

Expanding future possibilities

Hirakû

29

Cover Picture: Craft "Rabbits Gathering to Watch the Harvest Moon"
As the Harvest Moon rose in the night sky, many rabbits gathered together.
It seems these rabbits were born from the footprints of Kinder Kids students!
The perfectly round moon is so big that it looks as if you can reach up and touch it.
The other surrounding stars are also shining brightly.
All the rabbits seem to be enjoying the arrival of autumn
as they listen to the sound of the susuki grass swaying in the wind.

**We look forward to
your ideas!**

"Hiraku" provides useful information
and the latest news related to
English and childhood education.

- Your recent interests
- Topics you want us to cover
- New content etc etc...

If you have ideas to contribute,
please share these with us!

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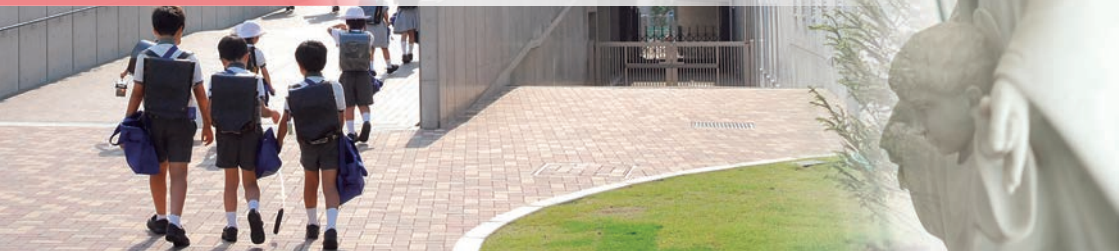


日本の心と、英語の力。Kinder Kids inc.



Nigawa-Gakuin Elementary School has Started Taking Kinder Kids Online Lessons!

An Interview with Ms. Mitsuyo Tanzawa, an English Teacher at Nigawa-Gakuin Elementary School



Since April of this year, Nigawa-Gakuin Elementary School has been taking Kinder Kids Online English lessons. We spoke with Ms. Mitsuyo Tanzawa, the English teacher at Nigawa-Gakuin, to learn about the changes in English education at Nigawa-Gakuin and the students' reactions to the online lessons.



Nigawa-Gakuin Elementary School
Mitsuyo Tanzawa

Q Why did Nigawa-Gakuin decide to use Kinder Kids Online Lessons?

Until the previous academic year, we were taking online lessons from another company. I had heard a lot about "Grad Chat" from students who were Kinder Kids graduates, so I thought about introducing "Grad Chat" lessons for our students. I made up my mind and contacted Kinder Kids, then I was invited to visit the facility and had the opportunity to see Online Chat in action. The quality of the lessons did not vary by the providing instructors, and the lessons were mainly focused on English conversation, without relying on unnecessary visual effects that are often common in online lessons for children. This approach matched our desire to expose children to beautiful

English pronunciation, so I felt, "This is it!" When we had a trial lesson at our school, the students naturally focused on the instructor and enthusiastically participated in the lesson.

Q What is your impression after actually taking the Kinder Kids Online lesson?

The problems we had before had been resolved! The online lessons are provided from Japan, so the connection is excellent and stable. The teachers encouraged the students to speak English in whole sentences by instructing them on the grammar and pronunciation of the English as they spoke. For example, when a student answered in the present tense when the answer should have been answered in the past tense, the teacher asks the student again while emphasizing "What **"DID"** you---?" to make the child naturally aware of the correct tense and grammar.

Q What were the children's reactions to the lesson?

Students in the lower grades found it exciting to wear headsets and speak while looking at the screen. The first graders began by learning the basic skills for using the iPad, such as tapping the buttons, and learned they could use other languages besides Japanese. The students in the fifth and sixth grades are becoming more aware of the important points in each lesson and commenting about things like "We should memorize this section". Many students not only enjoyed the English games but also greatly appreciated that they were wholeheartedly praised when they gave the correct answers, and when they made mistakes, they were given detailed explanations about what was wrong to help them better understand.



Q As the grade level gets higher, the lessons also become more challenging. Is the monthly lesson of 30-35 minutes sufficient?

The lessons have certainly become more challenging, but that is at the level that Nigawa-Gakuin Elementary School's English Course aims for.

The enjoyment and excitement of online lessons with native instructors are different from the regular lessons, so the students

have come to value their limited online time and focus on their studies. Moreover, because regular lessons and online lessons are linked, students have become more diligent in their regular class studies to better understand the online lessons. It also stimulates all teachers to plan lessons for the students.

Q What memorable experiences do you have from the online lessons?

One upper-grade student was very shy and didn't feel comfortable speaking in English. At first, she couldn't speak with the online English Instructors.

However, with the support of her instructors, she gradually became more confident in speaking English. After being praised in one of the lessons, she came to me and said excitedly,

"I could answer the question! Did you see me?"

She has since become more interested and enthusiastic about English, and now she often asks when the next online lesson will be.

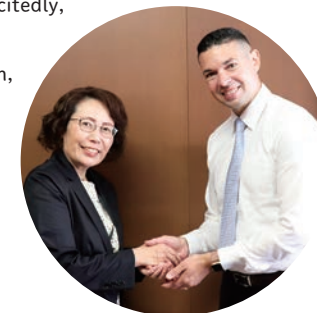
Q Please tell us about your future plans.

Some students find English difficult at first. Our target is to help make those students think, "English is fun!" by the end of the second term. I believe that online lessons have expanded the possibility of English learning, so I am considering letting children take online lessons during long vacations such as summer holidays. It would be a waste not to have lessons during the summer holidays!

Q Lastly...

We greatly appreciate the consistently high-quality English lessons that Kinder Kids provides. Students are also excited by the effective teaching methods and the teachers' wonderful support.

We are deeply grateful that we can confidently entrust our students to Kinder Kids.



Promising a strong partnership from here on out.
(Right) Ryan Lopes,
Head of the Education Dept.



The Coding Classes at Kinder Kids



Since 2020, Programming Education has become compulsory in elementary schools. Kinder Kids has also been teaching 'Coding' in K3 classes and the curriculum will be revamped from the 2024 academic year. What kind of lessons will be provided, and what skills will the students acquire? We interviewed the Coding Curriculum Supervisor for some answers.

◆The Reasons and Aims of Teaching “Computer Coding”.

Our world heavily relies on technology and computers, and learning coding gives students a better understanding of what is happening around them. The best part of coding is that it is so much fun! It enables students to bring their ideas and creations to life. In addition to that, it also helps them develop essential skills such as creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

◆How to proceed with the basic lessons and the expected abilities to be acquired after one year of study.

At the beginning of K3, there will be Unplugged Activities to introduce children to coding concepts. Unplugged activities are fun and do not require the use of a computer. These activities serve as a hands-on approach and an engaging way to introduce the topic. For example, the students will use printed programming blocks to control their teacher. The children will enjoy making their teachers walk, jump, and turn around as the teacher follows the code they lay down. After that, the children will move on to coding on their iPads. The Coding Curriculum will be taught through short video lessons. After the video, the classroom teachers will provide support to help the students and answer any questions as the students make their programs. To help the students achieve success, they will also get a workbook to accompany the lessons. By the end of the school year, the students will be able to make their own computer animations and games.



The code blocks are used to give various instructions to the teachers.



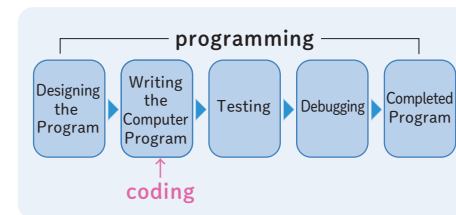
The workbook is illustrated with the Phonics Characters

※What is the Unplugged Coding?

Unplugged Coding is a method of learning the fundamentals of programming without using computers or electronic devices. It allows beginners and children to learn algorithmic and programming concepts by using paper, cards, or blocks in hands-on activities. It is introduced to school education as a means to foster logical thinking skills necessary to approach programming before actually working with computers.

◆Why is the curriculum called "coding" instead of “programming” at Kinder Kids?

“Programming” and “Coding” are very closely related and for a long time were used interchangeably. Today the term “Coding” refers to ‘telling a computer what to do’, and “Programming” refers to ‘making a complete computer program.’ You can think of Coding as a key part of Programming.



◆“Scratch Jr” as the Teaching Material for Coding

Scratch Jr is an introductory coding language designed for children aged 5-7 years old to create their own interactive stories and games. By snapping together the graphical programming blocks, children can make characters move, jump, dance, and sing. They can also modify characters using the paint editor, add their own voices and sounds, and even insert photos of themselves to bring their creations to life. Scratch Jr serves as a stepping stone to Scratch, a high-level coding program designed for children between 8 to 16 years old. The Scratch community is the largest coding community of children in the world. When the children graduate K3 they will be ready to join any coding community with confidence.



Scratch Jr User Interface



About Scratch Jr

ScratchJr, a simplified version of Scratch, is an introductory programming language developed by the MIT Media Lab in collaboration with Tufts University and The Playful Invention Company. The main feature of Scratch Jr is that it allows programming without typing any text. It offers an intuitive user interface that enables users to manipulate characters and create games just by using their fingers on a tablet. Scratch is used in educational settings worldwide, with over 100 million registered users (as of April 2023).

Message from the Coding Curriculum Supervisor

The students at Kinder Kids will have a ton of fun learning this important skill that is becoming a mandatory part of elementary school education around the world. At Kinder Kids, we have always strived to be at the forefront of Education. We are dedicated to innovating, creating, and designing educational programs that let students show their true potential. These coding lessons will open up wonderful new possibilities for your child and I am excited to see what the students will create in K3 and beyond.



The Coding Curriculum Supervisor for the coding lessons
Ian Vadas

My Stepping Stone (File5)

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

She Has Been Devoted to Music Since Childhood, and Accepted to New York University to Study Music. Her Goal Is To Compose Music That Will be Loved by People Around the World

H.N., who graduated from Kinder Kids Ibaraki Saito School in 2011 and recently graduated from high school, has been accepted to New York University's Music Department. We had the opportunity to talk with her. She has been passionate about music since her early childhood and has now seized the chance to continue studying at a world-class university.

She first encountered "Music and English" at Kinder Kids

When I was at Kinder Kids, there was an incredibly talented teacher who used to be a musician and had a beautiful singing voice. I loved the English songs she sang, and that's how I became interested in music. The teacher's singing also played a significant role in my continuing study in English.

"After graduating from Kinder Kids, I attended an international school from elementary to high school and also attended Grad Club until G3, which allowed me to maintain a high level of English proficiency. I was able to achieve a TOEFL score that allowed me to apply to prestigious universities."

Since I was a child, it has been my dream to live in the U.S. So I not only focused on improving my English but also worked hard to improve my school grades and engaged in extracurricular activities, which are highly valued for admission to American universities. All that effort paid off when I was accepted not only to New York University but also to schools like the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of California, Irvine.

New York University is an internationally prestigious institution, with an especially high reputation in the field of music and arts. The minimum TOEFL score required for international students is 100 or above. In addition to a high TOEFL score, students must have high school grades and strong portfolios.



She proudly posed with her handmade violin when she was a Kinder Kids student.



New York University [NYU]

New York University, founded in 1831, is located in Greenwich Village, New York City, and is a leading private research institution, along with Boston University. NYU is ranked 24th in the "Times Higher Education World University Rankings" (the University of Tokyo is ranked 39th) and ranked 2nd in the field of law. The university has produced world-famous politicians, business leaders, artists, and film directors, including Alan Greenspan (the former Chairman of the Federal Reserve) and Martin



Days Spent With Music

I began studying the violin at the age of 7, and during my elementary school years, I frequently participated in music competitions and earned several awards at the Fukuyama Music Competition, where I received a total of three awards in my 6th-grade and the first year in junior high school, holds a particularly special place in my memories. It is also a cherished memory that I was able to engage in volunteer activities through my violin playing. When I was in my first year of junior high school, I participated in an English singing competition called the English Vocal Election (EVE) and won the EVE Creative Partners Award. I also have a strong passion for dance. I achieved 3rd place in the "TEAM FINAL" category of the 2019 World of Dance Championship, a global competition. I had the opportunity to teach dance to children before, and I discovered the joy of teaching, which motivated me to work part-time at Grad Club's Saturday classes."

I Want To Study In a Town Where The Arts are Thriving and Become a Composer That People Love.

I decided to study in New York because it is the cultural and artistic center of the world. Manhattan has many art and cultural institutions, such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The New York Public Library, and The Morgan Library & Museum. I thought I could gain a lot of knowledge and inspiration there. I was attracted to the New York University's composition program because internationally renowned composers teach students various music genres. I will study music very hard at New York University, and in the future, I hope to compose music that is loved by many people, like Joe Hisaishi and Ryuichi Sakamoto.

Ibaraki Saito School Graduate

H.N.

New York University Freshman



H.N. showed her versatility in dance! The 3rd place in TEAM FINAL of the World of Dance Championship 2019!



Supporting the junior staff in Grad Club's Saturday classes.



Kansai/Nagoya/Fukuoka



Kansai Grad Club
Yui Sekiguchi

Kansai Grad Club held their summer school and one-day excursions, including the popular annual Dolphin Camp and Hachi-Kita Camp. During the Kansai summer school, students learned about ancient Rome and made related crafts. Each student made their own creative piece, and it was heartwarming to see them show their creations to each other. During the one-day excursion, students experienced many ways to use English outside the classroom, such as learning how to professionally cook takoyaki in English, an English soccer lesson, and interviewing foreign tourists at Osaka Castle.



Paragliding!
(Hachi-Kita Camp)

We also held summer schools over a two-week period in Nagoya and Fukuoka. During the second week, the theme was "Heroes & Villains," where we made masks and capes to transform into our very own heroes. Just like in Kansai, on our day trip in Nagoya, we conducted English interviews at Nagoya Castle, and it was exciting to see our students confidently approach tourists and talk to them.

By staying overnight at the camp, the students could interact with students from other schools, and through taking on new challenges, they significantly matured. The staff members were really happy to see how much they grew by the end of the camp.

We believe that through such diverse experiences during excursions and camps, our students were able to create wonderful summer memories. We hope that many more Grad students will continue to participate in similar events and gain even more memorable experiences in the future.



Studying about Ancient Rome and making their own Roman armor



Conducting English interviews with foreign tourists and writing a newspaper in English.

Kanto



Dragnet Fishing
at Nunohiki Coast in Chiba!

As a new project, Kanto Grad Club held a joint summer school with Sakura International School, in addition to having a seaside camp and a one-day field trip. Throughout this summer school, the students had the opportunity to delve into topics of their own choice for a full week. They attended every day filled with eager anticipation.

A total of 42 students participated in the camp. Under good weather conditions, the students were able to experience pulling in a large net filled with fresh fish in Chiba and then enjoying a BBQ right on the beach. This filled the students with great excitement! It was heartwarming to see the students from different schools making new friends.

We visited the Tokyo Global Gateway for a one-day field trip. The booths, which recreated landscapes and cultures of foreign countries, attracted the students' interest, and it was impressive to see their eyes sparkle as they engaged in the experiences at each booth. Through the various experiences during the field trip and at the camp, we were able to observe their growth firsthand. It was a summer filled with wonderful memories for all of us, including the staff members.



Kanto Grad Club
Yuki Tanma



Simulated overseas experience
at Tokyo Global Gateway



The first joint summer school
with Sakura International School



The Phonics Island Songs are now available on various music streaming services!



Starting from August 10th, the Phonics Island Songs, which are also available on the Kinder+ contents page, are now available as the "Phonics Friends Collection" on music platforms like "Apple Music," "Amazon Music," "YouTube Music," and "Spotify." Whether you're in your car, relaxing at home, or out for a walk, you can enjoy the Phonics Friends Collection with your children anytime, anywhere. Singing along repeatedly as part of your daily routine is an effective way to practice pronunciation and do tongue exercises!

Starting in September, we will gradually add Kinder+ original songs to the music streaming services.

Please enjoy the Phonics Friends Collection with your family.

※Please check each streaming site for availability and settings.

You can access each streaming service from the Kinder Kids page on [linktree](#)>

Linktree is also on the official Kinder Kids Instagram! Be sure to follow us and stay updated on the latest news!

official Kinder Kids Instagram
@kinderkids.japan

Kinder+

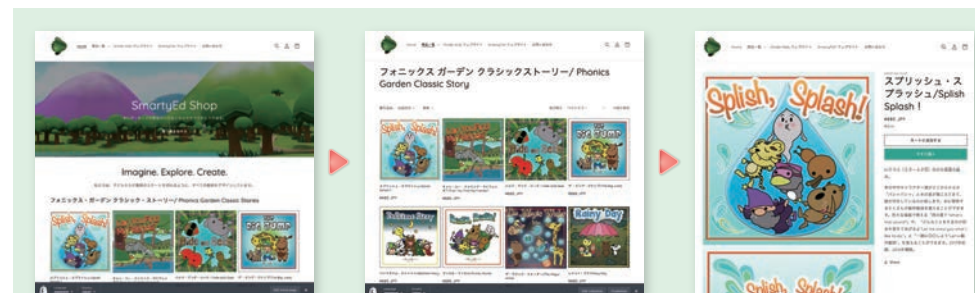
You can also connect to various music streaming services from Kinder+. Please check it out!



Phonics Garden's Classic Picture Books Now On Sale

We are pleased to announce that our beloved Phonics Garden picture books are now available for purchase through the SmartyED online shop!

(*SmartyED is a Kinder Kids group company that produces educational materials and products.)



From the book listings above, selecting "Classic" from the dropdown menu will take you to the next page.

When you select your favorite title, you will be directed to the purchase page.

After reviewing your cart, click "Proceed to Purchase" and the registration page will open.

- ✔ Payment ... Credit Card
- ✔ Delivery ... Home Delivery
- ✔ Shipping Costs ... Depends on the weight of the order.

SmartyED

You can access the online shop here>

Please visit **Kinder+** for more detailed information.