

The  
January  
2022  
Issue

What is  
in this  
issue:

Growing  
Up

Study  
Abroad  
Teacher  
Interview



What is a **milestone**? It is an important life event in your culture. It is how we mark the levels of life. What is **coming-of-age**? You may have heard about the coming-of-age movie **genre** or **Coming-of-Age Day (成人の日)** here in Japan. It means growing up and becoming an adult. In Japan, Coming-of-Age Day is on the second Monday in January. It is for 20-year-olds. This is when young people become **legal adults**. They can drink **alcohol**, smoke, **vote**, and do other things. However, in April 2022, the legal **age of adulthood** in Japan will change to 18! This means that young people will be able to vote at 18 but drinking and smoking will still be age 20. Why the change? **In fact**, about 130 countries use age 18 for adults. It is the international **standard**. Australians can vote and drink alcohol at 18. But the U.S. is like Japan in that everything is not at 18. Americans can **drive** at 16, vote as an adult at 18, and drink at 21.

## Sheila's Life Milestones



**0**  
First Reconciliation &  
First Holy Communion

I was in Catholic school, so we always wore white dresses.

**18**

Très Bien Ball & Prom & High School Graduation

Très Bien Ball was a 'Debutante Ball' at my school. A fancy party where girls are introduced to **society** as ladies. **Prom** is a formal dance at the end of high school. At 18, I became an adult in the U.S.A.



**21**  
Kalamazoo College Graduation

I could drink alcohol in the U.S.A. at 21. I **graduated** college a few days before my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday.



**0**  
Baptism  
A Catholic ceremony after you are born.



**13**  
Confirmation & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Graduation

Confirmation is when you become an adult in the Catholic Church.



**20**  
Coming-of-Age Day & Waseda University Exchange Student Graduation

My wonderful **host family** during my **homestay** helped me wear a **kimono** and a **yukata**.



## What's next?

**26**

XOXO,  
Sheila

## Coming-of-Age Around the World

My mother is an **event planner**, so she helps people with life milestone events and coming-of-age parties every year! The U.S.A. is a very **diverse** country. That means that we have people with roots from all over the world. I asked her for a little advice for this **timeline**.



**Shichi-Go-San**  
**Country:** Japan  
**Religion:** Shinto  
 A **Shinto** ceremony for girls at 3 and 7 and boys at 5. On November 15<sup>th</sup>, families go to shrines together in **traditional** clothes.

3  
5  
7



**Bar/Bat Mitzvahs**  
**Country:** Israel +  
**Religion:** Judaism

A ceremony then party to become an adult in **Judaism**. Bar Mitzvahs are for boys and Bat Mitzvahs are for girls. Children study for years for this.



**Sunrise Ceremony**  
**Country:** U.S.A., Apache Tribe  
 A **precious**, 4-day ceremony for girls with running, **praying**, and traditional dancing around a fire.



13  
16

**Sweet Sixteen**  
**Country:** USA & Canada  
 A big birthday party! Sometimes the present is a car because now kids can drive.



20

**Coming-of-Age Day**  
**Country:** Japan  
 Young people go to a ceremony at their town office with family then walk around the city with friends.



0

1

**Dol**  
**Country:** South Korea  
 A big birthday party because a baby is strong enough to **reach** 1 year old.



11



**Khatam Al-Quran**  
**Country:** Malaysia  
**Religion:** Islam

Girls study for years to **recite** the last chapter of the Quran to their **female** family and friends.



15



**Quinceañera**  
**Country:** Latin America +  
**Religion:** Catholic

A Catholic **Mass** then a big, fancy party where a girl becomes a woman. The girl has a **court** of friends. Pairs do special dances like the **waltz**.



18

**Debut**  
**Country:** Philippines  
 A big birthday party when a girl becomes a woman and wears a **ballgown**. There are 18 candles, 18 roses, and 18 **treasures**.



**Hindu Wedding**



**Country:** India +  
**Religion:** Hinduism  
 Women can **START** getting **married** at 18 and men at 21. Weddings are usually 3 days long and very colorful.



21+



## Let's learn about studying abroad! An interview with Morikawa Sensei

With the start of a new year, a lot of people start thinking about their futures! **Especially** High School 3<sup>rd</sup> years, who will graduate in only a few months. Whether you are graduating soon or not, there are always lots of amazing **opportunities** in the future for Keika Girls! One great opportunity is studying abroad. Please read this **interview** to learn about how Morikawa sensei studied abroad in Australia!

**Erin: What city did you study in? What is special about it?**

**Morikawa sensei:** I studied in **Melbourne**. It's one of the most **liveable** cities in the world! The people there are so nice. They're very lively and **laid-back**. Life there is not as **fast-paced** as Tokyo. Also, there's great coffee and tea. For example, there are not many Starbucks in Melbourne, but there are many amazing **local** coffee shops.

**E: How old were you when you studied abroad?**

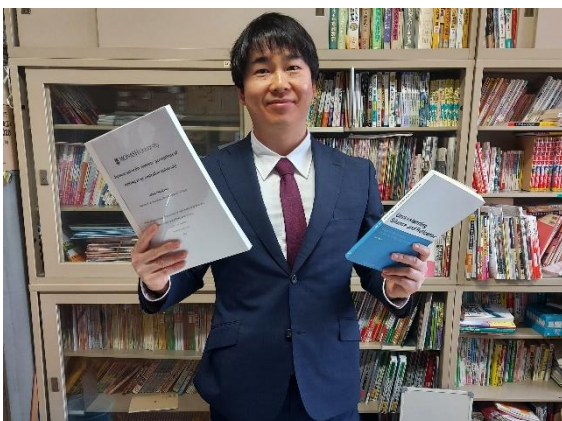
**M:** I was 23 when I went to Australia and I stayed for 3 years. **Before** I studied abroad, I did a degree at Waseda University. Then I did my **Master's degree** at Monash University in Melbourne.

**E: Why did you choose to study in Australia?**

**M:** Actually, my first choice was to study in the United States. A **classmate** from Waseda recommended the University of San Francisco. But I needed at least 3 years of teaching experience for that, which I didn't have **yet**. My second choice was Monash University. I was close to a **professor** at Waseda. His wife got her **PHD** at Monash. She recommended it to me.

**E: Please tell me about what you studied.**

**M:** I studied a TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) Masters. I really enjoyed studying at Monash, but it was a lot more than just textbooks. I met interesting people from all over the world, in and out of university. That was one of the best parts of Australia for me.



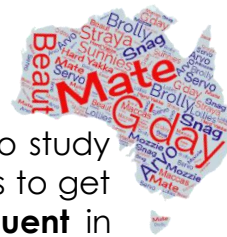
One of my closest friends recommended I take Dr. Dat Bao's lecture, and that became one of my most **memorable** moments! I got very close to him and learnt a lot about education. My graduation **thesis** was even **cited** in his book. He also has a very interesting family. His grandfather was actually the last king of **Vietnam!**




## E: How did you learn enough English to go abroad?



**M:** I never thought about it too hard, I just learnt it. If you want to study abroad, you must take a test like TOEFL or IELTS. I got 6.5s and 7.0s to get into Monash, but just having those scores doesn't make you **fluent** in English. When I first came to Australia it was hard to communicate with people, because I didn't know the local **accent**. I was very confused. Test scores are important, but I don't think they are the most important thing. I think you have to be **familiar** with the local accent and culture, and respect the people to be a part of the **community**.



## E: Keika Girls' School thinks it is important to be a global citizen. What does being a global citizen mean to you?



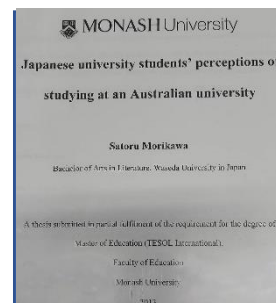
**M:** To me, learning English opens up new opportunities. When we are in our home country, we are **surrounded** by people just like us. We don't have to say much to understand each other because we **share** a culture. But once you're outside Japan you have to say what you mean **out-loud**. You meet lots of people from different backgrounds in terms of language, culture, race, religion, and more. An important **factor** of being a global citizen is understanding and **respecting** other people's culture. It is about being **compassionate** and **open-minded**.



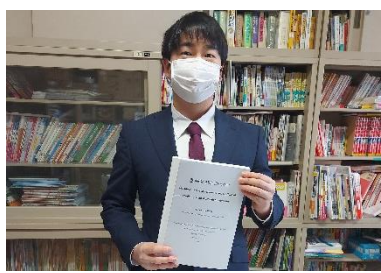
## E: Do you have any advice for students who want to study abroad in the future?

**M:** **First of all**, you can't forget about the tests. Like I said, when you are abroad, talking with native speakers and learning about their culture is a great way to learn. BUT, if you don't pass your tests first, you won't be able to go abroad at all. You can **prepare** by doing **research** on which English tests you need to pass for the program you want to join. If you have a choice of test, do more research to see which fits your skills best.

When you are studying for your tests, you should spend a lot of time on **vocabulary**! I thought I knew enough vocabulary from my education in Japan, but I still found lots of words I didn't know in my Australian University. Remember that **higher level** education like University use very difficult English vocabulary!



One last piece of advice is to read a lot! Textbooks, **novels**, newspapers, magazines, online articles, even YouTube videos. You can get a lot of English material online. For example, you can listen to your favourite **celebrities** like pop stars in English interviews and make use of YouTube **subtitles**.



**XOXO,**  
**Erin**





## Special Bonus! Poem Recommendation ‘The Road Not Taken’

**Morikawa sensei:** Here is a famous poem that changed my life. When I graduated from Waseda a lot of my friends were joining famous international companies. But that didn't seem like what I wanted. This poem is about making your own choices and going your own way, even if it is difficult. It gave me the inspiration to study abroad, even if I had to do it alone.

**Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;**

**Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,**

**And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.**

**I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.**

**Robert Frost (1874-1963)**