to follow during the spring. While these forums are led by Mr. Waterfall (and Mr. Kei Komaki in Japanese), graduates are advised to be as open and honest with their experiences as possible. These students know KIST, Tokyo, and the IBDP well. I cannot think of a better resource to ask questions to. Please look out for e-mails about upcoming forums or check our KISTv page to see past recordings.

Date/Time (Monday JST)	Name	Class of...	Forum language	Undergraduate university	Other countries applied to
Nov. 8   6 pm	Justin	2020	English	University of New South Wales, Australia	
Nov. 22   8 am	Yukino	2021	Japanese	University of California Davis, USA	Canada
Dec. 6   6 pm	Yui	2020	Japanese	University of British Columbia, Canada	USA/Japan
Dec. 20   8 am	Shubhankar	2020	English	University of Melbourne, Australia	UK

### Justin (Class of 2020)—University of New South Wales, Australia

As a preview, I have included a few questions from the first virtual session with Justin. He led off the winter forums and was one of our high scoring graduates from the Class of 2020. The presentation and Q&A session lasted about one hour with families and students from G8–G12 participating. Justin is now studying at the University of New South Wales (UNSW).

**According to the QS World Rankings 2022, UNSW is ranked #43 worldwide and ranks #36 globally for Engineering and Technology majors (#1 in Australia).**



#### Mr. Waterfall:

Today we are talking with Justin, a KIST graduate from 2020.

#### Justin:

Hello thanks. Yes, I graduated in 2020 and studied Economics, Business Management, and Physics at a Higher Level (HL) and am now at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia, studying a Bachelor of Quantum Engineering.

**Mr. W: What do you like about your university so far and why did you choose it?**

**J:** It is one of the leading schools for engineering, which is what I wanted to pursue since being a student at KIST. I also really wanted to live in Sydney, so it was a perfect fit. My favorite thing so far has been the connections I have had with my tutors and teachers. Everyone has been not only helpful, but also trying to make sure my classmates and I are enjoying ourselves.

**Mr. W: So how was the application process? For Australia you apply after you graduate?**

**J:** At KIST, you take your final exams in May, finish Grade 12 in June, graduate in July. From there you have three months or so to get started on applications, figure out where you want to go, and submit your applications. It all happens after you graduate and get your final DP score back. Australia is a bit more relaxed when applying for universities.

**Mr. W: On that same topic, when you were applying, it was transparent as to what you needed, specifically just your final DP scores. When you were looking into programs before graduation, were you worried you may not meet some of the scores necessary?**

**J:** For each university, I could review the different courses and the expected IB scores. If a student scores above that score, they are in most cases **guaranteed admission**. If they score below, there is still a chance for admission, it just is not guaranteed. Unlike the UK, there are rarely restrictions for certain subjects such as HL requirements. So, once I had an idea of what score I was going to get because of Predicted Grades (PGs) and mock exams, it let me know where I could consider.

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**Mr. W:** How did your PGs relate to your actual grades though? Were you able to use those accurately?

**J:** My last predicted grade was 41 and then my final score went up slightly. The courses I considered required between 38–40 points, so I was confident that as long as I kept doing what I was doing that my choices were on target, and everything worked out quite well in the end.

**Mr. W:** Did you have anything in your mind just in case you surprisingly had your actual scores come back lower than anticipated?

**J:** Of course. I considered other courses that had lower score requirements. Thankfully I didn't need to make that consideration, but if I needed to, I had three months after graduating to consider and make those decisions.

**Mr. W:** So, that may have meant you needed to pursue a different pathway than you are now?

**J:** Yes, but there are always alternative pathways to getting to your same result. You may sometimes enter a university with a broader course choice and then transfer or choose another major. If you are performing well as a university student, you have options that open up.

**Mr. W:** It seems nice that you didn't need to apply to multiple schools then. If you have the necessary score, you can confidently know you're in. So, you applied to just one school only?

**J:** Correct. I applied with the right score just to one school and with the guaranteed entry, I didn't have to concern about other options. It was much less stressful compared to others I saw applying across a wide variety of countries and universities.

**Mr. W:** Did you need to consider SAT scores?

**J:** No, Australia is very simple as far as extra things go. I just needed an IB score. Luckily Australia is very lenient towards IB and our scores convert rather well. So, doing the IB already puts you at an advantage. You may fill out an extra essay or do an interview if applying for a scholarship, but otherwise, just completing the IB Diploma is the main goal.

**Mr. W:** So, you mentioned earlier in our interview that your courses during university are quite tough already. Some students consider Australia as a backup or safety option for their applications. Do you feel like that is a correct choice, or does it feel that way as a student there?

**J:** I believe because of the timing of application; it can be a smart choice as a backup option if not considered your first choice. You don't need to commit to anything until after graduation and application; it gives you freedom of choice. However, the classes are challenging from day one. Many students will use Australia as their first choice, so the students in the

classes are smart and classes are rigorous. So, I would not recommend Australia for students thinking they will get an easy three-year degree.

**Mr. W:** You jumped right into courses then?

**J:** Well, our courses started in January. So, I could enjoy the break after finishing the DP. I know some students want to start immediately in July after graduation, but I think having a nice break before going would be my suggestion. Finishing the DP is quite tough already, so I felt lucky I didn't have to make university applications during that time and could focus my efforts just on my exams. Even with that, I enjoyed the break in between high school and university to prepare everything I needed to travel and live overseas.

**Mr. W:** What are some tips you would give to current students?

**J:**

- Pick up good study habits. No one in university is holding your hand. It's all up to you.
- Get comfortable talking to teachers and tutors. Your work gets difficult and talking to these people helps a lot. If you are the type of student who never seeks advice or feels uncomfortable doing so, you might struggle a bit.
- Don't limit yourself. Apply for things that seem out of reach. You never know what opportunities may come your way if you don't try.
- Look for inspiration proactively. You don't know what you might find interesting later down the line. So, it's good to speak to universities, try different internships, ask questions to classmates, pick up a hobby.
- Do things that look "juicy" on applications. Basically, do service work, try to be a leader of a team, and build on the things that can make you unique and standout.

**Mr. W:** Thank you for your time.

**J:** Thank you all for listening.

