

Japan ASCD

February 2007 Newsletter

The Annual Conference

The 16th Annual Spring Conference promises to be a rewarding experience for those who have signed up because they are passionate about their profession or because they recognize the renowned presenters who will be giving their words of wisdom based on much research and experience. There is only a limited waiting list because we are restricted in numbers at our facilities. The queue to enter the New Sanno Hotel will start moving at 7:30 am on Friday, March 2nd. The Japan ASCD Board looks forward to greeting you!

**16th Annual
Japan ASCD
Spring Conference
on
Friday, March 2
and Saturday, March 3
as well as a special
Sunday Session by Rubicon
Atlas at ISSH
www.jascd.org**



Another Featured Presenter

According to Dr. Carol Ann Tomlinson, “differentiation is a teacher acknowledging that kids learn in different ways, and responding by doing something about that through curriculum and instruction. A more dictionary-like definition is “adapting content, process, and product in response to student readiness, interest, and/or learning profile.”

When teachers differentiate, they help students focus on understanding ideas and applying new skills to develop frameworks of meaning, allowing learners to transfer and retain what they study. Dr. Tomlinson’s work suggests that we look at the quality of our curriculum and offer varying materials, meet with students in small groups, provide, scaffolding suited to student need, and so on. Educators will have the opportunity to discover more about differentiation at the Japan ASCD Spring Conference 2007.

Dr. Tomlinson is the author of numerous articles, books, and other professional development materials, including *The Differentiated Classroom: Responding to the Needs of all Learners*, *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed Ability Classrooms*, and *Fulfilling the Promise of the Differentiated Classroom: Strategies and Tools for Responsive Teaching*. Japan ASCD is honored to host Dr. Tomlinson in a two-day workshop session on differentiation, March 2 and 3 at the New Sanno Hotel and the International School of Sacred Heart. Dr. Tomlinson will also address the Japan ASCD members in a keynote session, titled “Differentiating Instruction to Honor the Power and the Passion of the Learner.” More information on Dr. Tomlinson can be found at www.jascd.org.

— by Cris Lozon, Spring Conference Chair

The Opening Keynote Speaker on Friday, March 2nd

Heidi Hayes Jacobs was featured in our December newsletter (Winter Edition). She will be kicking off our 16th Annual Conference with her keynote presentation, “Update on Curriculum Mapping: Best Practices, Latest Research, Newest Technologies”. She is the “guru” on matters of curriculum mapping and she’s here in Tokyo to share her research. She will also be a commentator at the Saturday lunch panel on mapping chaired by Rubicon with a panel of representatives from some of our represented schools. Come early, get a comfortable chair and some coffee/tea.

— Newsletter Editor



A New TIOM

Mid-January is a busy time of year for educators. Report cards, extra meetings, nor final exams could deter almost fifty educators from attending Japan ASCD's January TIOM. These educators, stretching from Tokyo to Sapporo, eagerly attended workshops presented by **Akiko Taira** and **Kayo Yoshida** from Yokohama International School; **April Racana** from Nishimachi International School and **Narumi Shimosato** retired from Japanese public schools; and **David Howland** from St. Maur's International School. Presenters and attendees alike were pleased with the opportunities to stretch themselves as they created music, shared ideas in teaching Japanese to native and non-native speakers, and created ways to differentiate work.

The January 20th, Try It On Monday was a time of firsts for Japan ASCD. First, there was a new format consisting of two sessions with a coffee break between them followed by an optional networking luncheon. Additionally,

this was also the first time Japan ASCD has been able to offer TIOM workshops in Japanese. For everyone involved in planning, participating, and presenting in the Winter TIOM 2007, thank you for making this a successful event.

How have you 'Tried It On Monday'?



Japan ASCD and your colleagues would love to hear how you have 'Tried It On Monday'. If

you have attended a TIOM this school year, Japan ASCD would like to hear from you. Please submit a brief account of your experiences to jamiejascd@gmail.com

Japan ASCD would like to acknowledge Kaoru Hirata from Seisen International School for her work in translating the Winter TIOM flyer into Japanese. Thank you Kaoru!

— by Jamie Green, TIOM Coordinator



Sharing—from Illinois ASCD

For Teachers: Encouraging Girls in Science

Teachers looking to give their female students a boost in science can direct them to [iWASwondering.org](http://www.iwaswondering.org), a project of the National Academy of Sciences intended to showcase the accomplishments of contemporary women in science. The site also aims to highlight for students the varied and intriguing careers of some of today's most prominent scientists. Lia, the teenage cartoon character who hosts the site, guides visitors through interactive resources and activities designed for middle-school students. Visit <http://www.iwaswondering.org/>

For Teachers: New Online Community Promotes Free and Open Collaboration Among Educators

A new online resource has emerged that promises to democratize the process of curriculum development, giving educators the ability to tailor instructional content to the needs of their students, wherever they are, free of charge. Dubbed the Wikipedia of curriculum, the online community known as Curriki aims to provide a place online where educators from anywhere in the world can post curricula and lesson plans for review and use by fellow classroom teachers. Visit <http://www.curriki.org/xwiki/bin/view/Main/WelcomeHome>

For Teachers: Spellingtime.com Helps Students Practice Weekly Spelling Terms

[Spellingtime.com](http://www.spellingtime.com/), a new web site from Synergy 1 Group, Inc., offers teachers and parents of elementary-age children a free spelling tutorial resource. Aiming to stimulate classroom test-taking scenarios, help students build self-confidence and erase test anxiety, deliver early computer-based learning experiences, and improve typing skills, the site uses text-to-speech technologies and interactive, phonetically correct avatars to help students practice a weekly spelling list. Visit <http://www.spellingtime.com/>

Playground Heroes: How Can We Teach Kids to Stick Up for Peers Who are Bullied?

In *Playground Heroes* in the latest issue of *Greater Good* magazine, researchers Ken Rigby and Bruce Johnson make clear that research has not only documented the great prevalence of bullying at schools; it's also shown that quite often, children serve as passive bystanders to bullying. They neither join in the bullying nor try to stop it, but just watch it from the sidelines. Yet when these observers do intervene, more often than not they're successful in stopping the bullying. Drawing on the results from a six-country study that they ran, called the International Bystander Project, Rigby and Johnson offer concrete strategies for helping children act on their best intentions. Visit http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/greatergood/current_issue/rigbyjohnson.html

“The Likeness of Unlike Things”
(Reflections on the Japan ASCD Board)

Attending one of the Japan ASCD Board of Directors meetings you would think you are at an important meeting of experienced company managers who are making decisions and diligently minding business on behalf of numerous stock holders. The demands are similar; deadlines, events, arrangements, expenditures, a budget, proposals, by-laws, reports, motions and votes. But it's the cause, the motivation that's different. The Japan ASCD Board goes to many of the same efforts and sacrifices, endures many similar pressures and accepts many of the same emotional risks as corporate executives, but with one important difference. The time and effort expended by the Japan ASCD Board is not about money, profit or market share. It does not result in a single penny of increased wealth for the members. The effort is all for better learning and more excellent teaching wherever it can be cultivated in Japan!

Where the Board members at a mid-sized U.S. Company meet to analyze bar graphs and pie charts of financial data, the Japan ASCD Board puts similar concentration into data about student learning, educational demographics and pedagogy. Why? So the best teaching and learning possible is available in Japan; so teachers here have more tools and resources and so that more kids can learn better.

By the time a Japan ASCD Board member has served one term, they could've started their own business, taken six semester hours of college or made considerable progress toward publishing a book. All these things they have declined in order to increase the quality of learning in the world; particularly, in that neighborhood of the world we call Japan.

Whether it's a "Try It On Monday" (TIOM) event or the annual conference or even just a reminder by e-mail from a site rep, everything that happens in Japan ASCD is ultimately due to numerous people coming together from a shared sense of educational mission. Let's hope they continue for many years to come!

— *Thomas Amend, Japan ASCD Facilities Coordinator*

**More Sites from Illinois
 ASCD**

This is Cool, Check It Out! Education Map of Future Forces Affecting Public Education

Public education in the United States is at a critical crossroads. The knowledge economy and globalization continue to challenge the basic industrial-era assumptions upon which most public schools, curriculum, and evaluation mechanisms are based. KnowledgeWorks Foundation commissioned a map to examine the forces affecting education and the economy. The map allows you to hold in your mind, at once, the complexity of several forces of change. It provides a means for moving the education conversation outside the details of today's disputes, and into a space where the larger issues

underlying those disputes come into focus. Taking this kind of long view allows you to make better strategic decisions now. Visit <http://www.kwfdn.org/map/organization/index.asp>

For Teachers: Exam Buddy—Super Teaching Resources

A huge resource for teachers of all grades and subject areas! K-12 Teacher Lessons, printable resources, tests, language arts, and math lessons for all K-12 subject areas. Flash-based math games, language arts games, on-line quizzes, web pages, flash cards, hangman, crosswords, word searches, hidden tiles, jumbles, match the theme, missing letters, cryptograms, cloze, cyber hunts, sequence lists, web quests, on-line learning games, calendars, your own class trivia game, printable tests. Automatic scoring. Visit <http://www.exambuddy.com/>

Students Struggle with Information literacy

Despite the assumption that today's students are tech-savvy, many fall short in demonstrating the information literacy skills necessary for success in college and the workforce, a new report says. The report comes from an evaluation of responses from students nationwide to an information-literacy assessment tool developed by the nonprofit ETS. Visit http://www.ets.org/Media/Products/ICT_Literacy/pdf/2006_Preliminary_Findings.pdf

Internet's Educational Value

While about 8 out of every 10 students under age 18 responding to a survey said they believe using the Internet is very important for their schoolwork, most of the parents surveyed said they had not seen any improvement in their children's grades since they began using the Internet at home, a report says. The study by the University of Southern California surveyed more than 2,000 adults and youths throughout the US over a six-year period asking questions about the effect of the Internet on their daily lives. A summary of *Surveying the Digital Future* is online at <http://www.digitalcenter.org/>

For Teachers: National Geographic Maps Available Via the Web

National Geographic maps have adorned classrooms for decades. And now students and teachers can print the National Geographic Society's colorful wall maps off the Web. The Map Machine, as the feature is known, offers an atlas of world, continent, regional, and country maps for printing, as well as photos, cultural profiles, and geographic facts. The Map Machine is available online at <http://java.nationalgeographic.com/studentatlas/>

— *Compiled by MaryBeth Luttrell, Japan ASCD Secretary*

The Miracle of Reading

Do you think the above title is simply a metaphor? “Miracle”, I mean. “Reading”, a miracle? Surely that is metaphorical or hyperbolic or something, right? Think again. In the opening pages of Alvin Toffler’s book, “*Power Shift*”, we learn that in the early centuries of the Common Era (about the time of the fall of the Roman Empire) the few people who could read silently (i.e. read without moving their lips or with any audible voice) were thought to be performing a miracle. Some observers worried that they were practicing witchcraft or, at the very least, be exhibiting extraordinary gifts of learning and genius.

Right now, if you are reading these words silently to yourself, then you are doing something which, in the third or fourth century, would’ve gotten you declared a saint, admired as a genius or, possibly, condemned as a witch! The same can be said of every one of the many thousands of struggling students, IEP kids or other special services youngsters who at least can read silently to themselves. They do effortlessly and without trouble something which it took humankind a very long time to develop and which great thinkers within recorded history regarded as astounding!

So seeing something miraculous in the act of reading is not so metaphorical after all. As a matter of fact, since reading involves a sophisticated use of language and language employs reasoning, the fact that anyone can read at all (whether aloud or silently) has enormous philosophical implications. Readers of C.S. Lewis, for example, will recognize the importance of reasoning in his arguments for the existence of God.

Those who have dedicated their lives to teaching children are inevitably contributing to this ongoing, mysterious and ever-evolving miracle of the human mind called reading. Who knows what the next step or stage will be in what we call reading. What feat of reading which astonishes us today will be commonplace tomorrow?

— by *Thomas Amend*

Book Reviews by Rose

I, Coriander, by Sally Gardner - Winner of the Nestlé Children’s Book Prize 2005

Set in London during the turbulent rule of Oliver Cromwell, this novel is a mixture of history, magic, adventure, and romance.

Coriander Hobie is the daughter of a wealthy merchant and ‘fairy’ mother. The early years of her life are filled with happiness and joy, but after the mysterious death of her mother, and her father’s forced departure from England, Coriander’s life is filled with pain and suffering. Shut away in a chest to die, she magically escapes death by entering the fairy world. When she returns to the real world, she is determined to make things right.

This story flawlessly blends fact and fantasy, and will appeal to readers who enjoy both historical and fantasy nov-

els. The strength and determination of Coriander Hobie to overcome so many injustices is truly inspirational.

The Incredible Book Eating Boy, written and illustrated by Oliver Jeffers

One day, Henry accidentally ‘eats’ a word. He develops a taste for words and is soon devouring entire books! The more books he eats, the smarter he becomes. However, he soon discovers that his ‘book diet’ is not very healthy, and all of the knowledge he has gathered gets muddled up. Finally, Henry realizes that the best way to ‘get smart’ is to read books, rather than eat them.

The illustrations in this picture book are delightful. Jeffers has painted the images of Henry and his surroundings over the text from pages of various books, and at the end of the story, small ‘bites’ have been taken out of the corner of each page!

This wonderful tale is not only funny, but also provides children with a clear message – the more you read, the more you learn. This picture book is sure to become a class favorite!

— by *Rose Hoger, Librarian at SMIS*

Wonderful Web Sites by Katie

<http://www.puzzle-maker.com/CW/> FREE - This web site isn’t high tech, but it is so easy to use. There is no spell check though so my students and I type our words and clues in Word and the copy/paste them into the **Enter your words and clues here** box.

<http://www.readinga-z.com/> YOU PAY – This is a fabulous source for guided reading books and more. The books are printable and come with lesson plans, work sheets, quizzes, retelling rubric, books with just pictures, books in Spanish, non-fiction books, poetry books, and the list goes on. New books are added all the time. The best part is the kids can take home and keep the books. There is something for every teacher on this site. **You can see and use 30 free samples of Reading A-Z’s choosing.** (Read download instructions carefully to make sure you have the correct version of Adobe.)

<http://www.starfall.com/> FREE – Learn to read at starfall.com. PRE-K – 1

<http://www.tumblebooks.com/> YOU PAY - An online collection of animated, talking picture books, reading comprehension quizzes, educational games, and teacher resources for everyone schools, libraries, and families. Fabulous site

<http://www.readingrockets.org/> FREE – Lots of teacher resources and interviews with some of Kids favorite authors. Live Video Clips.

<http://www.paragraphpunch.com/> FREE – Guided writing site for writing a paragraph.

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/vocabulary.htm> FREE - Everything you ever wanted to know about words! There is a lot to see and do at this site so explore explore. Great resource for teachers and students 5th grade and up.

http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/states_experiment_drag-drop_Intermed_State15s_500.html FREE – A great way to learn USA states and locations. You are given a large map of the U.S. to put the states into (like a puzzle).

To DIBEL or Not to DIBEL

What is DIBELS?

DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) was/is designed as a screening instrument to assess whether several key early reading skills are in place for a student to read on grade level. The areas screened are:

Phonemic Awareness

Initial Sound Fluency (ISF) – Assesses a student’s ability to identify and produce the initial sound of a given word.

Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF) - Assesses a student’s ability to produce the individual sounds within a given word.

Alphabetic Principle

Letter Naming Fluency (LNF) – Assesses a student’s knowledge of letter-sound correspondences as well their ability to blend letters together to form "nonsense" words (sim, lut)

Fluency in Passage Reading

Oral Reading Fluency (ORF)

These two sections are optional and do not have the same volume of data that is available for the above assessed areas.

Word Use Fluency (WUF) – Comprehension

Retell Fluency (RTF) – Vocabulary

The screenings take about 5 to 10 minutes per student and are easily administered and scored. Screenings are given 3 times a year with opportunity for progress monitoring. The students are categorized either as at risk, some risk, or low risk according to grade level bench mark scores. According to the authors, DIBELS is valid, reliable, and predictive.

DIBELS can be given via paper and pencil and mCLASS Wireless Generation. With mCLASS you use a handheld to test, score, and then connect the handheld to the internet and receive very professional looking graphs of progress and various other reports

All the detailed information you want to know about DIBELS can be obtained for “FREE” at <http://dibels.uoregon.edu/> including the assessments and directions for giving and scoring the assessments.

Okay, now you know a little about DIBELS, what is all the hoopla and ruckus about this simple screening tool?!? The book that is causing many to question DIBELS is:

The Truth About DIBELS: What It Is - What It Does by Kenneth S. Goodman, Emeritus, University of Arizona. Foreword by P. David Pearson

The book has seven articles and the forward written by well known educators including P. David Pearson, Robert Tierney, Sandra Wilde, Maryann Manning, and Constance Kamii. They contend that DIBELS doesn’t help and may even hurt students and teachers and discuss why it is impairing learning and teaching. There is also an article from a parent and a classroom teacher explaining how DIBELS has effected their child and the education process.

One of the key issues the authors have brought to our attention is how DIBELS is being used in school districts throughout the United States. Due to the “No Child Left Behind Act” schools are under tremendous pressure to show how students have improved. They need a quick and inexpensive source of data. DIBELS is inexpensive to use, though one of the authors of **The Truth About DIBELS** disagrees with that idea. DIBELS cost \$1.00 per student to be able to input your schools data and have a report run. How-

ever the schools could do this on their own.

The problem is that DIBELS is being used as high risk system wide test, when that was not what DIBELS is intended for. There are school districts where students are retained because they did not pass the benchmark DIBELS score. Retained in kindergarten because a student could not read enough nonsense word in a minute! That is cause for alarm. Districts are receiving or losing funding based on DIBELS scores. This ONE screening tool is determining whether schools are successful or unsuccessful.

Incredible pressure is being placed on teachers. Their jobs are at risk based on DIBELS scores. Students are pulled for intensive remediation for 30 to 60 minutes a day based on DIBELS scores. Teacher are teaching only the skills on the DIBELS screening, (because the DIBELS skills are the ones being tested) which is not all the skills student need to succeed in reading.

The authors of **The Truth About DIBELS** also claim that the “numbers” purported by the authors of DIBELS are inaccurate, and are not scientifically based. Of course the DIBELS authors say they “accurate and scientifically based”. DIBELS authors do have millions of students’ results to support their claims.

I agree with the authors of **The Truth About DIBELS** that DIBELS is being used in a totally inappropriate way and is causing harm to students and teachers in the process.

I don’t agree however that DIBELS is an inherently bad screening tool. When used appropriately and in conjunction with other assessments, it is another tool for determining the needs of my students.

In my experience giving DIBELS to my students, DIBELS has been right on the mark predicting the students future success and needs for intervention, however it wasn’t anything I didn’t already know as an experienced classroom teacher. DIBELS is another piece of data along with others, such as the DRA that I could use to confirm where my students’ needs lie, and to show to parents, colleagues, and administrators.

If you are interested in DIBELS or just want interventions to help with phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, and fluency, consider the book: **I’ve DIBEL’d, Now What? Designing Interventions with DIBELS Data** by Susan L. Hall, Ed.D. Whether you’re a proponent DIBELS (The book does outline DIBELS research and what do with the data) or not this book is a great resource for strategies, interventions and information on where to obtain ready made centers, alphabet arcs, decoded text, and much, much more. I couldn’t believe the amount of information that was available. What to do when a child doesn’t have phonemic awareness, what are the first steps? All these question and more are answered in this easy to read text. It certainly gave me a refresher course in beginning reading skills and strategies.

— by *Katie Straub, Literacy Facilitator, Japan ASCD Membership*

Dr. Seuss Web Sites by Katie

<http://www.kiddyhouse.com/Teachers/Literature/DrSeuss.html> This site links you to other sites. Some are inactive, I liked Dr. Seuss booktable. It gave you activities for most of the Dr. Seuss’s Books.

http://www.hubbardscupboard.org/dr__seuss.html - Cute activities, I like the edible hat!

<http://www.nea.org/readacross/activityguide.html>

<http://www.twice.cc/projects.html> Scroll down the page for projects. Although these projects are designed for video conferencing between classes around the world, many can be done with the class next door. I love the Write a Monster one.

http://atozteacherstuff.com/Themes/Dr__Seuss/
Lots of activities – There is a recipe for Oobleck!

<http://www.preschooleducation.com/seuss.shtml>
Good for PK-2

<http://homeschooling.about.com/cs/unitssubjhol/qt/mar2a.htm> Fun hands on Activities and some fun worksheets

<http://www.gpschools.org/ci/ce/elem/holidays/drseuss.htm>
Lots of Activities and lesson plans.

ASCD Regional Meeting

Quick! What do Japan, Singapore, Puerto Rico, Ontario and Texas have in common? All were among the ASCD affiliates in attendance at the recent NE/NW/SW Regional Meeting in Dallas, Texas. (Bonus points if you guessed that Japan is in the NW region!) Representatives from twenty-seven affiliates and ASCD staff members met for two days to share best idea and practices as well as ways to add value to each organization.

As with all ASCD meetings, everything was thought provoking and inspirational, raising plenty of “what if we...” and “why don’t we try...” ideas for our Japan affiliate. One common wish among affiliates was the desire for more collaboration. For example, hosting online conferences and opening them up to several affiliate’s members was mentioned several times. Keeping abreast of technology trends with blogging, webinars, and podcasts was also a common theme. (To give you an idea how quickly our technology lexicon changes, my computer’s spell check recognized none of those three terms!)



Criselda Lozon, Spring Conference Chair, with her committee. She has organized the conference again for a second year. What a great job! Thank you, Cris.



Japan ASCD serves a diverse educational community enriching teaching, learning and cross-cultural communication.

— Japan ASCD Mission Statement

The Japan ASCD Board of Directors will strive to do its utmost to serve the educational community in Japan. We would appreciate any suggestions or comments from you. Write to info@jascd.org.

Key points from 7 Measures of Success: What Remarkable Associations Do That Others Don't were shared. One point was that with a commitment to purpose, successful organizations assessed and fulfilled members’ needs and expectations. Japan ASCD mirrors that sentiment and strives to do the same for you. As your lives change, we want to adapt to those changes, too.

My carry-on suitcase bulging, I left the meeting with seven pages of notes, a stack of handouts, copious samples of other affiliate’s materials, and a promise of more information to arrive electronically. In addition, I look forward to reading and implementing my door prize, titled Learning on Display: Student-Created Museums That Build Understanding, by Linda D’Acquisto.

It is a privilege to be associated with a high quality organization such as ASCD, and the regional meeting only served to reiterate that feeling.

— by Susan Hagenson, Japan ASCD President

ASCD, the association of which we are an affiliate, hosts meetings during the year which board members must attend to represent our organization. There is the annual President-Elect meeting, Regional Board Meeting, National ASCD meetings at their annual conference.

Japan ASCD tries to have representation at all meetings. It is part of our constitution and also a requirement to be an affiliate.

We are grateful to the schools with board members for supporting our affiliate and its mission and vision.

— Editor’s Note

The 2006-2007 Japan ASCD Board

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