



# The Comet

The Newsletter of K. International School Tokyo

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## From the Head of School



As educators, we expect that there will be occasions when our students are not able to complete their work. While the explanations students give for failing to complete their work can be frustrating, or even entertaining at times, some are worthy of further investigation. In a recent Washington Post article, it was noted that one reason some students struggle with studying is that they simply do not know how. James Patterson explained in his article titled *Many students don't know how to study, here's how parents can help*, that some students lack proper study habits and skills, or that they rely on strategies that are ineffective.

In the article, Patterson described that while some popular strategies are not as effective as previously thought, others can be very effective if utilized properly. Based on the advice of experts, he described five strategies that are known to assist students in studying more effectively.



### 1. Set it up

Setting it up refers to establishing a regular time and routine for doing homework. Choosing an appropriate setting, free from distractions, is also important in helping your child develop productive study habits. It is important to note that according to research, some students learn better when they vary the places where they study, so every parent should determine what is best for their child.

### 2. Space it out

Spacing it out refers to spending time on a subject, taking a break, and then revisiting the same topic. According to the author, a student who studies a topic for one hour, three times throughout the week, will likely learn the information better than a student who spends three consecutive hours on that topic in one evening.



### 3. Mix it up

Mixing it up refers to practicing a variety of skills during one study session. When a study session involves a mix of topics or approaches, students can better differentiate between the types of problems and select the best method for each.

Continued on next page

## DATES TO REMEMBER



### December 2020

- 11 (K3-G5) LEAP classes end
- 11 (K1-G3) After care not available on this day
- 14-16 (G9-G11) Semester 1 examinations
- 17 Winter celebration rehearsals
- 18 Winter celebration (virtual format)
- 18 (K1-G3) After care not available on this day
- 19-Jan 10 Winter vacation
- 21-22 Office open

### January 2021

- 11 School resumes for all students
- 11 2021-2022 enrollment applications close
- 11-18 (G12) Semester 1 DP mock examinations
- 14 (G5) PYP exhibition explanation session
- 22 (G6-G10) Mathematics diagnostic testing (\*Morning)
- 22 End of semester 1
- 22 (S) Half day for Secondary students
- 25 Semester 2 commences
- 25 (K3-G5) Semester 2 LEAP classes begin this week
- 25/26/28/29 2021-2022 enrollment interviews
- 27 Japanese New Year Party (\*Tentative)
- 29 (K1/K2/K3) School holiday (for students)



Continued from previous page

#### 4. Bring it back

Bringing it back refers to students being quizzed about the material they have studied, either by themselves or by others. Quick quizzes allow students to "know what they know" and determine the things that they do not yet know.



#### 5. Make it deeper

It is often said that "the best way to learn something is to teach it." Making it deeper refers to having students learn the material well

enough to teach somebody. It is common for students to simply gather facts for quick recall rather than engaging in deeper learning about a subject. The act of teaching a topic to someone has the ability to enhance long-term understanding of a topic and develop a deeper interest in it.

Life is busy and there will be times when students are not able to complete their work. The main takeaway from this article is that through the implementation of sound study habits, the time our children put into their studying can become more efficient and productive.

The more efficient and productive our children's study time is, the more they will enjoy the process and have time for other activities of their choice.

As we move closer to the winter vacation, I would like to wish you all a wonderful holiday! Although many of us may not be able to travel back to our home countries this year, I still feel lucky to be part of such a wonderful school community and living in such a fantastic country! I wish all of you the best this festive season and a happy new year!

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



## Emergency Communication System

General school notices related to class activities, excursions, parent workshops, KIST Community Association (CA) meeting minutes, health alerts and the like are e-mailed to families through the E-Communications system. An archive of messages sent may be accessed on KISTnet at the link below (log in required).



### Web [E-Communications 2020-21 Archive](#)

Important school notices related to emergency situations such as school and grade/class closures due to inclement weather conditions, health epidemics and the like, however, are not sent through E-Communications. Instead, they are sent through our separate **Emergency Communication System (ECS)**.

Through the ECS, in addition to your KIST parent e-mail address, families are able to register up to four personal e-mail addresses directly into the system in order to receive emergency notices from the school in a timely fashion. As the school is not able to update personally registered addresses, it is the responsibility of families to do so themselves. **Failure to update your registered addresses may result in you not receiving important information from the school during emergency situations.** If you wish to change any of the addresses you have registered, please do so directly via the ECS.

The ECS log in page is accessible from the school website 'Community' portal at the link below (log in required). User Guides in both English and Japanese are also available.

Web <https://www.kist.ed.jp/user>

If you have any questions about accessing the ECS, please contact our IT support team at [it.support@kist.ed.jp](mailto:it.support@kist.ed.jp).

## Staff Professional Development



### Staff sit DP examinations!

At KIST we place a strong emphasis on academic success and have a common understanding among our staff that it takes a team effort from K1 through G12 to support our students. We recognize that in order to prepare our students for the IB Diploma Programme, it is critical we understand what they need to know and be able to do in order to be successful.

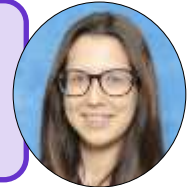
In his book titled, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, one of the seven habits Stephen Covey listed is to "begin with the end in mind". As such, on Saturday, October 24, a number of our Elementary classroom teachers, Japanese teachers, and ELS instructors took part in a rather unique professional development opportunity.

In this PD session, led by our Secondary English Subject Area Coordinator, Mr. Steve Otis, our staff learned about and sat a previous DP English or Japanese exam. Understanding the skills necessary for our students to be successful allows our staff to work towards a common goal and plan a path to reach that goal.

Here are some staff reflections:

“

As a previous English major, I really enjoyed the PD session. It was very interesting to see the depth of what the students are working towards, especially coming all the way from K1!”  
—Ms. Emma (K1 teacher)



“

I thought that Mr. Otis was a fantastic speaker with tremendous knowledge about his subject, and he made looking at an English exam interesting. I was able to get a clear sense of the passion and dedication the DP teachers have in ensuring students work towards good outcomes.”  
—Ms. Millican (G3 teacher)



“

It was an eye-opening experience that helped me understand how the little tools we help students build in the elementary school get used in the end.”  
—Ms. Christie (G1 teacher)



“

Participating in the PD brought back some memories of the long-forgotten past. It was a good reminder to me as a teacher that oftentimes we ask students to do things which are actually quite difficult to do! I am glad to have taken the PD as I have been able to affirm that ATLs, or different skills, are truly an important ingredient to a student's success.”  
—Ms. Aya (G2 teacher)



# Professional Development



## Language of Inclusion

### Language sets us apart as well as brings us together.

It is not a secret that K. International School Tokyo is an IB school. Just as it is not a secret that all IB schools rely on a concept known as "international mindedness" to smooth the wrinkles and obstacles that threaten the building of strong relations among its ensemble of learners, teachers and parents.

International schools, which are by definition a conglomeration of citizens from far and wide, consist of a variety of languages, cultural histories, ethnic backgrounds and experiences which do not always mesh into a conflict-free utopian dream.

In the elementary school we often find groups of students who enjoy communicating in languages other than English. Speaking one's mother tongue with friends around those who do not understand the language is exclusionary; it can cause those who cannot speak the language to feel shut out, alienated and even has the effect of casting doubt on the motivations of those who are using it.

The IB expounds the importance of "mother tongue" which is the original language that is shared with each child from their families as they are raised from infancy. Our mother tongue gives us a basis for all of our understanding in the world. It determines the perspective that we will have on new vocabulary as we continue to learn. It also affects our comprehension and estimations we apply to new languages we learn.

Mother tongues are indeed important, but as a school, we have determined that communication and the sharing of ideas is more important for building a community of diverse thinkers. At the risk of giving the impression that one language is dominant over the other, we as administrators often find ourselves having to give what in this case may seem to be conflicting directives. Therefore, I want to defend our plea to students to "SPEAK ENGLISH" that you may hear from time to time at school.

At KIST we consider English to fulfill two roles. One is as our language of instruction. All classes are taught in English and all classroom discussions and teacher instructions are tendered in the language. Secondly, English is our "language of inclusion." When we all speak a common language, we open ourselves up to making relationships through which we can accomplish our goals, strengthen friendships, solve

# English



problems, and enjoy each other's company. To this end, we are able to be part of an international community that requires compassion for others and an acceptance that we all have differences.



**Diversity is the one true thing we all have in common. Celebrate it every day.**

—Author unknown



**Clay M. Bradley**  
Elementary School Vice Principal

## School Calendar 2021–22



To assist families planning overseas trips, the dates of school vacation periods for students and other important dates for the 2021–22 school year are listed below.

Families are asked to make arrangements accordingly to ensure that students are back in Tokyo ready

to start school after each vacation period on the correct date. **The complete calendar will be distributed in June.**

- First day of school for students:**

**August 23, 2021**

- Whole school event\*:**

**October 23, 2021**

- Autumn vacation:**

**October 24 – 31, 2021**

- Winter vacation:**

**December 18, 2021 – January 9, 2022**

(Classes resume from Monday, January 10)

- Spring vacation:**

**March 26 – April 3, 2022**

- Golden Week vacation**

**April 30 – May 8, 2022**

- Last day of school for students:**

**June 15, 2022**

\*Due to construction of our new school building, KISTival will not be held in 2021–22. In its place, however, a separate event for the whole school will be held. Details will be announced at a later date.

# PYP News

## Take action!

You may have noticed recently that the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are being heavily promoted in Japan and we are also focusing on them in Grade 5 this year in our lead up to the PYP exhibition. The reason for so much promotion is that 2020 is the start of the [UN's Decade of Action](#) where the UN have set a target of 2030 to deliver all [17 SDGs](#).

At KIST, our mission is to develop compassionate individuals who make meaningful contributions to our global community, so one of the most important aspects of our program is encouraging "action". Even when inspiration hits, choosing how to take action can often be a daunting prospect, as though it must be some kind of grand gesture, but this is simply not the case.

While studying at KIST, our students are exposed to many wonderful and inspirational tales of bravery and selflessness. Through exposure to the stories of figures like Gandhi, Mother Teresa or Greta Thunberg, our students develop an international outlook and empathy for those with whom we share this planet.

Examples of past action have included building a friendship bench to help students who feel lonely; or making a school compost heap; and most recently, a G5 student set up a lemonade stand to raise money for a children's cancer charity. It has been amazing to see the levels of commitment that these students have put into their projects, but action that is small can still be meaningful.



Friendship bench



G5A student, Erika's lemonade stand. You can read more about Erika's action on page 10.



# DECADE OF ACTION

The IB breaks action into five categories:

- **Participation:** contributing as an individual or group
- **Advocacy:** action to support social/ environmental/political change
- **Social justice:** relation to rights, equality and equity, social well-being or justice
- **Social entrepreneurship:** innovative, resourceful and sustainable social change
- **Lifestyle choices:** e.g. consumption, impact of choices

Looking at this list, you can see that simple things like joining an environmental club, learning about issues and then spreading the word to your peers, switching the lights off when leaving a room, always finishing your food, or using less paper are also great examples of action and are things that we can all do.

## SO, HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Whether the action they take is big or small, we are extremely proud of our students. As they develop into global citizens, there will be many ways that they take action, most of which will be outside of school. Please remember to praise and encourage your children when you see them taking action that positively impacts their environment and encourage them to share these actions with their teachers. You can also set a good example by following through with action so that it becomes part of your life and not just a one-off.

Our students—your children, have some wonderful ideas on how they can take positive action, and with a little guidance and encouragement, we all really can make a difference.

**Oliver Sullivan**  
PYP Coordinator





## Early Childhood News

Hello KIST Families! I can't believe that it is already December, and soon, we will be starting off a new year!

This year got off to a very different start due to the unfortunate circumstances affecting us in Tokyo and all around the world. Returning to school from distance learning which ran from March until the end of the 2019–20 school year, we had to change our everyday activities and ways of interacting with our friends and teachers to protect our health. Thank you to all ECE families for following our school safety measures so that we can continue learning together on campus.

Each year, we enjoy celebrating events and holidays as a community and coming together to make memorable experiences for our children; however, it was unfortunately necessary to cancel many of our usual events this year, such as excursions, the DEAR parade and more. Despite the great hurdles we are facing, our ECE team has worked together to make an unforgettable autumn filled with new experiences for the K1–K3 students.

One example is the Autumn Festival, which was held by the ECE classes on October 23. The day before the autumn vacation, our ECE staff transformed their classrooms into magical autumn-themed spaces to

celebrate the festival. During the event, our ECE students spent their Friday morning enjoying fun carnival-style activities, having a costume fashion show, taking photos and making photo frames, and dancing to spooky autumn songs! They were also able to show off their costumes to their friends in a mini parade! The sounds of children giggling and enjoying themselves made me happy that we were able to create this chance for them to celebrate despite the current circumstances. The celebration was a wonderful success, and it reminds us of the true dedication our KIST team brings each day to make impactful experiences for our students.

Our winter holiday will begin from next weekend. This year, it will likely be slightly different from our normal holiday, but all of us on the ECE team wish you all an enjoyable and safe holiday with your loved ones.

I'm looking forward to seeing you back at school in January.

**Eri Ozawa**  
Early Childhood Coordinator (K1–K3)/  
K1B Teacher



**K1A**



**K1B**



**K2A**



**K2B**



**K3A**



**K3B**





# K1 Ice Cream Number Craft

## 5 scoops for me!

The K1 classes have been learning about numbers from 1 to 10. This quarter, we focused on numbers 1 to 5. We have been playing games such as rolling dice and matching numbers to corresponding counters or manipulatives. We have also been playing number scavenger hunting inside the classroom, on the playground, and around the school building.

One of our activities was to make an ice cream craft. The students love to eat ice cream, and after listening to a song about counting ice cream scoops, they decided to make their own using five scoops of ice cream! They pasted five cones first and then added the ice cream: 1 scoop, then 2 scoops, then 3 scoops, then 4 scoops and finally 5 scoops. It was very tricky! Some of the students chose one color for each cone; some of them chose different colors. They tried to copy the numbers 1 to 5 to the corresponding scoops of ice cream. Some of the students were able to say: "It looks like stairs," and "It looks yummy!"

How many scoops of ice cream would you like to eat?

**Claire Yoneyama**  
K1A Teacher





## G5s Consider the UN SDGs

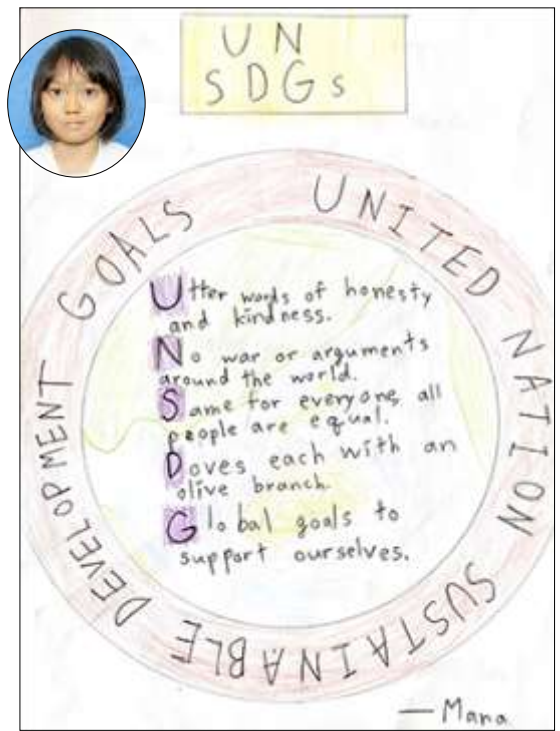
This semester, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) have provided a very useful lens for the grade 5 students to understand a variety of complex issues and how they are interconnected.

The students' interest was further piqued by our visit to the Dutch Embassy to partake in a flag hoisting ceremony to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the ratification of the goals.

Despite the wet weather, all students were able to hoist the UN SDG flag and speak with embassy staff, including the minister plenipotentiary!

Afterwards, the students wrote poems to reflect on their experience and exploration of the SDGs. Please enjoy the thoughtful poetic efforts of **Mana** from G5B.

**Bethan Thomas**  
G5B Teacher



Arriving at the Dutch Embassy



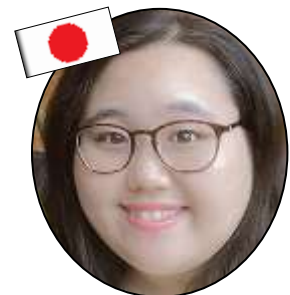
Hoisting the flag

## New Face

Since the last issue of *The Comet*, we have welcomed a new staff member, **Luca Nagaoka**, who has joined our team at KIPS as a Preschool Assistant. Ms. Nagaoka is supporting the children in P0, P1 and P2 with various activities, and also providing administrative assistance in the KIPS office.



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



**Luca Nagaoka**  
Preschool Assistant



# Childhood Cancer Fundraiser

## G5 student helps kids in need through action

During the pandemic, I started realizing how big a problem cancer really is to us and our loved ones. "Can kids get cancer?" It was a question that bothered me for a while. If you're wondering the same thing, the answer is **yes**.

**“Can kids get cancer? ...the answer is yes.”**

Children are just at the start of their lives and I wanted to try and help make it possible for every kid to experience a better life. Just imagining what some children around the world are going through made me upset and want to take action. That is why I want to help raise awareness and money for this cause.

We found a site called the [lemonadestand-pa.jp](https://www.lemonadestand-pa.jp). This organization helps people to plan lemonade stand events, and gives the money raised to the [Japan Children's Cancer Research Group \(JCCG\)](#). That sounded like the perfect way for me and my family to help. The JCCG is a nationwide organization that brings together experts to help with diagnostics and develop state of the art therapies for childhood cancer.

Soon, we realized there was a lot of planning to do. Fortunately, our apartment gave us permission to hold a lemonade stand event there on September 26. Once we had permission to do it, we constructed and painted the lemonade stand, which was a lot of fun. Then we found a recipe for the lemonade itself and started designing some flyers about the event. The Grade 5 teachers allowed me to present to my classmates about the event, to help raise awareness.



Just before the event, we prepared the cups, utensils, and most importantly, the lemonade. We set up the stand in the morning. Sadly, it was raining, but our apartment kindly lent us a gazebo, which saved us from getting too wet. We wore face guards and set some markers so people could socially distance.

We were so happy that lots of people from school came to the event, and many people from school donated even though they couldn't make it. With other donations from local residents we raised **¥61,720**. I want to say thank you to everyone for your support!

Something I had not realized before this event was that the support you get from your family and friends is really important, and however much you plan, the support from your loved ones is really powerful.

If you want to raise money for this great cause by doing a lemonade stand, you can get lots of advice and information on the Lemonade Stand website at:

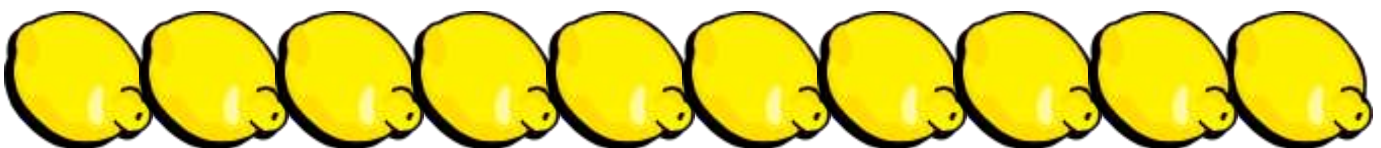
**Web** <https://www.lemonadestand.jp/>



**Erika (G5A)**

**C**ongratulations to Erika on taking action to assist those in need; we are very proud of her efforts! At KIST, part of our mission is to develop compassionate individuals who make meaningful contributions to our global community. *Erika's initiative is inspirational and demonstrates that we all have the ability to make positive change in our world!*

Dr. Yoshihara



## Elementary ELS

### Tackling figurative language

For English language learners in the PYP curriculum, the amount of vocabulary to learn is vast. This is challenging enough when the meaning of new words is literal. But with figurative language the task is doubly difficult. Oftentimes the very first step of working out which words in the sentence can be taken literally, and which ones are supposed to be symbolic, is where students get stuck. What's more, this affects how well students understand both what they read as well as the discussions and explanations they hear in class from peers and teachers.

So figurative language needs to be tackled in a different way from regular, literal vocabulary. At school, we can provide in-context guidance and practice in identifying figurative language, discussing its literal meaning, working out its symbolic meaning (sometimes by researching its origins), collecting different examples of figurative language as a class, and using it in writing and speech. (By the way, for the first step—identifying figurative language—comics are unbeatable reading material. This is because the difference between the literal pictures and the symbolic words is a hint that the words must be figurative.)

Since a strong first language supports the development of our second language, you can contribute a lot to your child's developing understanding of figurative language by taking any opportunity to discuss examples of figurative language in your home languages. Comics, movies, song lyrics, your own favorite sayings—any chance that is in context will be a great learning opportunity.

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



*G3 students with their current favorite reading materials—many gravitate towards comics which are a great space for learning figurative language. From left to right: G3A's Ren and Aayan, G3B's Taiga, and G3A's Yuka, Krishiv, Junyan and Nina.*



*G3A students Sara (right), Akiko (middle) and Aayan (left) share similes they wrote about classroom objects.*



*G5A's Poetry Pitstop—writing poetry is a great chance to focus on using figurative language.*

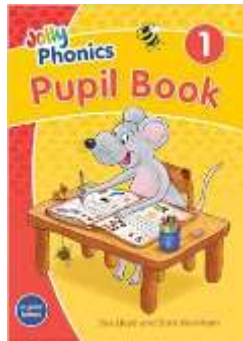


## LEAP News

This year we have implemented a number of changes to our LEAP courses which we hope will better target the individual needs of our students. The courses are still split between English and mathematics, but there are no longer any LEAP extension courses. The most significant changes, that I will outline here, have been the **introduction of textbooks** to some of our K3 and G1 courses, the start of an entirely new **Verbal Communication Course** for K3–G5, and **class sizes and sign-up procedures**.

### Textbooks

In K3, we now have two courses dedicated totally to phonics. At KIST, we use the Jolly Phonics program in K2 to build our students' reading skill; however, by K3, some students may need a little review or new students may need to learn the program in its entirety. To fill this gap, we have set up a 3-day and a 5-day Jolly Phonics course run by Ms. Wang and Mr. Derek that uses the same textbooks and covers almost the same material as in K2. The course will also be available to new G1 students who require this support. Textbooks are provided by KIST and the cost is included in the course fees.



### Verbal communication course

Some of our students, particularly those from non-English-speaking families, may struggle with communication in English. At KIST, we place a high value on collaboration with our students being encouraged to work together in pairs or groups as often as possible. This can be extremely challenging for some students who may have lower levels of spoken English, may be naturally shy, or may just need more time to organize their thoughts. For these students, group activities can sometimes be over before they have really had a chance to share their point of view.

The focus of the Verbal Communication Course is to work with such students to develop these skills. The classes will be led by the ELS instructor for each grade so that the topics of the classes can be matched with the units of inquiry for the grade. In these classes, the students will build their confidence in speaking aloud, improve their public speaking techniques, and become more familiar with topics studied in class by having more time to discuss and share their own thoughts and opinions.

### Class sizes and sign-up procedures

In order to give LEAP students as much contact time with their instructor, we have limited all LEAP classes to **six students**. Due to the extremely high demand for places in semester 1, we will also be changing our sign-up system slightly. We will now sign-up the students in three stages:



**Stage 1** – Classroom teachers will recommend six students per grade and notices will be sent out to parents with a sign-up deadline set.

**Stage 2** – Following the expiration of the first deadline, classroom teachers will make further recommendations to fill in any empty spaces and notices will be sent out to parents with a second sign-up deadline set.

**Stage 3** – The LEAP admin team will fill in any empty spaces with suitable students who have registered without recommendations. Notices will be sent to all families who tried to register confirming whether their child has a place or not.

It is a testament to our wonderful LEAP instructors that we receive so many applications. If you want to apply for LEAP without a recommendation, you are free to do so; however, please understand that we cannot accept every child.

If you have any questions, please contact the LEAP team at [leap@kist.ed.jp](mailto:leap@kist.ed.jp) or go to the LEAP homepage at the link below:

<https://www.kist.ed.jp/node/1128>



**Web** Oliver Sullivan  
PYP Coordinator



## KIPS News



### From the P1 classroom...

It's amazing how time flies—we're almost to the halfway point of the school year already! The P0 and P1 children have grown so much in the past few months. The P0s, who could barely move on their own in August, are now crawling from one place to another, exploring the classroom, while the P1s have become more independent and now can clean up their toys and take off their socks on their own!

Recently, we held our first event of the year: the Halloween Party. Although it was rainy that day, the children still had the chance to have fun playing games, sing Halloween songs together and go Trick or Treating, all while dressed up in adorable Halloween costumes. They also seemed to enjoy moving their bodies and making different sounds like various Halloween characters while trying to scare each other. At the end of the day, the children received treats, which they took home and shared with their families.

Despite the difficult situation in the world currently, we are glad that the children were able to have fun with their friends and teachers without having to worry about the pandemic. We are also grateful for the members of our community who so generously volunteered their time to make this event a success and make the children's day a little more special.

**Ma. Cielito Bautista**  
P0–P1 Teacher



### From the P2 classroom...

It's hard to believe that it has already been four months since the beginning of the school year, and that there are only two more weeks remaining in 2020.

The students who were new to KIPS this year have already become totally acclimated to their new environment, and are having a blast each day trying new things and discovering new experiences.

In October, the children enjoyed a variety of fun Halloween activities. Leading up to Halloween, they practiced seasonal songs and dances, and on the day of the Halloween party, they performed while wearing their Halloween costumes. They also went trick-or-treating at various shops around KIPS. The children were a little shy at first, but they were able to say, "Trick or Treat!" in a big voice, and their eyes twinkled with delight when they received treats and big Halloween stickers. All in all, the Halloween party was a big success!

Now, as the days get colder, we are maintaining strict measures to prevent the spread of both COVID-19 and the flu at KIPS. We're looking forward to having a great winter season with the children as well, balancing taking care of our health and having fun.



**Sohta Ohashi**  
P2 Teacher





# MYP News

## MYP assessment for learning—A guide for families new to the MYP

Student experiences in the MYP are rich and varied. Each student is engaged in inquiry in eight different subjects, and all of them include discipline-specific knowledge and understanding. The students' progress in their subjects is evaluated throughout the year. By now, parents have received a variety of feedback—both formal and informal—on the progress of their children. This includes Quarter One Reports and Parent/Teacher/Student interviews.

For parents with students beginning their MYP learning, the nature of assessment in the MYP can prove to be challenging to grasp quickly. Normally, families new to the MYP are invited to attend a workshop early in the year where these matters are explained in a hands-on session that explores the nature of assessment in general and the mechanics of the process in the MYP in particular. Because of the restrictions brought about because of safety measures for COVID-19, this session had to be postponed. For this reason, here is an overview of the key ideas driving assessment in the MYP:

### Formative and summative assessment

Each of the MYP subjects is organized into units of inquiry. These units collect course content, skills and concepts into sets of experiences intended to introduce students to the essential understanding of the subject.

**Formative** work includes all the day-to-day work in which students learn the key and related concepts of the unit and practice the skills necessary to improve their understanding. Formative assessments allow students to check their progress in lower-stakes situations.

**Summative assessment** comes after extended periods of work. The teacher makes a final assessment of student-understanding for the unit in these situations. Summative assessments can come in a variety of forms. These includes tests, essays, presentations, and reports.

### MYP assessment criteria

The MYP is organized in such a way as to balance the individual areas of focus for subjects and to harmonize the approach to assessment across the program. Each subject identifies four assessment objectives that serve as the criteria for assessment. These are the assessment criteria for each of the subjects.

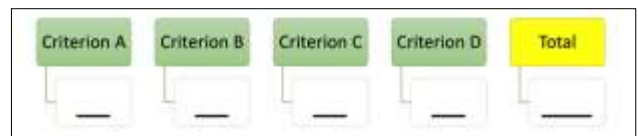
	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Individuals and Societies	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking Critically
Design	Inquiring and Analyzing	Developing Ideas	Thinking Creatively	Responding
Physical and Health Education	Knowing and Understanding	Planning for Performance	Applying and Performing	Reflecting and Improving Performance
Language Acquisition	Comprehending (spoken/visual texts)	Comprehending (written/visual texts)	Communicating	Using Language

	Criterion A	Criterion B	Criterion C	Criterion D
Arts	Knowing and Understanding	Developing Skills	Thinking Creatively	Responding
Language and Literature	Analyzing	Organizing	Producing Text	Using Language
Sciences	Knowing and Understanding	Inquiring and Designing	Processing and Evaluating	Reflecting on the Impacts of Science
Mathematics	Knowing and Understanding	Investigating Patterns	Communicating	Applying Mathematics in Real-World

Each of these criteria is evaluated with a summative assessment at least once per semester. In some cases, an individual criterion might be assessed multiple times.

### MYP reporting

MYP semester reports include a criterion score for each of the four assessment objectives in each of the subjects. The criterion scores range from 1–8. Together, each subject's score includes a total score of the criteria added together up to a possible score of 32.



For example, an individual student might receive the following scores on his or her semester report:



These total scores are then placed on a scale used by the IB to calculate the final semester score. The scale is used in both the MYP and in the Diploma Programme. It produces a score from 1–7:

- |   |         |   |              |
|---|---------|---|--------------|
| 7 | 28 – 32 | 7 | Excellent    |
| 6 | 24 – 27 | 6 | Very Good    |
| 5 | 19 – 23 | 5 | Good         |
| 4 | 15 – 18 | 4 | Satisfactory |
| 3 | 10 – 14 | 3 | Mediocre     |
| 2 | 6 – 9   | 2 | Limited      |
| 1 | 1 – 5   | 1 | Very limited |

As the year continues, students and parents will receive lots of feedback on their work. Better understanding of the structure of this feedback can help students make use of the information to help them to take action to improve as much as possible.

**Robert White**  
MYP Coordinator



## Academic Scholarships

### KIST Scholars' Awards

**KIST Scholars' Awards** are available for students in Grades 8 to 11 who meet certain criteria. There are four categories of Scholars' Awards that recognize students who exemplify our mission by making significant contributions to our school community through academic excellence and by acting as role models for other students.



This year, we are pleased to announce that a total of **nine** students have received awards. Congratulations to all awardees and their families!



**Gold Award**  
(75% tuition discount)  
1 student



**Silver Award**  
(50% tuition discount)  
2 students



**Bronze Award**  
(25% tuition discount)  
6 students

### KIST 'Learning for Life' University Support Scholarships

**KIST 'Learning for Life' University Support Scholarships** are awarded to Grade 12 students who attain 40 points or more as their final DP score, provided they meet certain other selection criteria and demonstrate responsible conduct. These scholarships are in place to recognize student commitment during their final year of study, to celebrate high accomplishment, and to support students with their tertiary education as they continue 'learning for life'.

A total of **23** graduates have been awarded 'Learning for Life' scholarships in 2020. Congratulations students and families, and all the best with your continued studies!



**Silver Award**  
43-44 points  
¥1,000,000  
5 students



**Bronze Award**  
40-42 points  
¥300,000  
18 students

**Web** Click the link below for more information about academic scholarships and how and when to apply.  
<http://www.kist.ed.jp/node/197>

## Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics Certificates

In the last school year, the G10 students and the G9 Mathematics Extended class sat the Edexcel IGCSE Mathematics examinations. These examinations were school-based due to COVID-19 restrictions. Despite this, the results were submitted to the Edexcel organization for checking, and students were still able to receive internationally recognized certificates for Mathematics that will help with their university applications in the future.



Congratulations to the 2019–20 G10 Mathematics Standard classes for receiving their IGCSE Mathematic A certificates, the G10 Mathematics Extended class for receiving their IGCSE Pure Mathematics certificates, and the G9 Mathematics Extended class for receiving their IGCSE Mathematics B certificates!

**John Rose**  
IGCSE  
Coordinator/  
Secondary School  
Vice Principal



*The current G10 Mathematics Extended class receiving their Mathematics B certificates.*



## Art Para Fukagawa

Over the past few months, our G6, 7, 8 and 9 students have taken turns helping out a local charity, Art Para Fukagawa. The purpose of the project was to encourage a welcoming society where we can live together in harmony for people with disabilities or special needs. Students helped out by braiding ribbons into *kumihimo* which were used to hold the art pieces created by students with disabilities, as well as those by some famous artists.

Presenters from Art Para came to KIST to teach the students how to braid *kumihimo* and taught us about the mission of the project. They also taught some of our students some Japanese sign language while we worked.

We would like to thank Art Para Fukagawa for opening our students' hearts and minds to new perspectives. We hope that they continue this wonderful exhibition for many years to come.

You will find some reflections from students who participated below.

**Anna Holdaway**  
Student Care Coordinator (G6–G8)



“I decided to volunteer for Art Para Fukagawa because its aim of creating an accepting and inclusive society was something I wholeheartedly agree with. As I live near the Fukagawa area, I was glad that the community was trying to create an inclusive community and I was amazed at all the beautiful artwork the participants had created. When I was explaining the artwork to the visitors during my volunteer hours, I could see them becoming more interested in the artwork, and I felt more people were able to build awareness. I hope that even after this event, our community will be celebrate and accept diversity.”  
—Sara (G10A), who volunteered directly with the organization



“I enjoyed making kumihimo with everyone! I'm happy that I was able to help Art Para!”  
—Yuma (G6A)

“I think it is amazing that Art Para is helping to spread awareness around the community about people with disabilities. It is an important issue and I was happy to help and be a part of it.”  
—Uta (G6B)

“I was happy to help the community by making kumihimo and putting it on the mikoshi with the emas. I enjoyed making the kumihimo, although I was struggling at the start.”  
—Halona (G6B)

“I felt happy that I could help the people with disabilities. I liked how we worked together with classmates on something that many people can see. I went to see the mikoshi and it looked good with the emas that the disabled people made.”  
—Rena (G6B)





## G11 Day Camp

### G11s travel to Chiba for a day of adventure

The G11 camp was the highlight of our first DP year. Due to the coronavirus outbreak, the G11 camp was replaced with a day camp to Forest Adventure Chiba. During the day camp, we did numerous activities that required coordination and teamwork to complete, such as getting a hula hoop around while holding hands and guiding another student using only voice while they were blindfolded.

The day camp was held on September 11. The summer heat had subsided to some extent, but it was still considerably hot for a day in September. We set off to the Forest Adventure from school by bus, and after around 45 minutes, we arrived. Once we stepped outside, all that we saw was nature. The cicadas were buzzing, and red dragonflies were flying elegantly. For many of us, it was the first time to see nature on this scale for a long time.

After reaching the Forest Adventure Chiba's facilities, the staff greeted us warmly. After doing warmups and some icebreakers, we split into two groups, each doing a different activity. The first activity was getting a hula hoop around while holding hands. This activity required us to coordinate our motion so that the person in the middle could transport the hoop quickly. One of the groups excelled at this activity, beating the other groups by a large margin. The second activity was to find the correct path across a 5 by 10 square sheet. This required us to communicate and memorize the correct path while helping other students get across. The difficulty and the complexity of the route increased every round.

After all the activities were completed, we had a lunch break and proceeded to doing the athletic course, which was the main facility of Forest Adventure Chiba. There were more than five different courses, as well as a special course that required us to jump off while wearing a harness. All courses were entertaining and allowed us to forget about the coronavirus and other sources of stress, as well as brighten our mood.

All the activities helped us develop in one way or another and helped us to relieve our stress, and improve communication skills and teamwork needed to successfully complete the DP. Without a doubt, this one-day trip to Forest Adventure Chiba will be remembered as an unforgettable experience in our minds, marking our first step into the DP journey.



Shiro (G11B)





## South Africa—The Interest Rate Challenge

G12 Economics students were asked to analyse the economic outlook of South Africa and recommend, as members of the monetary policy committee (MPC) of the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) what the next rate of interest should be for the country. The students had to look at the following:

- What evidence is there that shows that the Central Bank should increase the interest rate?
- What evidence is there that shows that the Central Bank should decrease the interest rate?
- What evidence is there that shows that the Central Bank should keep the interest rate as it is?
- What is the final decision?
- What does the success of the decision depend on?

The presentations concluded with a recommendation on exactly what interest rate the team would set in order to achieve the government's inflation target of 3.6%. The students made a 15-minute presentation and were judged by school staff. The judges asked questions about what had been presented and asked the students to justify or clarify certain aspects of their interpretation of the economic conditions.

The groups (teams) included the following students:

- **Sujin, Ishaan, Shreeya, Sidaarth**
- **Mika, Ethan, Kevin, Sneha**
- **Shreya, Shirley, Preston, Malini, Dharmik**
- **Noah, Riju, Leah, Michiko**

The presentations took place on November 17, and on November 19 the South African Reserve Bank (SARB) revealed its decision, which was to keep interest rates unchanged at 3.5%.



All groups chose the same and correct outcome. Well done! The decision as to which group would win the competition came down to which group had been the most convincing. The finalists were Sujin and Michiko's groups. Tough decision; lots of positives from both groups. The eventual winner was the group that collected and presented the most convincing and reliable data, and who would be trusted to make the decision on a country's rate of interest; basically, the group that, in addition to economic data, focused more on the impact of COVID-19.

**Congratulations to Michiko, Leah and Noah!**

**Edwin Gombya**  
DP Economics Teacher



*Noah (G12B), Michiko (G12A) and Leah (G12A)*

## Design@KIST



Here is a roundup of what some of our MYP students have been doing in Design so far this year.

**Timothy Smith**  
MYP Design Teacher

# Design



### Grade 6, Unit 1...

#### Digital citizenship

Grade 6 students researched and designed an informative set of digital citizenship posters illustrating to younger students the advantages and disadvantages of social media.

Some great advice for grown-ups too?



### Grade 7, Unit 1...

#### T-shirt design

Students were asked to research and design a t-shirt that could have been worn to the Grade 7 camp. The theme was tree conservation and students were encouraged to provide readers of the t-shirt with an action to take. Students studied various printing techniques.

Each student was provided with a plain white t-shirt image file. T-shirt artwork was produced in Adobe Spark Collage. The lossless png image was then conformed to the plain t-shirt surface using a displacement map in Adobe Photoshop (giving the artwork wrinkles that match the t-shirt). Background lighting and shadows were applied.



*T-shirt design by Noritaka (G7A)*

### Grade 7, Unit 2...



#### RoboJousting

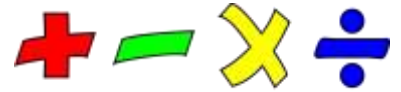
In their current unit on RoboJousting, all Grade 7s are building robot versions of medieval knights and horses in Lego. They will code their robots to take part in a fierce and challenging jousting contest in December.

In previous years, KIST hosted the inter-school RoboJousting event, but sadly, due to COVID-19, it will take place only within the class this year.





# Mathematics Diagnostic Testing



Mathematics diagnostic tests are coming up soon on January 22, 2021 for students in Grades 6 to 10.

I would like to take this opportunity to answer some frequently asked questions regarding mathematics diagnostic tests and class allocations in the Secondary School.

## What is the purpose of the diagnostic tests?

The diagnostic test results are not only used for mathematics class allocations; they are also used to measure students' progress. The mathematics department analyzes the data to check if there are any trends, and uses these findings to develop strategies to help students further improve in mathematics.

## How are class allocations determined?

Math classes for Semester 2 are determined based on the results of the August and January diagnostic tests, class performance and the recommendation of the math teachers. When making decisions, the mathematics department places emphasis on the most recent diagnostic test (January) results but also considers factors such as the semester test and unit test results. For this reason, students who focus only on doing well on the diagnostic tests by studying past papers may not be successful in moving to or remaining in the extended class as we take a more holistic approach when determining class allocations.

## Until when can students move from Standard Level to Extended?

The final opportunity for students to move from the Standard Level class to Extended is at the beginning of Semester 2 of G8. After this time, students may not move up to the Extended level class. The reason for this is because by this point, the G8 Extended Level class will have already started covering the IGCSE Mathematics B curriculum and they will be taking the official IGCSE assessment in May in Grade 9. The students will not have enough time to prepare for this assessment if they join in G9.

## Have students covered all the topics that are on the diagnostic tests?

For the diagnostic test, we use past papers of Key Stage 3/IGCSE tests and these are the tests that students in other schools normally take at the end of each course (i.e. G8 for Key Stage 3 and G10 for IGCSE). This means that the tests usually contain topics that students have not covered in class.

## But is it possible to meet KIST performance expectations without knowing all the topics in the tests?

The school's expected level is set so that if students can do most of what has been covered in class, they would be at expected level.

## Why do you keep these topics in the diagnostic tests instead of removing them?

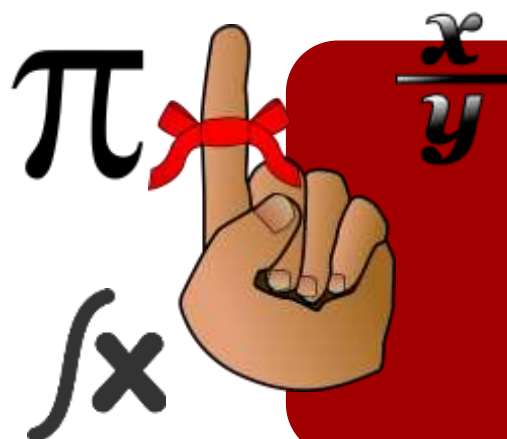
We purposely keep these questions as we want to provide opportunities for students who excel in math and/or are passionate about studying math to exercise their knowledge.

We encourage all parents and students to review the KIST Performance Expectations: Mathematics document at the link below (log in required) and set their learning targets accordingly for the January test sitting.

[Web Progression Criteria and Graduation Requirements](#)

*Happy studying!*

**Nanami Sakuma**  
Subject Area Coordinator—  
Mathematics (Secondary)



**REMINDER!**

**Math diagnostic tests**

**G6–G10**

**January 22, 2021**



## Science Department News

### Experimental investigations in the DP

It might be of interest to the school community to know that our DP students have been extremely successful in their experimental work for the last few years. This was especially evident in the previous school year, when their final grades were based solely on their internal assessment (IA), their predicted grade, and our school's historical data.

You may be wondering what internal assessments in Sciences and ESS are, and what students are trying to accomplish? IAs are compulsory experimental investigations for students, assessed by the science teachers at KIST and moderated by the IB. More importantly, **they are opportunities for students to demonstrate the application of their skills and knowledge and pursue their individual interests**, without the limitations or other constraints that are associated with written examinations.



Our Grade 12 Chemistry students have finished their IAs, and despite the challenges of the pandemic, they were all able to complete meaningful and exciting investigations. The Biology and ESS students are currently doing their IAs, and the Physics students are planning theirs, too.

With this in mind, we asked our next graduates to share with everyone their experience. You will find some reflections below. If you meet a G12 student, please ask them more about their interesting experiments!

**Cesar Cely**  
Subject Area Coordinator—Science  
(Secondary)



Since Acids and Bases is one of my favourite topics we covered in our Chemistry course, I decided to conduct an investigation in this area for my IA. Specifically, I chose to investigate how fermentation temperature affects the lactic acid concentration in sauerkraut, a dish my family eats weekly. Considering my mother is lactose intolerant, this IA allowed me to put my Chemistry knowledge to practice to better help my mother; this was my main motivation. Despite spending long hours in the labs making constant adjustments to my procedure, my IA truly enabled me to quench my scientific curiosity. It provided me the opportunity to think beyond the textbook and practically appreciate the beauty of Chemistry."

—Leah (G12A)



This year, I decided to explore the degree of unsaturation in the various types of oils used in cuisines globally. Unsaturated fats are considered "healthy" and the results of my exploration have given me extensive and relevant knowledge that I can use in my daily life. Although the process was bumpy, I look back on my month of work with pride, and relief that it is over. Chemistry has a reputation of being a "hard" subject, but if you approach it inquisitively and eager to learn, it is a very rewarding experience."

—Ishaan (G12A)



Continued on next page



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“For my Chemistry IA, I determined the activation energy of glow sticks of different colors. When I began the IA, I thought it would be a simple and fun investigation, but when I researched the reasons why the glow sticks illuminate, the reason was so much more complex and interesting. Although it took a while to get the hang of conducting the experiments, completing the experiments became easier and easier. By the end of the IA, I was happy with the outcome and was glad I learnt the chemistry behind a fun toy.”

—**Sneha** (G12A)



“I researched how the pH affects the growth of beans. The first half of my investigation was mostly gathering samples and setting up the experiment. As I was changing the pH of the solution, I had to make a great effort to control the rest of factors that could affect plant growth which was more challenging than expected. Once that was done, the rest was just consistently watering the samples appropriately and consistently observing the plants. Overall, experiments like these could be a hit-or-miss. Hence, preliminary trials are important. Though I did not get the results I was particularly expecting, the overall experience and getting to see physical and tangible results of plant growth was satisfying.”

—**Dong Hee** (G12B)



## Seven Golden Rules

01

02

03

04

05

06

07

### Tips for completing your IGCSE and DP Science exams

#### 1. Always, always, always make sure to read the questions properly.

For example, if the question asks you to state and explain, then make sure to state and explain! If the question asks you to give an answer in mm, don't give the answer in cm.

#### 2. Show each step in your calculation.

You are less likely to make a mistake if you write things out in steps. And even if your final answer is wrong, you'll probably pick up some marks if your teacher can see that your method is right. You also need to make sure you're working in the right units – check before you put any number in your calculators.

#### 3. Look at the number of marks a question is worth.

The number of marks gives you a pretty good clue of how much to write. So if the question is worth four marks, make sure to write four decent points. And there is no point writing an essay for a question that's only worth one mark – it's just a waste of your time.

#### 4. Use specialist vocabulary.

You know the words, you have learnt them all the time in class. Use the vocabulary! Teachers love them.

#### 5. Write your answers as clearly as you can.

If a teacher can't read your answer, you won't get any marks, even if it's right.

#### 6. Be prepared and try not to panic.

Exam day can give anyone a case of the jitters. So make sure you have everything you need for the exam ready the night before. Eat a good breakfast, sleep well and try to relax.

#### 7. Pay attention to the time.

Don't spend ages staring at the question paper. If you are totally stuck on a question, just leave it and move on to the next one. You can always go back at the end if you have enough time.

Obeying the golden rules will help you to get as many marks as you can – but the rules are not of use if you haven't learnt the content in the first place. So make sure you revise and do as many practice questions as you can.

**Cesar Cely**

Subject Area Coordinator—Science (Secondary)

## Athletics Update

### Fall season 2020

#### Kanto Plains cross country



Despite COVID-19, KIST had 32 runners participate this season: 8 JV boys, 3 JV girls, 15 MS boys and 6 MS girls. KIST students participated in the first ever 'virtual race' that included international schools from all over the world. The high school students were able to participate in two races near the end of the season at Kinuta track and Ajinomoto stadium, and the middle school students participated in one final race at Niiza track. Congratulations to all who participated as many ran their best times.



*Cross country MS girls at Niiza*



*Cross country MS boys at Niiza*



*Cross country JV at Ajinomoto*

#### A special shout out for exemplary performances below:

- **JV Boys: Daigo** (G11B) finished 11th and **Shin** (G10A) finished 15th of 50 runners in the JV finals
- **JV Girls: Tomoko** (G10A) finished 13th
- **MS Boys: Shota** (G8B) gained 5th and 6th best season time, and made the all-stars (Top 10)
- **MS Girls: Arista** (G6B) finished 5th and **Riko** (G6A) finished 8th; both made the all-stars (Top 10)

**Massive thanks to Coaches Cobbs, Thomas and Buck for their organization and time.**

#### ISTAA U-18 girls' and boys' volleyball



Due to COVID-19, KIST volleyball teams started three weeks later than usual but were still able to play a couple of games against Columbia and one at BST. Both teams lost to Columbia though there were some very close games, particularly with the boys losing 2 sets to 1 on both occasions and losing a very close 3rd set. The girls beat BST 2 sets to 0 and the boys tied BST 2 sets apiece.



*Volleyball teams*



*Volleyball seniors*

**A special thanks to all the seniors who have been part of the KIST volleyball team for a number of years: Saki (G12B), Izumi (G12B), Alia (G12B), Sidaarth (G12A), Den (G12A) and Min Seung (G12B) Fantastic effort!!**

#### Kanto Plains varsity boys' tennis team



Despite the COVID-19 safety measures adopted by all schools, the nature of tennis allowed a KPASS HS tennis season to take place, even if somewhat reduced in scope and size than normal. KIST joined four other schools, ASIJ, St. Mary's, CAJ and YIS in fielding a team. KIST played three of these schools in interschool games, playing CAJ and YIS strong only to lose out 3 matches to 2 in both games. Special mention to **Noah** (G12B) and **Abhinava** (G12B) who each won 2 of their 3 singles games in these matches. End of season tournaments were held at ASIJ and St. Mary's in mid-November where students competed as individual singles and doubles players. Competition was tough for the KIST players, many of whom are in G9 and were facing players in G10 or even G11. Noah, however, made it to the semi-finals of the KPASS boys singles finals only to lose out to possibly the strongest player in the tournament.



*Boys' tennis*

*KPASS all-star, Noah (G12B)*



Well done to the 11 KIST students who represented KIST at tennis this year. Although the KPASS season is not scheduled to start again until next September, we plan for the KIST HS boys' tennis team to start practice again in the Spring to prepare for competition to resume!

#### Coach Cowe

**Winter season teams** started practices a couple of weeks later than usual. The only games that have been scheduled are the Kanto Plains JV boys' football team with one December match and two January fixtures. Other teams that have started up are the Kanto JV girls' football, ISTAA HS boys' and girls' basketball, Kanto (and ISTAA) MS boys' basketball, and Kanto MS boys' baseball.

#### Dennis Ota

Athletics Coordinator





# Library News



## LMC news

The Library Media Center (LMC) is open for students in G9–12 before and after school.

### COVID-19 preventive measures in the LMC

There has been a striking increase in new COVID-19 cases due to the third wave recently. To ensure the safety of students, the LMC has implemented the following preventive measures:

- All students are required to wear a mask that fully covers their mouth and nose.
- Library staff recommend that students sanitize their hands before and after using resources.
- A limited number of students are allowed to enter the LMC to borrow books and use the resources.
- To maintain social distance, three students are encouraged to sit at the tables in the main area, and two students per table in the quiet study areas.
- Students are strongly encouraged to disinfect their working tables by using a disinfecting liquid which is readily available in the LMC.



### New laptop system

#### • Do not leave power cords on the floor!

- Remove the computer from the stall and replace the cord.
- When returning the computer, remove the power cord from the stall and plug into the computer.

This academic year, the LMC has been equipped with new laptop computers and as a part of our safety measures, we have been asking students not to leave power cords on the floor to ensure that the

laptops charge efficiently, and chargers are not in the way.



## Magazine subscriptions

To support students as much as possible in finding resources other than books and online materials, KIST stocks popular magazines to keep students updated and help them explore new ideas and inventions. The magazines provide crucial information regarding news updates and current affairs, which is useful for project work or assessments. The Library Team recommends that students and staff check out a magazine over the weekend or read during recess time or after school.

We have subscriptions to the following magazines:

**The Economist** – a weekly news magazine that focuses on current affairs, business, politics and technology

**Wired** – a monthly magazine that focuses on emerging technologies that affect culture, economy and politics

**National Geographic** – a monthly magazine that primarily publishes articles about science, geography, history and world cultures

**Scientific American** – a popular monthly magazine that includes articles on different scientific inventions, current technology trends in science and opinions of famous scientists/professors

**CDQ** – a quarterly magazine for illustrators, artists, animators and character art enthusiasts that offers inspirational and educational art articles and tutorials from art professionals to help with design and enhance art skills



### LMC Team



## Secondary SRC

The past few months have been quite productive for the SRC. Our bigger projects included Staff Appreciation Day—an event in which the students provided small appreciative letters to the teaching and office staff. The project was a big success due to the support and involvement of the students, and as such, we are very thankful for the student body's support.

We are also pleased to announce that we have set up relations with TELL, an organization that provides support for mental health, to allow students to reach out if they feel they want extra support.

We also had a great free dress day on Friday, October 23, with over 100,000 yen raised—50% of the revenue went towards Second Harvest Japan. Furthermore, the SRC Media and Arts Committee was pleased to announce the results of the Onigiri Action contest. The SRC asked students to send in photos of onigiri. Each photo was then sent to Table For Two, a charity that donates five meals for every photo submitted to school children in need. We had over 70 applications, which equated to 360 meals. The final three winners of the contest at KIST were awarded Amazon vouchers. You can see the winners and their photos on the right.

We have also made a few school-wide changes; for example, changing the basketball nets on the blacktop, which the students are already enjoying—we received positive feedback for that.

Lastly, we have set up an SRC bulletin board by the cafeteria in the school to lift the spirits of students. The board will include various student-related posters and artwork.



Jia Hang (G9A)



Shreyas (G9A)



SRC members near the bulletin board

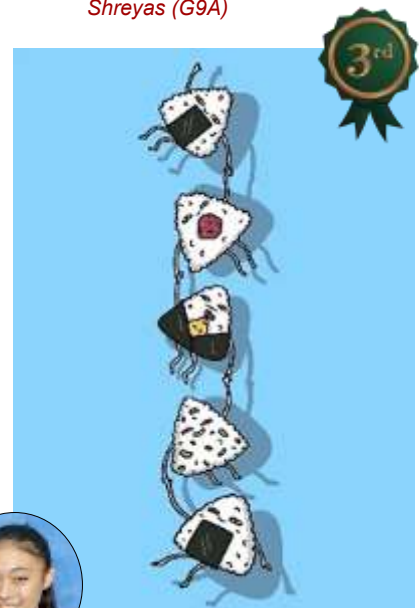
We are quite happy with our progress so far, but we still have many more plans, which we look forward to sharing with you very soon.

Stay safe! We hope you have a productive and enjoyable new year.



On behalf of the SRC,

**Ravi** (G12B)  
Public Relations Officer



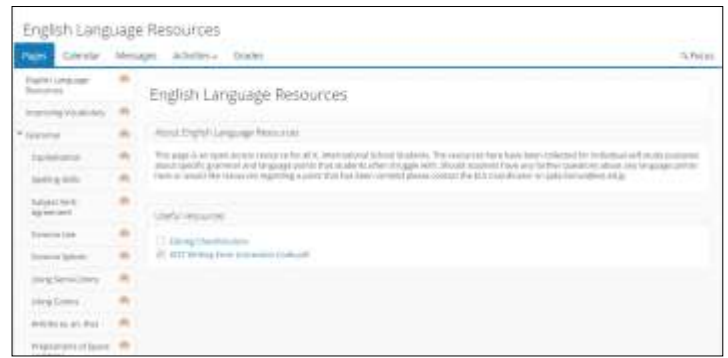
Anya (G12A)



## Secondary ELS

### English language resources

In the interests of supporting all KIST students, the ELS Department has collated a new resource for the whole school community. Located under the 'Extras' tab on PowerSchool Learning, *English Language Resources* is a collection of curated materials that provide further guidance about grammar issues frequently experienced by English language learners.



The English Language Resources section is accessible to all members of the KIST community and will be continually updated by the Secondary ELS department throughout the school year. While at this stage the area's main focus is on grammar, we look forward to expanding the collection of resources based on feedback from students and teachers.

While not a replacement for in-person support, these resources have been collated so that students can practice writing skills and solidify their understanding of English grammar on an as needed basis. Should any teachers or students wish to see further resources in a particular area, please e-mail me.

#### Jade Bonus

Secondary ELS Coordinator

[jade.bonus@kist.ed.jp](mailto:jade.bonus@kist.ed.jp)



## Staff 10!

In this month's *Staff 10!*, we are pleased to present **Yukiko Yamazaki** who joined us in January 2018 as our school nurse.

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

Akiruno city is in the west of Tokyo, about 60 km away from Kiyosumi-shirakawa, so my daily commute to work is four hours long. Akiruno is a great place to go hiking and fishing, have a BBQ, and visit hot springs. I prefer to live in the countryside rather than the city. There are many fruits (kiwifruit, grapes, Japanese citrus and persimmons) in my garden. One day a raccoon visited the garden and enjoyed eating grapes at midnight. I found a huge brown gift from the raccoon the next morning. ☺

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

Melbourne! I used to live there for 8 years when I was in my 30s to study English and nursing. Melbourne has the 10th largest immigrant population in the world, so there are many nice international cafes and delicious restaurants.

### 3) Where else would you like to travel to and why?

I have been to many archaeological sites and one of the most amazing historical places was Egypt. The opening of the Grand Egyptian Museum is scheduled for 2021, so I would like to visit the largest archaeological museum in the world after COVID-19 has ended.

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

I started learning palm reading when I was 13 years old and have read the palms of more than 1,000 people, but I have stopped doing this because discovering someone's bad luck made me feel stressed.

### 5) What was your dream when you were a child?

I love taking care of animals and visiting the zoo, so I wanted to work in safari parks or zoos.

### 6) Why did you become a nurse?

I was interested in school health committee activities since my childhood, so I enjoyed spending most of my secondary student life doing such activities. Also, I had opportunities to participate in volunteer nursing experiences at a hospital during the holidays and I realized that nursing is a very rewarding job.

### 7) Have you had any difficult experiences as a nurse?

I had a patient who had decided with their family to withdraw care to allow for a natural death. At the time, I was a young nurse with limited work and life experience so I felt that I wasn't able to properly support the patient's quality of life and the family.

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

Caring. I think it is natural for me to have become a nurse because other people's happiness makes me happy. But I feel that I should strive to be more reflective and more of a risk-taker, too.

### 9) How do you enjoy spending your free time?

I enjoy practicing yoga because it gives me a chance to release stress from ongoing dilemmas and brings positive energy.

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

I would like to meet Kuranosuke Sasaki, a veteran actor who portrayed 20 characters alone in a Japanese version of Macbeth. It would be great if I could ask him about his mental strength in overcoming the pressures of staging a one-man play.



*The always fit and healthy Nurse Yukiko, climbing her way to new heights in life.*

## Nurse's Notes

### How to stay healthy, fit and safe during the 2020–21 winter season

With winter almost upon us, many people are concerned about the upcoming peak season for contagious diseases, such as the common cold, influenza and coronavirus. This winter in particular may be a challenging time for us; however, proper preparation can help us resist infectious diseases to stay safe as the pandemic stretches into the coldest months.

#### Safety measures

**Get into a routine of wearing a mask when around others:** Masks should be used as part of a comprehensive strategy to reduce transmission of germs and bodily fluids.

**Wash your hands frequently:** Washing hands with soap and water is the most effective way to get rid of germs in most situations. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails for at least 20 seconds with warm water.

**Use hand sanitizer effectively:** Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is effective against bacteria when soap and water are not available. Hand sanitizer kills germs but does not clean your hands.

**Use disinfectant at home regularly:** Disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as door handles, tables and remote controls to prevent infection.

**Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth:** Your hands touch many surfaces and can easily pick up viruses. Touching your eyes, nose and/or mouth with contaminated hands will transfer the virus into your body, so it is important to avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

**Avoid the 3 Cs (closed space, crowded space, close-contact settings):** Avoid creating closed spaces by ventilating frequently. Open windows completely in two different directions for a few minutes each time. Do this at least twice every hour so that the air can flow through, carrying germs outside. Maintain social distancing (at least 1-meter distance between you and others). Avoid sitting face-to-face to reduce or eliminate transmission of germs and bodily fluids.

**Get the flu vaccine:** Recent studies show that flu vaccines reduce the risk of influenza between 40 to 60 percent. Influenza and COVID-19 share some symptoms such as fevers, coughing, sore throat, runny nose, and fatigue. It may be difficult to confirm the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a

diagnosis. Also, be sure to stay home if you are unwell.

#### Stay healthy and fit

**Eat nutritious food to support your immune system:** Eating probiotics, such as yogurt and fermented foods, encourage more beneficial bacteria to grow in your gut and aids the functioning of your immune system. Also, eating a balanced diet with vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and whole grains can support your gut.

**Keep hydrated:** Some people get less thirsty in chilly weather, so they drink less fluid in the winter than in hot weather. If you are dehydrated, your respiratory secretions are hard to clear from your lungs and may lead to infections.

**Sleep well:** Get adequate sleep can benefit your immune system. Sleep deprivation weakens the body's defense system and makes it more vulnerable to infections.

**Keep active:** Winter is a challenging time to stick to your exercise routine, but moderate physical activity helps to improve your immune system and mood.

**Get some sunlight:** Spending only 10–15 minutes outdoors helps your feelings of well-being by releasing serotonin in your brain and producing Vitamin D to maintain strong and rigid bones.

**Seek medical care early if you feel unwell:** Some people may fear getting exposed to contagious diseases, so they decide to avoid visiting the hospital. But doing so might be putting themselves at higher risk.

**Seek professional mental health:** The spread of COVID-19 not only causes physical health concerns but also impact the mental health of people. Feelings of stress and anxiety are natural response to this unusual and scary situation, but if your stress seems to be taking over your life, it might be helpful to seek professional support.

**Yukiko Yamazaki**  
School Nurse



#### References:

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# University Guidance News

## Scholarships

### KIST 'CLASS OF 2020' TOPS 100 MILLION YEN IN SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING! CONGRATULATIONS!

At KIST, we pride ourselves on our high IB scores, not only because it shows off the academic capability of our school, but **more importantly**, it provides benefits to our students for their further educational goals. This is seen in university applications where our current Grade 12 students have already been receiving offers from universities since October. It is also seen in scholarship award potential. From the surveyed graduates last year, our students received **37 scholarship offers** (and still counting) for a total of **102,163,000 yen**. Amazing job Class of 2020!

## The scholarship issue

Being part of a high performing IB school provides [many benefits](#). Few curricula offer the combination of breadth and depth that the IB has, making it a respected option at universities worldwide; for example, the highly ranked Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST) awards [guaranteed scholarships to IB students](#) (as shown in the table below) and offers more money than other international curricula.

IB Total Points	Scholarship Amount for Students Admitted in the 2021/22 Academic Year
45	*Full tuition plus living allowance of HKD55,000* p.a., renewable for normative duration of study
42-44	Full tuition, one-off*
40-41	Half tuition, one-off*
38-39	HKD15,000, one-off*
36-37	HKD10,000, one-off*

The IB also provides [a list of 50 scholarships](#) that are specific to IB graduates around the world.

## Moving into the future

KIST is trying to find new ways to increase these numbers so that our graduates can be successful as soon as possible. This is a team effort and is best done when teachers, families and students are working together. **Below is a list of awards and suggestions on how families can prepare.**

### KIST Scholars' Awards

This is [an award within KIST](#) for current students that also benefits students on their journey into university. Students finishing with an IB score of 40 points are higher are eligible.

**\*Suggestion:** Keep your main focus on your classes each year (not just Grade 11–12). Your grades are more valuable than your SAT/TOEFL scores, so they should be the priority!

### Global scholarship searching

Scholarships are available in almost every country worldwide. There are thousands of scholarships available that depend on your background and where you intend to apply. Websites such as [internationalscholarships.com](#) will allow you to search globally about some of the more well-known scholarships, and [US News](#) has also compiled a list of scholarship search sites to use. For those looking to stay in Japan, [JASSO](#) and [JPSS](#) are popular resources.

**\*Suggestion:** Students may be very busy with their assignments and exams. Finding scholarships as a family is something that can benefit everyone. [Scholarships are for EVERYONE](#), not just the students at the top of the class.

### University-specific scholarships

The easiest method is to search for scholarships that are offered from the university directly. Students are often eligible for a scholarship simply by submitting their application before a certain date. Many universities will have entire pages dedicated to all the different options they have available and these can be found by doing a quick Google search of "(insert university name here) + scholarships". A great example would be the university [UBC, which has an extensive page just for international student scholarships](#).

**\*Suggestion:** Making a list of universities to consider before Grade 12 will make searching for scholarships so much easier. I suggest making a workbook within Excel to list possible universities, application deadlines, and scholarship deadlines so that applications can be easily managed during your last year of high school.

### Large and full-tuition scholarships

Although rare, we do have a few students who receive these each year at KIST; last year we had three full-tuition scholarships offered. There are sites, such as [PrepScholar](#) that list some universities that will offer these very competitive awards. Best results are had when advanced preparation has been done by students applying to universities they discovered before Grade 12.

**\*Suggestion:** Consider options off the main path; for example, great universities that are **private, less competitive for applications, and are in less popular regions** will have much more potential for most students to receive large financial awards compared to the most famous schools located in London, New York city, etc.

## In summary

**\*Suggestion:** Being an IB student opens opportunities for scholarships that are not available to those studying other curricula. Finding all the options for your child can take time. Planning early and following these steps can help increase our scholarship opportunities.

1. **Focus on doing well in class.** Grades are the most important part of university entrance requirements and merit scholarships.
2. **Plan early.** The sooner you know the countries/universities you want to apply for, the sooner scholarship planning can begin.
3. **Ask questions.** The university counseling team is here to help. If answers are not immediately available, the research will be done for them as soon as possible!

**Thomas Waterfall**  
University Guidance Counselor  
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## Alum Interview

### Interview with KIST alum, Yui (Class of 2020)

**Mr. Thomas:**

*Thanks for speaking with me today.*

*You are a graduate of the class of 2020; could you please introduce a few things about yourself to the community?*



**Yui:**

My name is Yui and I joined KIST in Grade 11. I spent two years doing the DP at KIST and now I am a first year undergraduate student at the University of British Columbia (UBC), in Canada double majoring in Computer Science and Business.

**Mr. T:** *That sounds great so far! Can I ask why those two majors?*

**Y:** Originally, I wanted to study physics in university because that is the subject I enjoyed most in the DP. However, I didn't get accepted directly into the engineering program at UBC. My second choice was the Sauder School of Business (The faculty of Commerce at UBC). I found out about a program in Sauder called "BUCS", allowing students to do a double major in Computer Science and Business. Only 50 out of the 700 students in that college can enter this program. It's very competitive as it's the only double major program that the Sauder School of Business offers.

I have always been interested in bridging tech and business and that hasn't changed since my time in high school. Originally, I was planning to graduate with engineering and then go on to do something that bridges tech to business, but now I am able to approach it both from the business and science perspective during my undergrad.

**Mr. T:** *Speaking of applying to universities, UBC was not your first choice that you wanted to get into is that correct?*

**Y:** Correct. It was actually one of my safety schools and I hadn't strongly considered going there until I got rejected from my other schools.

**Mr. T:** *How did you cope with facing the rejection from the other schools that you applied to?*

I got rejected from most of my top choices at competitive US schools. It was tough. I was facing university rejections, dealing with COVID, and being stuck at home. It just hurt in general. It felt like I wasn't good enough for the universities and they were rejecting me personally.

The second thing was the expectation that I set for myself and the expectations from family, teachers and peers. At KIST I spoke with many teachers and university advisors to receive feedback. I didn't feel like I was making bad decisions in applying; I was expecting at least one or two offers from my higher target or reach schools. That not happening was very painful to deal with and that feeling was stuck in my mind for more than a month after facing my rejections.

I later realized that these schools were really competitive with some acceptance rates lower than 5%. I didn't set my sights broad enough. Even schools that I thought were "safety schools" in the US had acceptance rates in single digits last year. Afterwards when I thought back on it, my safety schools were not actually "safety schools". I came to find even my program at UBC had an acceptance rate of around 10% only.

**Mr. T:** *Who did you turn to for support in these cases?*

**Y:** My university counselor and teachers helped me to accept my rejection alongside my family. They helped me to look at things in a more logical way and helped to move past my feelings and look at UBC as what it is, a great university. The most important thing was that they helped me realize that I now had an amazing opportunity that not every student has the chance for. It helped to change my mindset. When I was able to start thinking of the positives is when I started to look more closely at what I could do within my new school and stop thinking about what I might be missing at schools I didn't get into.

**Mr. T:** *I'm glad to hear that your teachers and family were there for you, but how about other students?*

**Y:** At first I found it hard to open up to my peers about my rejections



because they all expected I would get into such famous schools and I felt that pressure on myself; I couldn't open up to them for a long time. Once I finally decided to talk to them, I was very surprised. They gave me positive feedback and reminded me of the amazing things I had done in life. They congratulated me for getting into the school that I did.

Don't hesitate to talk to your friends, they will be supportive no matter what! Don't try to carry everything by yourself. This is what inspired me and boosted my confidence to apply for the double major within UBC. After my acceptance during the summer, my mood continued improving and I was back to myself.

**Mr. T:** *So after going through all of those emotions, what advice would you give to current KIST students?*

**Y:** It's okay to be disappointed by negative outcomes you have; it's completely normal. You may get really excited about something only for it not to go as planned. But other paths may open that you didn't look at before. Once you decide on one path, try to find the best thing you can while on it. You'll realize that in that place, you can make it your home and you can find something that may be an even better opportunity than you would have had in other schools, but just didn't look at closely or consider before.

**Mr. T:** *It seems you are quite busy after finding your focus within UBC. However, I know you haven't been able to go and study on the UBC campus in Vancouver. How has that been?*

**Y:** Of course, we are missing a big opportunity as first-year students not being on campus to adapt to school life in a new environment.

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Having a personal life outside of studies has also been hard for students across the world. However, in terms of the classroom lectures themselves, it isn't too difficult to adjust because most of us have never experienced what a university lecture is like on campus anyway; it doesn't feel as if we are missing anything, so the adaptation into university has been simple for me.

My professors are also pretty tech savvy and have been able to present all different types of things for us to interact with, using multiple camera angles, interactive whiteboards, and interactive sessions amongst other things. Everything that has been presented by the professors has motivated the students and their continued efforts have made everyone feel welcome, challenged and wanting to cooperate.

For me, 80%+ of my lectures have been synchronous (live lectures, not re-watch pre-recorded ones), but for the re-watch lectures, I really try hard to keep up the pace as it can be very easy to fall behind and you would not even realize that until the exam.

As for the personal side, because I am not on campus, I cannot easily make new friends and it can be difficult with timings across the world to arrange extra sessions, such as meeting professor office hours.

**Mr. T:** *Have you been able to meet new friends virtually though? What have you been doing for any groupwork or study sessions?*

**Y:** At first, I felt that meetings with my new "online only" friends and classmates was a bit weird, but after having multiple online study sessions, I found that I could learn a lot from my peers. I have even been able to make UBC friends that live in Tokyo and can meet in person. It's the closest thing I can have to a university social life at this time, but it's been helping me to meet a lot of different students from a lot of different majors. In a way it feels a little bit like being in a dorm. Even though we are together in one city instead of a hallway, this has been something that has helped me enjoy my university life so far.

**Mr. T:** *Outside of university life, you have spoken about a few other opportunities that you have been pursuing to improve yourself and make the best use of the*

*situation you have. What are these exactly?*

**Y:** I have two main opportunities outside of my main academic studies. The first is called the UBC BizTech club that I joined within the first week of university. I applied to be a mentor in the tri-mentorship program which allows you to be matched with a different professional or upper-level students each week to get to know them and ask about career or academic questions of what you would like to do. Thanks to that, I have been having Zoom conversations with upper-level students and professionals. Now I have a mentor who is a graduate from UBC last year and was also a BUCS student like I am now. She has been helping me with a variety of things I am planning for my future such as internships I want to do, questions on what field I should go into, and how to make best use of my major. Talking to her and other professionals has helped lead me to my second opportunity.

I will be part of a co-op program for my major, giving me 16 months of full-time employment during university. With that being said, the co-op program only starts in second year. Because I have been in Tokyo during COVID, I felt at the beginning I was losing an opportunity; however, after speaking with my mentor and thinking again, I realized being in Tokyo may be much better than I thought. There are actually so many internship opportunities here! So, I found myself wanting to make the best of living in Japan during this time and found an internship to take advantage of during this time.

**Mr. T:** *How exactly have you been going about searching for opportunities in Tokyo such as this?*

**Y:** Several ways. Upper-year students that I met introduced me to different ones and I found connections like that. There were also recruiting websites that had many options. There are almost too many types of internships available I realized: short-time, long-term, part-



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time and full-time. Trying to decide which one of these internships would be most suitable would be the first step into searching and finding something that matches. Then the research becomes a bit easier. Now I will do an internship with a startup company in Japan in the Reuse industry to try to make an effort to bridge connections to sell different products and goods from Japan to overseas.

**Mr. T:** *Lastly, is there any advice you have for students who are applying to university this year and worrying that they will continue facing the same difficulties that your class is facing now?*

**Y:** It's very important to have good communication. Keep cameras on, smile, and don't be afraid to express yourself. At the end of the day that's what's going to give you the most out of your online experience.

Don't be afraid to reach out.

Making the most out of online classes is on you. It's very easy to be isolated in this type of situation. You only have university for three to four years. You don't have time to waste. Even if one year doesn't go according to plan, try to make the most of it. In 50 years you can say we were the "first" to go online like this. So, we are special!

**Mr. T:** *Thank you for your time, Yui, and I hope you continue to have success whether here in Japan, in university in Canada, and wherever you find yourself afterwards. We are proud to have you as part of our KIST Alumni.*

**Thomas Waterfall**  
University Guidance Counselor