

NET

SCHEME NEWS

issue 31



“Don't limit a child to your own learning, for he was born in another time.” -- Rabindranath Tagore

Education should be a shared commitment in every society. For the gift we see in every child, for the different needs we find in our students and for the challenges facing us in this rapidly changing world, we, as educators, need to commit ourselves to exploring, developing and refining ways to improve the learning environment and experiences for our students. It is by so doing that we help make a difference and build a future where our students will be the masters and our torchbearers.

This issue of the newsletter presents articles about how our frontline NETs, local English teachers and officers from the NET Section endeavour to create the kinds of environment and experience that enable our children to learn with fun and a good sense of achievement. Of equal importance is the professional growth that the teachers and officers concerned experience as they collaborate and innovate to create opportunities for students to shine and to enjoy the pleasure of learning and using language for meaningful purposes. While developed in different contexts, the good practices and the success stories shared exemplify how the NET Scheme enhances the professional partnership between teachers, promotes pedagogical innovation and broadens students' horizons.

Regarding professional partnerships, the experience shared by Rachael Williamson, the NET at Good Counsel Catholic Primary School, together with Eugene Poon, the English Panel Chair, and Gary Knight, the Advisory Teacher (AT) from the NET Section, corroborates our belief that collaboration is always the key to effective implementation of the NET Scheme. Through the launch of Space Town, our refined literacy programme for Key Stage 1, the school sees and celebrates the progress made not only in students' reading proficiency, but also in the professional growth that the participating teachers experience with the support of their AT. The commitment of the teachers and the AT, together with the moral purpose that is driving the collaboration, is making a difference. In the words of the English Panel Chair, “co-operation between local teachers and our NET benefits the students and teachers alike, as we strive to make learning an enjoyable experience.”

In Canossa Primary School (San Po Kong), where a NET Section project, Development of Text Sets (DTS), is being promoted, the professional partnership forged between Ritika Sethi, the NET, her local colleagues and the AT is bringing about pedagogical innovation, i.e. the use of multi-genre and multimodal texts on a chosen theme. As the NET sees it, the “ambitious and devoted team of teachers” in the school embrace and integrate this innovative practice into the General English lessons. The school-based decision regarding the choice of “The 100th Day of School” as a learning theme for P1 students enables the students concerned to adapt to and enjoy their new stage of learning. With DTS, the P1 students are engaged in authentic tasks “to build confidence by communicating with others, to do self-learning by finding information independently and to become thinkers by asking questions.”



Technology is now all the rage. One crucial question regarding the promotion of IT in education is how to turn cold technology into warm applications in a student-centred classroom. In Hong Kong Red Cross John F. Kennedy Centre, which is a special school, Kevin Tan, the NET, is collaborating with his local colleagues in using Kahoot to engage students in active learning both in daily lessons and in the Buddy Programme, which they run with support from English Schools Foundation schools. With the use of the various interactive features of the online platform, Kevin and his colleagues enhance the language learning environment and have observed “a dramatic increase in student engagement.” In Chiu Sheung School, where English is the lingua franca, the teachers are keen to use technology to develop students' language proficiency. With the support from their AT, Sterling Wu, they have adopted a new approach, which is to use iPads with an interactive virtual whiteboard to enable their



students “to make full use of their oral strengths.” The mode of learning and interaction that is taking place, as reported by Sterling, “would not have been previously possible in the classroom using traditional tools.”

Competitions are not just about winning or losing. In an educational context, they provide opportunities for students to engage in purposeful learning and collaboration, as well as for teachers to learn about and to help realise students’ potential. Chan Shuk Man, the NET at Ebenezer School, a school for visually impaired students, is fascinated by what her students can do. Upon entering them for the EU Calendar Drawing Competition 2017, she was elated at the opportunities that her students had for learning about the history of different European countries, their music and cuisines. To Li Kwai Lam, the NET in St. Teresa Secondary School, the “Hands on Stage” Puppetry Competition in 2016 offered his students “a chance to use English in a creative and motivating way.” According to one of his students, Koby Yu, while participation in the competition required



them to learn and practise regularly after school for several weeks, they learnt a lot through working with others and understood the importance of teamwork. At CCC Kei Wan Primary School (Aldrich Bay), the “Story to Stage” Puppetry Competition was, as nicely summed up by the teachers, “a thoroughly enriching, stimulating and memorable experience from start to finish.”

Competitions also offer professional development opportunities to teachers. Tasked with preparing his students for debating competitions, Kenneth Murray, the NET of Ho Ngai College (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen), has attended different professional development activities and adjudicated several debates. As a debate coach, Kenneth finds it a rewarding experience to develop “invaluable insights into the art of persuasive public speaking.”

In the past few years, the NET Section has been collaborating with tertiary educators to organise workshops for student teachers in local universities. Through this partnership, we have learnt about how some of our experienced NETs are contributing to teacher education as mentors and how this nurtures a new batch of professional language teachers. One feature article in this issue is contributed by Benjamin Moorhouse, a lecturer from The University of Hong Kong and also a former AT in the NET Section. In the article, the importance of teaching practicum as “a time when student teachers connect theories with real-life practice” is examined and the invaluable comments of the mentors and the personal reflections of the mentees are shared. As far as professional collaboration under the NET Scheme is concerned, we could not agree more with one of the mentors, Evan Binkley, the NET of Cheung Chau Sacred Heart School, who says, “The best way to ensure that you have great partners for teaching in the future is to help train your future colleagues.”

There are also snapshots of memorable moments in the different activities that the NET Section has organised or supported since the start of the 2016/17 school year, including the NET Induction Programme, the DTS Professional Seminar, the “School of Made in Italy” evening programme (organised by the Consulate General of Italy) and the EU Calendar Drawing Competition Award Ceremony (jointly organised with the EU Office to Hong Kong and Macao). There is also a contribution by Paul Charvet-Jackson, the NET of Chi Lin Buddhist Secondary School, about their English Week based on the theme of animals, where students’ active participation enlivened the entire Student Activity Centre.

Hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. We wish you all a joyful and successful 2017.



Joe Leung, Chief Curriculum Development Officer, NET Section

NETs Mentoring the English Language Teachers of Tomorrow

A fundamental part of teacher training is the teaching practicum when student teachers leave the comfort of the university classroom and enter the exciting, but also daunting, world of the school classroom. It is a time when student teachers connect theories with real-life practice. Often seen as the highlight of their journey to becoming English language teachers, the practicum is treasured (by student teachers) as a way to learn from experienced and knowledgeable professionals.

It can, however, also be a time when student teachers have doubts about their future teaching careers. They often face challenges that go beyond what they learn in the university classroom as they slowly begin to understand the complexities of teaching. It is important that they are mentored by in-service teachers who value and nurture their individual strengths and recognise their weaknesses. The mentors help the sometimes struggling novices to plan and reflect on their lessons to become confident teachers.



Wesley Lai, student teacher, BA&BEEd (Lang) – English, The University of Hong Kong with Evan Binkley, NET, Cheung Chau Sacred Heart School



Ms Seema Ramchandani, NET, and Mr Mak (former Principal), Jordan Valley St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School with Lauren Leung and Victor Chan, Student teachers, BA&BEEd (Lang) – English, The University of Hong Kong

At the English Language Education Division, Faculty of Education, University of Hong Kong, we are grateful to NETs and their local colleagues who mentor our student teachers. Although busy themselves, mentors have always gone out of their way to create a positive learning environment for the student teachers.

The benefits to the mentors are also positive and long lasting as they focus on their own teaching practices. Four NETs – Evan Binkley, Seema Ramchandani, Gordon Schiavon and Maria Henery – reflect on their roles as mentors below.

Who?

What?

Which?

“By articulating my strategies for teaching I have become more aware of what I am doing. The observation by student teachers really motivates you to do your best. It is great to see how well they interact with my students. Their youth and lack of experience also allows them to present completely novel ideas. The best way to ensure that you have great partners for teaching in the future is to help train your future colleagues.”

– Evan Binkley, NET, Cheung Chau Sacred Heart School

“I have partnered with HKU and the BA&BEEd (Lang) – English mentorship programme for the past six years and I have greatly enjoyed the experience. What I find most interesting is viewing my work through the eyes of budding teachers, and reflecting on their feedback and their many questions.”

– Seema Ramchandani, NET, Jordan Valley St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

“Watching students from the University of Hong Kong have an ‘ah ha’ moment or when they realise they are making a difference in a child’s life is special. I think this programme plays a significant part in helping young teachers develop the confidence and skills they need to become inspiring teachers.”

– Gordon Schiavon, NET, CCC Tai O Primary School

“When I was asked to mentor two students from The University of Hong Kong, my first thought was, ‘I’m so busy!’ However, hot on the heels of that thought came another: ‘If you do not give this opportunity to the students and if every teacher or school had this attitude, where would that leave the students?’ Teaching is such a privilege and it has an important role to play in any society. So by looking at the bigger picture, it was easy for me to say, ‘Yes!’ ”

– Maria Henery, NET, Chinese Methodist School, Tanner Hill

Where?

When?

How?

Student teachers also value the chance to be mentored by NETs. Wesley Lai, Patricia Leung, Derek Wong and Heywood Lam mention the benefits of this special experience after being mentored by Evan, Seema, Gordon and Maria.

“I believe NETs have a different mission from local teachers who teach regular English lessons. Evan has given me the chance to observe, co-teach and eventually lead English lessons. Such a stepwise approach has enabled me to increase my involvement and confidence. Most importantly, Evan has shared his insights into education and his experience of having been educated in the United States.”

– Wesley Lai, Year 4 BA & BEd (Lang) – English, student teacher, University of Hong Kong

“Not everyone understands what a NET does so I was lucky to shadow Ms Seema during my first teaching practicum, where I saw her expose her students to more English-speaking opportunities by greeting them, singing songs and joining in their jokes. This has encouraged me to apply progressive methods in any learning environment.”

– Patricia Leung, Year 3 BA & BEd (Lang) – English, student teacher, University of Hong Kong

“The experience of being mentored by Gordon was highly rewarding and now I know how to work more closely with a NET when I graduate.”

– Derek Wong, Year 4 BA & BEd (Lang) – English, student teacher, University of Hong Kong

“I was lucky to have the chance to be mentored by Miss Maria. She is an enthusiastic, energetic and passionate teacher who is always smiling, which helps students feel relaxed and welcome in her lessons. She establishes a learning environment that encourages students to take risks as a way to learn. I now see the need to create an interactive environment in my future English classroom.”

– Heywood Lam, Year 3 BA & BEd (Lang) – English, student teacher, University of Hong Kong

The English Language Education Division is always looking for dedicated and passionate teachers for its teaching practicums in years 3, 4 and 5 of the BA & BEd (Language Education – English major) programme. If you are interested in mentoring, please visit the website:

<http://web.edu.hku.hk/community/school-university-partnerships>

Benjamin Moorhouse, Lecturer, English Language Education, The University of Hong Kong
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Good Counsel Catholic Primary School Success through Collaboration



In the early years of the NET Scheme, Good Counsel Catholic Primary School taught General English lessons using the GE textbook. Student learning was enriched with a variety of school-based units developed by the NET. Through a series of Big Books, P1-P3 students were introduced to different text types and a variety of topics each term. Collaboration between teachers was evident in co-teaching, but the NET/LETs weekly lessons were not related to a common core curriculum. The NET commented, "I felt that my lessons were not an integral part of student learning and I did not feel part of the teaching team."



Advisory Teacher Gary Knight introducing the NET and EPC, Good Counsel Catholic Primary School, guest speakers at NET Induction 2016

When Good Counsel Catholic Primary School joined the Space Town literacy programme in 2015, teachers attended a series of professional development workshops. Scheduled co-planning sessions for each Space Town unit of instruction served to allocate teaching roles between members of the English team and define which strategies were to be employed to develop reading and writing skills. Professional dialogue between colleagues also increased, focussing in particular on the various teaching strategies and weekly activities in each unit. The Space Town literacy programme provided the vehicle for collaboration and change. The EPC stated that, "co-operation between local teachers and our NET benefits the students and teachers alike, as we strive to make learning an enjoyable experience."

The English language room is now the centre for the Space Town literacy programme and home reading library. Reading assessment data has shown steady progress with students' decoding skills and confidence levels improving each year. The Principal, Miss Ng, fully supports and encourages the collaborative NET/LET team teaching approach. "We look forward to implementing the programme in P3 next year so that we can fully appreciate the benefits it brings to our students." With Miss Ng's expectation, it is now infinity and beyond for the Space Town literacy programme and the teachers from Good Counsel Catholic Primary School in Cheung Sha Wan.

Co-written by Gary Knight (Advisory Teacher, NET Section), Rachael Williamson (NET) & Eugene Poon (English Panel Chair), Good Counsel Catholic Primary School

Development of Text Sets (DTS) at Canossa Primary School (San Po Kong)

In the current times of competition and digitalisation, exposing students to a variety of authentic texts and effective tools for learning is essential. To further enhance the ongoing school-based programme, our school, Canossa Primary School (San Po Kong), recently joined the EDB's Development of Text Sets (DTS) Seed Project for the Primary One students. The aim was to strengthen the foundation of students' reading skills and habits by introducing a more thematic approach.



DTS is a theme-based learning approach where each theme starts with an essential question and a set of related cluster questions. Students explore these questions through reading relevant texts from a variety of printed or digital collections developed by the team of teachers. I believe DTS is especially important in classrooms where the whole class is using a single textbook. Text sets are developed by putting together resources of different reading levels, genres and media that offer perspectives on a theme. Putting together a text set also provides all students, regardless of reading level or learning style, with a "way in" to a theme.



Leveraging Strengths through Information Communications Technology

Chiu Sheung School is a lively school filled with a multitude of conversations from when the students arrive in the morning to when they leave for the day. The students, who have family ties all across Asia, use English as the lingua franca in school and as a result they have incredible fluency when speaking.

The teachers at Chiu Sheung School wanted to introduce technology into their English teaching, but didn't want to add more to their already tight schedule. They settled on starting with a small-scale experiment, something that could be used as a proof of concept, but would not bring the scheme of work to a halt if it didn't work. They decided to use iPads with a virtual interactive whiteboard, Show Me, as their key tool to start.



A virtual interactive whiteboard, like a regular whiteboard, allows the user to write, stick pictures and move them around the board. A major difference is that an interactive whiteboard allows students to record their voice and the process of how they put things on the board in real time.

Teachers used this feature with their P4 students to publish

their work. This approach not only proved quick and easy for the students to use, but it also allowed them to make full use of their oral strengths, a combination which would not have been previously possible in the classroom using traditional tools such as paper and pencils. The experience also allowed the students the opportunity to review their work and revise it without having to worry about editing spelling, punctuation and grammar.



Sterling Wu, Advisory Teacher, NET Section

With the first term coming to an end, we are nearing the end of our first theme, 'The 100th Day of School'. The theme proved to be an apt interface between kindergarten and primary school learning. It has helped students adapt to the new learning stage in their lives by learning more about the people they see at school, and the rules, numbers and vocabulary related to school. The well planned authentic tasks gave students the opportunity to build confidence by communicating with others, to do self-learning by finding information independently and to become thinkers by asking questions. DTS is an ideal tool to cater for learner diversity too. The content, process or the product can be altered according to the students' needs. We altered and adjusted the teaching process according to the students' progress and the time available.

As the school is home to an ambitious and devoted team of teachers, the project was easily integrated into the GE lessons. The valuable input of the AT from the NET Section, not only in helping us plan the lessons but also in the development of text sets, has undoubtedly been instrumental in making this project a success at our school. We now look forward to introducing the project, which is soon going to be a programme, to our Primary 2 and 3 students. We hope to broaden our students' world of learning with the introduction of this powerful and effective tool, DTS.

Ritika Sethi, NET, Canossa Primary School (San Po Kong)





Ebenezer School & the 2017 European Union Calendar Drawing Competition

As the NET at Ebenezer School, I am always fascinated by what my students can do. Although visually impaired, they are able in all areas including visual arts. Whenever



I show visitors around the school, one of their favourite spots is always the Art Room, where they can see our students' perception of the world presented through art. Visitors we have had include the professional staff from the NET Section: Benjamin Moorhouse, James Vickers, Abuzar Abbasi and Phillip Weber. Having seen some of our students' artwork, they believe that our students could definitely compete with other schools in the 2017 European Union Calendar Drawing Competition. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the NET Section for their faith in our students and...bring it on!

As part of the preparation for the competition, we decided that 12 September 2016 would be our very first English Art Day. The representatives of the Belgian and Portuguese consulates and the European Union Office in Hong Kong and Macao came to visit and speak to us about the cultures of Belgium, Greece, Portugal and Spain. Our students were absolutely fascinated by the countries' histories, the unique sounds of their music and the gourmet Belgian cookies! They also earned a lot of nice souvenirs by answering the hosts' questions after the presentations. The English teachers then led a follow-up activity where students got to know better the four national flags and discuss their initial draft of the competition artwork. The students learnt a lot from the presentations to come up with such interesting work. They are looking forward to the upcoming Art lessons where they can perfect their drawings. They can't wait to show their artwork to the world...literally!

Chan Shuk Man, NET, Ebenezer School



Promoting Student Engagement by Using IT: In Cahoots with Kahoot!

Over the past year, our staff members have actively attended many of the EDB's IT-related workshops in an effort to maximise our teaching efficacy. With a great IT department and supportive management, we have made it our school-wide goal this year to promote the use of IT across all subjects. Kahoot has been a popular choice among our staff as this user-friendly online platform is a quick and effective tool to revise lesson content and to engage the students in active learning. Our students have even made their own Kahoots in their own time for classroom sharing.

We have used Kahoot to teach phonics, assess reading comprehension and for dictations. In addition, we have used Kahoot during our inter-school collaboration with ESF schools involved in our 'Buddy Programme' which focuses on learning English in an authentic language environment. You could even consider using Kahoot as an incentive for good behaviour!

Kahoot caters for learner diversity. No matter what specific needs a child may have, this interface is simple enough to accommodate any student.



EU Calendar Drawing Competition and Award Ceremony



Briefing sessions at schools



Calendar in the making



The picking of the winners



The award ceremony



One of the most important things to keep in mind when Kahoot is being used is to make the most of the features of this online platform in order to maximise learning. Finding captivating video clips and using interesting photos help to keep students engaged in the lesson. We have taken it a step further by filming our own students reading aloud or acting out certain scenes or actions and then uploading their videos on to Kahoot. Using the statistics provided at the end of the Kahoot is also a great way to inform our teaching as we can identify the areas that students have difficulties in and we can modify lessons accordingly.

Our teachers have found a dramatic increase in student engagement when using Kahoot in our lessons and they will continue using it to enhance the language learning environment at our school as their commitment to the use of IT grows.

Kevin Tan, NET, Hong Kong Red Cross John F. Kennedy Centre

Kahoot can be played on tablets, mobile phones and desktop computers, so it does cater for schools that may not have enough tablets for an entire class of 30!

Puppetry

What is puppetry? Puppets are a fun way to build on students' creativity and imagination. This year our school had an opportunity for students to take part in the 'Story to Stage' puppetry competition held by the NET Section (Education Bureau). It was an innovative learning experience for both our students and teachers. It gave the students a chance to create and explore different ways to express and tell their story. For a language teacher, it was a rewarding and fulfilling experience to see how the students were able to achieve confidence in using English as a second language outside the classroom. Not only did the students capture the hearts of the audience, but they also won over the adjudicators at the competition! Our students were presented with the 'Creativity' award for their outstanding performance in telling their story.

Congratulations to our young puppeteers on their amazing performance. From creating the story from scratch to bringing their puppets to life, they overcame a number of challenges, for example, script-writing, designing puppets and props, making the puppets lip-sync properly and coordinating their teammates behind the puppet tent, and so on. They were highly engaged and involved in all the preparation and rehearsals. For our young puppeteers, it was a thoroughly enriching, stimulating and memorable experience from start to finish.

Lam Lan Vinh, NET, & Cally Leung, EPC, CCC Kei Wan Primary School (Aldrich Bay)



Let's Try Puppetry



Do you ever want to be a puppeteer? Let me tell you how. There are five rules of puppetry. First there are entrances and exits. We can't just 'pop out' from the stage or else the audience will think the puppet is flying. Imagine making your puppet walk on a staircase. To learn this skill you'll need to practise a lot. The next rule of puppetry is height and positioning which can be difficult if your hand is tired. But you must remember to keep your hand up! You can always ask your performing peers to help you. I think this skill is not that difficult: if you keep practising, you will have enough strength to hold up your hand.

Besides height, the right positioning is also important. We should use most of the stage. If not, the puppets will not have enough room to move around. Another rule of puppetry is lip synchronisation, which also requires a lot of practice if you want to put on a good performance. Many people forget to close their puppet's mouth, but remember that your puppet's mouth won't be kept shut unless you close it. This is the easiest part to forget. Also, do not say each syllable separately or strongly or else it will look odd and appear like the puppet is not talking naturally.

Having eye contact is probably the easiest rule to follow out of the five puppetry rules. Just remember, puppets also need to look at other puppets or the audience when they are speaking or being spoken to. The only challenging part is when the one who's holding the puppet is too short or when the puppet is looking up towards the sky. Just be careful and pay attention to your puppet. When you have this problem, please use stools or other things to help you perform better.

The last rule of puppetry is maintaining believable actions by trying to keep the puppet looking 'alive'. When you are performing your puppet's movement, you can sway its head and move its body to make the puppet appear 'alive'. I had a lot of fun during my practices learning the different techniques. I hope the suggestions above can help you understand more about puppetry and hope you'll have fun being a puppeteer like I did!

Silky Siu King Sum (Class 6D, 2015/16), CCC Kei Wan Primary School (Aldrich Bay)



The 'Hands on Stage' Puppetry Competition 2016



The 'Hands on Stage' Puppetry Competition, held on 11 and 16 May 2016, once again gave students a chance to use English in a creative and motivating way by allowing them to write their own scripts for a puppet play. In its second year, the competition attracted 19 teams from secondary schools around Hong Kong.



Puppetry team from SKH Tang Shiu Kin Secondary School, trained by Ms Ivy Sun and Ms Stella Yip. The team received three awards: Puppetry Technique, Backdrop and Effects and The People's Choice Award in the May 11 session.

Mr Li Kwai Lam from St. Teresa Secondary School, whose team won prizes for Puppetry Technique and Puppet Design on 16 May, said his school was looking forward to entering again next year because his students had a lot of fun rehearsing and performing their show. "They hadn't had the opportunity to create a puppet show before, so this was a new and enriching learning experience for them," Mr Li said. One of his students, Koby Yu Wan Wing, said, "Although we had to stay after school many days over several weeks, we learnt so much. If you have to work with others and you want to achieve success, then teamwork is so important."

Preparation included a briefing session for teachers on 5 November 2015 followed by a 4-hour puppetry workshop at the NET Section

on 2 February 2016. Teachers learnt the skills of how to write their own script and how to make a variety of puppets including stick, glove, hand, paper bag and the ever-popular sock puppets. Teachers then took these skills back to their students, who developed a script, created colourful backdrop(s) and in many cases made their own puppets.

The 2016/17 'Hands on Stage' Puppetry Competition will once again be held in May with 26 teams from throughout Hong Kong expected to take part.

List of prize winners for 'Hands on Stage' for 2016

May 11

1st Prize: The MCHK Wesley College

Language – voice work: International Christian Quality Music Secondary and Primary School

Language – script: The YWCA Hioe Tjo Yoeng College

Puppetry Technique: SKH Tang Shiu Kin Secondary School

Backdrop and Effects: SKH Tang Shiu Kin Secondary School

Puppet Design: TWGHs Lee Ching Dea Memorial College

May 16

1st Prize: Po Leung Kuk Laws Foundation College

Language – voice work: CSBS Mrs Aw Boon Haw Secondary School

Language – script: St. Margaret's Girls' College

Puppetry Technique: St. Teresa Secondary School

Backdrop and Effects: Caritas Fanling Chan Chun Ha Secondary School

Puppet Design: St. Teresa Secondary School

*"I learnt how to control the movement of the puppet well, so the body language matched the personality of the character. I could see how this made my character more believable."
(Mandy Lam Hiu Man, St Teresa Secondary School, S5 last school year)*

Debating, a sport



NET Kenneth Murray emceeding for the HKPTU Secondary Debating Competition Grand Final

Last school year it was suggested that I enter some of my senior students into an English debating competition. I did ... and this school year there are three teams! This is an activity my students and I have come to enjoy immensely.

The competitive, sports-like nature of debating is probably what has made it so popular among my more able students. They love working together as part of a team.

They enjoy

researching a motion, refining a team line, developing two key arguments, predicting points the opposite team might raise and developing possible rebuttals to these. There is always plenty of laughter as I model and coach them in developing an emphatic tone of voice and other features of persuasive spoken English. Debating caters for learner diversity, as less confident students can be deployed as the first affirmative speaker with fully scripted and rehearsed notes. The more confident, quick thinkers, who enjoy the adrenaline rush of coming up with pointed rebuttals under pressure, can be enlisted as second and final speakers.

Although a lot of extra time and effort has been put into this new extra-curricular activity, I have no regrets. In fact, I found myself enjoying it so much that I even attended a Saturday morning debate

adjudicator training session at the EDB NET Section and an EDB debating cluster workshop where Hong Kong's Solicitor General, Wesley Wong, an accomplished former debater, presented. Both of these

EDB NET

Section

debate training sessions were very worthwhile and helped me further develop my skills as both a coach and adjudicator.

I appreciate the opportunity of getting out and seeing different secondary and primary schools and meeting debate coaches and students across Hong Kong. A highlight has been adjudicating for the HKPTU and other debating competitions such as the British Council Science Alive debate alongside a Cambridge University professor! Indeed, each debate I have adjudicated has provided me with invaluable insights into the art of persuasive public speaking, and this has helped me hone my skills as a debate coach.



Mr Wesley Wong presenting at the debating cluster workshop



Ho Ngai College (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen), HKPTU Debating Competition Secondary Sixes Team, Chau Wai Yuen, Misa Chungbang Hook, Gum Ping Chak (left to right) and Mr Kenneth Murray, NET



Gum Ping Chak (Zero)



Chau Wai Yuen (Russell)

Kenneth Murray, NET, Ho Ngai College (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)



English Week at Chi Lin Buddhist Secondary School

During the last week of October 2016, the students at Chi Lin Buddhist Secondary School celebrated their English Week with a theme based on "Animals".

Each morning the students were presented with a different text type and given the opportunity to submit their answers for prize redemption at the end of the week. The students also enjoyed testing out their skills while trying to repeat animal tongue twisters throughout the week.



They finished their week of celebration with several games in the Student Activity Centre. Students completed each task to receive stamps, which they could redeem for prizes. There was a lot of commotion at the "Ring Toss" booth, as students were given pictures of animals which they had to toss their rings over and answer a question about the Chinese Zodiac. Cheering could be heard from the "Saving the Animals" booth, as the students had to skip and catch the animal before returning quickly to the finish line. They had a lot of fun trying to identify which animal made each sound. In the "3D" booth, there was a lot of discussion as the students looked at 3D pictures with special glasses to find the hidden pictures. Laughter echoed through the centre as students had to mimic the way animals move to reach the finish line and obtain their stamps. Finally, lots of funny faces were caught as they took turns having their picture taken in the "Animal Photo" booth.

The students had a lot of fun completing the activities and participating in English Week. They practised their speaking skills and learnt about animals. An excellent time was had by the staff and students.

Paul Charvet-Jackson, NET, Chi Lin Buddhist Secondary School



A School of 'Made in Italy'



Having a taste of different cultures around the world has long been one of the learning targets of students in TWGHs Sun Hoi Directors' College. Thanks to the invitation of the NET Section, several of our students had the chance to attend 'A School of Made in Italy'. This was co-organised by the Consulate General of Italy in Hong Kong, the EDB and the School of Hotel and Tourism Management of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University to promote cultural and educational exchanges between Italy and Hong Kong.

On 24 September 2016, the students went to a hotel in Tsim Sha Tsui and tasted some of the most famous traditional Italian recipes, enjoyed performances of popular Italian songs and saw samples and demonstrations of fashion products.



We go international - The students and teacher from TWGHs Sun Hoi Directors' College with the headmistress of an Italian secondary school specialising in musical education (second right) and two NET Section officers (on both sides)

In addition to experiencing Italian culture, the students had conversations with some Italian teachers and students visiting Hong Kong, as well as some Italian professionals working in Hong Kong. Let's see what the students said to sum up their experiences of that evening.

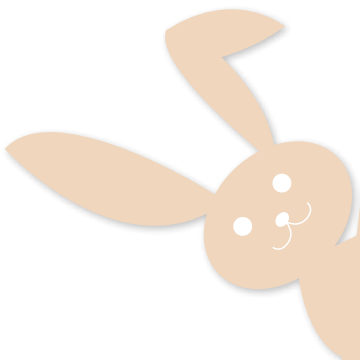
Anne Cheng, Vice Principal, TWGHs Sun Hoi Directors' College

TWGHs Sun Hoi Directors' College – Students' Sharing

Priscilla: I would like to use the word 'extraordinary' to describe this event. It was a valuable opportunity for me to make friends with Italians in a luxurious environment. I got a taste of traditional Italian food and it was as exotic and delicious as I imagined. I had a wonderful night as I learnt many valuable Italian cultural lessons without travelling 5,766 miles away from Hong Kong.

Philippa: My little world became more 'international' after this memorable moment with the Italian group. This was the first time I had met Italians and they were so hospitable. I seized the opportunity to chat with Italians in a dazzlingly brilliant environment. I learnt more about the wonderful place they live and also their food and culture. I hope there will be another chance like this to meet foreigners from all over the world.

Gretel: I would use the word 'intimate' to describe the atmosphere of this event. This was because the event organisers were very nice and friendly. The Italian food was also very tasty; as a result I enjoyed the evening very much.



NET Induction 2016



Exploring New Possibilities at the Hong Kong Maritime Museum



On board the Sørlandet at the Hong Kong Maritime Museum



The KM Koo Ship Bridge Simulator



Secondary teachers exploring the museum



A territory-wide cluster meeting on the museum for secondary teachers

DTS Professional Seminar



Professional Seminar for Catholic Diocese Schools
 Topic: Text Sets - Expand, Enrich, Invigorate English Teaching Using Quality Texts
 Date: 16 November, 2016 (Wednesday)
 Venue: St. Francis of Assisi's Caritas School



Guest speakers - Ms Jessie Chu from St. Paul's Primary Catholic School (picture on the left) and Ms Celine Leung from Jordan Valley St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School (picture on the right) receiving a certificate from the Catholic Diocese Schools representatives



Teachers from Catholic Diocese Schools studying the display



An audience of more than 120 at the seminar

Our Newsletter and Proofreading Task Groups

Newsletter Task Group
 Teresa Chu (Editor-in-chief), Julien Hawthorne, John Hone, Lionell Horn, Garlanda Kwan, Christine Xavier, Kit Yong

Proofreading Task Group
 Teresa Chu (Coordinator), Kamla Dilrajh, Gina Green, Julien Hawthorne, Simon Herd, Sala Liu, Anne Macpherson, Christine Xavier

This Newsletter is prepared by the NET Section, CDI, EDB.
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