



The Comet

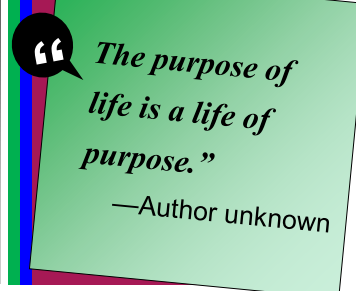
The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

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➡ In this issue...

- ▶02...New Building Construction Update
- ▶05...A Balancing Act
- ▶07...G5 Short Story Competition
- ▶08...Sakura Medal Book Report Contest
- ▶10...Model United Nations Events
- ▶13...School Calendar 2023–24
- ▶14...Connect to Hisaichi
- ▶17...Spelling Bee
- ▶20...Visit to Bloomberg Headquarters
- ▶21...World Book Day
- ▶22...Real-World Investigations
- ▶31...Turnitin Draft Coach



From the Head of School

ChatGPT and education

In late 2022, ChatGPT was launched by the research company OpenAI. The accessibility of this new artificial intelligence tool has been somewhat polarizing; while it is feared by some, there are those who want to embrace it. I am going to discuss some of the implications that ChatGPT will have on education and what we need to know as parents.

What is ChatGPT?

According to ZDNET, ChatGPT is “a natural language processing tool driven by AI technology that allows you to have human-like conversations and much more with the chatbot.” It is able to understand and respond to natural language, making it useful for tasks such as language translation, answering questions, and text completion.

Within an educational context, ChatGPT is being used by students in a number of ways including but certainly not limited to:

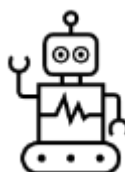
- Generating new ideas
- Helping to solve problems
- Writing e-mails
- Summarizing and paraphrasing
- Generating practice questions

One of the biggest concerns regarding student use of ChatGPT involves plagiarism and academic honesty. While various AI detection applications are available for school use, it is our view that students must first learn and demonstrate academic integrity. The goal is not to catch students who use AI maliciously, but to have them learn to use it responsibly, in a way that enhances their learning. The IB has stated that they will not ban the use of AI software but will instead work with schools to help them support students on how to use these tools ethically in line with their principles of academic integrity. The IB's statement on ChatGPT can be found here:

<https://www.ibo.org/news/news-about-the-ib/statement-from-the-ib-about-chatgpt-and-artificial-intelligence-in-assessment-and-education/>

We are entering a new era of education with the launch of AI software such as ChatGPT. While the concerns of academic honesty are valid, it is important to point out ways in which AI can possibly enhance learning. The University of Pennsylvania, for example, suggests that teachers can use ChatGPT to create learning activities or generate project-based learning scenarios.

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DATES TO REMEMBER



June 2023

- 14 Last day of school for students (Half day for students)
- 14 (K1-G11) Semester 2 reports issued
- 14 (K1-G3) After care not available on this day
- 15-30 Office open
- 19-30 Summer program session 1

July 2023

- 1-30 School closed
- 31-Aug 11 Summer program session 2

August 2023

- 17 (K1/K2/K3) Parent welcome night
- 21 First day of school for all students
- 21 (K2-G3) After care begins this week
- 21 (G6-G10) Mathematics diagnostic assessments (*Afternoon)
- 21 (K2-G3) After care begins this week
- 21-23 (G12) DP diagnostic exams
- 23 (G1-G5) Parent welcome night
- 25 (G6-G12) Parent welcome night
- 26 SAT@KIST
- 30-Sep 1 (G11) Camp

September 2023

- 4 (K1) After care begins this week
- 4 (G1-G5) Semester 1 LEAP classes begin this week



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It can also be used to generate reading materials based on student interest at various reading levels. As any educator knows, it is always a challenge to provide engaging, level-appropriate reading materials to all students, based on the same topic.

As we move into the summer vacation, hopefully most of you will have more free time to relax and dedicate to your hobbies and personal learning. For those of you interested in learning more about the ways in which AI technology can be used to enhance learning, I highly recommend watching the TED Talk by Sal Khan, the founder and CEO of Khan Academy. The way in which

they are applying AI to support student learning through their learning guide known as Khanmigo is very intriguing.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJP5GqnTrNo>

I wish you a safe and rewarding summer vacation!

Warm regards,

Kevin Yoshihara
Head of School/Elementary School
Principal



References:

- What is google bard? here's everything you need to know. ZDNET. (n.d.). <https://www.zdnet.com/article/what-is-google-bard-heres-everything-you-need-to-know/>
- IBO. (n.d.). Statement from the IB about CHATGPT and artificial intelligence in assessment and Education. International Baccalaureate. <https://www.ibo.org/news/news-about-the-ib/statement-from-the-ib-about-chatgpt-and-artificial-intelligence-in-assessment-and-education/>

New Building Construction Update



As announced to the school community recently via E-Communications, construction of the new school building has been delayed by approximately two weeks, and the move to the new building has been rescheduled for mid-November. We will continue to prioritize safety as we work towards the project's completion.



End of March 2023



End of May 2023

For this issue, we interviewed students regarding their thoughts about the construction of the new building by asking them: What are you looking forward to with the new school building?



Ann (G6A)

- The school grounds will be larger. The gym will be bigger, the restrooms will be cleaner, and the floors won't make creaking sounds anymore!
- I'm excited to see how the new building will look.



Edward (G9B)

- We will have a gym again!
- The toilets will be clean.
- I'm looking forward to daily school life in the big new building with improved facilities.

Taiga (G5B)

- I'll be in G6 next year, and I'm glad that I will be able to use all of the new facilities, like the classrooms.
- I've heard that the gym and school grounds will be larger, so I'm looking forward to being able to do more sports and activities than before.



Lia (G4B)

- The gym will be new and bigger.
- The new building will be bigger, and more people will be able to use it.



Finally, as you may have noticed on the KIST School Calendar for 2023–24, we will hold a "New Building Opening Celebration" on Saturday, June 15, 2024. Although we will be able to start using the new building from November, we have decided to delay the official opening event in order to maximize attendance and to allow participation from past members of the school community who may be visiting their families in Japan for the summer. We hope to make this an event that can be enjoyed by everyone, from current students to alumni. Please mark this event on your calendars! Let's celebrate together with current students, graduates, transfer students, and KIST families! We will send out formal invitations closer to the event.

Message from the Board President

On June 2, we held our G12 graduation ceremony. Congratulations to all our graduates! On the day before the ceremony, the G12s paraded throughout the school in their graduation gowns, and current students and staff were able to cheer them on with a rousing round of applause. Many of this year's graduates have been at KIST since kindergarten, so those of us who have known them for many years were particularly moved to see them wearing their gowns. This is only possible at a school such as KIST that offers a continuous education from a young age. We look forward to hearing about the future successes of all our graduates.

The core of KIST's mission is to: "provide academically motivated children with a high-quality education in order to develop competent, academic and compassionate individuals who make meaningful contributions to our global community." It is the responsibility of the school's Board of Directors to continuously check that the school is operating in accordance with its mission and related policies. At KIST, we have adopted the use of various external official tests in order to measure and verify that we are developing academically competent individuals in accordance with our mission.

The official GL test, based on the British curriculum, was recently conducted for G1 through G5. We are pleased to report the results for G5, the final grade in Elementary. The GL test is scored on a 9-point scale, with a score of 4 to 6 indicating 'Meeting expectations' and a score of 7 or higher indicating 'Exceeding expectations' in the British public school system; however, as our educational goals and student population are different from those of the British education system, KIST's 'Meeting expectations' level for English and Mathematics is higher than that of British public schools, with 6 points indicating 'Just meeting expectations,' 7–8 points indicating 'Meeting expectations,' and 9 points indicating 'Exceeding expectations.'

The results of the G5 English GL are as follows:

Stanine score	% of students
9	16%
7 or above	70%
6 or above	84%
4 or above	98%

At KIST, 84% of students achieved 'Just meeting expectations' or above, and 16% achieved 'Exceeding expectations.' However, by the standards of British public schools, 98% of students achieved 'Meeting expectations' or above, and 70% achieved 'Exceeding expectations.'

The results of the G5 Mathematics GL are as follows:

Stanine score	% of students
9	39%
7 or above	89%
6 or above	99%
4 or above	100%

As indicated above, despite taking the test at one grade level higher, 39% of students received a perfect score, and 99% scored 'Just meeting expectations' or higher.

Although omitted for reasons of space, students in G1 through G4 also achieved excellent learning results. I believe that these results are the result of the hard work of our students as well as the support of our dedicated faculty, support staff, and parents. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank you all.

I wish you all an enjoyable summer vacation!

Takako Komaki
Board President/Associate Head



Early Childhood News



Hello, KIST Families! It seems like another hot summer is approaching. This is the final issue of *The Comet* for 2022–23. As we started to lift some of the COVID regulations towards the end of this school year, I feel like we have just woken up from a long hibernation. We have our excursions back, finally, many children are not wearing masks inside and outside, and parents are finally welcome back on campus! I hope all the children in K1–K3 enjoyed not only these events but also their school life itself.

For this issue, I asked the K1–K3 staff to write about some of the fun activities they have been doing in each class. I hope you enjoy reading their stories. I wish all KIST families a wonderful summer holiday!

Eri Ozawa

Early Childhood Coordinator (K1–K3)/K2A Teacher



K1

Pyjama Day

The K1s spent time learning about patterns and finding patterns all around us. To show off our favourite patterns, we hosted a Pattern Pyjama Party in our classrooms! We wore our favourite pair of pattern pyjamas and showed them off in a fashion show catwalk, show and tell and then enjoyed a popcorn party with everyone!



Pirate Day

To bring some excitement to our UOI focusing on transportation, the K1s took part in a pirate day! We spent time discussing how pirates travel around, what transportation they use and how pirate ships are different to the big boats we see now. We used our knowledge of shapes and construction paper to craft our own pirate ships to become real pirates, then we hopped on our pirate ship and went on a treasure hunt!



K2

100th Day of School

On February 8, the K2s celebrated the 100th day of school! To tie in with our math curriculum, we spent the day playing games such as dot stamping 100 gumballs, making a 100-cup tower, and building structures with 100 kapla blocks. We also made a special 100-day poster, choosing and gluing images of our most cherished and favorite memories of the year so far. This day was a great chance to reflect on all the progress we have made in K2 and acknowledge that we are 100 days smarter.



Theatre Show

To celebrate the K2s' UOI focusing on storytelling, the children took part in creating a play in three groups and performing it at the K2 Theatre Show for their friends and family. We spent a lot of time throughout this unit learning about different story elements such as characters, settings and plots by focusing on a wide range of stories that not only come from books but from movies and plays as well. We took our newfound knowledge of story elements and created our own original stories or modified versions of classics such as "The Three Little Pigs" and "Billy Goats Gruff". To add another layer of excitement to our theatre show, we also used construction paper to craft our own character hats. All the K2s were able to put on some amazing, fun and creative shows for our families and teachers.



K3

Water Science Museum

In May, K3B went on a fun adventure to the Water Science Museum. The children were overjoyed as they learned fascinating facts about the importance of water in our lives and the environment. They got to experience a unique opportunity to see the different stages of water, its importance in the ecosystem and how it is purified. The museum exhibits were quite engaging and hands-on, which made the experience all the more memorable. Through this remarkable field trip, the children were able to grasp just how essential water is in sustaining life and our planet. It was a fun and educational outing that will surely stay with them for a long time!



Ainu Cultural Exchange Center

The K3s have been exploring how people interact with and value the natural environment. They began the unit thinking about where things they need daily come from. The most common answer was from the store, but throughout the unit, they began to realize that everything we use originally comes from the natural environment (e.g. a toothbrush comes from a store but is made from plastic which is made from oil originally from nature). They also explored how indigenous communities interact with and value the natural environment. Students realized that the connection such communities have with nature is much deeper. They remember to show respect and be appreciative of gifts from nature. To learn more about indigenous communities, the K3s visited the Ainu Cultural Exchange Center where they got to try a traditional Ainu instrument called the "mukkuri".



A Balancing Act

As the school year comes to a close and summer break approaches, I want to take a moment to emphasize the significance of relaxation during this well-deserved time off. As Vice Principal, I recognize the hard work and dedication you have put into your studies, and now it's time to recharge, unwind and enjoy the summer to the fullest.

Summer break offers a unique opportunity for you to engage in activities that promote relaxation and rejuvenation, aligning with the core principles of the International Baccalaureate (IB) Learner Profile. By embracing relaxation, you embody the following attributes:

- **Balanced:** Take this time to strike a balance between leisure activities and personal growth. Engage in activities that bring you joy while also investing in your well-being and personal development.
- **Reflective:** Use the summer break to reflect on your learning journey so far. Consider your strengths, areas for improvement, and set goals for the upcoming academic year.
- **Open-minded:** Embrace the diversity of experiences the summer offers. Step outside your comfort zone, explore new interests, and engage

with different cultures and perspectives, whether through travel, reading or connecting with people from diverse backgrounds.

- **Caring:** Show kindness and care not only for yourself but also for those around you. Spend quality time with loved ones, connect with friends, and engage in acts of service that contribute to the well-being of your community.
- **Inquirers:** Embrace curiosity and a love for learning even during your break. Pursue your interests, read books that inspire you, and explore topics that ignite your intellectual curiosity.

By prioritizing relaxation and embodying these IB Learner Profile attributes, you will make the most of your summer break. Allow yourself to unwind, reflect and grow. When you return to school, you will be equipped with renewed energy, a broader perspective, and a readiness to excel academically and personally.

Wishing you all a delightful and relaxing summer!

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



Elementary ELS

Bilingual math glossaries to support math discussions at home



<https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter/language-rbern/resources/bilingual-glossaries-and-cognates>

We are excited to announce that this summer you will have access to good quality math resources from *White Rose Maths* to use at home! These resources are in English; however, at the link above you will find a great set of bilingual math glossaries that will help with understanding the math vocabulary in *White Rose Maths*.

Remember, it is very helpful for your child's conceptual development if you use your family's home languages when you discuss math with them. Remember also that letting children explain their reasoning in their most comfortable language is a good way to help them develop their understanding of mathematical concepts. Having the English language of the *White Rose Math* resources together with lots of discussion in your home languages is a great combination that can really help your child enjoy and gain confidence in understanding the concepts in math and the words used to work with those concepts.

See the links below for more information about mathematics and language learning. Also, we would love to know if you have found any other free bilingual resources for math learning. Please get in touch at the e-mail address below.

- Moschkovich, J. (2013). *Principles for Mathematics Instruction for ELLs*. Stanford University. Retrieved from <https://ul.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/resource/2021-02/2.Principles%20for%20Math%20Instruction%208-14-13.pdf>
- https://www.kist.ed.jp/files/pdf/TheComet/The%20Comet_2016.12_E.pdf (p.10)
- https://www.kist.ed.jp/files/pdf/TheComet/The%20Comet_2022.03_E.pdf (p.5)

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



Math Glossaries

Elementary School Math

- Albanian
- Arabic
- Bengali
- Burmese
- Chinese (simplified)
- Chinese (traditional)
- Dutch
- French
- Fulani
- Greek
- Haitian
- Hindi
- Italian
- Japanese
- Karen
- Kinyarwanda
- Korean
- Kurdish (Kurmanji)
- Malay
- Mandinka
- Nepali
- Pashto
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Romanian
- Russian
- Slovak
- Spanish
- Swahili
- Tagalog
- Thai
- Tibetan
- Turkish
- Twi
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Uzbek
- Vietnamese
- Wolof

PYP News

How to use the six traits of writing to support your child at home

For this issue of *The Comet*, I would like to draw your attention to a new document that has been added to the Community portal of the KIST website: the [KIST PYP Academic Handbook](#).

As we approach the long summer vacation, many of you may be considering how to support your child with their writing. You may have been given advice such as writing short stories, writing letters to friends and relatives, or keeping a diary. This is all fine, but you might be unsure of what you should be looking for in their writing.

As you know, at KIST, we follow the Six (plus one) Traits of Writing which is a widely used framework for assessing and improving writing skills. It provides a comprehensive approach to evaluate and enhance various aspects of writing. Let's explore each trait briefly:

- 1. Ideas:** This trait focuses on the content and the main message of the writing. It assesses the clarity, originality and depth of the ideas presented.
- 2. Organization:** Organization refers to the structure and coherence of the writing. A well-organized piece has a clear introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion, with smooth transitions between ideas.
- 3. Voice:** Voice represents the unique style and personality of the writer. It examines the tone, word choice and the overall impression the writing creates on the reader.
- 4. Word choice:** This trait emphasizes the selection of precise and appropriate vocabulary. It encourages the use of vivid, descriptive language to engage the reader and convey meaning effectively.
- 5. Sentence fluency:** Sentence fluency assesses the rhythm and flow of the writing. It looks at the variety of sentence structures, the balance between long and short sentences, and the overall readability.
- 6. Conventions:** Conventions refer to grammar, punctuation and spelling. This trait ensures that the writing follows standard rules of language usage and is free from errors that may distract or confuse the reader.

The "+1" trait is **Presentation**, which encompasses the visual elements of the writing. It considers aspects such as formatting, neatness and overall appearance.

By focusing on these traits, writers can identify their strengths and areas for improvement, leading to more effective and polished written communication. The 6+1 Writing Traits framework provides a valuable guide for writers of all levels to enhance their skills and produce high-quality written work.

Obviously, what to look out for can vary a great deal across the grade levels. At KIST, we have developed our own writing rubrics which integrate the objectives of the national curriculum for England with the six traits of writing. To help you support your child, these rubrics have been published on pages 18–65 of the KIST PYP Academic Handbook. You will find the homeroom writing rubrics on pages 18–45, and Japanese class writing rubrics on pages 46–65. For homerooms, except for G1, which has two, each grade has three rubrics (one for each writing assessment), and you can see how each "assessment focus" is described across the SAME leveling system. (See the example in the image at the bottom of this page.)

When supporting your child, it is important to understand that these descriptors are for end-of-year expectations, so be careful to select the correct rubric. For this summer, I would suggest using the rubric for the class that your child has just graduated from.

While there may be changes to the rubrics over the course of the school year, these will be minor, and updated versions will be uploaded each summer. These resources should be helpful for you in supporting your child with their writing, however, please try to ensure the experience is fun and supportive. If they are old enough, it is best to encourage your child, to engage with the rubric themselves and self-assess their own work, then you can discuss their thoughts and set achievable targets.

If you have any questions of how you can support your child's learning over the summer, please do not hesitate to ask.

Oliver Sullivan
PYP Coordinator



This rubric has been developed from the Pearson Education rubric and has been aligned with the KIST writing curriculum and the Six Traits of Writing. This rubric is used to assess writing across the SAME system on KIST report cards.

K International School Tokyo Writing Assessment 3 Rubric: (G3)			
IDEAS			
1 Starting AF1 → Does not reflect a main idea or purpose; includes content that is off topic.	2 Approaching AF2 → States or implies a main idea, but is unclear, unfocused, inaccurate, and/or underdeveloped.	3 Meeting AF3 → Presents a clear, focused, and accurate main idea with adequate development and/or support.	4 Exceeding AF4 → Writing is organized with clear control of paragraphs or sections that support coherence throughout.
SENTENCE FLUENCY			
1 Starting AF1 → Structures sentences incorrectly so reader has to reread phrase several times and still has difficulty reading aloud without pausing or substituting phrases.	2 Approaching AF2 → Uses sentences that are technically correct but not varied and/or flow smoothly; sounds mechanical when read aloud.	3 Meeting AF3 → Has varied sentences that flow smoothly; tends to be pleasant or business like, though may still be mechanical in places; is easy to read aloud.	4 Exceeding AF4 → Incorporates some sentences that are chaffy and flowing, using a variety of correctly structured sentence types; flows well when read aloud.
ORGANIZATION			
1 Starting DENY SCORE ON THE RUBRIC	2 Approaching AF2 → Limited evidence of organization; effort is required by the reader (an appropriate structure which includes a clear, somewhat chronological sequence). AF4 → The writer has difficulty using taught sequential language.	3 Meeting AF3 → Simple and separated paragraphs are sequenced or grouped but may not be considered to have an appropriate structure which includes a clear, somewhat chronological sequence). AF4 → Evidence of taught sequential language, such as, next, then, after that.	4 Exceeding AF4 → Writing is neatly organized with separated paragraphs or sections logically sequenced, although some challenging transitions (e.g., meanwhile, nevertheless) may be evident. AF5 → Evidence of more advanced sequential language, such as, meanwhile.
WORD CHOICE			
1 Starting DENY SCORE ON THE RUBRIC	2 Approaching AF2 → In information texts, places, people, events, items, topics etc. are not described in detail. AF3 → Word choice is simple and could be repetitious.	3 Meeting AF3 → In information texts, places, people, events, items, topics etc. are described with specific detail, although this may not be consistently maintained throughout. AF4 → Word choice is deliberate and mostly accurate.	4 Exceeding AF4 → In information texts, places, people, events, items, topics etc. are described with specific detail consistently maintained throughout. AF5 → Word choice is deliberate and adds depth to the writing.
VOICE			
1 Starting DENY SCORE ON THE RUBRIC	2 Approaching AF2 → Links to the task (a news report) are limited. AF3 → Register is, at times, inappropriate to the task (formal and informative).	3 Meeting AF3 → Writing is partially linked to the task (a news report). AF4 → Register is mostly appropriate to the task (formal and informative) and is mostly maintained.	4 Exceeding AF4 → Writing is mostly linked to the task (a news report) with an emerging awareness of audience. AF5 → Register is consistently appropriate to the task (formal and informative) and maintained.

G5 Short Story Competition

G5 held a short story competition for our last unit. The students were asked to write a story no longer than 500 words on the theme of science, and to include at least one higher level punctuation (e.g. colons, semicolons, dashes, hyphens or brackets), an expanded noun phrase, a relative clause, and to build suspense.

We had lots of amazing entries with outstanding plots and excellent use of higher-level vocabulary, grammar and punctuation. The overall winners of the competition were **Taiga** in 1st place, **Max** in 2nd place and **Ming** in 3rd place.

Please enjoy reading Taiga's short story below.

Chloe Kniveton
G5A Homeroom Teacher



The 119th Element

10...9...8...7...6...alarms were blaring a deafening sound as panic spread across the room. But before I destroy the world, let me take you back a few days.

3 days earlier...

I had finally done it. I, James Hubble, and my team discovered what no one ever has—the 119th element. A plethora of scientists had believed that after the 118th element, that the Periodic Table was complete; yet we had discovered, "Energenium". Energenium is so powerful that it could power the entire world for a decade, and I have discovered it! I work at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC)—the world's largest particle accelerator—in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a 27-kilometer long, circular tube wrapped in magnetic coil, 100 meters underground, with machines and detectors everywhere. At this very facility, on November 7, 2023, I discovered Energenium—that's pretty amazing.

The team decided that we would launch Energenium into the world on November 10th a.k.a., World Science Day. Our finding took the media by storm: every news station wanted front row seats for our launch, offering millions. During that time, we were as busy as bees preparing for the launch. Everything had to be perfect.

November 10, 2023

The big day had arrived. My anxiety was like an anchor dragging me down. The huge, historical machine looked as good as ever. It was now officially one-hour before launch. We had checked, double-checked, and triple-checked everything; we couldn't be more prepared. Now all we had to do is wait.

We had the timer set to release Energenium at exactly 14:00 in Switzerland. There was no turning back now. Everything was going to be perfect. Or so we thought...

With only 10 minutes left, Energenium sped around the accelerator: the entire world was on their feet eagerly awaiting release. Then, suddenly, as if on cue to the timer hitting 9 minutes, the accelerator started shaking violently. The converters used to safely transfer the energy had been overloaded. If Energenium was released now, it would cause a massive explosion; destroying the world. How could I have missed this?

There was no time to waste. The world watched in horror as we tried to stop the launch. The tension in the room was unbearable. This was the end. I would be the one who destroyed the world. There was only 1 minute left. That was when I got it! If we launch Energenium into space and away from Earth, there just might be a chance. 10...9...8...7...6...alarms were blaring a deafening sound as panic spread across the room. I worked as hard as I could to try and change the launch trajectory. Would this work, there was only one way to find out.

3...2...1...! It had happened, yet we were all still alive. Thanks to my split-second thinking, the world had been saved. Although we were unable to launch Energenium (for now), we could always try again. The world is safe, and that's important.

10 years later...

Energenium has just been launched for the second time, and this time nobody came close to dying. We had upgraded the converters 10-fold to make sure it could contain Energenium. The world has now been powered for a decade, and I can officially say I have changed the world.



Taiga (G5B)

Sakura Medal Book Report Contest 2022–23



Once again this year, KIST students participated in the 14th Annual Sakura Medal Book Report Contest, held by the Japanese teachers at international schools around Japan. This year, five KIST students submitted works in the "Lower Elementary" division, and three in the "Upper Elementary" division.

As a result of the judging, in the Upper Elementary division, **Amane** (G4B) won a prize for excellence, and **Takuto** (G4A) won a prize for effort. And in the Lower Elementary division, **Masayuki** (G3A) won a prize for excellence. Congratulations to all students.

Upper Elementary division



Takuto (G4A)



Sho (G4A)



Amane (G4B)

Lower Elementary division



Masayuki (G3A)



Erika (G3A)



Sara (G3B)



Lia (G3B)



Arisu (G3B)



School Uniform—Lia Takes Action

When I came to this school, I didn't really think about the school uniform. I didn't think about how everyone needed to wear something and not something of their free will. But as I got older, I was thinking that you can wear anything even if you're a boy or a girl. So that's when I started to question. Why do girls need to wear skirts? Why can't they wear trousers like boys? In the elementary school, when it's not school time, there are students who don't want to wear skirts. However, girls needed to wear skirts while at school.

When I got to Grade 4, I suddenly noticed that secondary girls could wear trousers because students in secondary took action and said that girls can wear trousers. So, girls can now wear trousers in the secondary school. However, I was thinking, why only secondary? Why can't elementary girls also wear trousers? I asked some of my friends about what they thought about skirts, and some said that they just want to wear trousers. I asked my parents what I should do, and they suggested I ask people who know why only secondary girls get to wear trousers. I asked four people who we know of.

I asked Dr. Yoshihara, Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Bradley, and Ms. Mitsuyo. Mr. Bradley and Mr. Sullivan didn't know why only secondary girls got to wear skirts. Dr. Yoshihara said that when they discussed the new uniform, they simply didn't consider that some elementary girls would prefer to wear trousers. When I asked Ms. Mitsuyo, she said that only secondary girls get to wear trousers. I could've just waited 2 more years until I'm in the secondary school and I get to wear trousers, but what about the other elementary students? When I go to the secondary school, I was afraid nothing would change in the elementary school. So, I asked for help from my parents, and they emailed Dr. Yoshihara about my feelings and asked if KIST could consider changing the school uniform policy. A week later, I talked to Dr. Yoshihara, and he said that from then on, everyone could wear trousers. I was thrilled to hear that news. I think that if you believe that something's wrong or something shouldn't be the way it's done, just take action.

Lia (G4B)



KIPS News

We are almost 10 months into the 2022–23 school year, which began in a state of uncertainty regarding COVID-19. Fortunately, we have not had any closures at KIPS this year, and both the P1s and P2s have made remarkable progress.

The P1 class, with a total of 6 children—the largest P1 group so far—have demonstrated amazing growth and language acquisition as they work hard during the day with various routine tasks, while learning English, Art, Music, PE and Japanese. During the year, the children have also shown a growing awareness of each other as they play together, say sorry to each other when they get into fights, and ask about their friends when someone is absent. Did you see the P1's first stage performance at the Kindergarten Concert? If you did, I think you'll agree that they've progressed so much.



For the first time in P2, we held a parent-child visit that was a bit different from previous years. The visit was very well received by the parents who shared many positive comments such as: "It was very good to see how the children are doing at preschool," and "My child can't clean up at home, but seems to do it well at preschool." We are pleased to report that children who were not able to not speak any English when they first joined us have started to do so, and have even been speaking English at home! The P2s also have a "Science" class during which they learn through inquiry. The children's eyes shine with excitement as they observe the results of experiments. We don't know what the children will be interested in in the future or what direction they will take, but we hope to help them even just a little in building a foundation for their lives.

The P2 Completion Ceremony will be held on Friday, June 16, and all the P2s are practicing hard for it. This year, the P1s will also participate in order to say farewell to their P2 friends.



Let's enjoy the rest of the year together until the end of June! I hope you all have a wonderful summer vacation.

Yukiko Murai Jones
KIPS Office Coordinator



From the P2 classroom...



Have you ever heard of the term "non-cognitive skills"? At KIPS, we focus on improving the children's non-cognitive skills as they become accustomed to an English-speaking environment. The children learn to do many things, and each time they do something properly, they are praised. When they realize how happy they feel when they are praised, they in turn praise and encourage their friends. When a friend cries, the other children run up to them and talk to them gently or pat them on the head. Of course, there are times when they cannot do something or have disagreements with their friends, but at such times, they learn how to solve the problem in their own way, whether by thinking for themselves or asking for help from their teachers. We see the children's inner growth as they learn to lend and borrow toys without the intervention of an adult, learn to take turns with each other, and learn to help their friends with difficult tasks.



Now that the coronavirus pandemic has settled down, we are once again able to hold events with parental participation. In the "Tummy Exercise" sponsored by Yakult, we learned that maintaining a good intestinal environment is the secret to good health! By looking at the state of our feces, we can understand our intestinal environment and what we should do in order to improve the state of our feces. At the Spring Concert, we were very proud and impressed to see the results of our practices at KIPS fully demonstrated on stage. At the picnic, through various activities, we had a chance to see how the children played with each other, and how they interacted with their own and other parents. During Observation Week, parents were invited to hide from the children in order to observe how the children spend their time at KIPS (free play time, morning circle, lessons, communication). The children are now working hard toward graduation and progression to K1. We will continue to support the children so that they can enjoy their life at KIPS until the very end, and develop further both internally and physically.

Yoshimi Machida
P2 Teacher



Model United Nations Events

ASIJMUN

Our experiences at the 2023 ASIJ Model United Nations Conference

Arshiya (G11A)



This was my second ASIJMUN conference, and this time I was excited to see it on an even larger scale. We had students travelling internationally from Korea, just for the conference. This, apart from elevating the importance of the conference itself, gave me a chance to communicate with students from different cultures and become knowledgeable about diverse perspectives on my committee's topic. This time, I was placed in the ECOSOC Committee; it was quite a competitive experience as all of us raised continuous points of information and gave speeches on amendments and resolutions.

At the start of the conference, things were a bit hazy as I was still getting used to the rules of procedure and the people around me, but as it progressed to the other topics, I saw an increased relevance towards my country and was able to contribute more often. This time, I saw myself communicating more with other delegates than I had at any other conference and was able to make new friends and meet people.

Despite the conference getting somewhat tiring, with the two days packed with speeches, amendments, relaxing breaks and small talks, I was glad to be able to see myself understanding the modus operandi faster each time. This was, undoubtedly, a very knowledgeable and interesting experience for me as I could see how far I had come in terms of public speaking. My gratitude to my advisors, delegates, and secretariats is benevolent.



Kiichiro (G11A) and Arshiya (G11A)



KIST delegates

Kiichiro (G11A)



This year, I had the opportunity to participate in a fully in-person MUN conference for the first time at ASIJ. There were eight international schools involved in the conference including two schools from Jeju, Korea. I was selected to be the delegate of Japan in the 'Crisis' committee out of the seven committees at ASIJMUN. Naturally, I was a little nervous as I had never participated in a 'Crisis' committee nor a conference of similar size.

My committee, the 'Crisis' committee, focused on the Vietnam war. The committee started from the end of World War II, and individual delegates represented each nation to navigate their country through a period of high tensions. Although the 'Crisis' committee is known for having a wider range of flexibility because anything is possible, I felt that my country assignment of 'Japan' may be an irrelevant nation before the conference due to Japan's little involvement in the Vietnam war.

However, as the committee progressed on the first day, I noticed that I was the only delegate positioned to broker peace deals and negotiations. Other delegates had formed ideological blocks, separated between the 'communist' and 'capitalist' blocks. Despite the committee's many wild occurrences such as assassination of national leaders and many coup d'états, I was able to stay as the only one nation capable of calling for a cease fire on both sides to sway other delegates to come to negotiations. At the end of the second day, the committee was able to pass an open directive which ended the war with Japan, country represented by myself, as the main submitter.

Unexpectedly, ASIJMUN became my most memorable and favorite MUN event in all my MUN experiences. I was able to become proficient in being involved in a new committee and rediscovered the importance of having nonpartisan parties at the negotiation table during times of high tension. Most importantly, it was extremely entertaining to be involved in a very fast paced committee with friends from international schools in Kanto as well as Korea. I'm hoping that KIST can continue to participate in similarly larger and in person conferences, possibly even international events, or even host our own KISTMUN next year.

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JMMUN

2023 Japan Metropolitan Model United Nations Conference



On March 25 and 26, several KIST students had the opportunity to represent a range of nations at the largest student-led MUN in Japan—Senzoku Japan Metropolitan Model United Nations (JMMUN). KIST students participated in a range of levels and addressed a range of topics under the common theme of Renaissance including topics such as preventing deforestation and sustainable growth in the realms of nuclear technology.

Zayan (G10B) and I represented Spain as a double delegation in the Intermediate 1 committee with the topic of abolishing modern slavery. Over the course of the event, Zayan and I discussed a range of new ideas and solutions with delegates from various schools and backgrounds. We constructively debated with several other delegates regarding the various issues each member nation was facing, and viable solutions to the growing problem of modern slavery.

The passion shared by each delegate inspired every delegate in the room to participate and learn from the experience. In our committee the two resolutions proposed passed, with Zayan and I acting as signatories for both resolutions. Hence, it was an enjoyable and awarding experience for all in our committee.

This outcome was not limited to our committee! There was a plethora of fruitful and collaborative discussions occurring in every committee at various levels. Judging from the enthused faces of the delegates as they walked from the auditorium to the committee rooms, and the sounds of discussion echoing through the wide hallways, every delegate present had a delightful experience at the event.

At the end of the event, two KIST students from the Intermediate 2 committee won awards for excellent performance at the event:

- **Remi** (G11A) won Honourable Mention.
- **Aryan** (G10B) and **Zayan** (G10A) won Best Delegate.

Looking back at the event, JMMUN 2023 was an excellent learning experience for all participating delegates. I personally made many friends at the event, whom I keep in touch with to this date. Most importantly, I remember the passion felt by each delegate in my committee, which inspires me to keep discussing and inventing solutions to the world's problems in hopes of eventually representing my country at the UN stage.



Aryan (G10B)



KIST delegates



Zayan (G10B) and Aryan (G10B)

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SMISMUN

2023 St. Mary's Model United Nations Conference

On April 22, twelve KIST delegates participated in the inaugural St. Mary's Model United Nations Conference. Delegates drafted resolutions on a range of issues including combating plastic pollution in the oceans, addressing the global rise of authoritarianism, tackling the global mental health crisis, and responding to cyber warfare and state-sponsored hacking. The following are thoughts from first-time chairs **Arshiya** (G11A) and **Sadhika** (G11A).



Kiichiro (G11A)

This conference was the first time I have ever chaired at a MUN conference. Although I had participated in two large scale conferences prior, being a chair was a completely different experience. It was equally strenuous and collaborative, and I was happy to communicate with loads of people from different schools. Usually, in the past MUN conferences I have attended as a delegate, I have often only communicated with people from my own school and a couple of others. Being a chair really pushed me out of my boundaries and enabled me to gain a better outlook on the procedures of the conference itself.

My committee began a bit slow, so there were a lot of times where my co-chair and I had to specifically engage delegates and remind them of the rules of procedure; however, with some support from our talented secretariats we were able to kick-start our committee and received an increased number of POIs and speeches. Apart from this, my communication skills really improved as I was required to work alongside my co-chair, and I learned many new things from him, we were able to share our past MUN experiences and share a laugh or two.

After many debates on amendments and amendments on top of amendments, our conference ended, and I was required to give a speech and announce the winners of our committee. Being able to draft and deliver the closing speech in front of a huge crowd felt surreal; it felt great to announce my committee's achievements in my speech. We all wrapped it up with a photo, as I shook hands and said my last goodbyes to the secretariats and my co-chair. Overall, it was an extremely memorable, yet tiring experience and I am so glad that I was able to gain essential chairing experience in MUN.



Arshiya (G11A)



Arshiya (G11A) and Sadhika (G11A)

I was apprehensive at first, knowing that well-experienced delegates depended on my Co-Chair and I to facilitate their debate; I could only thank the SMIS secretariats for preparing me well and cooperating with me before-hand so that I could chair my committee with confidence.

I chaired the UN Human Rights Council (HRC), in which delegates discussed the global rise of authoritarianism. My committee had a fruitful conference to begin with—the delegates in my committee almost immediately formed blocs and resolutions for this issue. Throughout the day, I was able to hear a range of views and solutions from delegates such as those representing China and Saudi Arabia (who supported authoritarianism), compared to those representing India and South Africa (who spoke against authoritarianism). During this event, I saw numerous delegates walk up to the podium and reveal their excellent speaking styles and arguments, and I was able to learn some skills that I could as a delegate in future MUN conferences.

Towards the end, my committee did become quite chaotic. This is when my duty as a Chair truly became challenging. Fortunately, my Co-Chair and I worked well together to bring our debate to an end by passing our committee's final resolution.

Despite any hardships during this conference, I was honored to chair the UNHRC. I am glad that every delegate in my committee contributed to the debate and hope that the SMISMUN conference was a memorable experience for everyone who attended, just as it was for me.

Sadhika (G11A)



Coping with the Summer ERA (Exam Result Anticipation!)

Another year has flown by at KIST! Another year where we have felt privileged to support students develop their self-regulation skills and find creative ways to balance their study and social scales. However, even though we have much to celebrate at the end of this year, we wanted to take the opportunity to look ahead to important milestones that are fast approaching.

It might seem a long way away now, but the start of the new year in August will be with us in the blink of an eye (possibly quicker for teachers and slower for parents...!)

One of the biggest milestones for the start of the new year is the much-anticipated reveal of exam results.

It is natural that there will be several types of anxiety around these situations. For the students in G10 and G12, these results are the culmination of years of demanding work and represent more to them than just an exam result: these grades will be keys that have the power to open a variety of doors in their futures. This *Comet* article will give families some practical tips for dealing with these anxieties over the upcoming summer break.

Waiting for exam results?

1. You cannot change the past!

It is easy to focus on the 'what ifs?' of exams. The nature of exams forces us to focus on what we did not do, rather than celebrate what we did!

However, at this point, nothing can be changed. The anxiety can often come from the lack of control over the exam results—everything is in the hands of an unknown person. Instead of reflecting on what was not done, reflect on the revision process. What did you find useful? Which exam did you find easiest? What did you do differently to prepare for that? It is this reflection that can help you look to the future so that the next time an exam situation arises, the preparation can be tweaked to suit your personal learning style.



2. Take control

As we mentioned in the previous point, the lack of control over exam results is often the main driver for anxiety. Taking control of other aspects of one's daily routine can be a significant help in reducing this anxiety. Channel into action all that nervous energy buildup by preparing yourself for different outcomes. Consider, in advance, what you will do if specific anxiety inducing situations arise. For example:

- *If I do not get the grade I wanted in this subject, I will do this from now on.*
- *I am worried about the content for this aspect of next year's course. I will do some reading in advance.*
- *I am feeling lethargic. A walk to buy a drink/snack will clear my head.*

Maintaining a daily routine is another strategy to help you feel like you are in control. Sticking to your daily routines (which you can set and perform with certainty) will provide a sense of familiarity and a consistent sense of achievement. Every step in the routine that is stuck to will deliver the dopamine release that helps distract from any result related anxiety.

Staying on top of exam result related anxiety is not a simple task. It requires self-reflection and determination not to wallow in the hypothetical apocalypse level outcomes! However, we know our students are very resilient and we hope that these tips can help kickstart a worry-free summer.

We look forward to celebrating, and continuing to support, all the students upon the receipt of their results. Good luck, everyone!

Matthew Archer and
Hannah Cowie
Student Care
Coordinators
(Secondary)



School Calendar 2023–24



As a reminder to families, the dates of school vacation periods for the 2023–24 school year are listed below. **Please check carefully as a number of changes have been made since being announced in the December issue of *The Comet*.**

For details of the year's events and activities, please check the full calendar that has been distributed to all families via E-Communications.

• First day of school for students:

August 21, 2023

• Autumn vacation:

October 28 – November 5, 2023 [*Changed!]

• Winter vacation:

December 16, 2023 – January 7, 2024
(Classes resume from Monday, January 8)

• Spring vacation:

March 23 – 31, 2024

• Golden Week vacation

May 3 – 6, 2024 [*Changed!]

• Last day of school for students:

June 12, 2024

Connect to Hisaichi

At the beginning of this year, the G11 Geography students were introduced to Mr. Jordan Hatter, the founder of Help4Refugees, who works in Syria to help refugees displaced by the civil war. Mr. Hatter ensures that refugees receive direct help and that all donated funds are clearly shown to where they were used.

Following the devastating earthquakes in Turkey and Syria earlier this year, Mr. Hatter flew to Antakya, Turkey and got into contact with a family of eight, including the father, Yasser. At the time, the family was living on the sidewalk in a metal street stall with urgent need for assistance.

During this time, the KIST Connect to Hisaichi (CTH) team got into contact with Mr. Hatter and learned about the needs of the family he was assisting. This prompted the G11 Geography class and CTH to organize a fundraiser to assist Yasser's family. The total proceeds of the fundraiser were ¥169,082, and this was equally split between two NGOs: Ahbap* and Help4Refugees. Additionally, the CTH team collaborated with The American School in Japan's

English Circle Club to raise funds at ASIJ for Help4Refugees.

Through Help4Refugees, the donations from KIST were able to provide partial funding for a new container home for Yasser's family with additional help from the American School in Warsaw.

This occurred around the same time as the Islamic holiday of Eid-al-Fitr, which the family was very thankful for.

Thank you all for your continued support. We appreciate the KIST community's donations in helping us make a difference in this world.

The CTH Team

*Ahbap is a Turkish organization which actively provides humanitarian aid and coordinates natural disaster relief measures. Following the earthquakes, they have been providing water, food, tents and other crucial supplies for the victims.



Container home being delivered next to Yasser's family's street stall.



Karam (center) waving to the CTH team and the American School in Poland.



Yasser's family with Mr. Hatter (right).

Service Activities Report

HiGEPS (High-Grade Global Education Program for Sciences)



Zayan (right) with fellow KIST participants: Fumie (G10A), Diya (G11A) and Shota (G10B).

This was an internship I attended at Saitama University. In the internship we covered many university level topics in the sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology) and even a few in mathematics. Professors from Saitama University hosted lectures on these topics both online and at the university. As all the lectures were given in Japanese, I often found myself struggling to understand them. Nevertheless, my co-interns helped me a lot throughout the course and explained the many topics I was struggling with. Towards the end of the internship, we had to do a presentation and write an essay describing a recent development in the field of science or mathematics. In addition to this we also had to take tests which allowed the internship hosts to track our

progress and see if we were understanding the course material.

I have always held a great interest in the sciences and this internship allowed me to meet many people like me whilst expanding my knowledge and interest in the natural sciences. Great and very knowledgeable experience overall!

Manila x Tokyo SDG speech contest

The Manila x Tokyo SDGs Speech Contest was an international exchange program and competition with students from the Philippines. The main theme of the speech contest was the 17 sustainable development goals; speeches were given on the sheer necessity of these goals for the betterment of society and on the progress that the world has made to comply with these goals and pave the way for a better world for the future generations.

In my speech, I gave a desperate call for climate action. I talked about my personal battles with climate change and used it to show the need for climate action in Japan. With my speech, I won 2nd place and I hope I can get other platforms like this to address my passion in combatting climate change.



In the contest, I listened to talks from many other passionate students from Tokyo and the Philippines. The speeches given made me realize the necessity of complying with the SDGs and the speeches made me question the contribution of my actions to society.

Blind jogging (Achilles International)

I participated in a Blind Jogging event wherein I assisted a blind runner, run throughout Yoyogi Park. Achilles International which is a blind runner group allows volunteers to assist blind runners, run; because of this I was able to get a great opportunity to run with a blind runner. With my blind teammate, we jogged around 10 km, and it was a wonderful experience.



My blind partner shared his experiences being blind, such as how he lives his day-to-day life and his life before he was blind. It was one my most humbling experiences, and I gained great respect for people with visual impairments.

Zayan (G10A)



KIST HEART CLUB

February 11th Fundraiser Results!



Who are we?

We are the KIST HEART CLUB, a student-led organization formed by secondary students to 'Help Empower and Assist Refugees Today!'

We host various events such as donation drives, fundraisers, competitions, and other interactive events in hopes to help refugees with their needs but also spread awareness of the refugee crisis.

THE FUNDRAISER



We organized a Fundraiser in early 2023, where all students, teachers and parents were able to purchase coffee, hot chocolate, and snack bags, and participate in a raffle event to win a waterproof speaker!



We were amazed by the generosity of the KIST community! We would like to especially thank the Community Association for their donation.



With the help of your donations, we were able to donate 1200 USD to the NPO "Help4Refugees" to provide essential water and medicine for a community of Syrian refugees who were affected by the Turkey-Syria Earthquakes!

Thank you so much!

We are extremely grateful and thankful to the KIST Community for all the support HEART received this year!

We are inspired by everyone's compassion and empathy, and look forward to being able to host more events in the future.

Spelling Bee

In March, I took part in the Tokyo Academics Spelling Bee where I won 2nd place in the competition. The memorable event took place in the Tokyo Academics building in downtown Roppongi and here is how I would encapsulate my whole journey:

Before I entered the building, I encountered a lot of entrants of the Spelling Bee holding a thick list of complicated words hole-punched inside of a binder. As they vacuously condensed the information, I was dubious if I had prepared enough for the contest. For the whole time at home, I had prepared for the Spelling Bee by learning and studying some of the critical, distinct etymology and their respective languages. I believe that studying for the Spelling Bee this way is much more resourceful since the English language has 150,000+ words in the dictionary and exponentially more including proper nouns (which come up in the Spelling Bee).

When I entered the building and into the room, there were rows and rows of chairs for the audience (guardians of the contestants) and that really built onto the pressure. Before our tournament started, we had a go with a practice round to get comfortable around the microphone. Simultaneously, a twitch livestream was broadcasting the whole event for the whole world to pry its eyes on. The first few rounds were trivial since it had easy, short words.

However, as it went on, the words were quickly getting harder and harder with some unlucky contestants getting challenged with city names and proper nouns like the words 'Andean'. When I could not spell them myself, failure seemed inevitable and the thoughts of 'I am going to fail', 'OH NO, it's my turn next,' kept crossing my mind. I got words like 'volumetric', 'shamrock' and 'amphibian' which were easy words to spell. Another contestant got the word 'memorandum' which I thought was much harder. With these harder words, more and more people got disqualified. There was another word 'hula' for 'hula hoop' and the contestant spelling that word spelt it as 'hoola' and that was the most brutal of them all.

For the third to last round of the Spelling Bee, there were three contestants left. When it was my turn, 'Next contestant, please spell the word 'Tarmac'—oh no. As that word was presented to me, time seemed to slow down, as my heart amplified its rhythmic pulse and echoed through my mind. This was a challenging word. I thought that there might have been a lake, an anxious lake forming around me—chipping my endless memory for a clue.

'Have I heard that word before?' Time was ticking, 'Tick, tock' as it went on—'30 seconds left,' answered the pronouncer. I strained through my memory, looking for a clue; the only motivation to keep me going was my voice, following through in my head.

'Tarmac, termite, video...' and then I finally remembered where I heard that word. I had heard of it in a video about experimenting with termites.

'Tarmac, T-A-R-M-A-C..., *tarmac*,' I answered.

'Correct,' answered the pronouncer. Yes, I had done it—I had made it onto the final round.

For the final round, there were only two contestants left including me and another contestant. It was my turn to spell the word and I got the word 'Whelp'. I was extremely unsure of this diction, and I might have confused it with the word 'Welp' commonly used in casual conversation. However, I asked for the definition, usage in a sentence and the etymology. The definition was different from the 'welp' I thought it was and I was getting unsure. Since the etymology was old English, there were only two possibilities that crossed my mind when answering—either 'Welp' or 'Whelp'. I took my chances and answered 'Welp', the incorrect spelling. There were two possibilities, two chances—a 50-50 and I had got it wrong.

Even though I made it to the podium with the 2nd place, it was a tough defeat as I was aiming for the pinnacle. Nevertheless, it was a great, astounding experience with a lot of fun moments and an explosion of emotions. We got to meet a lot of incredible people and sharing this moment with everyone was amazing!

Noah (G7B)



Lance in Spain

In the early months of 2023, I learnt about a program at ie University.

To provide some background, ie University is a private institution in Spain with campuses in Segovia and Madrid. The school is considered to be one of the top universities in Spain, if not Europe.

When I applied for the Junior Advisory Board program, I was unsure if I would be successful as the program only accepts 15 students worldwide each year. There is a theme at the heart of the program which all activities are centered around. This year, it was "Cities without cars". One of the key aspects of the application process involved a four-minute video pitch supported by a presentation addressing this theme.

This five-day, all expenses paid program consisted of a series of engaging workshops, conferences, interactive sessions, and teambuilding projects led by the faculty at ie.

When I first landed in Madrid, I was surprised by the people I met. I soon realized that out of the 15 accepted participants, 13 countries were represented, as well as all the continents. Despite being from various nations, there was no language barrier, and we had multiple opportunities to learn about each other's cultures and share our opinions.

The lectures we attended ranged from data collection and analysis to sustainable development of buildings. By delving into statistical methodologies, data visualization techniques, and data-driven decision-making processes, these sessions taught me the importance of data processing in addressing issues. By intertwining economic principles with the study of geography and business management, the lectures highlighted the multidimensional nature of real-world challenges and the need for interdisciplinary approaches in addressing them.

Ultimately, at the end of the program, the 15 of us presented to the executive board of the school. The presentations had the goal of addressing the issue of cars within cities and devising methods of tackling the issue. My group presented "Hyperloops" which are high speed transportation modules that are capable of taking passengers from point A to point B without a set track. There were no strict guidelines, so we chose to portray the hyperloop as a venture capital/shark-tank style investment.

The Segovia campus, part of a UNESCO world heritage site, had a medieval Spanish feel. Studying here slowed down the pace of life with a close-knit community feel. The Madrid campus, however, was completely different; with its building standing at over 180 meters tall, in the heart of the financial district of Spain. Madrid had a beautiful urban culture.

During the program we were given plenty of time to tour Segovia and Madrid. I had the luxury to try many of the cultural foods of Spain, and visit historical landmarks with my new found friends.

The program was an unforgettable experience that I will cherish forever.

Lance (G11B)



All of us going to a lecture in Madrid



Down time with friends



Aqueducts in Segovia, Spain

Secondary SRC

Chess tournament

On April 13, 2023, the SRC organized a chess tournament in which 18 chess players from G6–G12 competed to see who the best chess player in the secondary school was.

Every player played four rapid games (ten minutes given to each player), receiving two points for each win, one point for each draw, and zero points for each loss.

Congratulations to **Anant** (G11A) for winning the competition having won all eight available points from four games. Six other players ended the tournament with six points indicating three wins from four games.

There was strong competition overall and it was great to see passion for chess transcend grade levels.

Overall, the event was a success and the SRC hopes it can organize another chess competition soon!

Congratulations to all participants, especially some of the younger contenders, for coming out and competing against a variety of opponents. Special thanks to Mr. Cely for helping to supervise the event!



Arnav (G11B)
SRC Co-President / Competition Organizer



Amazon Web Services



On Monday, February 27, 2023, guest speakers from AWS (Amazon Web Services) delivered an enlightening presentation regarding AWS to the Grade 10 Business Management class. The guest speaker, Mr. Babikov, delved deeper into cloud computing, Amazon's principles, as well as Amazon's hiring procedures. Particularly, Mr. Babikov provided exceptional insights into the foundation principles of AWS; even discussing how these principles played a key role in Amazon's operations by providing an example of the working backwards method.

Mr. Babikov provided many interesting applications of Amazon's web services; such as its recent integration of AI models with Shimamura Music, one of Japan's biggest music brands. Additionally, he also delved into aspects of Machine Learning and AI which were used to optimize Amazon's Web Services processes, which gave the G10s a completely new perspective on the uses of AI. Mr. Babikov also explained Amazon's unique approach towards the hiring processes; in this he talked about the multiple different stages which included interviews and skill tests that helped output the candidates which were best suited for the job. He showed the importance of hiring the best equipped candidates and how this standardized process has helped Amazon grow.

Overall, Grade 10 Business is grateful to Mr. Babikov and the AWS team for allowing us to gain a perceptive understanding of AI and ML and its applications in industry, as well as Amazon's complex hiring processes.



Zayan (G10A) and **Aryan** (G10B)



Visit to Bloomberg Headquarters

Recently, we as 10th-grade students in Economics and Business classes had the unique opportunity to visit the Bloomberg head office in Marunouchi, Tokyo. This visit gave us an idea of how the Bloomberg offices are run and even included a demo of the Terminal service they provide.

Bloomberg staff—Kate, Hana and Sakura—greeted us and led us through their cutting-edge offices. They were wonderful and gracious hosts who inspired us to consider working at Bloomberg in the future! We were toured around the various departments, including the video room, trading area, and customer service room, but the pantry was definitely our favorite. This demonstrated to what extent Bloomberg cares for not only their staff, but also visitors to the office. The degree of technology prevalent in the office was amazing (some had 6 monitors!), and we had the opportunity to see directly how these services are used to make informative decisions.

During the visit, we had the opportunity to interact with Bloomberg's experts and ask them questions about the world of finance and business. In the trip, for me I learned how data is crucial to succeed in the finance and business world, and how we can transform this data into being more useful for decision making.

The tour of the Bloomberg headquarters was eye-opening for me. It introduced us to the fast-paced and demanding world of finance and business, and to be candid, it encouraged me to become a successful entrepreneur who can one day benefit from their world-renown services. I left the Bloomberg office with a new outlook on the world of finance.

Overall, this excursion provided us with a wonderful opportunity to see our IGCSE knowledge being portrayed in the real world (flat hierarchical structure, employee motivation, unique selling points to name a few). It gave us a one-of-a-kind experience that encouraged us as 10th graders to pursue our aspirations in the world of business and finance. Thank you again to Kate, Hana and Sakura from the Bloomberg HQ, and Mr. Gombya and Mr. D'Rozario, for organizing this wonderful opportunity.

Pranav (G10B)



New Faces

Since the last issue of *The Comet*, we have welcomed two new staff members to the school—**Tomoya Matsuda** who is working as a Japanese teacher in the Secondary School, and **Venessa San Juan** who has joined the Elementary School as a Learning Support Instructor for the remainder of this school year, and will move into a classroom teaching role from August.

Mr. Matsuda said of his new role:

I am happy to say hello to the KIST community. At KIST, I find new challenges and enjoy them every day. Outside school, I love to play music with my friends and have conversations with others. In particular, Japanese 80s rock is the best for me. Nice to meet you all."

Ms. San Juan said of her new role:

I am Venessa, I have lived and worked in the Philippines, China and now Japan. It has been more than a decade since I started teaching children, but I am always a student in and outside the classroom. I believe that everybody has the potential to succeed no matter what. I am excited to learn and grow together as we share goals that establish positive learning atmosphere and nurture the whole child. It is my pleasure to be in KIST community. So happy to be here!"

On behalf of the school community, we wish you both all the best in your new roles and hope that you enjoy your time with us.



Tomoya Matsuda
Secondary Japanese



Venessa San Juan
Learning Support Instructor

World Book Day



Sunday, April 23 was the birthday of William Shakespeare, who is widely considered to be the greatest writer of all time. April 23 is also celebrated as World Book Day. This is a day that encourages students to develop their love of reading and appreciate the importance of books in their lives. Many schools around the world celebrate World Book Day in different ways, with activities that promote reading and encourage students to explore the wonderful world of literature. Here at KIST, we were delighted to celebrate this day on Monday, April 24, with a number of different activities across the secondary and elementary buildings!

On the day itself, many students and teachers came to school dressed as their favorite literary characters. The corridors were filled with Harry Potters, handmaids, and horses. This fun and imaginative activity encouraged students to engage with their favorite books and characters, and promoted the joy of reading. Thank you so much to everyone who came in costume!

A very popular activity during World Book Day was the book parade. Elementary students paraded through the elementary and secondary buildings, showcasing their fantastic costumes. This fun activity encouraged students to engage with books in a creative and imaginative way, and was a great way to build community spirit within the school!

Throughout the day, students were encouraged to match up a list of teachers and staff with their favourite books. Clues were placed around the school to help students with this. Well done to **Carys** (G7A), **Amy** (G7A), **Akanksha** (G7B), and **Tianlin** (G7B) for guessing the greatest number of favourite books!

During lunchbreak, students were invited to participate in a special LMC treasure hunt. They had to solve clues and find ideas from books to complete tasks. Two prizes were awarded for **most** ideas found and the most **imaginative** ideas found. Well done to **Gaurav** (G8B), **Tianlin** (G7B), and **Lauren** (G7A) for winning prizes here!

In conclusion, World Book Day is an important event for schools around the world. It encourages students to engage with literature and promotes the joy of reading. By hosting a range of activities and events, the English department at KIST hoped to inspire students to explore new books and authors, and to develop a lifelong love of reading. We look forward to seeing your costumes next year!

Isobel Duncan

Subject Area Coordinator—English



Costume winners

Most creative:

Yutong (G7A)—*Charlotte's Web*



Most accurate:

Erika (G7B)—*Coraline*



Best pair:

Moka and Rena (G8B)—*Boxer from Animal Farm*



Best group:

L>R **Mirea** (Benvolio), **Sara** (Friar Lawrence), **Rumi** (Lady Capulet), **Joanne** (Rosaline), **Ankita** (Romeo) and **Arista** (Juliet) (G8A)—*Romeo and Juliet*

Real-World Investigations

G9 and G10 IGCSE Geography field trip

Grade 9 and Grade 10 IGCSE Geography students recently participated in a field trip to Makuhari to investigate coastal erosion and conduct a beach clean-up. The trip provided an opportunity for students to apply their classroom knowledge to real-world situations, to identify sources of pollution and learn about measures being taken to protect the area from coastal flooding. The students were enthusiastic about making a difference and collected several bags of rubbish from the beach. We are proud of the students' hard work and the write-up they produced with the results of their research.



G10 Geography fieldwork—Kiyosumi-shirakawa

G10 Geography students conducted an impactful fieldwork investigation in Kiyosumi-shirakawa, examining the effects of urban renewal. Their focus was on whether the proliferation of coffee shops indicated gentrification. Through surveys and visits, they found that the influx of coffee shops positively attracted more visitors to the area, revitalizing its appeal.

The phenomenon of gentrification often yields a mix of positive and negative consequences for local residents and the cultural fabric of an area. After comprehensive analysis, the students reached the conclusion that the influx of coffee shops in Kiyosumi-shirakawa has positively influenced the area by attracting a greater number of visitors, invigorating its appeal.



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G11 and G12 DP I&S visit by Robin Lewis

Robin Lewis, the visionary founder of **mymizu**, delivered an inspiring talk to G11 and G12 I&S students on sustainability, community movements, and crowdfunding. Mymizu, a startup dedicated to reducing single-use plastic in Japan, developed an app to locate free water refills. Robin's engaging presentation ignited the students' entrepreneurial spirits and encouraged them to pursue their ambitions and ideas.



Web <https://www.mymizu.co/>

Web <https://youtu.be/oL1mTcQ827U>

Visit by Schneider Electric

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the team from Schneider Electric for graciously visiting and addressing both the G11 and G7 I&S classes. Their insightful session shed light on how Schneider Electric assists companies in adopting a more sustainable approach to their business operations.

The students were presented with a stimulating challenge, wherein they were tasked with devising strategies to enhance the environmental friendliness of KIST and identify opportunities for conserving electricity.

We extend our utmost appreciation to our esteemed guests for their valuable contributions and the enriching experiences they imparted to our students. Their visit has undoubtedly left an indelible impact on their understanding of sustainable practices in the business realm.

Hannah Cowie
Secondary Geography/I&S
Teacher



Library News



Elementary Library

Celebrating Book Week: Fostering a love for reading

Book Week, celebrated as part of World Book Day, proved to be an enriching and engaging experience for our students. The week-long event aimed to ignite a passion for reading among students, encouraging them to explore new literary worlds and embrace the magic of storytelling.

Throughout the week, various activities were organized, including a Character Day parade, 'Drop-and-read' time, teacher-led read aloud sessions, and a book exchange reading among students.

Character Day and character parade

To kick off Book Week, both students and the staff participated in **Character Day**, a special occasion where they dressed up as their favorite literary characters. The school buzzed with excitement as students arrived in colorful costumes, transforming into beloved heroes, heroines, and intriguing personalities from their most cherished books.

The highlight of Character Day was the **character parade**, where students proudly paraded through the school, flaunting their costumes, and bringing their favorite characters to life.



Drop-and-read time

During this designated period, all students and staff were encouraged to set aside their regular tasks and immerse themselves in the joy of reading, creating an atmosphere of tranquility and fostering shared literary experiences.



Read aloud sessions by teachers

Another integral component of Book Week was the **read aloud sessions** conducted by teachers. These sessions took place across different grade levels, with each teacher selecting a captivating story to share with their students. The power of storytelling came to life as teachers expertly animated characters, enlivened plotlines, and invoked emotions. The read aloud sessions not only showcased the importance of fluency and expression in reading, but also introduced

students to a diverse range of literature.

Swap and shine

The **book exchange** event provided an opportunity for students to share their favorite stories with others and discover new tales to delve into. The event promoted a sense of community, as students engaged in conversations about their preferred genres, recommended books to one another, and shared their excitement for reading.



These activities not only highlighted the importance of books but also fostered a sense of community and togetherness among our students. Through events like Book Week, we strive to nurture a lifelong love for reading, empowering our students to become avid readers and lifelong learners.

Priyanka B P
Elementary Library Supervisor



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Library Media Center (LMC)

Sakura Medal winners

The Sakura Medal is a reading list of books chosen and curated by librarians in international schools in Japan. A winning book is voted on at the end of the school year.

Throughout the year, students have been encouraged to read the Sakura Medal books, and many students read this year's books for their English reading portfolios.

The winning books have been announced, and are as follows:

Middle school:

- 1st:** *When the World Was Ours*—Liz Kessler
2nd: *Ground Zero*—Alan Gratz
3rd: *Amari and the Night Brothers*—B.B. Alston

At KIST, the most popular books in middle school were:

- 1st:** *Hide and Seeker*—Daka Hermon
2nd: *The Supreme Lie*—Geraldine McCaughrean
3rd: *The Girl from the Sea*—Molly Ostertag



New books

Thanks to the kind support of the CA Library Committee, the Secondary and Elementary libraries were able to buy an **extra 144,040 yen each** worth of books! This is made possible in part to book donations, and the hard work of the CA, which are then sold to raise money for KIST Libraries. Here are some of the new titles coming soon to the LMC thanks to the money raised by the CA committee! Posters designed by Library Elves service students.

World Book Day

On April 24, both Elementary and Secondary Schools celebrated World Book Day. World Book Day celebrates reading and literacy, and aims to foster a love of books.

We saw some fabulous costumes from both students and staff, and had some fun events like a Library 'treasure hunt' and matching teachers to their favourite books.



Shannon Goan
LMC Librarian



Secondary ELS

Something we've all discovered over the course of the school year is how important it is to expand an already exemplary and extraordinary vocabulary to amplify your English abilities, so, before you leave for the holidays, let's have a quick chat about how we can keep your English levels up over the summer. Maybe, just maybe, we can push them further and farther while you're out and about enjoying the holidays. We're talking about building confidence, amping up those already ambitious vocabularies, and strengthening those speaking strategies!

Good habits make happy homes

When you get home, there's a chance that a lot of you will immediately switch your English conversation brains to "off" in favor of communicating with your friends and families in a different language, whether that's Japanese, Hindi, Russian, Swahili, any number of the multitude of languages represented here at KIST...and I get that. No, really, I do. When I fly home to see my family, I'm almost desperate for the chance to order a cheeseburger in English, so there's a level of mutual understanding here.

But at the same time, please think about this: it can take a month or more to build up a habit, but only a day or two to break down that same habit you've just spent four weeks building up. You're used to speaking English right now, so don't throw that away. You'll just end up feeling frustrated at why you're having such a hard time when you come back after the holidays.

Read what we told you not to (for class)!

With the doom and gloom out of the way, maybe we can look at some fun ways to keep English in your lives and maybe, just maybe, have some fun at the same time.

Think back to your IRPs and how devastated you all were that you weren't allowed to do reports on *manga*. Well, now that it's the summer, go wild: read all the *manga* in English that you can, because you might end up picking up some phrases or word usage you wouldn't have otherwise. I'm not saying that it's all going to be 100% useful, but language absorption comes in all shapes and forms.

If you want to challenge yourself, try reading the Japanese or native version of a *manga* or other easy bit of text, and then read the English version and see what's different. There can be a shocking amount of differences in even the simplest things sometimes, and you can see where translators and editors have to try and patch the holes or build bridges to make the stories work.



Singing to stay cool

If you enjoy karaoke, I highly recommend that you give English songs a try. There's a very interesting side effect of singing in different languages that you might not be aware of, but it's that you'll start to parrot the accents or pronunciations you're trying to sing! The more you're focused on having fun with it, the less you're going to be listening and picking apart how you sound. Your mouth gets more used to the foreign sounds and makes it easier to get out those words in normal conversation, so you might find it even easier to speak English when you

get back, and you might even be able to apply this to other languages, too (I know a lot of you love K-Pop, so have at it)!



Video games: not just for adults!

If you want to try something that will definitely throw you for a loop (but in a good way), change the language settings on your game console to English. Will it be challenging? Definitely. Will it be fun? Possibly. Will you get to tell me in the fall that you tried it and it was at least a fun little experiment? Almost certainly! A lot of your games these days do have language options that let you



listen in Japanese or English with subtitles, so that's an option you can use that won't mess with your gameplay, but will also give you a different, not-as-disruptive experience.

A teacher is telling you it's okay to watch movies and TV!

Before you run off and tell your parents I've given you permission to plug your frontal cortex into a YouTube and Netflix feed for the entirety of the summer, let's have a look at a couple of caveats: you've got to balance indoor and outdoor activities, social media is not a replacement for real human interaction, and there's an educational purpose to all this glorious media binging.



Watch things in different languages and turn the subtitles on. Pretty much every streaming service has this feature, and you might be surprised that even some of your teachers will listen to things in their native languages with subtitles on, because some of us are old and can't hear quite so well anymore. Also, because some of us (like me) want to watch *anime* in Japanese and don't understand it, so if we want to follow what's happening, we need the subtitles or we're lost.

If you go to the movies, try and see a screening in whatever native language the film comes in, you might enjoy it! And I'm not just saying that because it feels like the subtitled screenings have fewer people on average than the dubbed showings, and that means it'll be easier to get tickets, but it is a very handy bit of ticketing trickery that I've used to my advantage in the past when something popular has come out.

English is everywhere

Just like that, it's probably harder to avoid English these days than to just accept it's around, so why not embrace it? There's more than one way to experience it, so while you've got some free time, enjoy it however you can. Meet up with KIST friends, and try to speak English with each other for at least part of the time. Play games in English. Order off the English menu at restaurants. Any of the million little ways you can keep it in your lives, give them a shot; the choice is yours.

Charlie Owen
Secondary ELS Instructor



Athletics Update

Winter season (ISTAA basketball) update

The winter issue of *The Comet* was distributed before the completion of the ISTAA basketball season.

- The U-14 boys beat LFIT and CIS but lost 33–23 to Columbia in the ISTAA final.
- The U-18 girls had an unfortunate 27–26 loss to Columbia in the semi-final.
- The U-18 boys crushed KAIS (payback for their loss with a depleted team in the season) 64–41 and lead LFIT most of the game to win the tournament 45–41. **ISTAA champions 2023!**

Overall, a great effort from these teams this season!



Spring 2023 athletics news

Spring season conclusion—KIST teams finished their full spring schedule in the Kanto Plain league and will finish up their ISTAA futsal season in the first and second weeks of June. Below are some short summaries from the spring season from the coaches!

JV girls' soccer team

This season, the JV girls' soccer team grew to its biggest numbers, with 25 players joining the squad. Though the desire was there, results were hard to come by and we found ourselves taking some tough losses despite the effort in training. With that said, I am extremely proud of all the players who came out, and we have a ton of potential for the future with G9 making up over half of our squad. I also want to thank all of our G11s for what will be their final JV girls' soccer season. Great job this season everyone, and I hope to see you all on the pitch next year!

Coach Buck



MS and JV boys' baseball teams

Middle school team

This year, we were able to participate in the Kanto Plain league and tournament even though our team consisted mainly of beginners with little baseball experience. During the league games, KIST lost to YIS and St. Maur, but beat ASIJ. Although we lost two games in a row at the tournament, the players did a great job of showing the skills they had acquired in the

little time they had to practice.

In particular, they seemed to realize the importance of cooperating with other team members and showing good teamwork in the course of the games. I look forward to their further growth next year by making the most of this experience.



High school team

This year we were able to hold our first JV practice games with teams from the Kanto Plain league. It was the first time for the players to play with hardballs. At first, they were a bit confused, but as the game progressed, they became accustomed to the speedy feel of the ball and played with vigor. We were able to play St. Mary's and ASIJ once each this year. We plan to have more games next year. We are especially looking for people who want to pitch.

Coach Nogami



MS girls' basketball teams (Kanto League A and B pool)

After a couple seasons off due to COVID-19 and a limited schedule last season, our MS girls' basketball team was back in action for a full season for the first time since 2019. Naturally we had many inexperienced players—many of the B team players coming in with no basketball experience whatsoever. Despite this, the girls were motivated and worked hard in practice even though we had to travel to many different local gyms for practice.

Our B team started the season slowly but gradually got stronger and won 3 games against 7 losses. Two of the losses were very close. I really look forward to this group developing further next season.

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Our A team finished the league in 5th out of 10 teams with 6 wins and 4 losses. It was a great result, though the team were extremely unlucky with injuries late in the season, particularly one of our top players in the second last game of the season. Hence, we lost to a strong Seisen team (who lost in the final to ASIJ) 22–10 in the QF. The game was tied 8–8 at the half which shows just how good the team had become. It was a pleasure coaching them again this season.

Mr. Ota



ISTAA futsal season (to date)

U-14 boys

After keeping the core of the successful 2021–22 futsal squad intact, hopes were high for another successful string of results for the U14 boys.

The initial two games were successes with the whole squad making contributions in convincing wins against KAIS and Shinagawa International.

The first challenge came against BST and, despite going into an early lead, the team were unable to take their chances and were ultimately punished by more ruthless finishing from the opposition.

A mini tournament at LFIT gave the team an opportunity to bounce back. Bounce back they did with a fantastic squad performance against LFIT, with nearly every member of the squad getting on the scoresheet. The second game was against Aoba, a team that provided the only narrow defeat for the team in a thrilling game from the previous season. This game was similarly tight with both teams exchanging goals. KIST peppered the Aoba goal, yet every combination of footwork and goalkeeper somehow kept the ball out. However, as KIST pushed for a winner, they were caught out on the break and Aoba were able to sneak away with the win.

Thank you to all the G8s who have played over the past two seasons and contributed to the success of the team. We wish them well for the step up to the U-18s squad next year.

Coach Archer

U-14 girls

Building from their progress with the MS girls' soccer team in winter, the girls have quickly made the adjustment to 5-a-side futsal. Thus far we have had a

friendly against a team of G9 girls from LFIT in which the KIST MS girls (with the help of two G9 girls because a few players were unavailable) won 2–1 and clearly had the better opportunities. Our first official league game was at BST in which we did not have a regular goalkeeper but were still able to finish with a 3–3 draw. Overall, the girls still have a few things to work on; however, they have done a great job in a short period of time keeping their shape on the pitch. We play DSTY, Horizon, and UIA over the next couple of weeks to see how far we have come.

Mr. Ota



U-18 girls

This year, KIST U-18 girls' futsal have had an excellent start to the season! With a 2–1 record, including a huge 3–2 comeback victory against BST, the girls are poised to finish the season in the top 2. This will put them in good stead for the end of season tournament! All the girls who have participated have grown and excelled, especially considering we have been limited to only a couple practices. Good luck in the rest of the season girls! Let's end with some big victories!

Coach Buck

U-18 boys

The HS boys' futsal team have had a great season. Starting off with wins against Columbia and our big rivals BST, we had high hopes. With a couple of tough games that followed, the team were determined and focused from this point on. With stellar performances from all involved, the team showed just how good they can be and should be proud of the work that they have put in this year. I wish them every success in the seasons to come.

Coach Smith

The futsal season will finish with tournaments in the first and second weeks of June. Updates will be available in the next issue of *The Comet*!

Thank you to all the coaches for making the spring season possible!

Results, team rosters, schedules and other information can be found on Schoology under KIST Athletics by any member of the KIST community.

Dennis Ota

Athletics Coordinator



Experimental Sciences Department Snapshot



Welcome to the Experimental Sciences Snapshot, which as the name suggests, provides insight into some moments at each grade level and subjects explored during the current semester.

Cesar Cely

Subject Area Coordinator—Science



LSP Grade 6

In G6, students completed a heart dissection to deepen their understanding of the structure of the heart. Students used scalpels and tweezers to dissect a pig's heart and explore its chambers, valves and vessels. This activity helped students to gain awareness of what the heart looks like in real life and contributed to the development of their practical skills.

Students also completed a flower dissection to better understand the functions of the structures within a flower. This activity helped students to connect what they had learned in class to things they observe outside the classroom on a regular basis, and helped to strengthen their memory of the names of the parts of a flower and the roles they play in sexual reproduction.



LSP Grade 7

In G7, students took part in a "Mini Science Fair" this semester. In small groups, students picked an aim and came up with a research question to address their aim. They then worked collaboratively to design an investigation to answer their research question. Students then carried out their practicals and collected data. They then processed their data and analyzed their results. Students drew conclusions from their results, evaluated their method, and thought about potential further investigations. They displayed their findings on a poster and presented their investigations to a group of judges. We then had an awards ceremony where students received prizes and were commended for their performance. This activity really helped to develop students' practical skills, critical thinking skills, and collaboration skills.

Students conducting their experiment for the Mini Science Fair.

LSP Grade 8

In G8, students have been finishing with the LSP curriculum and consolidating their knowledge with a lot of practical work to link their theoretical knowledge to real-life applications. Throughout the year they focused on turning circuit diagrams to real-life circuits, making force diagrams of observable interactions, and thinking like industrial chemists by altering the rate of reaction through various means.

Students using circuit diagrams to correctly place the components in the right orientation, using ammeters and voltmeters.



IGCSE Biology

In Biology, G10 students have been able to focus on applying practical skills to demonstrate their understanding of several life processes, such as measuring rates of key reactions that happen in living organisms, and examining various organs to see how structure is related to function. Grade 9 has had the opportunity to delve into looking into rate of photosynthesis in the aquatic plant Elodea. They also had the opportunity to look at some organs such as the kidneys, the heart, and the lungs to enable them to spot key structures, consolidating what they have gone through in the unit.

IGCSE Chemistry

In Chemistry, students have been learning about many different types of reactions. We looked at acid base reactions and made a universal indicator rainbow by diluting acids and alkalis. We continued learning about different chemical reactions with experiments to put metals into order of reactivity based on their reactions with water and acids, as well as with metal salts. Students in G10 have recently finished the IGCSE course and at the end of the course used what they know about organic chemistry to name and then make different esters, which are used in perfumes and flavourings, and the room was filled with a range of interesting fruity smells.

Testing the pH of acids and alkalis with universal indicators.



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IGCSE Physics

I found this year's physics class to be highly engaging and fascinating. From thermodynamics to electromagnetism, every unit had its own challenges and opportunities for growth, which allowed me and all my classmates to develop a deeper love for physics. One unit that I especially enjoyed was electricity and circuits. In this unit, I got the chance to experiment with many interesting circuits and components which I had never seen before. Not only did this help me grasp the fundamental concepts of electricity, but it also stimulated my creativity and problem-solving skills. One specific practical that I remember involved designing our own experiment to explore the temperature-dependent resistance properties of NTC thermistors. In my experiment, I applied my understanding from the thermodynamics unit and used the concept of thermal dissipation to design an experiment to find the temperature coefficient of resistance for an NTC thermistor. Many other groups in our class also designed very interesting experiments. Overall, it was a very engaging and enlightening experience which amplified my love for physics.

Zayan (G10A)



Sample of data collection of the resistance of a thermistor sensor using a multimeter and a thermometer.

DP ESS

In DP ESS, we explored the threats to biodiversity and the conservation strategies in place to reduce those. One of the main threats we focused on was the introduction of invasive species and the damage they can cause to endemic species by increasing competition and spreading disease. Students produced "Wanted" posters to illustrate a series of case studies of invasive species and strategies that can be adopted to minimize the loss of biodiversity.



Example of student work.



DP Chemistry

In DP Chemistry we have completed a range of experiments using mole calculations as well as measuring rates and enthalpy changes. The practical chemistry skills students have learnt will be invaluable for their independent investigation next year. The difficulty and complexity of experiments is significantly greater than in IGCSE and it has been rewarding watching students develop their skills throughout this year.

Investigating rates of reaction.



DP Physics

These are pictures of a bubble and a diffraction grating. At first glance, it may not seem like much other than a clear plastic film covered by colorful material, soap, water, and lots of fun; however, when viewed from a different angle, a whole new world of colors is visible. This is the world of thin film interference and diffraction, which is what we studied in Physics recently. Provided with the opportunity to experience

these two phenomena firsthand, we used soap and diffraction gratings to view their effects, observing an array of fascinating patterns and colors of the rainbow. The physics behind this explained the behaviors of light, specifically when it passes through thin films and slits. It was quite an engaging lesson!

Kushagra (G11B)



Experimenting with thin film interference in soap films and diffraction gratings.

DP Biology

Over the two years in DP Biology we have explored a lot of micro and macro systems within our living world. These activities have highlighted how much fun learning about life can be! How to denature an egg, how exactly do bubbles work and why they are an excellent analogue for the cell membrane. In G11 we explored how light affects photosynthesis as well had a go at creating our own self-sustaining mesocosms. No DP course is ever complete without microscope investigations and dissections.

Various practicals were carried out during the semester.



Staff 10!

In this month's Staff 10!, we are pleased to present **Julian Buck** who joined us in August 2020 as a PE teacher in the Elementary School. He also has teaching duties with selected classes in the lower Secondary School.

1) Tell us something interesting about your hometown.

My hometown is a tricky one. I moved a lot as a kid, so I do not have a set hometown. However, if I had to pick one, it would be Hong Kong because I spent the most time there. When living there, I at one point lived on the most densely populated island in the world (Ap Lei Chau).

2) What is your favorite place in the world?

Though there are many places I love, sitting at my uncle's house in Sea Cliff, Long Island (New York), overlooking the Long Island sound with a coffee and a proper New York bagel is definitely my favorite place in the world to be.

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

If I could meet anyone, it would be Leslie Nielsen. Leslie Nielsen is one of the funniest actors of all time. I love every movie he is in, and if he were alive, I would love to meet him and just laugh in his presence. If not Leslie Nielsen, I'd love to meet Mel Brooks, the greatest comedy writer of all time.

4) Do you have any special skills or talents?

I can turn most popular songs into songs about whatever I happen to be doing. This has become particularly common now that I have a young son. Diaper change time has become song change time as well.

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

I am dichromatic, or red/green colorblind.

6) What is your most prized possession?

For a long time, my most prized possession was a canvas tapestry that has travelled the world with me and has grown as I and others have added artworks to it. However, my most prized possession now, which really isn't a possession, is my son. Nothing else compares!



Mr. Buck and his most prized "possession".

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

This is a tough one. I am a strong **communicator**, but I am also a **risk-taker**, and I am **principled** in everything I do.

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

I don't think I would. The only thing I might change would be to put more effort into my sports when I was younger as I genuinely had a chance to play a few sports professionally but did not take them seriously enough.

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

I am constantly trying to be the best father I can be. Having a child really changes your perspective on what is important and needed in life and is something you can constantly improve.

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

You all have homework – do something fun!



Turnitin Draft Coach

We recently announced the trial of a new tool for secondary students called **Turnitin Draft Coach**. This powerful writing tool, accessible via Word Online, aims to enhance students' academic writing skills and promote academic integrity. It will be available for all secondary students using Microsoft Word online.

Turnitin Draft Coach for students offers real-time feedback and guidance, helping students improve grammar, clarity, coherence and originality (avoiding plagiarism) in their writing assignments. It provides access to valuable resources, such as **similarity reports**, **citations reports**, and a **grammar guide**, which further aid students in their writing development.

While Turnitin Draft Coach for students cannot currently identify AI-generated text, it is important to note that the Turnitin tool version used by teachers is more powerful than the Draft Coach and can check work for plagiarism by checking for AI-generated text, as well as originality. Please be aware that at KIST, the use of AI-generated text for academic assignments without proper citations is not allowed, unless explicitly permitted by the teachers.

We believe that Turnitin Draft Coach will empower students in their writing, produce higher-quality academic work, and gain confidence in their abilities. Parents, we encourage you to support your child's use of Turnitin Draft Coach by familiarizing yourselves with its capabilities.

Some resources are available [on Schoology in the IT Support \(Family Page\) Group Resources page](#).

Should you have any questions or encounter any technical issues, please don't hesitate to contact our IT support team at it.support@kist.ed.jp. If you have any general questions about academic integrity, please contact Secondary School Vice Principal, John Rose, at john.rose@kist.ed.jp.

IT Support Team



Nurse's Notes



Food allergies (Part 1)

Fifty to sixty years ago, food allergies were almost non-existent in Japan; however, changes in diet have led to a huge increase in the intake of eggs, milk and meat, and it is thought that a diet high in animal protein and fat is the main cause of food allergies. The body mistakes food that is not harmful to the body for a foreign substance and the immune response becomes oversensitive and tries to attack the foreign substance. It is estimated that 5–10% of infants and toddlers today and 1–3% at school age and beyond have food allergies. This article provides information on symptoms caused by allergies. In the September issue of *The Comet*, I will discuss the treatment of food allergies.

Common food allergies

	0-year-olds	1 year olds	2–3-year-olds	4–6-year-olds	7–19-year-olds	>20-year-olds
1	Eggs (58%)	Eggs (39%)	Fish roe (20%)	Fruits (17%)	*Crustaceans (17%)	Wheat (38%)
2	Milk (24%)	Fish roe (13%)	Eggs (14%)	Eggs (16%)	Fruits (13%)	Fish (13%)
3	Wheat (12%)	Milk (9%)	Peanuts (12%)	Peanuts (11%)	Eggs (10%)	Crustaceans (10%)
4		Peanuts (12%)	Nuts (11%)	Buckwheat (9%)	Wheat (9%)	Fruits (7%)
5		Fruits (9%)	Fruits (9%)	Fish roe (9%)	Buckwheat (9%)	

From the Guidelines for the Treatment of Food Allergies (2018 revised edition)

*Crustaceans include shrimp and crabs

Symptoms

- Skin symptoms (>80% of total): Itching, swelling, urticaria, eczema and skin redness
- Mucosal symptoms (23%): Itchy or bloodshot eyes, nasal discharge, nasal congestion, itching, discomfort, irritation in the throat and oral cavity
- Digestive symptoms (13%): Abdominal pain, diarrhoea, bloody stools, nausea and vomiting
- Respiratory symptoms (28%): Cough, asthma-like wheezing, difficulty breathing and breathlessness
- Neurological symptoms (5%): Headache and decreased vitality
- **※Anaphylaxis (11%):** A severe acute allergic reaction that appears in multiple organs and throughout the body within minutes to hours after eating.
 - ① Skin conditions (generalised rash, itching or flushing), mucosal symptoms (e.g. swelling of lips and tongue etc.)
 - ② Rapid (within minutes to hours) onset of one of the following symptoms: respiratory symptoms (dyspnoea, airway narrowing, wheezing/whistling: wheezing, hypoxaemia) or cardiovascular symptoms (decreasing blood pressure, decreasing level of consciousness)
 (※Anaphylaxis has one of the symptoms of ① + one of the symptoms of ②)

In addition to anaphylactic symptoms, **anaphylactic shock** can cause a drop in blood pressure and loss of consciousness, leading to a state of shock. In such cases, as there is a life-threatening risk, call an ambulance and seek medical attention immediately.

Special food allergies

Food-dependent exercise-induced anaphylaxis

Rare anaphylactic shock caused by a combination of food and exercise (e.g. after ingestion of wheat, fish or shellfish), and during strenuous exercise such as playing football during breaks, urticaria may appear, followed by respiratory symptoms such as laryngeal oedema and wheezing, which may lead to a state of shock.

Oral allergy syndrome

When hay fever sufferers eat fruit (kiwi, melon, peach, pineapple, apple etc.), vegetables and nuts, they may experience redness around the mouth, swelling in the mouth, sore throat and discomfort. However, most cases resolve spontaneously after a while. This occurs when the protein components (allergens) that cause hay fever and the proteins in these plant-derived foods have some similarities in structure (common antibodies), causing an allergic reaction in the mouth. It is important to note that repeated ingestion, even if initially only in the oral cavity, can lead to systemic urticarial symptoms, asthma and anaphylactic shock.



Yukiko Yamazaki
School Nurse

Reference:

Japanese Society of Allergology. (n.d.). *Food Allergies*. Retrieved May 11, 2023 from <https://allergyportal.jp/knowledge/food/>

KIST Community Association (CA) News



2022–23 events throughout the year

- Oct. 10, 2022: Coffee morning (Secondary)
- Nov. 23, 2022: Book sale and secondhand uniform sale
- Dec. 2, 2022: Christmas wreath workshop event
- Dec. 16, 2022: Bake sale
- Jan. 9, 2023: Coffee morning (Secondary)
- Jan. 24, 2023: (ISC) 2 safe and secure online session
- Feb. 23, 2023: Coffee morning (Secondary)
- Feb. 23, 2023: CTH Turkey disaster relief fundraising support
- Feb. 27, 2023: G10 Amazon Web Services corporate session
- Mar. 13, 2023: CAS and Service session
- Mar. 13, 2023: G10 IBM corporate session
- Apr. 22, 2023: Cultural workshop—English afternoon tea
- Apr. 24, 2023: Book Week—Honesty box book sale
- Apr. 27, 2023: Book Week—Library and Japanese bags sale
- May 10, 2023: Parent talk session—Mrs. Branka
- May 17, 2023: ESRC/SRC popcorn machine trial
- May 16, 2023: CA coffee morning—Thank you meeting
- May 29, 2023: Secondhand uniform sale
- Jun. 12, 2023: ESRC/SRC Popcorn and movie Monday support

Welcome all parents! 2023–24

Sign-up
for CA!!



CA funds contributions



- ▶ [List of books for Secondary LMC](#)
- ▶ [List of books for Elementary Library](#)



English-style afternoon tea event

Items that the
CA supported...



Book Week, Honesty box
book sale



Talk session with Mrs. Branka,
parent of Igor, Class of 2019

New CA Officers 2023–24



President

Priyanka Nadkar

Parent of
G5 Ashlesha,
G2 Aneesha



Vice President

Harumi Yamamoto

Parent of
G5 Len



Treasurer

Ikuyo Matsuda

Parent of
K3B Reina



Secretary

Fumiko Travin

Parent of
K3A Sai,
K2B Ori



We express our sincere gratitude to all CA members for their dedicated support throughout 2022–23!

University Guidance News

Let's all get an internship! Or, do we not need that?

There has been a lot of talk within the KIST hallways this year on the topics of internships. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss this in more detail. **For a similar topic, I recommend checking out *The Comet* June 2022 issue where competitions were discussed in a similar manner.**

What are internships?

An internship is generally considered as work experience at the most introductory level. It is often unpaid and considered a learning experience for the person doing the internship, known as the "intern". This is commonly done during university as the soon-to-be graduate is moving closer to going out into society and enrolling in the work force. **These days, however, internships have become a popular option for high school students as well.**

Are they required?

NO! Only students pursuing direct entry medical programs NEED internships or work experience in a place that has patient care/customer service opportunities. For everyone else, an internship is but one option by which you could show off yourself and your interests. Research opportunities, summer programs, speech contests, music performances and the like, are of a similar value. **Students should show off what is important to them and what makes them unique in any way they can.** As can be seen by the below chart from the admissions office at Stanford University, "work experience" is one of the parts they may consider for application, but more important is how that may impact your talent/ability or character/personal qualities.

	Very Important	Important	Considered	Not Considered
Academic				
Range of secondary school record	X			
Class rank	X			
Academic GPA	X			
Standardized test scores	X			
Application Essay	X			
Recommendations	X			
Nonacademic				
Interview			X	
Extracurricular activities	X			
Talent/ability	X			
Character/personal qualities	X			
First generation			X	
Alumni/ae relation			X	
Geographical residence			X	
State residency				X
Religious affiliation/commitment				X
Racial/ethnic status			X	
Volunteer work			X	
Work experience			X	
Level of applicant's interest				X

What benefits would an internship bring?

The benefits are many and would often depend on length of time spent, company policies, and tasks assigned by the respective company. They could be including but not limited to the following:

- Experience to add to a resume and/or university application, especially if in a relevant field and some potential real skill development.
- Understanding of what a real job may be like at a similar company in the future, which may help for choosing a major.
- Being able to get your "foot in the door" and develop a relationship with a potential future employer.

- Having a letter of reference or certificate from completion of the program that may help with future internships, jobs and university applications.



Sounds great, but what are the difficulties or drawbacks?

While the benefits generally outweigh the negatives, there are many key points to consider:

- There may be language barriers or difficulties for those who are not proficient in Japanese to acquire an internship in Japan, even with the number of global companies in Tokyo.
- Because working days for companies are generally Monday–Friday, most internships would only be reasonable during summer or winter breaks.
- Companies are more likely to want to work with current university students as that person may be more productive and knowledgeable while having potential for entering the workforce sooner.
- Because of the above points, international schools do not receive as much information about potential internships for high school students, so more personal research may be needed.

For those wanting to consider internships, what comes next?

Families wanting to consider internships in the end should take the following steps:

- Speak with our office to see if there are any opportunities available within the field you are interested in.
- If not, consider those connections you have with family and friends in or outside of Japan. Like job opportunities after graduation, sometimes good connections can help when first starting out!
- Lastly, if the options above do not work, do some research on the local companies that are nearest to your house or ones that have international offices. Reaching out to the owners of smaller shops or the Public Relations (PR) teams of larger offices are the best bets. Explain that as a high school student, you have a large interest in what they are doing and want to learn more about how things work and possibly even help with small tasks if there is anything at all. *(You want to provide a benefit to them, not be a hindrance. Remember, at this point, they are 100% doing a potential favor for you, so make it worth their consideration!)*
- And while this is a last consideration, there are also sites online such as [GoAbroad](#) that offer options, but please keep in mind that many of these options may be from paid companies.

Inaugural Cialfo scholarship award winner

We are pleased to announce the first of hopefully many years of a successful scholarship partnership between KIST and our university software partner Cialfo for the "Tech for Good Scholarship". **This year our Class of 2023 graduate, Heet, received the award.**

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Cialfo is a platform that we use for university research, data tracking, and in some cases, applying to universities. To qualify for the scholarship, the following criteria needed to be met:

- Overall estimated GPA of 3.8 or higher
- Used the Cialfo Direct Apply option for university applications
- Outstanding academic/personal conduct throughout the high school years at KIST

There was also a prompt issued from Cialfo tasked to answer the question of **"How do you plan to leverage technology to create a positive social**



impact in or after university?"
Heet's reply can be read below.

In response to an ineffective roll-out of rentable electric-scooters in Japan, I thought, 'why is something so fun, convenient, and cheap, barely used?' And then I came to realize the issue: 'why would millions of aging Japanese use something that isn't accessible to them?' Statistics by the WHO confirmed this; with the projected estimate of 1 out of 6 people being over the age of 60 globally by 2030, we MUST leverage technology to increase affordability of healthcare, innovate to enhance mobility, and much more. Observing a lack of innovation assisting the elderly has driven me towards joining the effort to provide our aging societies with more accessible infrastructure boosting mobility.

I gained experience tackling this issue by leading a group of high-schoolers to 3D-design a societally inclusive electric-scooter alternative. We conducted field/desk research analyzing shortcomings of existing models, learned to utilize computer-aided design and computational fluid dynamics to obtain a reliable and tested prototype, and implemented accessibility-boosting features—including a heavier base to lower the center of gravity and improve balance, and a thicker stem to increase drag and reduce risks of sudden accelerations. I have found satisfaction in continuously striving to refine designs and contemplate new prototypes; a recent example involved a mechanism attaching a motorcycle front wheel and engine to wheelchairs, transforming them to more mobile, agile, and convenient methods of transport when required, thus enabling the elderly or disabled to experience greater independence.

At university, I plan to continue pursuing this project exploring technological solutions aimed at strengthening mobility. In particular, using resources available to me, I wish to transition from digital to physical development and testing of these various prototypes. For instance, I am excited to join makerspaces and use machinery such as 3D-printers to bring digital prototypes to life. Moreover, as a mechanical engineering student, I am confident that participating in clubs including formula racing will allow me to acquire the technical know-how of producing functional vehicles. Additionally, it would be an incredible opportunity to make use of sophisticated equipment to test physical models; for example, using wind tunnels to aerodynamically test prototypes would be hugely productive.

Ultimately, either at or after university, my long-term goal is to bring these prototypes to fruition and make this project accessible to the public. I am deeply committed to joining others in paving the path towards a more inclusive and resilient future catering to today's aging societies.

We are always excited to share the successes of our graduates and hope that our current students can remain inspired to show off the best versions of themselves both while students, during university applications, and past graduation.

I will see you again next term, please e-mail me with any questions throughout the summer and I'll respond as quickly as I can!

Thomas Waterfall
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Office hours: Monday–Friday,
8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
University Guidance Office (3F
Secondary Building)



Class of 2023



(Back row L>R) **Rinka, Su Yeon, Junyung, Keanu, Gijeong, In Kyu, Heet, Amey, Samii, Varun, Shin, Hibiki, Gun Hyuk**

(Middle row L>R) **Hajime, Hamsika, Nehal, Calder, Shuonan, Akanksha, Reed, Hriday, Tatsunori, Mariko, Devaj, Gini**

(Front row L>R) **Hinano, Jiaying, Tomoko, Sara, Archita, Shreya, Saanvi, Nidhi, Yuki, Mai, Shona, Eanya**

CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD LUCK!

