

**The  
January  
2021  
Issue**

**What is in  
this issue:**

**New ALT &  
Australia  
Day**

**Student  
Essays**



## New Year, New ALT



### Hello everyone!

My name is **Erin Montgomery** and I am a new ALT here at Keika Girls' Junior and Senior High School. I will be working with Sheila sensei and your English teachers to help you improve your English. Please call me **Erin sensei**.



Let me tell you a little bit about myself.

I am **23 years old**, and I moved to Japan in **November** last year. It is my first time living by myself, which is very exciting. I started learning Japanese when I started high school. I learnt it for 5 years at high school, then for two years at **University**. I still have a lot to learn about Japanese, and my kanji skills especially need a lot of improvement. When I see you in class though, I will only speak English- so please do your best to use English too.

Before I came here I was a **teacher**. I mainly taught in **high schools**, but also spent a little time teaching in a **primary school**. I only taught for 1 and a half years before moving to Japan. I mainly taught **Japanese, English, Geography, and History**.

I am from **Australia**, in a city called the Gold Coast. Have you heard of the **Gold Coast** before? It is famous for having lots of beautiful beaches, 5 fun theme parks, relaxing **rainforests**, and friendly people. Because it is a beach city, people will often walk around in just their **swimmers**, and it is culturally acceptable.



Right now it is **Winter in Japan**, but it is **Summer in Australia**. We don't have snow or cold weather for Christmas, so instead we often have Christmas by a pool or on the beach. On the Gold Coast, in summer it is usually between **25 – 35 degrees**, but it can sometimes get over 40! In Winter, it never gets that cold. It is usually between **10 – 20 degrees**. We never get snow where I live, so I hope I can see it while I live in Japan.

I look forward to telling you all more about Australia!



## Australia Day

One of Australia's biggest holidays is **Australia Day**. It is celebrated every year on **January 26<sup>th</sup>**. It is a **public holiday**, so people get to take time off work and school to celebrate. People will hold a big party with their family, or friends, or both. The parties are usually **barbecues**, since it is Summer. Lots of Australian families own their own barbecue, but even if they don't they can still celebrate. Lots of Australian beaches, and some parks, have free barbecues that anyone is allowed to use.

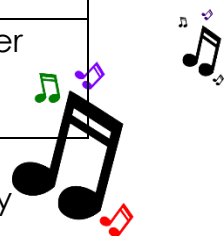


Popular barbecue foods are **sausages, burgers, prawns**, and more. We also eat plenty of sweets. **Lamingtons** are sponge cakes with jam in the middle, coated in chocolate and coconut. Another Australian cake is the **Pavlova**- the outside of the cake is like meringue, but the inside is soft like marshmallows. It usually has fruits on top.



Another big part of Australia Day used to be **The Hottest 100**. Every year since **1989** people vote for their favourite songs of the last year, and on Australia Day the radio played all 100 songs that got the most votes. Some of the number 1 songs over the years have been:

2020 (Best of the 2010's): The Less I Know the Better by Tame Impala	2019: Bad Guy by Billie Eilish
2018: Confidence by Ocean Alley	2010: Big Jet Plane by Angus & Julia Stone
2009 (Best of all time): Smells like Teen Spirit by Nirvana	2000: My Happiness by Powderfinger



As of 2018, they decided to move the **countdown** to the next day on the **27<sup>th</sup>**, because not everyone agrees with Australia Day.

Australia Day celebrates the anniversary of the **1788** arrival of the **First Fleet of British Ships to Australian shores**. When the British arrived in Australia, they did not respect the Indigenous owners of the land. Many **Indigenous people** were **killed**, or **taken** from their homes or families. This is why many Indigenous people do not agree with Australia Day, and some call it '**Invasion Day**'. In recent years there have been talks about the possibility of moving Australia Day, incorporating more Indigenous culture into the celebrations, and possibly changing the Holiday all together.



Australian National Flag



Australian Aboriginal Flag

XOXO,  
Erin



## 1D Class Student Essays

from the



### "The Book That Opened My Mind" Essay Contest

## Live with Death

~Ri Shiken

Today the book I talk about is To Live. To Live is one of the representative works of Yu Hua. It tells the story of Xu Fugui's life and family suffering from the social changes of civil war, three five evils (1951-1952 三反五反), the great leap forward (1958 大跃进) and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966-1976 文化大革命).

At the end of the day, all his relatives left him one after another, leaving only the old man and an old cow to live by. To live is full of power in our Chinese language. Its power does not come from shouting or attacking, but from enduring, to endure the responsibility given by life, to endure the happiness and suffering, boredom and mediocrity given to us by reality. After reading this novel, my biggest feeling is depression, as if it has been shrouded in the shadow of death intentionally or unintentionally created by the author. Scenes of death are constantly emerging in front of us. That heavy sadness still lingers in my heart. I deeply sympathize with Fugui's miserable life and fate. At the same time, I also think of myself and the scenes that happen in reality: many workers are unemployed and the society is facing very dangerous pressure. Pornography, gambling, drugs, law and gangster emerge as the times require... At the same time, the natural environment is deteriorating rapidly... These are the things we are facing or about to face.

But I think what Yu Hua wants to tell us is that people's endurance is infinite, and the expectation of hope is infinite, "people live for the sake of living themselves". But people living in the world will encounter a lot of hardships, so it is difficult to live, life should be patient. At the same time, people can and can bear great suffering, Let a hair bear the weight of 30000 Jin, it does not break. Only after suffering in the world can we make our life not mediocre; only through the twists and turns of fate can we give life nutrition.

A person living, no matter how bad the external environment is, all the hopelessness and hardship are nothing, are not the hopeless place of life. Love life well, and feel life well!

## The Book that Opened My Mind

~Chiharu Suzuki

I went to Ohio in the U.S. during the summer vacation when I was a second-year junior high school student. I did a homestay there for about one month. Through that experience, I learned some important things.

I think the most important thing was “to behave confidently”. I didn't have courage to actively communicate before that because I can't speak English well. I was afraid of making mistakes with English grammar, pronunciations, and spellings.

However, that was a big obstacle to communication. I still continue to regret not being brave, even now. The reason is that I couldn't communicate well with my host family, and I felt it wasted my precious experience. I should have told my host family what I wanted to do and what I didn't want. Then a book opened my mind. The book title is “John Manjiro Was Here”.

This book is written in English and Japanese. English was written by Arthur Binard, Japanese was written by Eguchi Mikio. It is written about a man who was an actual person. His name is Nakahama Manjiro, another name is John Manjiro. It takes place in early modern times Japan and U.S. He is one of the Japanese figures that I respect in the most.

The story starts when he and his co-workers became distressed at sea during work. At that time, he was 14 years old. They drifted to an uninhabited island and were helped by an American whaling ship. After that, John Manjiro stayed in America and learned the advanced skills of whaling and navigation for ten years.

I thought he was fantastic because at first he wanted to return home quickly. Why did he made the decision to stay? He was very surprised by the differences between Japan and U.S., especially the technologies superior to Japan. He wanted to learn and to bring them to Japan. If I was in the same situation, I don't think I would have been strong enough to stay in America for ten years.

Also, after returning to Japan, he succeeded as a translator and a teacher. Most famously, he contributed to "the conclusion of the Treaty of Amity and Friendship" and "the Japan-US Treaty of Peace and Amity". He helped Japan to build relationships of mutual understanding with Western countries. His own courage, diligence, and never-say-die attitude made him a true man of the world.

I really want to know more of the joy of communicating with people from different cultures like him. Then I have to emulate at least his courage.

Finally, I will share some great words from John Manjiro.

“My life was full of ups and downs, but no matter where in this wide world I traveled, I could always count on the friendship and trust of the people around me. I learned that, if you keep on striving and refuse to give up, a favorable wind is sure to blow.”