

POTENTIAL

JANUARY - JUNE 2021

KUMON *feature*

Self-learning In A Fast
Changing World

parenting **TIPS**

How to support
your child's
learning at home?

*my life,
my dream*

DIVJOT KAUR

AMANDA TAN

editor's Note

Dear Readers,

2020 had been a year filled with both challenges and opportunities. Many of us were forced to adapt to new realities. Yet these new realities presented us with opportunities to discover how our Kumon families (Instructors, students and parents) could adapt and thrive on the challenges.

Being a self-learner is more important today than ever before. At Kumon, we have always focused on building the ability to learn from trial and error in our students. Through this process of learning, every child is enabled to self-learn every day beyond the boundaries of physical locations.

In this issue of Potential, we asked two young ladies; Divjot Kaur (7 years old) and Amanda Tan (16 years old), and their parents to shed some light on their learning journey during the pandemic.

In 2020, the Advanced Students Forum (ASF) shifted to a dedicated microsite where we commemorated the achievements of 102 Kumon Programme Completers and 301 advanced students. In the spirit of encouragement and motivation, the awardees could relive and rejoice in the best moments of their learning journey with Kumon in the exceptional year.

On this note, here's wishing you a bright and peaceful new year.

Do follow us on Kumon Singapore on Facebook @KumonSingaporeOfficial and Instagram @Kumon.sg to receive the latest updates and keep up with our upcoming activities!

Last but not least, our first WhatsApp Stickers are available for download on iOS and Android smartphones.

Elphin

PR & Marketing, Kumon Singapore



ON THE COVER Jan - Jun 2021
Amanda Tan



Scan the QR code to
find out more
and download the
softcopy.

Have something to say?

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Tel: +65 6232 5855 Fax: +65 6232 5822/33

E-mail: sg-kaoweb@kumonglobal.com

Website: sg.kumonglobal.com

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Parenting Tips

How to support your child's learning at home?



Divjot Kaur is a seven-year-old girl enrolled in the Kumon Maths and English programmes for more than two years. She enjoys colouring and dancing, and always has a zest in learning. Divjot has since adapted well to the Kumon way of encouraging children to learn independently through the process of trial and error.

"My favourite part of learning at Kumon is working on challenging problems. And I enjoy doing all the Kumon worksheets because I can complete the worksheets on my own easily by following the examples.", said Divjot.

Divjot's mother, Gurjeet, was keen for her daughter to develop her English and Maths abilities to ensure Divjot has a good start before entering primary school. Not too long after enrolling, Divjot quickly demonstrated the ability to work independently and confidently. Gurjeet recounted, "She told us that she likes going to Kumon class a lot because it is easy for her and she can do it by herself."

Gurjeet said, "Since joining Kumon, Divjot's comprehension ability has increased dramatically. I am pleased with both programmes; the reading ability and the comprehension skills developed through the English programme has worked very well with the Maths programme. It's evident in Divjot's ability to take on word problems in school. Also, Divjot became good at expressing herself because of the exposure to the complex words in the English programme."

During the pandemic, Divjot continued diligently with her Kumon studies every day and was able to put in the same level of concentration in Zoom lessons.

Gurjeet commented, "The online lessons were very successfully planned and carried out. Along with Divjot's individualised study plan from the Instructor, she adapted to the new way of learning smoothly. Furthermore, Divjot was already doing the worksheets on her own most of the time before the Circuit Breaker. The biggest joy is watching Divjot's ability, confidence and independence grow through her engagement with the Kumon Worksheets."

Divjot has progressed more quickly than anticipated and has been happy to take on more challenges. Gurjeet shared, "Kumon has equipped our girl with the study skills to get her off to a good start in school and pushed her further to stay ahead of the school curriculum."

She added, "Divjot is now confident in her abilities and strives to go further and faster."



Divjot Kaur
7 years old (Primary 1)

Current Worksheet level:
MATHS D131
ENGLISH E1 131

Starting level:
MATHS 3A71
ENGLISH 7A1

Ambition:
Divjot aspires to
become a doctor



16-year-old Amanda, a sports enthusiast, completed the Kumon Maths Programme and developed a burning passion for Maths. Not only is she taking on Further Mathematics as a subject at Raffles Institution, but she is also continuing with the elective Level X in the Kumon Maths Programme.

Amanda's mother, Ms Amy, first enrolled her elder daughter Emily in Kumon. Ms Amy recalled, "We read about the Kumon Methodology and decided to find out more from the learning centre near our house. We were fascinated with the concept of "learn at your own pace", which coincided with our preferred approach. We subsequently enrolled Amanda in Kumon after seeing how Emily benefited from the programme."

Amanda started her Kumon journey at the age of five, and over time, she became a confident, self-motivated and independent learner who developed a love for learning.

"Amanda is an active girl and she is curious about many things. Initially, it was not easy to sit her down every day to do the Maths worksheets. My husband and I had to take turns to remind Amanda to complete her daily worksheets, which soon became part of our daily routine. Over the years, I have witnessed her interest and confidence in Maths grow. Despite her busy competitive sports schedule, Amanda persistently progressed from one level of the Maths worksheets to the next, and she became motivated to complete the programme," said Ms Amy.

Amanda used to think Maths was a dull and tedious subject. However, her perception shifted after joining Kumon.

"I enjoy the process of problem solving as it allows me to

think creatively by applying concepts learned previously to different problems. The satisfaction of overcoming each Maths problem motivated me to higher-level worksheets," said Amanda.

Kumon has instilled many transferable soft skills in Amanda, such as perseverance and discipline, which have helped her to become an independent learner. These skills are especially crucial in her upper secondary years. According to Ms Amy, the Kumon approach of daily worksheets enabled Amanda to develop a habit of constant learning, which led her to take charge of her learning progress. She was then able to regroup, take stock of her learning progress and plan her own timetable to prepare for her Secondary Four examinations.

Amanda shared about her experience in Kumon, "The Kumon programme has taught me both hard and soft skills. Staying on task to complete my homework was no easy feat. However, the practice of doing worksheets daily has taught me discipline, perseverance and dedication."

She continued, "Having to know Maths concepts such as linear algebra and calculus before being taught in school had enabled me to complete my school work with confidence and translate my skills into desirable results."

Likewise, Amanda enjoys helping her friends with their school work.

"I recall explaining to my classmate the cross method for factorisation as she was unsure of how to use it. By lending a helping hand, I also further enhanced my understanding of the concepts," Amanda further divulged.

When asked about her favourite Maths topics, Amanda

revealed that Multiplication and Division in Level C of the Maths Programme were the most enjoyable as they resembled a fun pattern to her. She also disclosed that she was always motivated and passionate about going to Kumon classes.

"I like the conducive learning environment in my learning centre. My instructors always ensure that every student stayed focused. Moreover, they are extremely dedicated, helpful and encouraging. I can freely approach them whenever I'm in doubt," Amanda revealed.

Home Learning With Kumon

Given Amanda's passion for Maths and her independent-learning skillset honed with Kumon, it was no surprise that she adapted to a new learning scenario comfortably.

"During the suspension of classes, her instructors remained accessible via WhatsApp and continued to progress her learning with the appropriate worksheets via mail," Ms Amy shared. "Amanda's quest for knowledge also motivated her to plan her own schedule and to ensure the pandemic situation did not disrupt her learning."

"Whenever I was faced with challenging questions, I would either take a break before attempting them again or seek guidance from my instructors. When the latter option was not possible with face-to-face, I would turn to my next best instructor—my sister, Emily, who is also a Kumon Maths Completer and Maths Electives Completer," Amanda added.

Amanda admittedly loves Maths, and her next goal is to complete the elective level. She is keen to pursue a STEM-related career by developing new, innovative and purposeful technology to help better lives. Until the time comes for her to bring her automotive designer dream to fruition, Amanda continues to enjoy watching Formula One races and reading up on new car designs, watching NBA games and baking desserts.



A Kumon Maths Completer continuing with the elective level

Amanda Tan
16 years old

Current Worksheet level:
MATHS XP90

Starting level:
MATHS 6A II

Ambition:
Amanda aspires to become an automotive designer, conceptualizing more powerful, yet environmentally friendly cars.



Self-learning for a fast-changing world

The pace of change in the 21st century has been faster than it has ever been. New jobs have been created, digital adoption has also been accelerated, and as most of us have experienced, new mode of learning, working and conducting meetings. In these instances, self-learning could be one of the ways to acquire knowledge.

According to the US Department of Education¹, self-learning enables the individuals to develop curiosity and willingness to try new things, view problems as challenges, desire change and take pleasure in learning.

For Kumon students, self-learning is an important skill throughout their Kumon journey as the Kumon programme is designed to be a self-learning programme, without reliance on the Instructors. Working out the answers or solutions on their own is not only rewarding for our children, it also helps to solidify the learning.

As children start to take ownership of their own learning, they develop confidence and motivation. More importantly, they develop the self-learning skill that will benefit them not just in Kumon, but in their future academic pursuits and professional career.

Kumon founder, Toru Kumon, is a lifelong believer of the benefits of self-learning, sparked by his own experience in self-learning as a child.

When he was fifth grade, his maths teacher informed the class that if they were able to learn from the textbook on their own, they could advance. He felt happy to be able to study at his own pace and did so enthusiastically.

Toru Kumon later moved to Tosa Junior High School (equivalent to lower secondary) and was similarly exposed to a self-learning method, where the teacher taught only the basics and encouraged students to learn by themselves.

'This method suited me very well. If I advanced beyond the school grade level, I would have an easy time studying in school. In addition, I didn't like to be forced into studying or having to listen to teachers' lectures, so an educational policy which encourages students to learn what they liked at their own pace by themselves was just right for me.'

'From this time forward, I began to think that all the other schools should adopt this policy of achieving the greatest result with the least amount of effort, so their students can enjoy their school life more,' Toru Kumon wrote in his autobiography Give it a try – Yattemiyo.

Toru Kumon later went on to become a maths teacher in Tosa Junior High School, where he graduated. He used his belief in self-learning in his own teaching career. He would encourage his students to learn on their own and he would take the time after school to guide his students on the additional learning that the students were taking. Such was the efficacy of the learning method that the majority of the students he helped reached high school level mathematics within a year.

Children's inherent desire to learn is what forms the central tenet of Kumon's self-learning methodology. Instead of standing in front of the class and writing on the board, examples, explanations and hints are provided in the worksheets. Students learn from these examples and attempt the questions on their own, under the guidance of the Kumon Instructor when necessary.

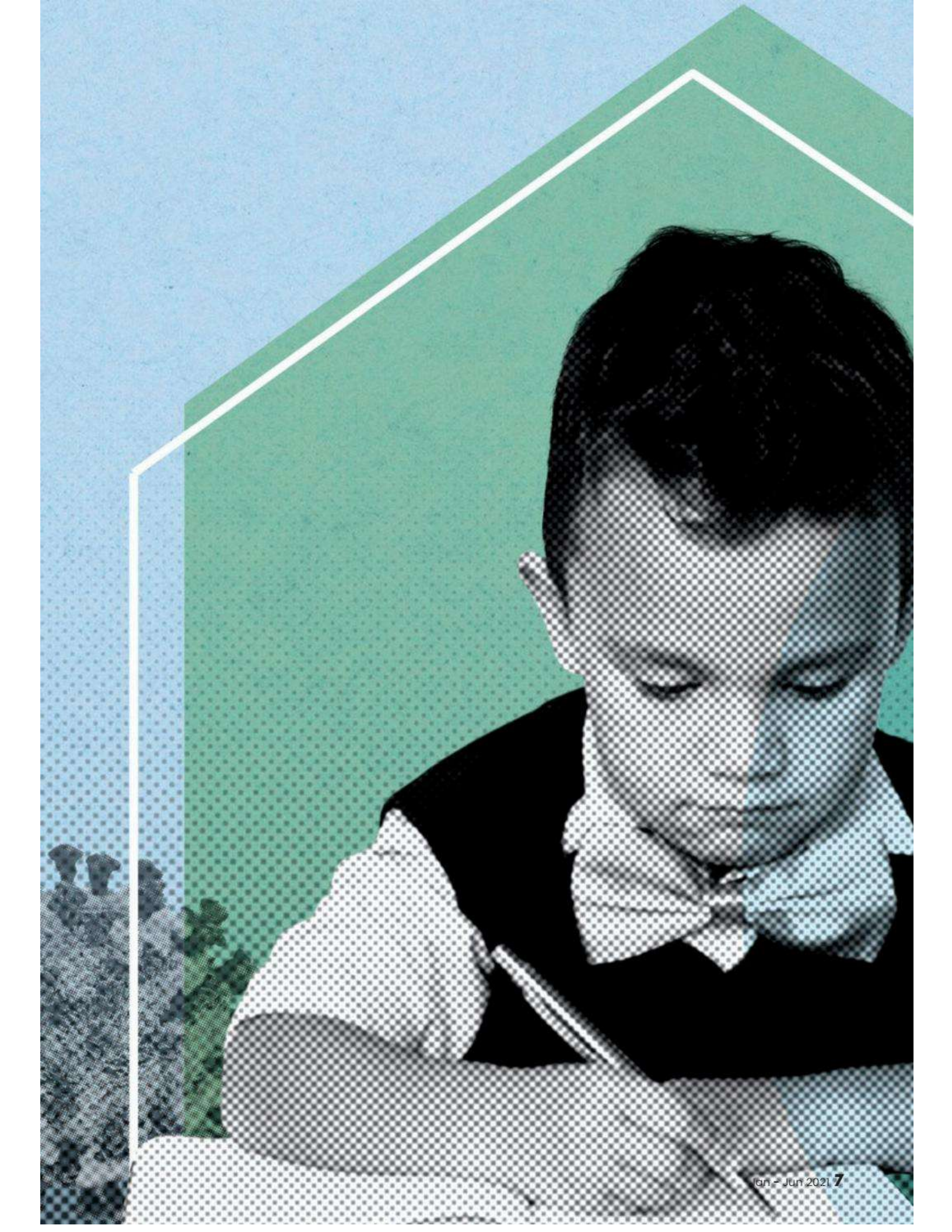
This learning methodology was helpful to Kumon students when many countries were lockdown during the outbreak of COVID-19. As Kumon Centres are closed for in-Centre study, students now have to complete all their assigned worksheets as homework, instead of the usual routine that they are used to.

Self-learning is an important life skill and the benefits are far reaching. Kumon students have known to be able to apply this skill, beyond Kumon, in their academic pursuits, interests and in their professional career.

This is the true purpose of the self-learning methodology that Toru Kumon prescribed for all Kumon students, as it helps our children beyond learning.

#beyondlearning

¹<https://www.tcdsb.org/schools/holyspirit/thefuture/ESD/LCA/Documents/SDL%20article%201.pdf>





Instructors' Quotes



Ms. Sharilla
Kumon Malaysia



Self-learning comes from the personal desire to gain new knowledge. In Kumon Method, children learn by the examples and doing the worksheets without specifically being taught. Through doing exercises on their own students gain confidence in their studies and develop the desire to advance further. Learning becomes more purposeful for them, as well as being enjoyable, which leads to better results.

Children who learn through experience find ways to work faster and more efficiently, and that involves time management, self-assessment, and setting their own goals. These are important skills that are very much important later in their studying life and more so when they join the workforce. In fact, kids who are adapt at self-learning have more opportunities in developing other skills and they do so by developing one particular skill set as they go along. Self-learners also possess a strong commitment towards completing tasks and they stick to a plan until they achieve their goals.





Ms. Kim Jarvis
Kumon Australia
and New Zealand

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Home study over the COVID-period helped me realise, even more, how effective the worksheets are for enabling children to work independently to access learning. I think it's been exciting to see how children have really made Kumon their own while studying at home. I've found my students to be very focused on their studies. Zoom has also been a great opportunity for me to observe how they're really focused and working incredibly well.

”



Ms Lena
Kumon Singapore

“

Self-learning becomes an essential skill during this pandemic period. As a Kumon instructor, it is a challenging time but also a great experience to see how the student can pick up such a skill to solve problems by themselves while doing worksheets at home. Using the worksheets as a tool to see the small steps and figure out the question is the excellent moment to develop their confidence and sense of achievement.

”



Ms Ruby
Kumon Singapore

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During the pandemic situation, the Kumon students, especially the ones at higher levels sailed through, pursuing their studies at home and progressing quite well. This was possible only due to the fact that these students are Kumon self-learners and were not afraid to face new challenges in their worksheets. They have been applying the self-learning skills picked up from Kumon, in every walk of life. And hence shine as our rising stars, even when they step out in the mainstream academic or corporate world!

”



The Annual Advanced Students Forum (ASF)



The annual Advanced Students Forum (ASF) is held to recognise and award the Kumon students and Completers for their achievements in the Kumon Mathematics, English and Chinese programmes. It is in that same aim that Kumon has and continues to organise ASF. And pandemic notwithstanding, a dedicated microsite was created to commemorate the achievements of 103 Kumon Programme Completers and 301 students who were studying five years ahead of the Kumon International Standard (KIS).

Amongst the Completers in 2020, the youngest was a Primary Three students who completed the English programme. For the 5-years advanced awards, the youngest awardees were three Kindergarteners (K1) in the Mathematics programme.

The General Manager of Kumon Singapore, Mr Masahiro Takatsu, conveyed his congratulations to the Kumon awardees who put in tireless effort for their achievements. He went on to encourage all Kumon students to continue to work towards their goal by looking ahead and anticipating future, after challenges so that they can contribute to the development of societies and the global community, as well as thrive in a post-COVID world.

On the microsite, all the awardees joined in the celebration by sharing their photos taken with their awards. Videos of Kumon awardees recounting their learning journey and how they overcame their challenges during the pandemic were unveiled.

Kumon Singapore's first WhatsApp Stickers Pack - available on iOS and Android Smartphones

Some Kumon moments are better expressed with stickers instead of words. Whether it is to send a reminder for Kumon homework, give encouragement or excuse yourself for some Kumon time with these stickers, there is certainly one relatable Kumon moment.

Start expressing yourself with the stickers through your daily chats with one another in a new, enjoyable way.



KUMON

SG STICKER PACK

Illustrations of various stickers including: 'LET'S GET IT DONE', 'REWRITE (LEARNING)', 'DO NOT DISTURB', 'BIBI!', 'IT'S KUMON TIME', 'HAVE YOU DONE YOUR KUMON?', 'BUT FIRST KUMON!', 'LEVEL UP', '100', 'DON'T FORGET YOUR KUMON!', 'NEVER GIVE UP TRY AGAIN', 'Write it down', 'READY TO GO?', 'AKUMON A DAY'.

For download

Android users (in Singapore only)
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=sg.com.kumon.stickerapp>

Apple users
<https://whatsticker.online/p/37281zyHU7st/SG>





Kumon Singapore on Instagram

@KUMON.SG

Our official Instagram account is up and running! Follow us to read exciting stories from Kumon students and to receive updates on the latest activities and news in the year ahead.





How to support your child's learning at home?

As Kumon is designed to be a home-based learning programme, they will be learning at home most of the time. Hence at home, it is important that we help to motivate your children to keep up with their Kumon study, and stay on track of their goals. How do we, as parents, help to support your children's learning at home?

Provide an environment that is conducive for learning

Designate a time and place, ideally free of distraction, for your children to complete their Kumon homework. Getting into a routine helps them to learn discipline and prevents them from developing the habit of procrastination.

Encourage your children to complete their work each day

Remind your children on the importance of completing their Kumon homework daily. As time passes, they will develop the habit of bringing out their Kumon homework to do at the designated time on their own.

Praise and encourage your children

Celebrate big and small achievements at Kumon, which may include completing a set of worksheets on their own without being told or advancing to the next level of the subject. You may praise them when they have done well, or consider rewards such as a nice dinner or extra time for their favourite activities.

Maintain good communication with your Instructor

While Kumon students succeed through their own efforts, that success needs the partnership between parents, students and Instructors to make it happen. Communication with your Instructor is an important cog in the wheel of success. Understanding your children's progress will also help you to motivate them to achieve more.



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