



Newsletter

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http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/index_e.html

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March! Cold one day and warm the next! Confusing for the trees and flowers, humans and for Popoki, too! He enjoys the blooming flowers and sunshine, but curls up at night in a warm blanket. How about you?

Popoki's Hot News!



"Popoki's Mask Gallery – Living the Covid-19 Pandemic"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BjT1ZjVUsm8&t=3s>

Popoki's House

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8OCzg64oH8>

Piece of Peace

One of Popoki's friends, **Guillermo Miranda**, sent the following piece of peace.



"My peace is being surrounded by people I love the most. These people are only a few. Not the family, not friends in general either, but really, only some specific people that are distinct for making me feel more than an average person on this planet.

What sort of 'peace' did you encounter today? Please let us know by sending a message to Popoki's e-mail: [ronniandpopoki \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:ronniandpopoki@gmail.com) !

Popoki Peace Project Report

Yukinyan

(Translated from Japanese by Yakonyan)

27th of February, 2021

Date: Friday, 26th of February, 2021

Participants: 20 school children at Ofunato Kita Primary School

Popoki's friends: Ronyan, Satonyan, Bethanyan, Yakonyan, Evanyan, Laurenyan, Gabinyan, Rienyan, Yukinyan

Adviser: Esashi san

Workshop Style: Video letter

Some Popoki friends visited Ofunato Kita Primary School in February last year. This year, 2021, marks a decade since the Great East Japan Earthquake. Although we planned to hold a workshop again in Ofunato, it turned out to be difficult because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we sought advice from Esashi san from the NPO Ohanashi Kororin, we prepared for an online class through Zoom to read the picture book and draw pictures related to it in the fifth and sixth period of the primary school. However, we heard from the school staff that they would like to avoid the gathering of children and workshop supporters in the classroom.

We felt sorry to hear that. Considering how we could communicate with the school children of Ofunato Kita Primary School, we decided to create our video letter and send it to them.



Recording the video letter on Zoom

Our video letter is about 10 minutes long. We chose the picture book “Popoki’s House” to read because Popoki’s friends had read it during last-year’s visit. The friends of Popoki pictured above practiced reading in Japanese and English in turn. The program’s organizing team consisted of three nyans: Yakonyan (the facilitator), Bethanyan (the video director) and Yukinyan (the reporter). We enjoyed recording the reading and exchanging ideas. We asked Ronyan for the opening speech and Satonyan for the ending speech.

The original recording was more than 15 minutes long. Editing it to reduce the time was hard work. Nevertheless, Bethanyan made much effort and completed the heartwarming easy-to-understand video letter.

This workshop aimed to think about ‘peace’, ‘being safe’, ‘feeling safe’ and ‘genki (good health)’ with children and to have them send their drawings back about how they felt. That could make the distance between Kobe and Ofunato feel closer.

For a year our daily lives have been inconvenienced in a way in which we have never experienced before due to the COVID-19 pandemic. What we thought was normal in our daily lives changed a lot. In this regard, this pandemic is a similar phenomenon to the Great East Japan Earthquake ten years ago. I realized that we can connect to others under such a difficult situation.

After the Video Letter

Yakonyan

We looked forward to hearing the reactions after sending our video letter to Ofunato Kita Primary School. The very good news is that we received a lot of letters and pictures in which the school children read and drew with their whole hearts and smiles, and enjoyed talking about their drawings together. They seemed to enjoy the special picture book “Popoki, Can You Draw Feeling Safe?”. How happy we were when we watched their pictures at the Po-kai this March and shared our feelings!

Thank you very much to every participant and teacher at Ofunato Kita Primary School, Esashi san and the supporters of Ohanashi Kororin san to this program!!



Drawing



Talking together

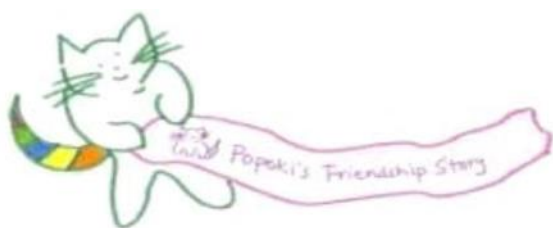
Now, there is more happy news. In response to many requests, the reading of the Popoki picture book “Popoki’s House” is watchable via YouTube! As soon as it was uploaded, we started getting comments that it is nice. That encourages us.

Please take a look at the video with the link below. We are looking forward to your feedback and comments.

<https://youtu.be/I8OCzg64oH8>



☆Special Thanks to Bethanyan for the English proofreading!



Popoki's Interview



* We have started a new series of interviews with Popoki's friends in different places. We are asking about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. This time we have a report about life last year in the UK from Yakonyan.

A conversation between Osaka and London a year ago

Yakonyan

I talked about the COVID-19 pandemic with my friend Bejanyan who was living and working at school in London last March and April. This conversation reminded me of things at that time. Then, I realised there are some similarities to the current situation.

Thank you very much for sharing your story, Bejanyan!

Talk on 19 March, 2020

Yakonyan: Hello. How are you? Do you have enough daily necessities?

Bejanyan: I am fine and family is also fine. We have bought food stuffs and I think it will be enough for until next month. Coronavirus is spreading rapidly in UK so many schools and universities are closing. My school will close this Friday. There is a rumour that there will be a lock down from Friday for the next 15 days. Nothing is sure but let's see what happens.

Yakonyan: That sounds hard. I hope such hard times will end soon.

Bejanyan: Yeah, everyone is panicking. How are things in Japan?

Yakonyan: I cannot trust information of the mass media and government because they may manipulate information to support holding the Olympics.

Bejanyan: Ya, I have heard the news on the Olympics that they are going to decide what to do.

Yakonyan: The worst thing is that people cannot get the COVID-19 test... I heard only people who has been in contact with someone who has tested positive can get test at the hospital, and that is only after having a continuous fever for three days... Possibly many people have already been infected by coronavirus.

Bejanyan: Yeah, here as well, the NHS and government are telling us not to call GP and hospital but instead check the NHS website. Only severe cases will go to hospital.

Yakonyan: Please take care. You can rest soon, in a few days.

Bejanyan: Thank you. You too take care. Hope to see you soon.

Talk on 30 March, 2020

Bejanyan: Hello. How are you doing? I'm still in lockdown. London is in lockdown now. So, everyone is at home. I'm also at home doing nothing, just watching corona news and doing some work from home. Everything is so quiet and everyone is inside their home but some shops and pharmacies are open. Few buses... There are buses and trains

but only a few. But otherwise, everything is closed. How was it in Japan?

Yakonyan: Hello. I am fine, thank you. I feel so sad to hear of the terrible situation in the UK. I cannot believe it...

As you know, the number of corona cases increased in Japan after the decision to postpone the Olympics. It is recommended that we do to go out except in cases of emergency or for daily necessities. I feel so much pressure that I must not catch coronavirus, in order not to be a threat other people's lives, including my parents.

Bejanyan: Take care. Stay safe. Bye.

Yakonyan: You too. Bye.

Talk on 8 April, 2020

Yakonyan: Osaka is under the state of emergency until 6th May.

Bejanyan: Sorry to hear about the lockdown. We are also still in lockdown.

Yakonyan: I am really concerned about the situation in the UK. Hope the peak of death toll stop and the numbers decrease soon.

Bejanyan: Yes. UK's death toll is increasing. Even Boris Johnson is in hospital.

Yakonyan: I was surprised to hear it. I hope for his quick recovery. Are you tired because of lockdown?

Bejanyan: Ya, I am just at home doing nothing. I feel lazy to do anything. What about you?

Yakonyan: I do not have motivation to study. I feel so sleepy every day.

Bejanyan: Me too. I am eating sleeping and watching movies. I feel like I'm in a bubble. Time has stopped. No worries, no future.

Yakonyan: Oh, sorry. I think you are a creative person! You are good at painting. I hope you enjoy some artwork.

Bejanyan: I don't feel energetic. I feel tired all the time. But I will try to do some work. I am telling myself to be energetic.



#thankyounhs #thankyounhsstaff

POPOKI'S EASY POGA

Lesson 155 This month's theme is stretching our backs and shoulders!



1. First, as always, sit up straight and look beautiful.
2. Now, stand and make big circles with your arms, 10 times forward and 10 times back.
3. Next, spread your legs wide apart and stretch your arms up. Then slowly bend forward until your head is between your legs and you are looking behind you. Be sure keep your arms just in front of your ears! Now come back up slowly. Repeat!
4. Okay! Now, keeping your legs far apart, spread your arms. Keeping your arms and legs straight, bring your right arm down to your left ankle, parallel with your leg. Slowly come back and then try the other side.
5. Did it? Even if you didn't succeed, you tried! It is time for the 'success pose.'
Congratulations! Do you feel refreshed? Please remember to relax, breathe, laugh and practice for 3 minutes every day.

Please join us!



Next Po-kai: 2020.4.14 @ zoom* 19:00

Everyone is welcome. We always use the same link, so send an email if you need it.

Reading Suggestions from Popoki's Friends

Otsuchi-cho (July, 2019). *"Ikiru Akashi – Iwateken Otsuchi-cho Higashi nihon daishinsai kirokushi"* (Testimony of Living: A Record of the Great East Japan Earthquake in Otsuchi-cho, Iwate Prefecture). Editorial Supervision: Otsuchi-cho Board of Education, others.

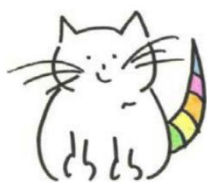
- ・アレキサンダー ロニー&桂木聡子 (2020)「被災体験後「今」を表現する：絵から読み取れる被災ナラティブ」『国際協力論集』27(2)、17－32 (2020 年 1 月発行) http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/infolib/meta_pub/detail
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Popoki in Print

* Back issues of Popoki News: http://popoki.cruisejapan.com/archives_e.html

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- "Peace Picture Book Published – linked to disaster support in East Japan" *Kobe Shimbun* (2014.3.25) KIHARA Kana
- "Awards given to 37 groups Daiwa Securities Foundation" *Kobe Shimbun* (2013.8.23 p.8)
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- R. Alexander. "Remembering Hiroshima: Bio-Politics, Popoki and Sensual Expressions of War." *International Feminist Journal of Politics*. Vol.14:2:202-222, June 2012
- "Article 9 is at the base of Peace with Popoki" *Kodomo to Mamoru 9 jono kai News*, No.66, 2012.5.12
- "Hope on 60 meters of cloth" Etsuko Akuzawa. (In Japanese) *Asahi Shimbun* 2012.1.21
- "Voice for Peace made into a book" Masashi Saito. (in Japanese) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2012.1.19
- K. Wada. "Conversations with Ronni Alexander: The Popoki Peace Project; Popoki, What Color is Peace? Popoki, What Color is Friendship?" *International Feminist Journal of Politics* Vol.13, No.2, 2011, 257-263
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- R. Alexander. (2010) "The Popoki Peace Project: Creating New Spaces for Peace in Demenchonok, E., ed. *Philosophy after Hiroshima*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, pp.399-418
- 省窓 : Column in *Kobe YMCA News*, No.606, 2011.1, p.1 (*In Japanese*)
- "If we all participate, something will change! Reflecting on Palestine" *THE YMCA* No.607 June 2010, p.1 (*YMCA Japan Monthly Newspaper*)
- Hiroshima and the World: What Color is Hiroshima? Chugoku Shimbun Peace Media Center, http://www.hiroshimapeacemedia.jp/mediacenter/article.php?story=20100312140608602_en 2010.3.15
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- "Human Rights, Popoki and Bare Life." *In Factis Pax Journal of Peace Education and Social Justice* Vol.3, No.1, 2009, pp.46-63 (<http://www.infactispax.org/journal/>)
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- 'Yujo wo kangaete – Ningen to, Neko to, soshite Jibun to,' *RST/ALN*, No.259 2009.6.28, p.11
- 'New Books: Popoki, What Color is Friendship? Popoki's Peace Book 2' (Rebecca Jennison) "Cutting-Edge," Vol.35 2009.6, p.3
- "Thinking about Peace with a Cat: Second Peace Book Published." (SAITO Masashi) *Kobe Shimbun*, 2009.4.21
- 'Popoki, What Color is Peace?' *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.3.1. No.593. p.2
- 'Popoki, What Color is Trash?' *Kobe YMCA News*, 2009.1.1. No.592. p.2
- 'Tomodachi ni Natte Kuremasenkai,' *RST/ALN*, 2009.2.22
- Popoki on the radio. <http://www.kizzna.fm/> Click on 6CH to hear the program and reading of Popoki in Japanese (No longer available)
- *Yasashii kara hito nann desu* Exhibition Organizing Committee 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights.' Hyogo Buraku Liberation and Human Rights Institute. 2008.10. ¥500. For information contact: blrhyg@osk3.3web.jp
- "KFAW College Seminar: What Color is Peace for Women? Thinking about Peace, Violence and Gender with Popoki." *Asian Breeze* No.54 October 2008, p.8 (Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women)
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- "An Interview with Dr. Ronni Alexander." *The Newpeople*, Pittsburgh's Peace and Justice Newspaper, Vol.38 No.9, October 2008, p.5
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What Popoki Means to Me

Shiorinyan

Hello!

I am Shiori-nyan and she is Koume-nyan.

I have been a big fan of Popoki since I met Popoki at Nada challenge a few years ago. Since then, Koume-nyan and I often join Po-kai.

In one of previous Po-kais, I could watch the slides of the Great East Japan

Earthquake and also hear the story of it. I am twelve years old now. So, I did not know about the Great East Japan Earthquake well.

I was shocked at the pictures I have never seen before. The colors in the pictures were mostly gray and brown, not the beautiful ones I always see. What I thought from the story is that it may be hard to see hope and it will take a long time for reconstruction without "peace" and "inspiration to help each other". But if we could have something heartwarming, we may take a small step even when it is tough.

The place where people can think about such things, the place where people can connect with each other, that is the power of Popoki, and I think it is the Po-kai. I hope it will be a world, where people all over the world can talk honestly with each other ♪



PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE POPOKI PEACE PROJECT!

The Popoki Peace Project is a voluntary project which uses Popoki's peace book and DVD to promote peace through various activities such as peace camps, peace workshops, seminars and other activities. Since the March 2011 earthquake, we have also worked in the disaster area and in 2012 published a book about that work: *Popoki's Friendship Story - Our Peace Journey Born Out of the Great Northeastern Japan Earthquake*. *Popoki, What Color is Peace?* has been translated into Thai, Chinese, Korean, Khmer, Indonesian, Tetun and Bengali, Vietnamese, Arabic and Hebrew. Spanish, Farsi, Lao, Swahili, translations are underway. If you would like to translate Popoki, or have a way to have the book sold at your local bookstore, please let us know.

How to purchase Popoki's books: *Popoki, What Color is Peace?* *Popoki's Peace Book 1*, *Popoki, What Color is Friendship?* *Popoki's Peace Book 2*, *Popoki, What Color is Genki?* *Popoki's Peace Book 3* and *Popoki's Friendship Story*

From outside of Japan

1. Go to your local Japanese bookstore: Kinokuniya, Maruzen, etc. (or their website)
2. Write to us at ronniandpopoki@gmail.com and we'll figure it out!

From Inside Japan

From the publisher, Epic: TEL: 078-241-7561 · FAX: 078-241-1918

From Amazon.co.jp or your local bookseller

From the Popoki Peace Project ronniandpopoki@gmail.com



Contributions are always welcome!

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THANK YOU FROM POPOKI!