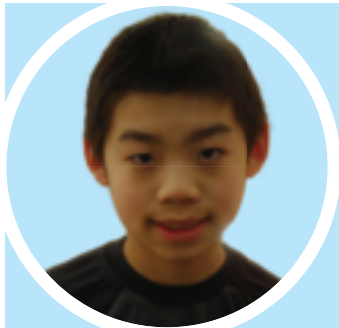


## STRAIGHT talk

Published Quarterly for Parents of Kumon Kids

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**Jonas Yeung:**Drive, Determination  
and Success

Eleven year old Kumon student Jonas Yeung lives in the scenic town of Belleville, Ontario located off the Bay of Quinte. Jonas has been a Kumon student for just over three years and is currently studying in Level H math. When asked why the family decided to join Kumon, Jonas' father remembers seeing a Kumon sign on his commute between home and Jonas' violin lessons. A parent in Jonas' violin class highly recommended and shared the benefits of Kumon with the family. Aside from this recommendation, Jonas' parents knew of friends in Australia and Hong Kong whose children were also studying Kumon. Based on the feedback about Kumon from their friends, the Yeungs decided to contact the Instructor.

Mr. Yeung cites the reason for joining Kumon was to introduce the concept of discipline to Jonas. He knew that Jonas was naturally bright, but lacked the necessary discipline to develop his natural ability. Due to the lack of enough homework from Jonas' school, he would often finish all of his homework on the bus ride home. His parents soon realized that Jonas would have a lot of free time at home. Enrolling Jonas in a structured program seemed like a good way of ensuring that Jonas could

develop his natural ability and still have time for his other activities.

Upon meeting Jonas' Instructor, Chris Foley, the Yeung family learned more about the Kumon Method, the comfortable starting point, building a solid foundation for future study and the daily routine. These ideals matched the values the Yeungs were seeking.

Every day, without fail, Jonas' parents would have to say, "It's Kumon Time," which meant that his Kumon work had to be done before he could use the computer, watch television or play with his toys. When asked how he liked Kumon when he started, Jonas says, "I felt I didn't like it. Back then I was shy and didn't want to do Kumon every day. Now it's easier [and] it's worth it because at school I already did the stuff at Kumon." Until now, Jonas stated that finishing Level D was the toughest part of the Kumon program. However, he went on to say that anything new can be tough at first, but gets easier when you do it again. Whenever he encounters something new, he admits that it is still tough, but he likes the challenge and has the confidence that

he will understand it with practice. When asked if he ever wanted to give up on his homework, he answered with no hesitation (and a smile), "Lots of times!" His advises other students to "Try your best [and] you will get it in the end."

Working in Level H, Jonas is studying material that is 4-5 years ahead of the current grade 5 curriculum. With his math ability being so high you would think that Jonas would be bored in math class. The opposite is true: Jonas uses any free time he has in math class to help the other students in his class. His teacher affectionately calls him "Mr. Math" because of his willingness to help other students and his uncanny ability to recall the multiplication tables faster than anyone else in the class. Jonas' math skills go beyond the ability to quickly recall the multiplication tables; he has won the school's "Hawk's Award" for mathematical accomplishment two times. He says that Chris helps him a lot by choosing the right work for him; it is neither too hard nor too easy. Chris says that it is easy planning for Jonas because the Yeung's are, in his own words, "a model family." They let him know when the material is getting too difficult (or too easy) and they rarely miss a class or submit incomplete work. He takes very little credit for Jonas' accomplishments and attributes it to the commitment and effort of the entire Yeung family.

The experience that Jonas has had at Kumon reinforces Mr. Yeung's opinion that children have different abilities and

## THOUGHTS BY TORU KUMON

*Neither intuition nor perseverance can come to children without enhancement of processing ability and without forming the habit of studying with total concentration and effort.*



# The 5 W's of Summer Study: Kumon

**Who?** Your children need to continue with Kumon even when they are on a long break from school during the summer.

**What?** Daily Kumon study! Your children and you have demonstrated a commitment throughout the school year. The summer is not the time to interrupt that commitment. As a matter of fact, you may want to request an increase in the daily workload. With no homework or school activities, your children will have a lot of spare time. However, they will still have plenty of time to enjoy all of their most favorite summer activities! It is a “win win” situation all around.

**Why?** Research demonstrates that students suffer an erosion of learning and skills over the summer. Research also demonstrates that educators spend time at the beginning of the school year re-teaching concepts that were “lost” during the summer. Why risk this with your children? Students studying at Kumon are working at their own level. Students will continue to reap the benefits of daily consistent work throughout the summer. Give your child the edge!

**Where?** At your local Kumon Center! Perhaps you know other parents that would be interested in the Kumon Method? Summer is a great time to start Kumon and get acclimated to the routine without the distractions that might come up during the school year.

**When?** Check with your local Kumon Center! Some of our Instructors adopt more flexible summer hours that you can take advantage of. Going on vacation? Not a problem. Discuss with your Kumon Instructor how your children can continue with their studies.

## Jonas Yeung: Continued from front

aptitudes. He says that it is important for parents to recognize that some students will understand certain concepts faster than others. He firmly believes that it is the parents' responsibility to coach and encourage their children and allow them to think for themselves. He advises parents to become part of the learning process and suggests they should not leave the responsibility solely to the school or Kumon.

The results of the hard work that the Yeung family, particularly Jonas, has

invested in Kumon have become evident in other areas as well. Jonas is now a self-starter for all his work. He completes his homework and his Kumon work without having to be reminded. He practices at the Conservatory of Music and is currently a Grade Five violinist. His other pastimes include playing various other musical instruments, soccer in the summer and swimming at the local YMCA once a week. Having met their initial objective, Jonas' parents now see Kumon as a means of further developing the skills and academic knowledge necessary to enter university.

## Kumon on Vacation

It may be springtime, but summer break will be here before you know it. If you are like many Kumon students, you're probably already counting down the days to the end of the school year.

As you get ready for vacation and fun in the sun, remember that Kumon is a year-round program. Worksheets can be easily packed in suitcases or taken on road trips.

Your Kumon work is a great travel buddy. Just ask this Kumon student who's taken her work to lands far away:

Kumon aboard Royal Caribbean's Grandeur of the Seas Cruise Ship:  
Breyana Howell, a math and reading student at the Kumon Center of Southfield West, completed worksheets in the ship's library. She also found time between visits to Tampa, Cozumel and Progreso, to read a couple books from Kumon's Recommended Reading List.



Jonas is already thinking of his future and says he wishes to be a doctor or a scientist studying in the field of medical science.

Jonas also has a sister, Eunice, who joined the program one year ago. She has already shown improvement in her ability to concentrate and focus. Now, as a gentle reminder, Jonas can happily say to Eunice, “It's Kumon Time.”

# How Kumon Can Help Your Child Be Test-Terrific

At one point in your child's life, he or she will have to take an exam. From the first standardized test in school to the SAT, GRE, MCAT, the local State Bar Exam or the Medical Boards, students will inevitably encounter test-taking situations. While Kumon is not a test preparation program, the principles of the Kumon Method can help students develop time-management, discipline and problem-solving skills that will prepare them for a lifetime of testing.

Standardized tests assess knowledge and critical thinking skills over a variety of topics. The best way to determine mastery of a subject is to calculate the number of correct answers a person provides within a given period of time. Under any test taking conditions, time and accuracy are important factors for an individual to consider. Students who follow directions, avoid careless mistakes, and utilize their time effectively, will feel more comfortable during an exam.

Kumon students' daily work is timed, which prepares and familiarizes them with test-taking conditions. Students also learn valuable test-taking strategies, such as checking their answers and answering questions they know before spending too much time focusing on concepts that may pose more difficulty. Kumon teaches basic math, reading, and critical thinking skills to provide students with a solid academic foundation to master concepts at their own pace.

According to the Washington Educational Research Association, it is not considered beneficial to "use any test preparation material that promises to raise scores on a particular test by targeting skills or knowledge from specific test items and does not increase students' general knowledge and skills." In other words, the best test preparation is that which promotes quality, long-term learning and covers concepts in depth, rather than only studying that which may appear on a specific test. When

a student fully understands a concept, they are more likely to retain that knowledge. Conversely, if a student does not have mastery of a concept, he or she will have difficulty sustaining that knowledge and become nervous and uncertain when seeing that concept on a test.

Possessing strong mental calculation, summarization and vocabulary skills proves more effective than only practicing questions that may appear on an exam. Students who have a strong academic foundation in math and reading tend to think quickly and solve problems mentally. Think back to your child's first test and consider how the Kumon Method's constant development of math and reading skills would make the score much higher today. In addition, the daily practice of Kumon strengthens students' concentration and attention span. These study skills are essential when working under timed testing conditions.

Placing too much emphasis on one specific test could cause anxiety and stress for a student and result in a lower test score. Stress, an unavoidable part of life, can tremendously impact a student's ability to learn. Managing and coping with stressful situations are important life skills. To take his or her mind off of an upcoming test, balance your child's test preparation with some form of stress-relief or enjoyable activity to show them the value and fun of learning. For example, when your eighth grader finishes a day of practice for a standardized test, offer to buy her a new book or take her to a play so that she can see the value of putting words together. If your son feels stressed memorizing his times tables, take him to a baseball game where he can calculate his favorite players batting average. Math and reading can be more exciting when it coincides with your child's favorite activities.

Remember to reward progress, not solely perfection. Your child's test score may not have placed her in the top percentile, but she

still deserves praise for improvement. When there is continual praise for development, there is a greater chance of success. Taking tests are a large part of life, and during these times it is important for you to be your child's biggest supporter and greatest encourager.

Here are some easy tips to prepare for test day:

- Set a daily study time. Routine teaches children to be organized which will reduce the level of stress. Provide your child with a study area that is quiet, free of distractions and well-lit.
- Praise improvement, not only perfection.
- Teach your children how to manage stress. Let your children know that during an exam it is okay to take a moment to put down their pencils and take a deep breath.
- To encourage positive results on a test, reinforce the "focus on what you know rather than what you don't know" philosophy.
- Encourage your children to read and follow all directions. Students should listen to and read instructions for all school assignments to become accustomed to doing so during important exams.
- Help your children with managing their time—remind them not to spend too much time on one problem. At home, if they can't figure out a problem, encourage them to go to school early and speak with their teacher. Guide them to find solutions, rather than immediately providing them with the answers.
- Make sure your children have strong fundamental skills. Lacking a basic foundation creates academic gaps, causes additional stress and hinders students abilities to learn.

If you would like to learn more about how Kumon can help prepare your child for standardized testing, please contact your Kumon Instructor to schedule a parent conference.



**DOB:** 09/16/2001  
**School Grade:** 1st  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 4A  
 Reading 4A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math B  
 Reading BI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Rithik**



**DOB:** 12/09/2002  
**School Grade:** K  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 4A  
 Reading 7A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math C  
 Reading All  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Keerthika**



**DOB:** 04/29/1999  
**School Grade:** 3rd  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 3A  
 Reading 4A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math F  
 Reading FI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

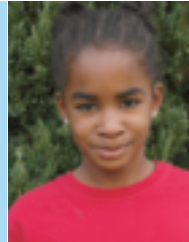
**Natasha**



**DOB:** 04/29/2000  
**School Grade:** 2nd  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 4A  
 Reading 6A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math D  
 Reading DI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

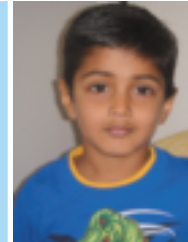
**Victoria**

# THE FACES OF KUMON



**DOB:** 09/28/1997  
**School Grade:** 5th  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 4A  
 Reading 2A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math G & Reading FI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading,  
 Math G by 5)

**Tyler**



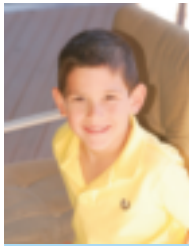
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**School Grade:** K  
**Starting Level:**  
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 Reading 6A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math B  
 Reading BI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Atharv**



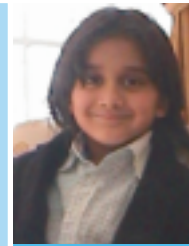
**DOB:** 11/07/1998  
**School Grade:** 3rd  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 3A  
 Reading 3A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math D  
 Reading CII  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Jonathan**



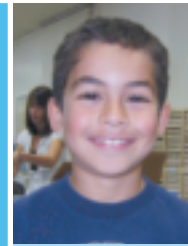
**DOB:** 04/12/2000  
**School Grade:** 2nd  
**Starting Level:**  
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 Reading 4A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math C  
 Reading BII  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Brandon**



**DOB:** 01/18/2002  
**School Grade:** K  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 6A  
 Reading 7A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math C  
 Reading BI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Saatvik**



**DOB:** 11/07/1999  
**School Grade:** 3rd  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 4A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math D  
 (ASHR Math)

**Hamza**



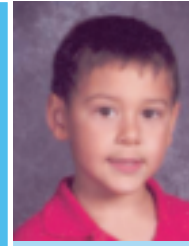
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**School Grade:** 2nd  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 2A  
 Reading 3A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math D  
 Reading CII  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Jay**



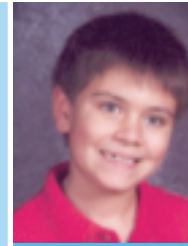
**DOB:** 10/30/2001  
**School Grade:** K  
**Starting Level:**  
 Reading 7A  
**Present Level:**  
 Reading BI  
 (ASHR Reading)

**Yuki**



**DOB:** 06/13/2000  
**School Grade:** 2nd  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 2A  
 Reading 3A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math H  
 Reading EI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Nathan**



**DOB:** 03/13/1997  
**School Grade:** 5th  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math A  
 Reading AI  
**Present Level:**  
 Math I  
 Reading FI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Jared**



**DOB:** 09/18/1994  
**School Grade:** 8th  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 3A  
 Reading CI  
**Present Level:**  
 Math I & Reading EI  
 (ASHR Math & Reading)

**Kate**



**DOB:** 04/14/1995  
**School Grade:** 7th  
**Starting Level:**  
 Math 5A  
**Present Level:**  
 Math I  
 (ASHR Math )

**Katelyn**

## Interested in having your child featured?

Please talk to your Kumon Instructor.



ALL submissions to The Faces of Kumon must include a completed Straighttalk Submission Form and a digital format image. We will not accept photographs that are mailed in. The photo should be emailed to [Straighttalk@kumon.com](mailto:Straighttalk@kumon.com). Applications without a digital format image will not be considered.

Request a form directly from your Instructor.

## STRAIGHTtalk

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