

2014-2015, Goals and Expectations



I am sorry that this will probably be one of my shortest homepage entries. It may seem like an easy topic, but it's actually very complex to write about.

As with last year, I expect many of the same things this year, and some “new” things. You may likely see many similar things in Preston's and Daniel's entries.

For Day Care (保育園) and Kindergarten (幼稚園), I expect that we will continue to include English in our everyday activities and picture books (絵本), and to have English lessons that are mostly songs and games. I hope I can learn many students' names, and see them next year. Because of the new schedule, I am sad to say that I will probably not be attending any field trips (遠足), and probably miss out on some of the events I was very fortunate to have attended last year. We will also never have lunch or bentou (弁当) together, which also makes me sad, because that is more time we could sit together and chat freely. But, whatever events I can attend, I will be happy to attend and communicate. “Real study” is still years away for these children, so I simply hope that they have fun with attempting to use English whenever they can.



In Elementary school, we are spending much more time with the 3rd and 4th graders than we did last year. Last year, we spent about 15-20 lessons together – I don't remember how many, but it was definitely less than the 5th and 6th grades. This year, we are giving 3rd - 6th graders all the same time, about 35 lessons in the year. Our 1st and 2nd graders are still about 10 lessons, and won't start until after Summer Vacation.

1st and 2nd grade is virtually unchanged from last year, but 3rd and 4th grade will have more lessons, which will ease them better into becoming better students next year. With the extra lessons in 3rd and 4th grades, it will be more familiarity with the topics that are used in following years.



There will be a little more exposure to the alphabet – and the pronunciation (発音) – which will also help them learn the words that appear on the flashcards and in the books that we use. With this additional time, it should be a very comfortable transition into 5th grade and enable the children to express themselves.

One new thing this year, to the 5th and 6th grades, is **HOMEWORK!**

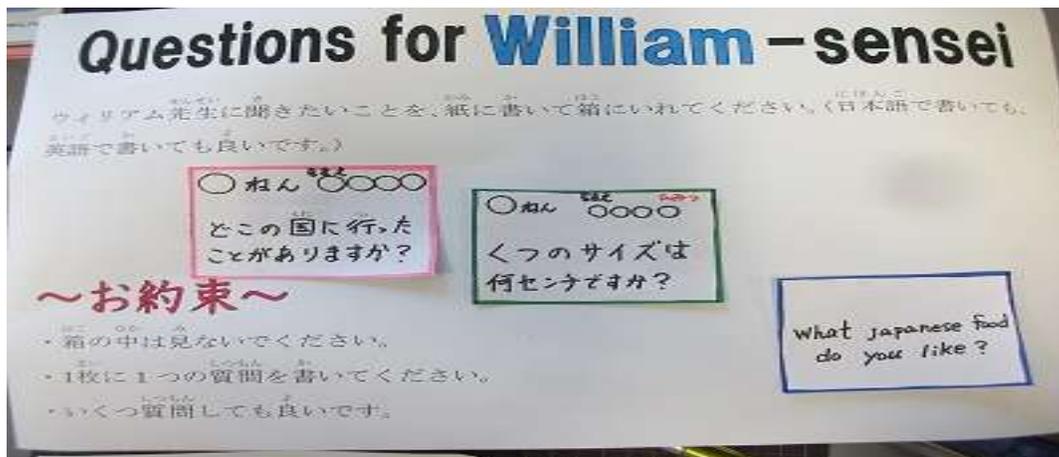
The majority of the homework is writing, so that students can get used to it. It is a very important skill to have, even in this era of smartphones and personal computers.



In my 5th and 6th grades, I want to continue projects to allow students to express themselves and their creativity.

In 5th grade, we will have the “Make a dessert (cake, crepe, pie, or parfait),” and “Interview.” Our 6th grade projects are the “I can do OOO” self-introduction (seen in this picture), “I want to go to OOO,” and “I want to be a OOO.”

These projects, I believe, are excellent opportunities to transition the students into their next year of study.



In my schools, I am continuing the Question Box, but with one change. 1st-4th grades can still ask any questions that they wish, because I don't want to discourage their curiosity. However, 5th and 6th grades must limit themselves to questions directly related to English study, such as “How do you say OOO in English?” or “What is an American 5th grade lunch like?”

This will be my first year to teach JHS in Kanegasaki, but I did teach one year in Aomori Prefecture. To “step up” from the 6th grade, I expect them to use what they have learned, and be able to understand and be understood in English. It doesn't have to be perfect, and I expect a LOT of mistakes, but the important thing is to try...to work through mistakes...and to improve. It's not perfect, and it probably won't be for a while. “The effort does not betray you” and “Fall down seven times, stand up eight times” are great words of advice.