



FOR RELEASE ON 01/01/2020 AT 12:00am **Contact:** Donald Kinney
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Q&A With Donald and Michael Kinney

Independent Publishing in Japan

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Q. Tell us about your books.

A. We started in 2000 with three titles aimed at junior high school students in Japan where we were teachers at the time. Today, we have 22 titles that include a *Phonics and Spelling* series for early learners, a *Stories for Young Readers* series for junior high and high school students, and a *Business and Culture* series for adult and business classes. In addition, we offer a wide range of downloadable flashcards, games, and activities. The materials work together to create a complete and cohesive program where the goal is to engage students of English and bring them to reading, writing, and speaking competence and confidence.

Q. Care to share your author bios?

A. We've all worn many hats over the years. The most salient experience would be Michael's school management experience, Robert's academic and artistic experience, and Donald's work with preschool through elementary classes. From the mid-1990s, all three of us gained valuable experience teaching in a variety of settings, including the public school system, private language schools, business language classes, and intensive academic preparation programs. We coalesced this experience into a collaboration to shape Kinney Brothers Publishing into a brand that represents practical, congruent, and student-focused materials that teachers can rely on for their ESL classes.

Q. How did you come to independent publishing?

A. When the first three books were designed and created, we sent proposals to the big ESL textbook publishers, but were politely rejected. Undeterred, we decided to go it alone and self-publish. We invested our savings, found a local printer, and were fortunate enough to find a bookstore in Japan that was willing to take us on. From that point we grew slowly but steadily, adding new titles through the years, and managing our growth at a pace we could afford. By 2010 we were ready to move out into the global market, and this is when we found the perfect model for achieving that with print-on-demand technology. Freed from the burden of inventory and the revolving capital costs, our creativity was unleashed! We were able to expand our titles without monetary investment and importantly, made the books available to the US, Europe, and other Asian countries.

Q. Tell us about your marketing efforts for your books. How did you get the word out?

A. When we started out, we purchased advertising space in magazines and on ESL websites. We also traveled extensively in Japan, promoting our material through presentations at book fairs and conferences. Today, fully aware of the power of the internet, we get the word out through our own website, social media, blogging, and an online store called Donald's English Classroom. The dynamics have changed over the years, but the message is the same: supporting teachers with reliable and affordable educational materials that will make their ESL classes successful.

Q. What are your goals with your book project?

A. Our goal is to continue our upward trajectory, expanding our library of material, and making schools, teachers, and students around the world aware of Kinney Brothers Publishing. We have always believed that if provided methodical, yet interesting and fun material, students will eagerly engage with the learning process and garner the success necessary for continued motivation and enthusiasm. Kinney Brothers Publishing is committed to offering focused, engaging, and flexible materials for unleashing the full communicative potential of students studying the English language. With so many classes going online, we're expanding into the digital age with materials teachers can use when teaching online. This is a huge transition that's bringing even more teachers and students together and our materials translate well into this digital environment.

Q. What has been your greatest success so far?

A. Our greatest feeling of success comes from the reviews we receive from teachers who use Kinney Brothers Publishing material. This keeps us motivated like nothing else can. As teachers, we understand the frustration of not having, or not being able to find, the material necessary for a successful class. The best review is when a teacher says, “This is exactly what I needed!”

About Kinney Brothers Publishing

Kinney Brothers Publishing is an American based company producing ESL textbooks and learning materials with a focus on younger ESL learners. With a commitment to provide learning materials appropriate for elementary, junior high, and high school students our publications are licensed in Japan through Independent Publishers International, available on Amazon’s world-wide network, and as digital downloads in Donald’s English Classroom.

Please visit kinneybrothers.com to learn more about our publications. If you would like more information about this release, please contact Donald Kinney at press@kinneybrothers.com.

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