

Expanding future possibilities

Hirakū

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- ★Kinder Kids Writing & Picture Diary Contest 2024
- ★Green School Bali Visit
- ★Kobe Seaside School Renewal as an Adventure School
- ★Infinity Elementary Nagano Study Trip





KINDER KIDS

Writing & Picture Diary

Contest 2024



Grand Prize (Picture Diary Category)



S.K.
(Shinagawa School · K2)



I rode on a boat.
It looked just like the little bowl boat I saw in the Issun-bōshi picture book.
When I looked at my little brother, he seemed sick.
Mom told me, "That's seasickness."
I thought, "You can get dizzy even on a boat!"

Excellence Award (Picture Diary Category)

K.T. (Osaka School · K2)



I set off fireworks at camp.
When I lit them, they crackled,
and they looked like golden flowers
blooming.
Some were round, and some were
shaped like triangles.
I thought, "If they were real
flowers, I'd love to touch them!"

Thank you for your submissions to the Kinder Kids Writing & Picture Diary Contest 2024! Once again, we received many wonderful and creative entries from students across all our schools. Each piece showcases the children's rich imagination and keen sensitivity, capturing everything from everyday moments to significant discoveries. Their work truly resonates with the viewers. This year, we saw a rise in both the quality and number of outstanding entries, making the selection process even more competitive and inspiring.

Grand Prize (Writing Category)



L.K.
(Kyoto School · K3)

My First Underwater Staring Contest

I was always scared to put my face in the water. Even when I went to the pool, I only stayed in the shallow end.

But this summer, my dad said, "Hold my hand. It's okay." Then, he helped me swim all the way across the big pool.

I kept swimming and swimming—it felt like I had turned into a fish!

After going back and forth many times, my dad said,

"Let's have a staring contest underwater!"

Suddenly, I felt like I could do it.

"Ready... go!"

I took a deep breath and dove in.

For the first time ever, I was underwater.

I was so, so happy!

Excellence Award (Writing Category)

K.M. (Nara Tomigaoka School · K2)

Making Bread

Since we promised to make bread tomorrow, I woke up early. Before breakfast, I measured the flour. I scooped it little by little with a spoon, being very careful. I added water and salt too. After putting in the dough and pressing the button, it started spinning like a fan and made a crackling sound.

At lunchtime, I shaped the dough. It was soft and squishy, like slime, so I touched it gently. I put candy inside.

When I baked it in the oven, I made a perfectly round loaf of bread. The candy melted, but it was still really delicious, so I gave one to my grandma.

I want to make bread again!

My Daughter and Her Dad

My 4-year-old daughter has become quite the talker.

Daughter: "Can you get me Hee-Haa?"

Me: "Hee-Haa? ...Oh, you mean Eeyore from Winnie the Pooh? That's such a mix-up!"

Daughter: "Well, to me, he's Hee-Haa!"

I couldn't help but laugh.

...A few days later.

Dad: "What's that trendy see-through fashion called again? Suu... something?"

Me: "You mean sheer?"

Dad: "Suu, sheer... close enough!"

Watching my husband talk just like our daughter, I smiled and thought, "Like father, like daughter!"

Kagayaki Award

【Picture Diary】 H.T. (Osaka School K3)
 S.K. (Yokohama School K3)
 K.N. (Sakai School K3)
 D.T. (Yokohama School K3)
 I.M. (Tennoji Yuhigaoka School K3)
 R.T. (Dojima School K3)
 【Writing】 S.S. (Fukuoka School K3)
 S.F. (Kobe Seaside School K3)

Habataki Award

【Picture Diary】 K.I. (Fukuoka School K1)
 K.O. (Tennoji Yuhigaoka School K1)
 I.S. (Ashiya School K2)
 M.M. (Yokohama School K2)
 Y.Y. (Awaza School K1)
 S.T. (Shinagawa School K2)
 I.T. (Nagoya School K2)
 S.K. (Yao School K2)
 【Writing】 H.T. ((Shinagawa School K1)

A Summer Evening

Right before dinner, my daughter did something she wasn't supposed to, and I scolded her.

The two of us sat in silence at the dinner table, while the baby's chatter filled the room. Then, suddenly — "Silence sleeping into the rocks, the cicadas' cry."

My Daughter recited the haiku in one breath! I was stunned — how does she even know that?! In an instant, the atmosphere shifted and our quiet dinner became a joyful one. Thank you for always bringing smiles to our lives.



Kumiko Shinoda
Exam Prep /
Japanese Learning Div.
Deputy Division Manager

We have been receiving more and more inquiries from parents asking, "Will the contest be held again this year?" This increase in interest makes us very happy, as it shows that the Kinder Kids Writing & Picture Diary Contest has become an established part of creative activities at Kinder Kids. The act of using the letters learned in class to record memorable experiences not only enhances language skills but also builds the foundation for self-expression. Writing down their thoughts and sharing them with family and friends provides children with valuable learning experiences.

We encourage you to keep your children's work as a record of your child's growth and as a special way to strengthen family bonds. We also hope that by reading the winning entries, both children and parents alike will be inspired by the creativity of their peers. We look forward to even more entries next year!

Green School Bali – Visit Report

January 9-12, 2025  Bali, Indonesia

Kinder Kids Staff Visit Green School in Bali, Indonesia

In January 2025, Kinder Kids staff visited Green School Bali, an international school in Indonesia dedicated to fostering future leaders who will create a sustainable world. The school provides education in harmony with nature, promoting an eco-friendly lifestyle and encouraging students to develop a deep awareness of sustainability. This visit included members from Adventure School and Infinity, who aimed to explore how Green School's unique educational approach could be applied to their own learning environments.

Green School is known for its open-air bamboo classrooms and a vast natural learning environment. The school emphasizes Project-Based Learning (PBL), where students actively engage in hands-on projects focusing on sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Through this visit, we explored various aspects of Green School's educational philosophy, including hands-on project-based learning, education in harmony with nature, and strong ties with the local community.

Key Features of Learning at Green School

Green School's education stands out in the following ways:

1. Experiential Learning (PBL)

Each grade level has its own garden, where students cultivate crops and learn about sustainable agriculture. The school also incorporates renewable energy into its ecosystem, allowing students to experience sustainability firsthand.

2. Integrated Curriculum

Subjects such as science, mathematics, art, and technology are taught in a cross-disciplinary manner, encouraging students to explore solutions to environmental challenges. The school's solar panels and rainwater recycling system are also used as learning tools.

3. Connection with Nature

Many classes are conducted outdoors, promoting hands-on learning experiences such as river activities and barefoot learning.

4. Animal Care and Responsibility

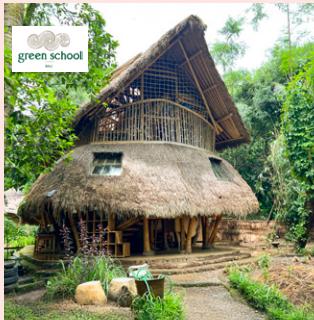
Students help take care of cows, pigs, and rabbits, fostering an appreciation for life and a sense of responsibility.

5. Community Engagement

Green School actively involves parents and the local community in agricultural programs and environmental education initiatives.



The tropical rainforest surrounding Green Village, adjacent to Green School. The area is home to a rich ecosystem where various plants thrive, and birds and insects coexist in harmony.



Green School, Bali

Established in 2008 in the rural area of Abian, Bali, Green School is an international school renowned for its commitment to sustainability. The school is unique for its fully bamboo-structured buildings, non-electric lighting, and eco-friendly toilets, embodying a deep commitment to sustainability.

Surrounding the school is Green Village, a sustainable community that integrates eco-friendly architecture, residential spaces, workspaces, and educational facilities. The entire area embodies a lifestyle centered around sustainability.

Green School has been recognized as one of the “most innovative schools” by TIME Magazine and Forbes for its pioneering environmental education. Building on its success, Green School has expanded internationally, with campuses now in South Africa and New Zealand.



The Ayung River flows through the Green School campus. Students engage in water play, swimming, and even muddy wrestling in a mud pool, using all five senses to enhance their learning experience.

At Green School, students care for animals such as cows, pigs, and rabbits, gaining hands-on experience in living alongside animals as part of their daily lives.



Insights Gained from the Visit and Their Application

Through this visit, we discovered valuable insights that can be applied to learning experiences at both Adventure School and Infinity.



Application to Adventure School

Enhancing Inquiry-Based Learning through Nature

Developing children’s curiosity by engaging in activities such as risk management near water and crop cultivation.

Practical Activities to Raise Environmental Awareness

Conducting workshops on composting and renewable energy to promote sustainable practices.

Animal Interaction Education

Encouraging students to care for small animals, providing hands-on experiences in nurturing life.

Expanding Learning Opportunities with Parents

Strengthening collaboration between home and school to create more opportunities for inquiry-based and environmental education.

Advancing Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Strengthening student-led inquiry activities by exploring topics such as environmental and community issues.

Enhancing Learning Environments

Creating a space where students can freely move between indoor and outdoor areas to promote inquiry-based learning.

Introducing Multi-Sensory Learning

Expanding opportunities for hands-on experiences, such as barefoot activities and direct interaction with nature, to enrich experiential learning.



A unique open learning space made entirely of bamboo, blending harmoniously with nature to foster free-thinking education.

A vast green space within the school grounds. In this natural environment, children engage all five senses in learning.



A recycling station installed on campus. By carefully sorting waste such as paper, plastic bottles, cans, and Tetra Pak cartons, students learn about waste reduction and recycling.



The "I see ... I wonder ..." inquiry-based learning board. Students freely write down their daily discoveries, expanding their curiosity and deepening their learning.



Adventure School,
Tokyo Campus
Aya Moroguchi

Reflecting on the Green School Visit

This visit reinforced my belief that an environment where nature and learning are integrated helps nurture children's independence and curiosity.

For example, at the Tokyo campus, we have a large lawn where many insects live. Rather than simply using this space for play, I realized that, like Green School, it can be effectively utilized for learning. I am also considering increasing opportunities for children to take an active role, such as engaging in activities like campus cleanup, where they can develop a sense of responsibility.

Additionally, I observed that Green School students deepen their learning through challenges. I hope that our students, too, will develop a habit of exploring what they like and what interests them. To support this, it is essential

to create a safe environment where they can embrace challenges without fear. If they know that failure is not the end, but an opportunity for growth, they will be able to move forward with confidence.

As educators, we will continue to support children by respecting each individual's pace and emotions, ensuring they feel safe and encouraged in their learning journey. This visit has inspired us to further enhance our approach to nature-based learning and experiential education at Kinder Kids.

Expanding Learning Through the Transition to Adventure School

At Kobe Seaside School, we aim to increase opportunities for children to engage with nature throughout their daily activities. This not only refreshes their minds and bodies but also promotes healthier growth. Additionally, outdoor activities provide more opportunities for children to collaborate with friends, fostering teamwork and creativity. Furthermore, hands-on experiences are expected to provide more opportunities for students to naturally use the English they have learned.



Programs That Utilize the School's Facilities and Unique Features

The school grounds feature various outdoor facilities, including the Circle Time Deck, a mud pond, a vegetable garden, and a fire pit area, creating an environment where children can engage their five senses, learn through hands-on experiences, and play freely with creativity in nature.

At the mud pond, children enjoy sensory play, using their whole bodies to freely express themselves. In the vegetable garden, they cultivate sweet potatoes and watermelons, experiencing the joy of harvesting while developing an appreciation for food.

Additionally, cooking activities using the fire pit area are held in the schoolyard, such as the baked sweet potato event and miso-making workshop.

The children even used the miso they made themselves to prepare and enjoy homemade miso soup together.

Furthermore, as part of environmental education, students participate in beach cleanups and nature observation activities, fostering an awareness of environmental conservation and deepening their connection with nature.

Fostering Inquiry and English Skills Through Nature

Moving forward, we will focus on increasing opportunities for children to think creatively in nature, rather than relying on toys and play equipment. This will further enhance child-led inquiry-based learning.

As part of this initiative, we are introducing outdoor free art activities using recycled materials and paints, providing children with a space to fully express their creativity. Additionally, we will expand opportunities for children to learn about the natural environment by creating compost from food scraps and fallen leaves, which will then be used to grow vegetables and fruits.



Toward a Learning Environment Where Children Explore, Challenge Themselves, and Grow in Nature



Naoko Kamo
Branch Manager,
Kobe Seaside School

Children love to play and learn in nature. With the transition to Adventure School, we have created an environment that places even greater emphasis on outdoor activities, providing opportunities for children to think, create, and explore independently. We are also expanding programs that take advantage of our location near Suma Beach, including beach walks, marine learning activities, vegetable gardening, outdoor cooking events, and collaborative programs with the local community. Our teachers continue to generate wonderful new ideas, making the possibilities endless. Moving forward, we will further enhance the learning environment to ensure that children can nurture their curiosity and learn freely in a stimulating setting.

Kobe Seaside will be the first Adventure School in the Kansai region, and we can't wait for you to join us on this exciting and fun-filled journey!



Unique Learning Experiences at Kobe Seaside School, Enriched by the Ocean and Nature

The transition of Kobe Seaside School into an Adventure School is designed to maximize the benefits of its spacious schoolyard and its coastal environment, which is distinct from that of the Tokyo campus. Through coastal exploration activities, children can collect shells and stones while observing marine life and gaining a deeper understanding of environmental conservation.

Additionally, the food education program utilizes the school's vegetable garden and outdoor cooking facilities, providing opportunities to learn about sustainable living.

In this nature-rich environment, children engage in open-ended play, which helps them develop teamwork and problem-solving skills.

New Challenges and Program Development

At Kobe Seaside School, we are developing new programs with a strong focus on sustainability. Our teachers have also completed training with certified lifeguards at Suma Beach, enhancing their safety awareness to create a secure environment where children can engage in activities with confidence while fostering their ability to collaborate.

Additionally, the "Nature-Based Journals" program provides children with opportunities to record their observations, helping them develop logical thinking and communication skills. Furthermore, through "Free Art" and "Exploration", children are encouraged to express their opinions and strengthen their decision-making skills.

Nurturing the Power to Shape the Future

The goal of Adventure School education is to cultivate resilience (the ability to overcome challenges), problem-solving skills, and creativity. As a model Adventure School in Japan, Kobe Seaside School actively promotes environmental awareness initiatives, deepens nature-based learning, and nurtures the skills that will empower children for the future.

Adventure School: Fostering Curiosity and Deepening Learning



Ryan Lopes
Curriculum Manager
Adventure School

At Kobe Seaside School, we utilize the coastal natural environment to nurture children's ability to think independently, take action, and develop a love for learning, while also providing deep, experience-based education.

We incorporate inquiry-based programs that encourage creative thinking, expanding opportunities for children to enhance their logical reasoning and decision-making skills. Additionally, through challenges in nature, children develop resilience and creativity, while also gaining practical experience in using English in real-world contexts.

Our goal is to further evolve the philosophy of Adventure School, creating a more dynamic learning environment where children can experience a wide range of educational opportunities through nature.





Learning History,
Geography, and Society
Through Travel

Nagano Exploration Study Trip



October 31 – November 2,
Nagano

Although the main destination of this trip was Nagano Prefecture, the students first studied all nine prefectures of the Chubu region as part of their pre-trip learning. For children living in Osaka, it was not easy to immediately picture the location and characteristics of the Chubu region. Thus, the learning process began with understanding Japan's prefectures and the seven geographical divisions. As the first step in their inquiry, the students used a prefecture-based karuta game to explore the diverse regions of Japan. When they classified the prefectures based on their regional groupings or shared specialties, their curiosity was sparked—

many students exclaimed, “Prefectures are so interesting!” Next, they challenged themselves to conduct deeper research using the internet. While adults might simply type “Nagano Prefecture specialties” into a search engine, for children, the very act of formulating their questions into appropriate words was an essential part of the inquiry process. Many students typed full sentences like, “Please tell me about Nagano’s food,” experimenting with different ways to search for information. Through repeated discussions—focusing on questions like “Which place do we want to learn about?”, “What do we want to know?”, and “How recent should the information be?”—they gradually learned to search using only keywords, and eventually, they developed the ability to research in both English and Japanese. Through this inquiry-based process, their understanding of the Chubu region deepened.

Finally, the day of on-site learning arrived. The most frequently heard phrase from the students was: “The air is so fresh!”

This simple remark encapsulated the invaluable experiences that cannot be gained inside a classroom. By actually visiting Nagano, the students realized firsthand how travel brings about new discoveries and moments of excitement.

The theme of this trip was: “Learning about the primary industries of the Chubu region through experiences such as vegetable harvesting, dairy farming, and agricultural activities.”

The students participated in activities such as making miso, harvesting apples, and taking care of cows.



Apple Harvesting Experience at the Orchard!

The students also challenged themselves to make apple pie using the apples they harvested.



Harvesting giant bell peppers! Smiling with gratitude for nature's blessings.

Children were especially engaged in the vegetable harvesting experience. Using large scissors for the first time, they skillfully harvested bell peppers and eggplants. Their motivation seemed to grow as they thought, “I want to bring back the most delicious ones for my mom and dad!” It was particularly impressive to see how actively they asked the farmers questions. As they inquired about harvesting techniques and how vegetables grow, natural interactions with the farmers emerged, deepening their learning experience.

One of the most notable areas of growth in the children during this trip was their ability to ask for help. At our school, we emphasize the importance of being a “**Collaborator (a person who cooperates with others)**”. Because of this, the children love being relied upon and eagerly help friends in need. However, at the same time, they also have a strong

desire not to appear weak, which sometimes makes it difficult for them to say, “Can you help me?”

However, during experiences such as farming and dairy work, many tasks were impossible to complete alone. Naturally, the children began calling out to one another, saying, “Can you help me with this?” or “Can you hold this for me?” Teachers observed without intervening as much as possible, and the children worked together to complete tasks, realizing the importance of cooperation. Through these experiences, they came to understand the importance of cooperation.

At night, this cooperative attitude extended to daily tasks such as preparing bedding and packing. Calls of “Can someone help me?” and “Sure!” could be heard frequently, showing how the experiences during the day translated into everyday behavior. The spirit of mutual support fostered through this trip will surely continue to enrich their school life and future learning experiences.



In Nagano, Japan's top producer of miso, students learned about miso-making and experienced the preparation process.

Expanding the Circle of Learning – Sharing Experiences at Home and Looking Forward to the Next Journey



Suzuki Momoka
Grade 2-1 Tutor /
G2 Japanese Language Teacher
Infinity Global Elementary School

During this trip, the children brought home the vegetables and fruits they had harvested themselves. They excitedly shared, “My family used them in our meals!” Some children who originally disliked bell peppers were eager to taste the ones they had personally harvested and brought home, saying, “I want to try it!” It was impressive to see how they cherished the experience and savored the food with a newfound appreciation because they had harvested it themselves. This journey became a meaningful experience as it connected their learning to their everyday meals at home.

This year, our journeys took us to Nagano and Shodoshima, and next year, we are planning a four-day, three-night trip to Hokkaido. Even those who were initially anxious before their first trip, saying, “I don’t want to go because I don’t want to be away from my family,” are now eagerly asking, “When can we go next?” It is heartwarming to see the children grow through travel, and we look forward to continuing to support them on their learning journey.

HP



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Cover Craft: “Butterflies Dancing in the Spring Breeze on Graduation Day”

Near a fully bloomed cherry blossom tree, numerous butterflies flutter gracefully in the gentle spring breeze.

Beneath the tree, children who are about to graduate stand with bright smiles, ready to take their next step forward.

The butterflies and cherry blossom petals seem to be quietly watching over their hopeful journey into the future.

Under the calm spring sky, the children embark on their new adventure, embraced by nature—a heartwarming sight indeed.

**We look forward to
your ideas!**

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

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- New content etc etc...

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

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