

The Goal of English Study

I will conclude by writing about something one of my students told me this week. She said, "I went to an onsen over the holidays and I met a foreigner there. It's because of you that I was able to go and talk to him in English. It was really fun." I



I can't tell you how happy I was to hear that. That is the feeling that I want all of my students to have when they meet someone from another country. I don't want them to feel shy or worried about how they should talk to them but rather I want them to have confidence and to not be embarrassed to go and talk to them.

I strongly believe that English ability is going to be one of the most sought after skills in Japan and in the world. Japan is in real danger of falling behind its Asian neighbors in this regard and so that is one reason why I'm so proud to live in a town like Kanegasaki that is pushing forward on English education.



English is the international language. It is the language of business, the language of the internet, and the universal language that people from other countries communicate in. We are no longer living in a world where you can live and work and not interact with people of other countries. From the farmer

learning about new techniques from farmers in India to a factory worker learning to use a new machine from Germany, we all are interacting with the outside world more and more.

If we are this connected now, imagine how much more the world will be interconnected 10 years from now, 20 years from now, 30 years from now. Being able to communicate in English will be an essential skill for

anyone entering a workplace.

That is why we must start teaching our children now. We must teach our children to be able to communicate in English.

There are four major skills required to learn a foreign language: speak, listening, reading, and writing. All are important in developing fluency in the English language.

In the kindergartens and elementary schools in Kanegasaki, we are focusing on building the speaking and listening skills of our students. Starting from Junior High School, we are including writing and reading as well. The reason why the focus is on those skills



for those age levels is because of the number of class hours and the need to continue to progress with learning new communication skills.