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“Tsunagaaru” to Open Autumn 2007: A Site for Secondary Students Worldwide

www.tsunagaaru.com



What is “Tsunagaaru”?

Tsunagaaru is a communication website utilizing social networking service software. “Tsunagaaru” is a space for connecting secondary school students all over the world, no matter where they are and what language they speak.

Participants

Secondary students of Japanese in other countries, Japanese students of foreign language (e.g., English, Chinese, and Korean), or students interested in international understanding.

What Tsunagaaru Will Achieve

Mutual Understanding among Junior and Senior High School Students around the World

Through exchange via the website and in direct exchange programs, Tsunagaaru will seek to transcend national boundaries and language barriers to promote mutual person-to-person understanding among junior and senior high school students around the world. It will make possible exchange among multiple countries and languages, and in multiple directions.

Transmission of Culture via Individuals

Tsunagaaru will transmit information about language, culture, and society from the viewpoint of individuals. This will provide opportunities for understanding of diverse cultures and social conditions through the experience of contemporaneous individuals.

Foreign Language Study

Tsunagaaru will make it possible for students to use the language skills they are learning in actual communication experiences, and we hope thereby to heighten their incentive to pursue foreign language study.

Main Content

A Registered Members-only Social Networking Site

● My Page

Here each participant will have a personal page to post a profile, essays (diary-like messages), etc. This page gives each member the opportunity to give expression to his or her personal thoughts or discoveries in the form of text and photographs. Other members can post comments to these pages, promoting exchange of ideas and views about the content posted on these personal pages.

● Community

Here is the forum where participants can propose topics and discuss them in depth. This is also the base for class-wide research projects.

Features

Multidirectional Exchange, Multiple-language Use

As a common forum where junior and senior high school students of multiple countries and regions can engage in multi-directional exchange of ideas and information, Tsunagaaru goes beyond the kind of two-way exchange previously common between, for example, Japanese and American high school students or between Japanese and Australian junior high school students. To facilitate this exchange, the site enables viewers to freely view and post comments in Chinese, English, Japanese, and Korean. TJF will introduce Internet machine translation sites that might be of some help.

Exchange in a Safe Environment

In order to protect the privacy of members and secure the social networking environment, TJF will check the student status of those who register for the site and obtain the assent of their parents or guardians. Texts posted for the site will be checked to assure the content does not contain personal information or inappropriate expressions.

Enhancing Face-to-face Exchange Opportunities

TJF will conduct programs that organically tie together exchange via the website with actual face-to-face exchange programs.

How to Participate

Student Registration

Please register from the Tsunagaaru site.

Note to Teachers

Tsunagaaru is, in principle, a site open only to secondary school students, but TJF will provide open access for one week to teachers who contact us desiring to introduce it to their students. Teachers who want to create a class-wide community on Tsunagaaru should contact us for details on how to proceed.

For examination access for teachers and other queries, please contact us at:

tsunagaaru@tjf.or.jp