

# Tsukuba International School

First Term Overview  
November 2011

Homeroom Teacher: Mrs. Dianne Suzuki  
Grade 1

## Reading

*As a class we have enjoyed shared reading of a variety of stories and non-fiction. We have worked on identifying the title, author and illustrators of the stories we read. We have discussed and identified characters, settings and sequences within stories and retold them by listing the events that take place in order. As individuals we are enjoying becoming stronger and more confident readers through daily reading of books from the Oxford Reading Tree series. More recently we have been supplementing this with RAZ kids online. By recording our voices as we read, we are becoming more aware of what it means to read clearly and with expression.*

## Writing

*This term we have worked on developing our skills as writers in a variety of ways. We began with writing short personal recounts in our journals and in the form of postcards which we sent to our preschool teachers. We wrote lists of things that we would need for various activities which led to writing shopping lists and instructional texts in the form of recipes in connection with our unit of inquiry. During our How We Express Ourselves unit we have learnt how to record our ideas using mind maps and charts. Our major focuses have been on writing complete, simple sentences that start with a capital letter and end with a period or question mark. We are also working on the correct capitalisation of nouns and including adjectives to make our writing more interesting. We have begun to use a simple writing cycle where we write a draft and then edit with the help of a teacher before writing our final or good copy..*

## Speaking & Listening

*Grade One students are learning to be active and respectful listeners. Working with partners and in small groups has required us to share our ideas and to be open-minded towards the contributions of others. Presenting the work we have done in groups to the rest of the class is developing our confidence to speak and become effective communicators.*

## Mathematics

*This term we have worked on number concepts such as less than and greater than, and sequencing with before and after, as well as with ordinal numbers. Students have used counters, drawings, blocks, and number lines to explore addition and subtraction concepts. In our How We Express Ourselves unit, we have looked at how calendars work and identified significant dates that are related to traditions and celebrations. We have examined and experimented with the properties of size, shape and colour along with patterns and symmetry associated with traditional decorations.*

## Units of Inquiry

*For our Who We Are unit, we explored the lifestyle choices that we can make to ensure that our bodies are healthy. We sorted and classified foods in groups according to our own criteria and then learnt about how foods can be classified according to the food pyramid. We kept diaries of the foods we ate and reflected on our choices. For the summative assessment task, students worked together to plan a "Healthy Choices Lifestyle Party" for which they decided that foods low in sugar and oils, exercise, and rest were important components. In our How We Express Ourselves unit, we have considered the traditions and celebrations that are an important part of our lives. We identified and compared the traditions of others with those of our own families. We used mind maps to identify the traditions associated with different celebrations and then charts and venn diagrams to compare and contrast them with others. Finally we created a "Celebrations and Traditions" box with the help of our families which we then shared with classmates.*

## Japanese

Akane Kono

*This semester, we studied nouns and their categories, especially the names of things around us, for example, vegetables, fruits, foods, animals, transportations, tools, bodies and so on. We also studied antonyms of*

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nouns and adjectives. At the same time, we studied hiragana, and practiced how to read and write them. Then we practiced reading and speaking easy sentences, to answer easy questions, for example, "What is this?" "What is in there?" "Where is it?" and so on. At the same time we trained ourselves on how to listen. We used materials from various different resources (e.g. ones designed for Japanese primary school students, for foreign students, for adults and original resources we created at school) because of the varying levels of the students.

<b>Art</b>	<b>Cheryl Okubo</b>
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This unit was about introductions and the elements of art. We spent some time getting to know one another, the art room, and various materials therein. Our focus was mainly the element of line, with two weeks focused on shape. The children explored all kinds of lines and how to make them come together to create an image they like. The book for this unit was *Harold's Purple Crayon*, and the artist for the second unit was Matisse. Each class begins with a warm up exercise to develop eye-hand coordination skills. Then the material for the day is introduced, and they are free to create any sort of picture they want. After cleaning up we have a brief sharing time, where each child talks about his or her artwork. We accept any and all artwork unconditionally, without passing judgement on it. Teamwork and individual exploration without fear of being criticized has been established as a basis for future artmaking together.

<b>Physical Education</b>	<b>Davidson Onuoha</b>
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This semester we focused on soccer skills which helped us to be creative as individuals and cooperate as a team. We also improved on ball handling skills by practising sports such as handball and volleyball.

<b>Music</b>	<b>Jennifer Sadler</b>
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Throughout this year we will be exploring different areas of music through notation, listening, performing (singing, playing instruments), creating and composing. We began this semester with a unit about beat and rhythm. The children are learning to recognize the difference between beat and rhythm and how to perform confidently with a steady sense of beat. We touched on the first unit of inquiry, "Who We Are" by creating percussion using our hands in a variety of ways. The students learned to perform simple rhythms to a given beat with the song "I Hear Thunder". We have also been learning about pitch in music and discriminating between higher and lower sounds. The students followed the pitch movement of different songs with their hands. To solidify their understanding of beat, rhythm and pitch, the students have improvised with different instruments such as the xylophone, glockenspiel, rhythm sticks and shakers. We have learned to take turns when using the different instruments. We have been learning how to sing with an appropriate tone, posture and correct breathing. While listening to music, the children have moved to the various tempos with scarves and have drawn on paper what they feel the music "looks like" and what it means to them. We have learned songs about Autumn and Halloween to tie in with the unit of inquiry on *How We Express Ourselves - Celebrations*.

<b>Music - Violin</b>	<b>Craig Coleman</b>
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The first graders learned how to care for their violin by opening the case and holding the violin in its proper position. Basic rhythms were covered first by using pizzicato and then by using the bow. Divisions of the bow including whole and half bows were introduced and practiced. The class sang the notes in a one octave scale using solfege and then by repeating it on the violin. The works in progress included preparatory exercises on all four strings and the tune "Boil 'em cabbage down" with several rhythmic variations. Through this weekly class, students worked towards developing an understanding of the basic elements that make up music (precise rhythm, correct intonation, and a pure tone).

<b>Music - Recorder</b>	<b>Youichi Hembo</b>
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This term, we are learning how to hold the recorder, how to move our fingers and how to breathe when playing music. To practice our solfege skills, we learned some songs by heart and sang them.

<b>Learner Profile</b>	
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Our *Who We Are* unit of inquiry allowed us to focus on ways in which we ensure that our choices are balanced ones. As we explored traditions and holidays from around the world it was important to remember to be open-minded and accepting of those that have different customs and beliefs to those of our families and community.

# Tsukuba International School

First Term Overview  
November 2011

Homeroom Teacher: Ms. Peggy Marsh  
Grade 2

## Reading

*During this learning session the children have begun to use the RAZ-Kids online reading program. Using this system has given the children access to many leveled reading books which are available at home and school. The children have also started recording their readings on a regular basis. Through the units, especially How We Express Ourselves, the children have been introduced to a wide variety of texts from poetry to biographies. The children have a shared reading time every day during which they are encouraged to discuss their reading choices. They can also listen to books and read along with the text at the listening station and on the classroom computers. Through classroom discussion, students are working on improving their comprehension. When faced with an unfamiliar word, they are encouraged to use dictionaries, a thesaurus, iPod Touch translators, or to ask a friend about its meaning. Through all these activities the children are being guided to become independent readers who read for enjoyment and research.*

## Writing

*During this learning session the children have been encouraged to write to communicate a message to a particular audience and to value their own efforts. They have been exposed to a variety of text types such as journaling, descriptive writing, script writing, and storytelling. They have been encouraged to use the publishing cycle which includes using graphic organizers to note ideas, making a draft copy, editing, final copy making, and publishing. They have been encouraged to self-edit by reading their own writing before showing it to the teacher. This also includes using dictionaries to check their spellings. Throughout all writing experiences, the children have been encouraged to form characters conventionally and legibly, with correct spacing. The children have begun to use ICT to publish their work. Use of word processing software included learning about fonts, letter sizing, and character colours, and inserting images to enhance the final version of their text.*

## Speaking & Listening

*The students were encouraged to give presentations of their work during both of the first two units of inquiry. This included a puppet show during the Who We Are unit. They were also given the opportunity to present their written work to their peers at various other times. They have presented work independently and co-operatively with a partner or as part of a group. The children have taken part in discussions guided by the teacher and as independent groups. They have been exposed to poems and songs which they have memorized and performed during the weekly assemblies and to other grades. Through teacher modeling the children are beginning to understand such terminology as body language, tone of voice, eye contact, and voice projection. Students are also beginning to use RAZ-Kids reading scheme to read aloud books into a microphone, this gives them extra practice in the basics of presentation such as using a clear voice.*

## Mathematics

*The mathematical focus during the Who We Are unit was data collection and data handling through the use of graphs and charts. The children were introduced to the idea that sets can be organized by one or more attributes and that information can be collected and recorded in different ways. The children were exposed to many types of graphs, for example, tally marks, bar graphs, t-charts, Venn and Carroll diagrams. The second unit, How We Express Ourselves, introduced the use of mind maps to think through ideas on given topics. Throughout both of these units the children were also exposed to the concept of chance in daily events by words such as impossible, likely, maybe, and certain. This led onto the idea of mathematical likelihood or ratios such as a 1 in 5 chance. With the introduction of the website "Mathletics" the children have been able to increase their exposure to all aspects of the mathematical curriculum. Through this website, mathematical games, and daily questioning the children have also increased their accuracy with addition and subtraction equations. They are also beginning to understand the connection between these equations and multiplication.*

**Units of Inquiry**

The first unit of inquiry was *Who We Are* which focused on conflict resolution or what to do when a problem occurs and how personal differences can be resolved. This unit encouraged the children to use strategies to solve and avoid social conflicts. The unit emphasized taking responsibility for your actions and cooperation with peers. The children were introduced to the term 'perspective' and how different people can have different points of view that are different from theirs, but are not wrong. The summative assessment involved the children writing a script and performing a puppet show. The final presentation had to include a conflict and a strategy they would use to solve it. The second unit of the year was *How We Express Ourselves* which delved further into the idea of perspective through the medium of story. The children were exposed to a variety of stories from around the world and they used mind maps to think more deeply about how stories portray different cultures. The students studied modes of storytelling such as through books, music, animation, and poetry. They learnt that people create stories for a variety of reasons such as to portray historical characters, introduce morality, and to tell fables. The children created their own stories, comics, acrostic poems and haiku poetry. They published these in a variety of ways such as word processing, comics, and written text.

**Japanese****Akane Kono**

This semester, we studied nouns and their categories, especially the names of things around us, for example, vegetables, fruits, foods, animals, transportations, tools, bodies and so on. We also studied antonyms of nouns and adjectives. Then, we studied a second grade level poem which focused on developing a keen sense of the Japanese language, for example, "gitaigo", "giongo" and "giseigo" which are characteristics of the Japanese language. We made sentences using the kanji which we have already learned. We learned how to write a formal letter in Japanese. We practiced new second grade kanji. We also practiced writing beautiful characters, especially hiragana, as Sho-sha (training to write beautiful characters). At the same time we worked on listening and how to speak in a way that others will understand. Students who have not studied Japanese before were able to work on some of the same activities as the other students, but they also worked on their own projects, such as learning hiragana. We used materials from various different resources (e.g. ones designed for Japanese primary school students, for foreign students, for adults and original resources we created at school) because of the varying levels of the students.

**Art****Cheryl Okubo**

Each unit focuses on one of the six elements of art. Unit one was line, and two is shape. Students have been exploring the art room and all its materials, finding many ways to play with lines and shape. After a brief warm up exercise in which they compare, match, or draw a pattern, they are free to start creating their own unique imagery. To become familiar with art media, a wide variety of two dimensional media has been introduced, and playing with materials before rendering their drawing has been encouraged. Children are asked to be risk takers by doing what they feel is "right" when they create imagery. This means without copying or seeking the approval of others. All artwork is deemed neither "good" nor "bad" but rather something to be cherished. The book for unit one was *Harold's Purple Crayon*, and the artist for unit 2 was Matisse.

**Physical Education****Davidson Onuoha**

This semester in PE class we worked on incorporating attitudes like cooperation, integrity, creativity and confidence into our game plan. We focused on soccer practice and also improved on our ball handling skills with games like handball and volleyball.

**Music****Jennifer Sadler**

Throughout this year we will be exploring different areas of music through notation, listening, performing (singing, playing instruments), creating and composing. We began this semester with a unit about beat and rhythm. The children are learning to recognize the difference between beat and rhythm and how to perform confidently with a steady sense of beat. We listened to two contrasting pieces of music to hear the difference between a steady beat (rhythmical) and a free beat (without a steady beat). The students learned to create simple rhythm patterns based on words and phrases. We have also been learning about pitch and discriminating between higher and lower sounds. The students followed the pitch movement of different songs with their hands. To solidify their understanding of beat, rhythm and pitch, the students have improvised with different instruments such as the xylophone, glockenspiel, rhythm sticks and shakers and with ordinary objects such as buckets and plastic bottles. We have had to learn how to cooperate when waiting to use the different instruments. Within the singing portion of our class we have been learning how to sing with an appropriate tone, posture and correct breathing. In our class we have been making

connections with the second unit of inquiry "How We Express Ourselves" - Stories. We are learning how storytelling through music is important. Students have drawn on paper what they feel the music "looks like" and used words to express the mood that the music creates. The students have begun to create sound stories with music. In groups they selected sounds using instruments to represent the characters in the story and then they narrated the presentation.

### **Music - Violin**

**Craig Coleman**

The second and third graders were combined into one class this term. Correct posture and form were emphasized during each class as well as technical exercises to improve and strengthen the left and right hands. Several new techniques were introduced this term including whole step (fingers in an open position) and half step (fingers in a closed position) through the use of a major scale. String crossings and the four levels of the right arm to facilitate a more pure tone were practiced. The works in progress that were practiced are preparatory exercises using open strings with both whole and half bow strokes and the tune "Beautiful Skies".

### **Music - Recorder**

**Youichi Hembo**

This term we are learning "Minuet by Bach" which includes crossing between the first and second register and helps us understand how to do "thumbing". This term we used some music from the Baroque era in which the recorder often features. This music lets us learn about history, it helps us practice the fundamental skills and it teaches us about the the musical style and manner of early music in Europe. We use "fingering numbers" to get used to playing this instrument.

### **Learner Profile**

The children have become more familiar with all aspects of the PYP learner profile throughout the term. We have accomplished this through daily discussion and lessons based around the units of inquiry. The "Who We Are" unit focused on being "caring" and how everybody has different perspectives and so we might hurt someone's feelings even when we did not mean to. Being caring and thinking about other points of view helped the students understand the overall focus of solving conflicts. This meant the children had to be "open-minded" to other people's ideas. The "How We Express Ourselves" unit focused on being a "thinker". The children asked questions and inquired into various stories from around the world. They made comparisons and thought about the origins and reasons behind the stories they heard.

# Tsukuba International School

First Term Overview  
November 2011

Homeroom Teacher: Ms. Rio Nagakura  
Grade 3

## Reading

*In the unit "Who We Are," the students made an effort to read non-fiction texts for the purpose of research. The primary challenges were to understand the biological terminology and filter the extensive information to find data that was relevant for their investigation. The class is being introduced to strategies that will assist them in being more analytical in reading any type of text. So far they have covered strategies for visualizing, summarizing, inferring, and making connections (to their own lives, to other texts, and to global issues). In the unit "How We Organize Ourselves," they read and studied a number of persuasive texts to help them prepare for the writing assignment. In November, the students began using RAZ-Kids online. This program allowed students to read a wider range of titles independently for both pleasure and research at home and school.*

## Writing

*This term the students reviewed nouns, verbs, adjectives, synonyms and antonyms in order to make their writing come alive and to build vocabulary. They have been encouraged to make use of their Have-A-Go-Pads and dictionaries when writing. These tools benefit them because they sound words out and consider spelling patterns as well as read examples in sentences. Both Everyday Spelling and Words Their Way are being used in class to place increased importance on spelling and vocabulary acquisition. The latter focuses on individual placement and trains them to pay more attention to words by grouping them into categories. Persuasive writing was covered in Unit 2 so that the students could take a position on how a monetary donation could be used for TIS. This task entailed writing a letter to the student council using the Writing Process, a procedure involving prewriting (with the aid of graphic organizers), making a draft, revising, (self and peer) editing, and finally, publishing. In addition to a letter, the students examined and applied persuasive strategies to make advertisements for the T-Mart Trade Day. In Information and Communications Technology class, they practiced word-processing skills such as typing, formatting exercises, and most importantly, how to compose their persuasive letter.*

## Speaking & Listening

*For the final assessment of "Who We Are," the students gave an oral and visual presentation of their area of research to another grade. This, along with regular Assembly presentations, is increasing their confidence. The class has been noticing what a praiseworthy delivery looks like and shares these observations for class improvement. To support vocabulary practice and retention, students are encouraged to use words related to our units or the ones on the Word Wall as often as possible. Asking questions is an integral part of the PYP and the students are learning how to form questions that lead to a deeper level of mental activity, in contrast to close-ended questions, which can be answered with a simple yes or no. The students of this class are enthusiastic about sharing stories, and their eagerness sometimes leads to talking over others. Taking turns and listening respectfully are skills that will be continued to be reinforced as they learn that being a communicator is not merely about being bilingual and speaking articulately.*

## Mathematics

*This term's Math placed attention on collecting, recording, and representing data on various graphs like bar graphs, Venn diagrams, and tally charts. During this study they made estimations and demonstrated use of rulers and measuring tape. The students also studied place value and decimals, and further strengthened their skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. A goal for the entire year is for students to not only solve problems with accuracy but to understand the concept of these strands. Therefore, we have discussed what the tools and concepts mean and how they can be used in their lives. In the second unit, the students had ample opportunity to look at world currencies and in particular, practiced handling Japanese yen and American dollars. "Mathletics," an educational online program catered and customized for students of differing abilities, has become a popular site for the students. It is a pleasure to see them view their own improvement and become absorbed in the world of numbers.*

**Units of Inquiry**

*The goals of the first unit of inquiry, "Who We Are," were for students to take a keener interest in their bodies and to reconstruct their understanding of their physical operations at a deeper level. Through this process they practiced research and question-forming skills as well as presenting their findings to another class. At the beginning of the unit, students debated about the most important organ. In contrast to this, at the end of the unit, they concluded that it was impossible to decide on one vital organ since they all had a significant role in a system, which itself could not be isolated. From the class discussions stemmed philosophical discussions such as what it means "to live," covering not only vital organ failure but also the quality of life. In Unit 2, "How We Organize Ourselves," the students perceived that humans place and determine a certain value on goods and services. By examining world currencies students contemplated how human activity functioned before the existence of money and how it connects to the present. A study of international trade segued into economics and Fair Trade, and what this movement symbolizes. Their summative assessment brought together what they studied in the unit. After creating their own currency, the students collected items that were no longer needed but in good condition from the school body, placed a value on the items, and opened T-Mart, a shop that allowed students to purchase goods with the money they were given. This required skills that combined their creativity, integrity, communication, and social skills. The third graders were given the opportunity to appreciate the development of money by being reflective of its purpose and impact.*

**Japanese****Akane Kono**

*This semester, we studied nouns and their categories, especially the names of things around us, for example, vegetables, fruits, foods, animals, transportations, tools, bodies and so on. We also studied conjunctions ("setsuzokushi"). Then, we studied a third grade level poem which focused on developing a keen sense of the Japanese language, for example, "gitaigo" "giongo" and "giseigo" which are characteristics of the Japanese language. We tried to think of the characteristics of the Japanese language. For example, there are a lot of words about nature in Japanese, so we studied about how languages are always connected to culture and people's thinking. We learned how to write formal letters in Japanese. We practiced new third grade kanji. At the same time we discussed how to listen and how to speak in a way that others will understand. We used materials from various different resources (e.g. ones designed for Japanese primary school students, for foreign students, for adults and original resources we created at school) because of the varying levels of the students.*

**Art****Cheryl Okubo**

*Each unit focuses on one of the six elements of art. Unit one was line, and two is shape. Students have been exploring the art room and all its materials, finding many ways to play with lines and shape. After a brief warm up exercise in which they compare, match, or draw a pattern, they are free to start creating their own unique imagery. To become familiar with how to use art as personal expression, a wide variety of two dimensional media has been introduced, and playing with materials before rendering their drawing has been encouraged. Children are asked to be risk takers by doing what they feel is "right" when they create imagery. This means without copying or seeking the approval of others. All artwork is deemed neither "good" nor "bad" but rather something to be cherished.*

**Physical Education****Davidson Onuoha**

*This semester in PE class we worked on incorporating attitudes like cooperation, integrity, creativity and confidence into our game plan. We focused on soccer practice and also improved on our ball handling skills with games like handball and volleyball.*

**Music****Jennifer Sadler**

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*different songs with their hands. To solidify their understanding of beat, rhythm and pitch, the students have improvised with different instruments such as the xylophone, glockenspiel, rhythm sticks and shakers and with ordinary objects such as buckets and plastic bottles. We have had to learn how to cooperate when waiting to use the different instruments. Within the singing portion of our class we have been learning how to sing with an appropriate tone, posture and correct breathing. We are learning how storytelling through music is important. They have drawn on paper what they feel the music "looks like" and used words to express the mood that the music creates. The students have begun to create sound stories with music. In groups they selected sounds using instruments to represent the characters in the story and they narrated the presentation.*

### **Music - Violin**

**Craig Coleman**

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**Youichi Hembo**

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### **Learner Profile**

*The focus of the learner profile in Unit 1 was on being inquisitive and knowledgeable and for the second unit, on being principled and well-balanced individuals. Studying about the intricacies of the human body encouraged them to delve into matters they had taken for granted, such as certain muscles in the body that never stop working and how the bodily functions are accomplished through teamwork. By way of bartering activities the students deepened their understanding of what it means to make wise choices and to be fair. Cooperation will be an ongoing goal for this class as they learn how to resolve problems as a group.*

# Tsukuba International School

First Term Overview  
November 2011

Homeroom Teacher: Mr. Stephen Okyne  
Grade 4

## Reading

*This term the grade 4 students delved into the concepts of choosing “just right books.” This concept helps promote the self reflections of the students as they now read books that not only interest them but will challenge them as readers. They have started pursuing the idea that connections can be made through reading. They explored making connections to themselves, to other texts and to the world. We have been developing the notion of asking questions for a better understanding while reading. We have also begun to make inferences and predictions from texts. The grade 4 students have furthered their own reading skills through the internet-based website RAZ Kids. This website allows the students to read levelled books at a suitable and comfortable pace. As an internet-based site, it promotes the students' technology use at school and at home. The students have developed a curiosity and appreciation for reading. They read to acquire information as well as for enjoyment.*

## Writing

*As writing is an ongoing process, the students have made investigations into the steps in the publishing cycle. The embedded idea of this cyclical procedure was quite useful to the students in our first unit, Who We Are, as they examined the interdependency of the different systems of the human body and how each system performs. It was expounded upon further in the next unit, How the World Works, as they examined weather patterns and the water cycle. The students became peer editors, helping each other with their writing pieces. The students explored different forms of writing. They focused on becoming better writers along with understanding why writers write. As communicators, the students improved their ability to write creatively, logically and clearly. Handwriting was also a focal point as students practiced manuscript writing. The students used Venn diagrams to make comparisons within the systems of the human body in regards to the key concepts of form and function and again with comparisons of seasonal/climatic and geographic weather conditions.*

## Speaking & Listening

*In our units, Who We Are, and How the World Works, students worked towards being presenters as well as active audience members. In addition to leading discussions, they also had to be reflective and open-minded to the ideas that were expressed by other students. The students posed questions to local experts in the fields of medical and atmospheric sciences. Through these inquiries, the students were able to communicate that information to their classmates in the form of printed and digital media.*

## Mathematics

*Building upon their prior knowledge of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, the students collected data, recognized patterns and then interpreted these patterns into valid and usable information in the forms of charts and graphs. The students were exposed to mathematical theories such as place value and number sorting and were given a preliminary glance at probability. The students became familiar with temperature and barometric pressure readings and the tools that are used for such measurement. Rulers, meter sticks, and tape measures helped bring together an understanding of length, height, width and distance in relationship to ourselves, our bodies and our surroundings.*

## Units of Inquiry

*Our unit, Who We Are, took us on an exploration into the major systems and organs of the human body, their complexities and interdependency. The students examined and dissected parts of a chicken and compared it to human tissue, joints and bones. The students furthered their own learning by using computers to gather information and then developed questions to be fielded by our own Dr. Kolba. They made cards to say thank you to him for taking time out of his busy schedule to bring his models and vast knowledge into our classroom. The end result had students working in groups to make a presentation to the rest of their class about a particular system of the human body. How the World Works expanded the*

students' focus from themselves and their physical form to the outside world of meteorology, and weather patterns in particular. Gaining the knowledge of cloud formations, geography, and climatic changes, the students became meteorologists, observing weather instruments to record data and make predictions about what the weather would be at later dates.

## Japanese

Akane Kono

This semester, we studied nouns and their categories, especially the names of things around us, for example, vegetables, fruits, foods, animals, transportations, tools, bodies and so on. We also studied conjunctions ("setsuzokushi") and exclamations ("kandoshi"). Then, we studied a fourth grade level poem which focused on developing a keen sense of the Japanese language, for example, "gitaigo" "giongo" and "giseigo" which are characteristics of the Japanese language. We tried to think of the characteristics of the Japanese language. For example, there are a lot of words about nature in Japanese, so we studied about how languages are always connected to culture and people's thinking. We learned how to write formal letters in Japanese. We practiced new fourth grade kanji. At the same time we discussed how to listen and how to speak in a way that others will understand. We used materials from various different resources (e.g. ones designed for Japanese primary school students, for foreign students, for adults and original resources we created at school) because of the varying levels of the students. Some of the students who are not at grade level in Japanese worked on a special program to develop their hiragana writing skills.

## Art

Cheryl Okubo

Each unit focuses on one of the six elements of art. Unit one was line, and two is shape. Students have been exploring the art room and all its materials, finding many ways to play with lines and shape. After a brief warm up exercise in which they compare, match, or draw a pattern, they are free to start creating their own unique imagery. To become familiar with how to use art as personal expression, a wide variety of two dimensional media has been introduced, and playing with materials before rendering their drawing has been encouraged. Children are asked to be risk takers by doing what they feel is "right" when they create imagery. This means without copying or seeking the approval of others. All artwork is deemed neither "good" nor "bad" but rather something to be cherished.

## Physical Education

Davidson Onuoha

In PE classes this session, we improved our endurance skills with running techniques like jogging and also improved on speed skills with relay races of short and long distances. Games such as handball and volleyball helped us with our flexibility and throwing skills. The students also practiced soccer, which helped to improve their attitudes towards sports, in particular their cooperation, creativity and confidence.

## Music

Jennifer Sadler

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**Music - Violin****Craig Coleman**

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**Music - Recorder****Youichi Hembo***Intermediate Class*

*This term we are learning "Minuet by Bach" which includes crossing between the first and second register and helps us understand how to do "thumbing". This term we used some music from the Baroque era in which the recorder often features. This music lets us learn about history, it helps us practice the fundamental skills and it teaches us about the the musical style and manner of early music in Europe. We use "fingering numbers" to get used to playing this instrument.*

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**Learner Profile**

*As in any PYP school, the Learner Profile has an important role in the dynamics of the school. The students started the year with working on their understanding of being an inquirer. They had to become investigators of themselves, classmates, schoolmates, teaching staff and their local and global surroundings. Next, we worked on being principled. The students had to examine the idea and take ownership of what they know and feel are positive and appropriate choices. Finally, we investigated the idea of being balanced. This focus helped the students learn that their lives can be fulfilled through a myriad of physical and mental activities. The students attended assemblies promoting these learner profile attributes and later took on the leadership role of putting together and demonstrating their own perspective of these attributes.*

# Tsukuba International School

First Term Overview  
November 2011

Homeroom Teacher: Mr. Jordan Breithaupt  
Grade 5

## Reading

*In 5th grade, we have been reading for a variety of purposes. We read the newspaper daily to become informed, we read to find out as we inquired in our units, we have also read for entertainment as the students got to pick their own books to read. We have been working on finding the main idea of a text and writing summaries of what we have read. Making predictions and inferencing is another strategy that we have begun to learn. We have also read independently and listened to the teacher read aloud books related to the topic we are studying, stopping the teacher when he gets to an unknown word to build vocabulary. Raz-Kids is a new online-program that we have just started using that gives students access to many leveled books which they can access at home.*

## Writing

*This term we have been writing fiction and instructional essays through a writing process that includes prewriting, rough drafts, editing, and final drafts. We also did some reporting in our unit on "How We Express Ourselves", when the students published a newspaper. We also began to explore informative writing and persuasive writing. We have been investigating new vocabulary weekly in Language Arts, Math, as well as our Unit of Inquiry in order to increase our literacy in all areas. In the beginning of both our units this year, we spent some time sorting and categorizing words into spelling patterns and topics to improve our spelling and build vocabulary.*

## Speaking & Listening

*Students have been practicing speaking and listening skills by way of classroom discussions, small group discussions, presentations, and class meetings. We have been working on active listening skills and speaking in a big, clear voice when addressing the whole class. In our "Where We are in Place and Time" unit, we spent a lot of time presenting information to the rest of the class. During this unit we began to learn some presentation skills such as, using a big, clear voice, facing the audience and making eye contact.*

## Mathematics

*This term we focused on data collection and reporting as it related to our "How We Express Ourselves" unit. The students designed surveys, one for our class and another for the whole school. They collected and reported on the data. One of the ways that they reported was through many types of graphing, such as line graphs, bar graphs and other types of graphs. We also explored place-value, looking at writing words in expanded form using exponents, and rounding numbers to a specific place-value including decimal places. We also identified a variety of angles and polygons. In studying polygons, we explored the different types of polygons and their names. In addition to studying polygons, we also explored the concept of symmetry.*

## Units of Inquiry

*The Units of Inquiry we have focused on this term have been How We Express Ourselves and Where We are in Place and Time. In How We Express Ourselves, we explored the importance of being informed and knowing what is going on around the world. We focused on the different styles and genres of journalism and how they are used. Our main focus was on the newspaper which the students read daily. To wrap up their unit, the students showed they were principled communicators when they worked in groups of four to produce a newspaper. In Where We are in Place and Time, we focused on how civilizations change and how they have similarities with modern societies. We focused on being open-minded inquirers as we looked at the characteristics of a civilization, how we know about ancient civilizations, and similarities between ancient and modern civilizations. For our final project, the students worked in pairs and showed their creativity by creating their own civilization. They made up a history for their civilization, told how their civilization changed over time and compared their civilization to our own society. They applied their knowledge from their investigations by including elements of civilizations such as technology, education, transportation, money, and government.*

Japanese	Akane Kono
<p><i>This semester, we studied nouns and their categories, especially the names of things around us, for example, vegetables, fruits, foods, animals, transportations, tools, bodies and so on. We also studied conjunctions (“setsuzokushi”) and exclamations (“kandoshi”). Then, we studied a fifth grade level poem which focused on developing a keen sense of the Japanese language, for example, “gitaigo” “giongo” and “giseigo” which are characteristics of the Japanese language. We tried to think of the characteristics of the Japanese language. For example, there are a lot of words about nature in Japanese, so we studied about how languages are always connected to culture and people’s thinking. We learned how to write formal letters in Japanese. We practiced new fifth grade kanji. At the same time we discussed how to listen and how to speak in a way that others will understand. We used materials from various different resources (e.g. ones designed for Japanese primary school students, for foreign students, for adults and original resources we created at school) because of the varying levels of the students. Some of the students who are not at grade level in Japanese worked on a special program to develop their hiragana writing skills.</i></p>	

Art	Samir Carvalho
<p><i>In the first half of the term, we created a newspaper. The students came to understand the process of creating a newspaper and the components that go into a newspaper. They developed their sense of planning and creating through guidelines and they practiced their illustration skills and thought about the composition of both image and text. In the second half of the term, we furthered our understanding of illustration and designed a character with pixel art on the computer. The students were able to learn about the process of creating something from the sketches to the final artwork, going from analog to digital. They experienced the differences between the analog world and the digital world and got in touch with the possibilities from both medias.</i></p>	

Physical Education	Davidson Onuoha
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## **Learner Profile**

*The students are becoming more familiar with the attributes of the PYP learner profile. We have them on our wall and refer to them on a daily basis. During our weekly class meetings we discuss how we can do better at showing the learning profile elements in our own lives. During our "How We Express Ourselves" unit, we focused on being knowledgeable and principled. The students became more knowledgeable as they read the newspaper daily, researched about different types of journalism, and, in the end, put together their own newspaper. The students learned to be principled when they learned to cite the sources where they got their information. In our "Where We are in Place and Time" unit, the students focused on being open-minded inquirers. As they researched about other civilizations, there were many beliefs, customs, and other elements that were different from what they know about their own society. They had to learn to be open-minded about these things as they inquired into other civilizations.*