

STRAIGHT talk

Published Quarterly for Parents of Kumon Kids

INSIDE
THIS ISSUE

2 Proud to
Read Aloud!

3 Marching off to
Middle School

4 The Faces of Kumon



Students Give Up Summer Day to Take the Kumon Math Challenge

Congratulations to each Kumon student who participated in Kumon's most prestigious event of the year! More than 10,000 students woke up early Sunday morning and descended upon 33 universities and colleges in North America. This year's Kumon Math Challenge was the most difficult in the company's history and generated significant media interest.

An Associated Press photo of Kumon student Matthew Sie appeared in newspapers across Canada and the United States, including the largest newspapers in the United States (USA Today) and Canada (The Toronto Star). Together, both papers reach more than 6,000,000 readers. Matthew attends Ms. Mariko Matoba's Center in Chino Hills, CA and was taking the Math Challenge for the first time.

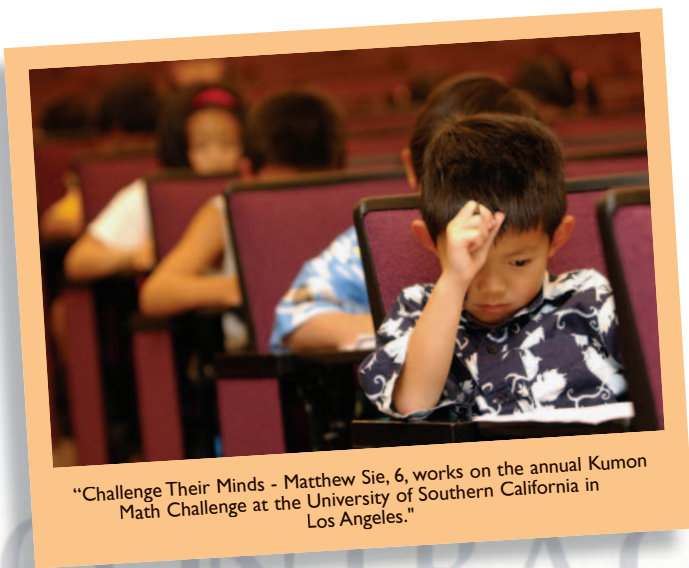
students from Jacksonville, Florida and two students from London, Ontario even participated in LIVE in-studio interviews during the morning news before the event.

Some students even took the event while on vacation. Here are just some of the stories we heard about:

Students' Hometown:

Where they traveled to take the Kumon Math Challenge:

Tulsa, Oklahoma	to	San Diego, California
NYC, New York	to	Toronto, Ontario
Chicago, Illinois	to	Los Angeles, California
Windsor, Ontario	to	Detroit, Michigan
St. Louis, Missouri	to	Honolulu, Hawaii
Fort Gratiot, Michigan	to	London, Ontario
Las Vegas, Nevada	to	Phoenix, Arizona



"Challenge Their Minds - Matthew Sie, 6, works on the annual Kumon Math Challenge at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles."



Toronto Blue Jays President and CEO Paul Godfrey kicked off the 2004 Kumon Math Challenge at the University of Toronto by delivering an inspirational speech to more than 250 Grade 4 students.

More than 20 TV news stations from across Canada covered the event on evening newscasts. Major network affiliates (ABC, NBC, FOX, CBS) in US cities also covered the Challenge. Four



Continued on page 2



THOUGHTS BY
TORU KUMON

"Children are bundles of curiosity. They closely observe what they think is interesting. Once they think they can do something, they are soon inspired to give it a try."

Cover Story (continued)

Results will be distributed the week of September 1st via email or mail (depending on how you registered). No matter what your score is, we would like to join you in celebrating your courage and achievement.

On behalf of the entire Kumon community, we appreciate that you took a break from your summer vacation to compete with other confident math students. You challenged yourself far beyond expectations.

Thank you again for your participation and we look forward to seeing you at the **Kumon Math Challenge next year!**



PROUD TO READ **ALoud!**

(Practical Advice on Oral Reading)



Have you ever wondered why children need to read aloud to you? Have you ever questioned if and when they need to stop reading aloud?

Reading aloud trains the brain in reading fluency and all readers can benefit from it. When practicing fluency, students should read from books which are easy for them, ones where they can decode the words with 95% accuracy. Silent reading does not allow students to develop fluency, nor does reading books that may require emphasis on decoding. If students stumble over words, this interferes with fluency training. It is important to encourage children to select easy books to read when they read aloud and not to say, "That book is too easy for you!" Good readers should still read aloud throughout elementary school and weaker readers should continue

the practice through middle and high school! Building fluency is a long-term endeavor. We must not take for granted that it will come to students automatically.

Do you ever read aloud to your children?

Reading aloud is for you too! Let your children hear you read to them as they will develop a better sense of the rhythm of a passage and of correct pronunciation of words which they may have difficulty decoding on their own. This is part of fluency training. Throughout elementary school, it's a wise choice for parents to read to their children, even if they are good readers. This will train you to be an excellent reader as well.

Marching off to Middle School



It's a big step! For many children, this time of year means transition to middle school. Although the first day of middle school rarely receives as much fanfare as the first day of kindergarten, it should. When students leave the comfort zone of elementary school for the

uncharted waters of middle school, they (and their parents!) generally feel anxious.

Parents can help their children prepare for this transition by getting as much information about the new school as possible and by staying involved in their child's education. One key to a smooth transition is to make communication with your child and the new school a priority. Fortunately, children who have been enrolled in a Kumon Center can continue with the same Instructor in the Center. This consistency offers families an element of stability during this sometimes difficult period.

Here are some additional suggestions for parents:

- **Visit the school with your child if you haven't already—** Participate in any type of formal orientation offered by the school. If none, call the school on your own and arrange for a tour. Locate your child's locker and practice opening the combination. Make a trial run of your child's class schedule.
- **Have a system in place for keeping track of homework—** Understand what is required by each teacher and help your child organize assignments for each of the six to eight different classes. Don't assume that the study habits from elementary school will be enough for middle school. Long-term Kumon students, however, will have an edge in this area.

- **Be aware of social pressures —** Middle school is a time when your child can be exposed to many outside pressures. He/She must learn to handle peer pressure and make smart choices. Ask questions that require more than a yes/no answer.

Talk with your child daily, showing an interest in what he/she is doing and feeling. Listen to your child—especially to what is not said. During the middle school years, parents and children will face many challenges and adjustments. Keep a positive outlook!

- **Stay involved —** Although your child may not want you to be a presence at school, be one anyway! Join the parent/teacher organization, attend parent conferences and volunteer in any capacity that fits your schedule and expertise.

- **Reestablish a solid Kumon Goal —** Students should be encouraged to discuss a long-term goal with their Kumon Instructor such as finishing Level J before they enter high school. Now that your child has moved to middle school, use this monumental event to reinvigorate his/her Kumon studies. Start by asking the Instructor for a meeting to discuss where your child is headed.

- **Keep the Kumon Instructor up-to-date —** If your child's grades begin to slip, be sure to inform your Kumon Instructor of this. In most cases, having a chance to review work from the past may be all that is needed to improve the grade.

There will definitely be some sour notes in this march to (and through) middle school, but it can also be a time of harmonious growth. Working together – student, parent, teacher, Kumon Instructor – and communicating honestly can produce amazing results.

Doctor on Call



DR. ANDI
Addresses
Today's Parenting
Issues

WE HAVE MAIL...

Q

Dear Dr. Andi,

The 2004 Kumon Math Challenge test seemed a lot harder this year. Is there a reason for this?

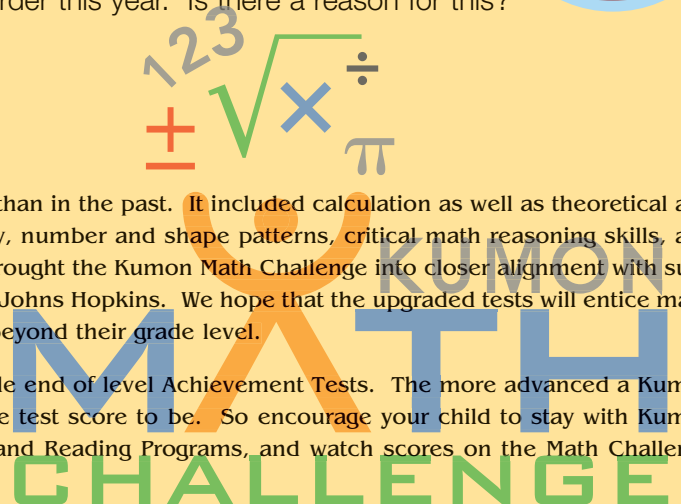
Signed,
Interested Parent

A

Dear Interested Parent,

This year's Math Challenge test was considerably more difficult than in the past. It included calculation as well as theoretical and non-computational items in areas such as geometry, probability, number and shape patterns, critical math reasoning skills, and problem-solving. The addition of these challenging questions brought the Kumon Math Challenge into closer alignment with such well-known and much respected talent search math tests as the Johns Hopkins. We hope that the upgraded tests will entice many students to continue to take the challenge and strive to study beyond their grade level.

Please keep in mind that the Math Challenge tests are not simple end of level Achievement Tests. The more advanced a Kumon student is, the higher one would expect his/her Math Challenge test score to be. So encourage your child to stay with Kumon long term, to set his/her sites on completing the entire Math and Reading Programs, and watch scores on the Math Challenge improve over time!





DOB: 4/96
School Grade: 2nd
Starting Level: Math 3A/ Reading 3A
Present Level: Math C/Reading DII (ASHR Math & Reading)
Kumon Center: Yonkers

Andrew



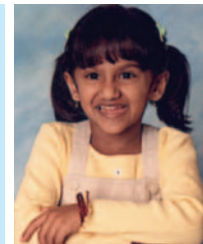
DOB: 7/93
School Grade: 5th
Starting Level: Math 3A
Present Level: Math H (G by 5 and ASHR Math)
Kumon Center: Upper Montclair

Rachel



DOB: 10/93
School Grade: 5th
Starting Level: Math 3A
Present Level: Math K (G by 5 and ASHR Math)
Kumon Center: Troy East

Nish



DOB: 10/93
School Grade: 5th
Starting Level: Math 3A
Present Level: Math K (G by 5 and ASHR Math)
Kumon Center: Troy East

Maya

THE FACES OF KUMON



DOB: 7/93
School Grade: 4th
Starting Level: Math 2A
Present Level: Math G (G by 5 and ASHR Math)
Kumon Center: West Maple

Blaine



DOB: 1/95
School Grade: 3rd
Starting Level: Math B
Present Level: Math E (ASHR Math)
Kumon Center: Elgin Mills

Armin



DOB: 9/92
School Grade: 5th
Starting Level: Math C
Present Level: Math G (G by 5 and ASHR Math)
Kumon Center: Greystone

Shawn



DOB: 3/00
School Grade: PK 3
Starting Level: Reading 7A
Present Level: Reading AI (ASHR Reading)
Kumon Center: Northwest Plano

Taylor



David

Amanda

Daniel

DOB: 8/96
School Grade: 1st
Starting Level: Math 4A/Reading 5A
Present Level: Math B/Reading All

DOB: 2/95
School Grade: 3rd
Starting Level: Math 2A /Reading 2A
Present Level: Math D/Reading CII (ASHR Math & Reading)

DOB: 7/98
School Grade: K
Starting Level: Math 5A/Reading 6A
Present Level: Math B/ Reading BI (ASHR Math & Reading)

Kumon Center: Kendall



Eliot

Miriam

DOB: 4/95
School Grade: 3rd
Starting Level: Math 4A/Reading 3A
Present Level: Math D/Reading EII (ASHR Math & Reading)

Kumon Center: Eagle River

DOB: 3/98
School Grade: K
Starting Level: Math 4A/ Reading 6A
Present Level: Math 3A/ Reading 3A



Braedan

DOB: 2/94
School Grade: 4th
Starting Level: Math 3A /Reading 5A
Present Level: Math E/Reading DII (ASHR Math & Reading)
Kumon Center: Barrie



Coltrane

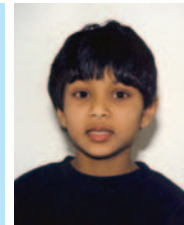
DOB: 12/98
School Grade: PK 1
Starting Level: Math 7A/Reading 7A
Present Level: Math 3A/Reading 2A (ASHR Reading)
Kumon Center: Sugar House



Saachi

DOB: 9/98
School Grade: K
Starting Level: Math 4A/ Reading 3A
Present Level: Reading and Math 2A (ASHR Math)

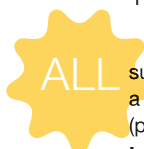
Kumon Center: East/West Windsor



Keval

DOB: 2/96
School Grade: 2nd
Starting Level: Math B
Present Level: Math H (G by 5 and ASHR Math)
Kumon Center: North Andover

Interested
 in having your child featured?
 Please talk to your Kumon Instructor.



submissions to The Faces of Kumon must include a signed **Student Profile Form** and a photo (preferably, a head shot).

Incomplete submissions will not be considered.

Request a form from your Instructor or email us at:
straighttalk@kumon.com



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