

1st year English at Kanegasaki Junior high school.

This month I'll be writing about the English class for the 1st years at Kanegasaki Junior High school. This year the 1st year students are being taught English by Sekimukai Shinsuke. The year has just started, so it's a little difficult to have a definite idea of how this year will be. So First, let's start with the goals of the 1st year of English in Junior High school.

At the end of the school year our students at Kane-chu should be able to:

Students will be able to use basic English to express themselves.

Student will be able to understand limited spoken English.

Students will be able to read English words that use basic phonics.

Students will be able to write basic English sentences.

That being said, the students success will depend on how hard they study (at least 15 minutes a day is my recommendation). The curriculum for the 1st year students is not difficult, but does require practice and study.

This year the students will learn a number of important things. This year is the foundation of their English study. If they work hard now, the next few years will become much easier. Some of the big concepts they will be learning are:

- a) Basic phonics
- b) Writing
- c) Reading
- d) Basic English grammar
- e) Subject-verb agreement

Every one of the topics is so important to understanding English. I want to encourage all of our students (and parents) to give these points special attention.

Many of you may be familiar with the English class your children had in Elementary school. The type of class we teach in Junior High school is different and I think it is important to understand the differences. The goal for our classes in Elementary school is "familiarity". This is a key difference. In Elementary school students become aware of English and other places in the world. Elementary students are not taught English reading or writing (although many of them can recognize a few English words). One of our secondary goals is to build the student's confidence in their ability to speak and communicate in English. The last difference is that in Elementary school English is not a "subject" like Math, Science, etc. This definitely affects the way everybody perceives the lesson.

In Junior High School English joins the other subjects. That means that the lessons are taught in a different way. The goal is still to have students be confident in their communication and speaking, but now competence is also being assessed. Adding reading and writing also increases the level of difficulty

of the subject. Some students are thrown off by the somewhat sudden change, and don't have good feelings about English.

So this year at Kane-chu we are making an effort to include more "bridge" activities. "Bridge" activities are lessons or activities that use what the children (may) remember from Elementary school to ease the transition to Junior High school.