



# straightTALK KUMON®

## Making Kumon Parenting Easy!

**Are** there times when you think that there aren't enough hours in the day to do Kumon every night with your child? Do you have days when your child nags you about doing his work and you feel like giving in? Although Kumon requires an ongoing commitment from you and your child, we believe that the rewards are significant and well worth the effort. Here are a few tips from parents that make Kumon parenting as easy as abc...

### 1. Be Consistent and tireless!

Consistency may sound simple but it isn't. Kumon done at the same time each day (Kumon time), and even at the same desk or table each day (Kumon place) will help. Even on those days when you are tired, we recommend that you find it within yourself to make sure your child does her Kumon. This is an important habit to establish, especially during the first year.

### 2. Praise, praise, praise your child!

Kids thrive on praise, especially when it is specific to the little improvements seen in their work. Acknowledge those times when homework or Kumon is done without having to remind your child. Point out when your child is no longer making the same error he

\* G Level by the end of 5th grade.

made the last time you graded his work. These are just a few examples of positive reinforcement opportunities.

### 3. Let them catch you reading books!

Parents who model reading are likely to have children who read. An important goal of the Kumon Reading Program is to promote the reading of books among students and to get them to read frequently and widely. The more your child reads, the better he will do in school because reading is the key to success in school and life.

### 4. Learn more about Kumon! Research it!

Understand the tremendous power unleashed in children when they advance beyond what they are learning in school. By studying ahead of grade level, students enjoy the true academic benefits from their Kumon studies. Dr. Andi makes a strong case for advancing beyond grade level in this issue, so read on. One thing is for sure, if you doubt Kumon, so too will your children, but if you believe in it, they will also.

### 5. And finally, know where you're headed!

When was the last time you talked to your child about his or her goal for the month? Do you know if your child stands

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a chance at making G5\*? How soon before your child reaches Advanced Honor Roll Status? Parents who know the answers to these questions, usually have an easier time at "Kumon parenting" than parents who cannot answer them. Parental understanding of goals is key to children achieving them.

We know that being a Kumon parent can be trying at times for the best of us. However, as it is with all aspects of parenting, it's easiest if viewed as a learning experience. Learning from other parents is sometimes the best source of parenting information. The above five tips that Kumon parents have shared with us over the years are meant to make your Kumon parenting experience as rich and stress-free as possible.



## Victims & Survivors Close to Our Hearts and Our Homes

Kumon shares in the extreme sadness the rest of the world feels over the recent tragedies in the US. We were especially saddened to hear that Kumon students lost parents in these senseless attacks. One of the many heroes of September 11th was a Kumon parent from San Ramon, California. Thomas Burnett, Jr., was among the brave passengers of UA flight 93 that crashed in rural Pennsylvania. Thanks to his bravery and the bravery of his fellow passengers, the hijacked airliner never made its intended target in Washington DC.

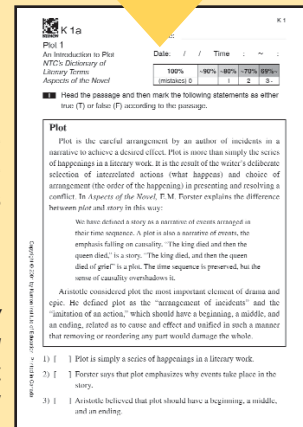
We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of the victims. Kumon would like to help those affected by offering free tuition to those who lost a parent or guardian. This is extended to current students as well as all new students affected by the tragedies of September 11th. Read how one Kumon family was affected by the events that unfolded right before their own eyes. Sebastian, a Kumon student in NYC and his mother, Morning, told us how this tragedy changed more than just their beloved skyline.

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# 2 | Introducing the Future While Revisiting Our Past

## Introducing Level K & Revisiting Homegrading

Level K  
is  
here



### Homegrading/Homemarking



So now that you've had at least a month to home grade/mark your child's Kumon work, how is it going? Any problems? Have you remembered to ask your child's Instructor for an answer book so that grading is fast and easy for you? To all those who have started, congratulations! The immediate feedback it provides will make learning easier for your child. To those who haven't started home grading/marketing yet, let's get on board! Nothing you do, with the exception perhaps of bringing your child to class weekly, will have as much of an impact on your child's Kumon studies. Ask any successful Kumon family and they will tell you that your effort will be rewarded, because home grading/marketing is the best way to keep your child on track and doing his or her Kumon homework daily.

### Introducing Level K

The fun is not over yet for J level Reading students! Beginning this Fall, the Reading program will be expanded with **Level K**. This new level features an in-depth discussion of literary terms and applies them to the classics, including *Brave New World*, *Hamlet* and *King Oedipus*. How does a plot develop? What is irony? Why is the setting important? Answers to these questions and more lie ahead, so tell all those Level J Reading graduates to hang on to their hats and look for the new Level K!

## Survivors

(Continued from page 1)



12-year old Sebastian with his mom, Morning, has been studying Kumon for four years. Sebastian is studying G-Level Math.

**After dropping my son Sebastian at school on the morning of the attack, I stood on Greenwich Street facing the WTC and watched in horror as the towers burned and then disappeared. I raced home and grabbed my camera to photograph the burning towers. My phone rang. It was Sebastian, crying, "Someone attacked the WTC. Please, Mommy, come and get me."**

When I reached his school on Sixth Avenue, the skyline was covered in black smoke and our children were crying and clinging to us. I told my son that one of the towers had fallen and that the other was on fire, and we hurried towards our apartment to see it. By that time, the second tower had already collapsed, and we gazed upon an empty landscape.

Because we live below 14th Street, our neighborhood was immediately locked down by the state police and national guard. People were walking around with their hands

on their mouths in total disbelief, crying and numb. The constant sound overhead was of helicopters and F-16 fighter jets and sirens, always sirens.

The towers continued to burn, filling the air with smoke and the smell of burning rubber and chemicals. By Wednesday morning, we had to wear face masks when outside. The highway was closed except to army trucks and emergency vehicles. That day, we went through our closets looking for clothes to donate. We filled the baskets on our bicycles and rode the bike path along the Hudson River. We took our clothes to Chelsea Piers, where a triage center had been established. People lined the side of the road, holding American flags and signs that read, "Thank you; you're our heroes." Everyone clapped whenever an army truck, fire truck or emergency vehicle passed by.

On Thursday, I decided to spend time with family in Boston. Once on the train, we began to breathe a sigh of relief as we traveled away from "ground zero." Sebastian did his Kumon, which was the beginning of his return to "normalcy." His school was closed until the following Monday and perhaps Kumon made him feel somewhat grounded. I feel grateful not only for the academic advantages Kumon has given to my son, but also for the temporary relief it provided him from his fractured world.

Sebastian experienced so many frightening events over those three days that I pray the experience will not have a negative effect on him. When he returned to school the following Monday, his teacher asked the class to spend some time writing an expressive poem about the WTC. This is his poem:

### "Home"

My home is where I live, it's my peace house, where nobody can get to me. My community, where I grew up, and where I have always loved to be, then watched it burn before my very eyes. It was violently ripped away from my heart and I can no longer seek protection from the places I once loved. All the doves have gone away now, taking the brothers that once protected our skies, to soar among the clouds, to fly like the angels they really are, cloaked in a feathered form. The rest are grounded, searching for their lost. I will remember the day my peace and protection was stolen from me, and now, I can no longer feel my luckiness.



# 3 | The Desirability of Advancing Beyond Grade Level

## The Obvious Benefits



As students climb through the Kumon levels -19 for Reading and 23 for Math, parents often ask the following questions; "Once my child reaches grade level, why continue with Kumon?" and "What is the benefit of having my child advance beyond grade level?" One answer to both questions is simple. Why settle for the norm when you can surpass it? The second answer is a bit more complex, with extrinsic and intrinsic components. Let's look at some of the benefits of continuing with Kumon after a student reaches grade level.

The most obvious benefit is academic. In the US, children who study above grade level almost always qualify for gifted programs and have the greatest chance of getting into High School Honors and AP classes. (AP classes are especially valuable because a student can receive college credit for them, a time and money saver.) Additionally, study above grade level usually correlates with high scores on standardized tests. Admission to the school of choice and qualifying for scholarships go hand-in-hand with honors/AP class success and high test scores. In Canada, entrance into university is becoming more competitive. Having a strong high school transcript is one way that students can secure the university acceptance of their choice. What is clear in both countries is that getting a child up to grade level, then advancing beyond it, and finally soaring above it is one plan for their child's academic success that parents can implement by making long-term Kumon study part of their strategic educational plan.

In addition to the academic, another benefit to working beyond grade level is the solidification of a variety of skills which are easily transferable to other subjects and other areas. Some of these skills are life skills, such as confidence, concentration, perseverance, self-motivation and discipline. Others are basic study skills such as time management and organization of materials. As students progress beyond grade level they also learn how to study on their own. These skills are part and parcel of the basic Kumon package, but become second nature to students who advance beyond grade level.

Dr. Andrea Pastorok received her doctorate in Educational Psychology from U.C.S.B and her masters in Counseling Psychology from the University of Buffalo. She holds a national certificate in School Psychology and three credentials from the state of California in Counseling, Psychometric Testing, and School Psychology. For over 30 years she has worked with a wide range of children in a wide variety of settings. During the 22 years she resided in Santa Barbara, she worked extensively with programs for the gifted. Prior to coming to Kumon, she worked for seven years at the Beverly Hills public schools administering and evaluating a wide battery of tests to children in grades K-8.

It takes time for students to reach grade level. The Kumon Math and Reading Programs both begin with the basics and move through a range of skills up to highly sophisticated levels. From counting to calculus in Math and from sight word vocabulary to summary and critique in Reading, getting to grade level - and beyond - is one of the ultimate goals of the Kumon Program. Because mastery of the basics is a springboard for future success, Kumon students start their study at very early levels, mastering each one before proceeding to the next. Once students (and parents) have invested the time and energy that it takes to get there, it would be shortchanging them if they were to quit midstream. Allowing students to soar beyond grade level is the best way for students to receive all the gifts that Kumon has to offer.

Students who reach above grade level - or the ASHR - develop a positive and resilient attitude that is beneficial to any individual, in any aspect of life. Once they achieve success, they inevitably crave new challenges because success leads to success. And as more and more of their goals are attained, Kumon students experience the true joy of learning which is the greatest gift of all.

"Does the Kumon student stop at Boardwalk or continue around the board, passing GO and collecting \$200 ?"

Got  
Questions?

Dr. Andrea Pastorok is eager to hear what you have to say. Please send all questions and comments to [askdrandi@kumon.com](mailto:askdrandi@kumon.com)

Publisher:  
Takao Kashima, CEO

Managing Editor:  
M. Dean Bradley

Contributors:  
Dr. Andrea Pastorok  
Dr. Laurie McNelles  
Morning Slayer  
Sebastian Slayer

Design & Layout:  
Nanette Haig

Kumon North America  
Glenpointe Centre East, 5th Floor  
300 Frank W. Burr Blvd.  
Teaneck, NJ 07666  
website: [www.kumon.com](http://www.kumon.com)

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# 4



# Student Achievement Summary Know Where You're Headed

Kumon Centers will soon be providing each student with an individualized Student Achievement Summary. This summary is issued twice yearly.

Let's explain how to read this report.

**1** The graph plots your child's monthly achievement (bold line). It recaps the progress made over the last year (up to Sept. 2001).

**2** These two goals are based on each student's past performance. We expect your child to achieve a point between these two lines represented by the letters A & B over the next six months.

**3** The Honor Roll lines are noted on the graph with ASHR (Advanced Student Honor Roll), 2 years ahead and 3 years ahead. These are the minimum requirements to achieve honor roll status. Be sure to take note of these lines and discuss them with your child.

**4** The Comments box is for parent and Instructor to record comments.

