

# Teen graduates alone from school on remote Japanese island

## Vocabulary Match

- residents • graduation • era • sole • interaction • representing •  
• time period • speaking for • only • completion • inhabitants • communication

## Article

Akino Imanaka, a 15-year-old girl, was the only student in her elementary and junior high school on Oteshima, a remote island in Kagawa Prefecture, Japan. Her recent graduation marked the end of an era, as her school will close after 107 years. Akino expressed her gratitude towards her teachers, family, and island residents who supported her throughout her studies.

With only 34 residents on the small island, Akino was the only person under 18 years old living there. Despite being the sole student, she had five teachers at the school, some of whom played student roles to interact with her during class. Akino also visited a junior high school off the island once a week for "exchange study."

"It all happened so fast. I'm just so grateful as I was able to enjoy my school life thanks to the support of my teachers, my family and the people of the island," Akino said. She took part in various activities, such as serving as the student body president and representing her school in events.

After graduation, Akino will attend a high school off the island and live with her older sister and brother-in-law in Kagawa Prefecture.

## Quiz

1. How many teachers did Akino have at her school?
2. What activities did Akino take part in?

## Conversation

- A: Akino! Congratulations! Did you enjoy having teachers act as students during class?  
B: Thank you, sensei! Yes, it was helpful and kind of fun. I liked exchanging ideas with everyone.  
A: What are your plans after graduation?  
B: I'm going to go to high school off the island, and will live with my sister and brother-in-law.  
A: You'll have a great time, I'm sure. We're very proud of you and wish you all the best.

## Discussion

1. What are some advantages and disadvantages of being the only student in a school?
2. What challenges do you think Akino might face in attending high school off the island?
3. How do you think technology can help students who live in remote areas or small islands?