

NET Scheme news

LITERACY FOR A WORLD CITY



NET Scheme news Issue 23

A Cup of Joe, a Cup of Dreams

A few words from Mr. Joe LEUNG,
Chief Curriculum Development Officer, NET Section



Dear Partners in English Language Education,

Thanks for dreaming and pursuing your dreams

The experiences I have had the privilege to acquire, since joining the NET Section in mid-June, have made me proud and humbled. They have also prompted me to dream bigger dreams.

The NET Section is more than just an English language learning support section in the Bureau. It is an international professional community formed by a 70-strong staff coming from about ten different countries on five different continents. These colleagues of ours bring with them not only their professional expertise and experience, but rich and diverse cultural legacies which help make learning and working in and with the Section an intriguing and rewarding experience.

Our Section is a community of learners. Given the very nature of our work, learning is the order of the day and so is collaboration. At the start of this school year, we had a special Office Day activity in our Yellow and Green Rooms with all the lights out. There and then, all professional officers met and joined a ceremony led by one of our colleagues. There and then a candle was lit to 'curse the darkness', a gesture to show our commitment to our learning circles. Through engagement in the circles, we will articulate and share our tacit knowledge, build our corporate memory and enjoy an experience of learning and professional growth.

Our profession is one that encourages and celebrates dreaming. A decade or so ago, few would envisage that there would be a NET in each of our primary schools, that there would be a NET Section to support our NETs and LETs, and that there would be a primary literacy programme specially designed, and developed from scratch, for our students.

Thanks to the dreamers and those with the courage and wit to pursue their dreams, the impossible has become not only possible, but achievable. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to all those dreamers who have helped us make a difference in the English Language education of Hong Kong.

I need to thank my predecessors, Chong, for leaving a proud principals, our LETs and NETs language education and their programmes. I need to thank Tsui for enlightening us on the And, of course, I need to thank Advisory Teachers, Regional NET Seconded Teachers and Administrative dedicated efforts that they have made in

The footprints of these dreamers are all two issues of our Newsletter. "Reading PLP-R" and "Cooperation Generation" issues published in 2005. Since collaboration, the promotion of creativity and the role of NETs as central and recurrent themes of issue, we promoted a BIG idea with

Language learning, in essence, provide quality exposure and and implement different literacy support measures. To enhance the effectiveness of each and every of these programmes, projects and measures, we need to forge close partnerships not only with schools, but with other professional practitioners in the education sector and our Bureau. We need to identify and address shared concerns and focuses so that we can build stronger leverage for system-level enhancement. As the Chinese saying goes, "Little drops of water make a mighty river." Let's join hands in building this mighty river.

No noble dreams in our profession could be realised without visionary leadership and a strong dose of moral courage, wisdom and hard work. Further, the fulfilment of our dreams needs to be guided by sound educational principles. In this respect, I would like to share one that was advocated by the creator of the 'Hole in the Wall' project, Dr Mitra. In his TED talk 2010, he shared, "If children have interest, then education takes place." He was in fact quoting Sir Arthur C. Clarke, author of 2001: a Space Odyssey. This is good food for thought and advice to guide our own practice.

2012 sees the 10th anniversary of the Primary NET Scheme. We will be celebrating the anniversary during our 'Literacy for a World City' Conference on 2 February 2013. Let's all meet to celebrate what has been achieved and to share more dreams for the future.

Yours truly,



Joe LEUNG
Chief Curriculum Development Officer



The English Ambassador Programme and Raising Students' Awareness of Worthy Causes

Dr Dog

Our English Ambassadors had a wonderful time when Jasmine Nunes from Animals Asia arrived at our school with Helen and "Dr ChaCha" who volunteer on the Dr Dog programme. For many students it was the first time that they had approached such a large dog. They could hardly wait to be allowed to touch him. However, before any touching was allowed to take place, they first had to listen to Jasmine as she explained that we need to take responsibility for our pets and learn how to care for them. We also learned how Dr Dog visits people in hospitals and care centres and helps them feel better. "Dr ChaCha" sat patiently throughout the talk and he certainly had no complaints when the students practiced feeding him treats!



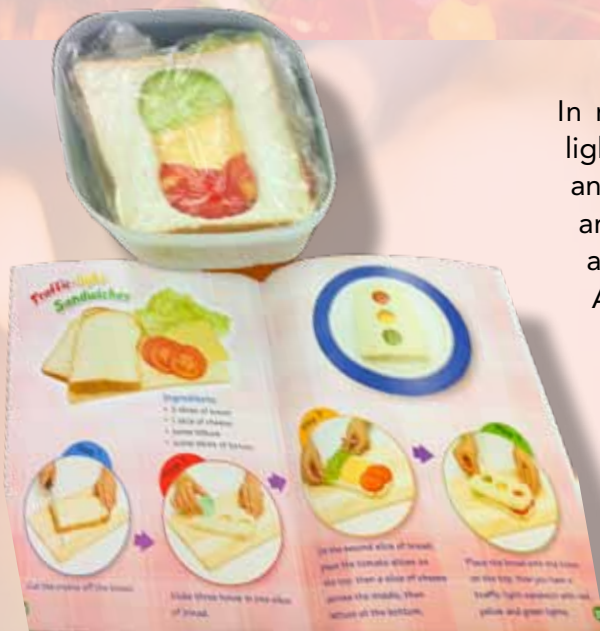
Orangutan Orphans

Mara McCaffery from Orangutan Aid came to talk to the students about the plight of orphan orangutans. She discussed deforestation and the effect it has on animals. The students watched a video of the orangutans playing, and they laughed a lot when they saw their own behaviour mirrored in these adorable 'toddlers'. They discussed ways of combating the problems and decided to sponsor a sweet-faced boy named 'Oru'. We will receive updates on him and his fellow orphans so that we can keep check on their progress.

The aim of the English Ambassador Programme is to expose our students to different outreach programmes. By making students aware of the needs of others as well as issues that have an impact on the environment, we hope to develop a life-long commitment to worthy causes in our community.

Rachael WILLIAMSON, NET
Good Counsel Catholic Primary School

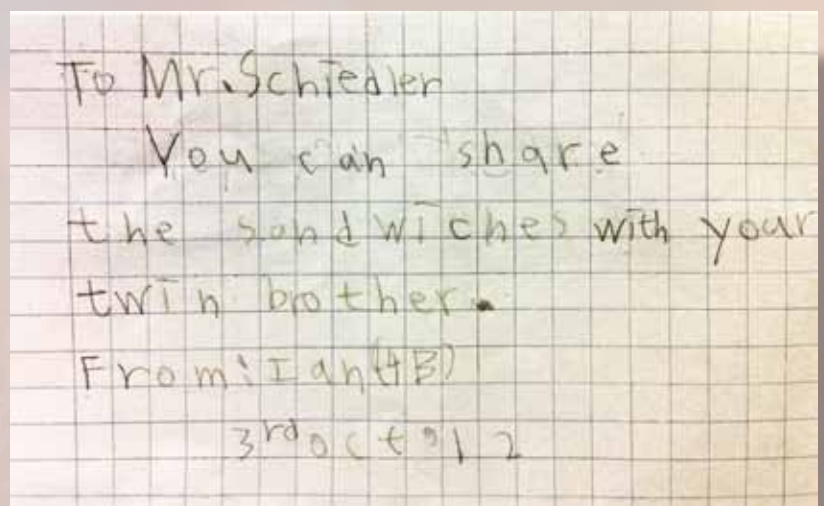
The Making of a Heartwarming Sandwich



In my P4 class we read a story called 'Traffic-light Sandwiches'. In this story, two aliens, Felix and Flora, crash-land in Hong Kong. While they are in Hong Kong they go on a journey to find a sandwich called 'the traffic-light sandwich'. At the end of the story, they finally find the sandwich. In the story there is a detailed description of how to make the sandwich. At the end of one school week, one of my P4 students told me that he was going to make me a traffic-light sandwich. He asked me if I would like ketchup on it, but I told him I liked mustard on sandwiches. I was not sure if he would really make a sandwich, but even the suggestion itself made me happy.

The next week, he brought a container with two sandwiches inside. One was for me, and one was for my 'twin brother.' A few weeks ago my Advisory Teacher came to visit the school, and the student, Ian, had thought he was my twin brother. He wrote a very nice note to me and the other teacher, and even provided a squeeze bottle of mustard to add to the sandwiches. I asked him later if he had made the sandwiches. He said he had done it with his mother's help.

It was a very heartwarming experience to have a student make a gift for me. This was not something required of the students, but something he did on his own. It is this kind of experience that makes me enjoy being a teacher. I still have the note he gave me, and will always cherish the thoughtfulness of my student. Making something as small as a sandwich shows how much he cared, which filled me with joy.



Adam SCHIEDLER, NET
CCC Chun Kwong Primary School, Yuen Long

Living and Working in Hong Kong, from 2002 to 2012 and Beyond

I replied to a newspaper advertisement seeking interested and suitably qualified candidates to teach English in Hong Kong. That was in April 2002, when I was living and working in Australia.

Greetings, my name is Paul Mallia and I've been involved in the Primary NET Scheme since its inception in August 2002. I decided to move to a country that I'd never visited, knew no one and little about its education system. During my first few days in Hong Kong, the oppressive heat, the humidity, the crowded streets and the noise all made me wonder if I could last the two years I had agreed to.

Initially, the Primary NET Scheme they visited in alternate able to finally teach at to establish a closer local colleagues as well

I have taught at over the ten years Kong. In conjunction we have instituted and programmes benefited greatly.

With the support and (now EDB), the Advisory and facilitated a plethora development workshop topics to



deployed NETs to two schools, which weeks. After two years, I was one school. This enabled me working relationship with my as with the students.

three primary schools I have resided in Hong with my local colleagues, many English activities where the students have

guidance of the then EMB Teaching Team have written of centralised professional assist NETs and local English teachers.

Teaching children to read effectively is a very complex process. I have been fortunate enough to have taught at a school that supported the PLP-R (Primary Literacy Programme – Reading). Again, with the guidance and support of the Advisory Teaching Team, my colleagues and I were able to confidently facilitate the curriculum to equip Key Stage 1 pupils with the necessary skills to become competent readers.

I am now a member of the Advisory Teaching Team and hope to continue to facilitate the NET Scheme vision, which is 'to enable Hong Kong primary school students to become competent users of the English Language.'

Perhaps in 2022, I may write another short piece about the PNET Scheme. Watch this space.

Paul MALLIA, AT
NET Section

(Photo shows Paul Mallia and Jimmy Wong, both at PLK Luk Hing Too Primary School, Po Lam in 2005, at a school picnic.)

A thank you note from a 10-year NET

'How come you have stayed so long when the others have left? And at the same school?' - the question I am always asked. Reflecting on my decade here in Hong Kong at Buddhist Wong Cho Sum School, I think the answer lies not just in the wonders of this amazing city, but also in the students, teachers, Principal and fellow NETs.

The students in our school have been delightful to teach. Happy faces greet you when you walk into the classroom, teach a song, read a big book, present an assembly, go on an English excursion, or dress up for Halloween. Visiting family members or friends from overseas are greeted by more than happy faces as the children's eyes all light up with curiosity. There is also that proud look of joy on these happy faces, registering their sense of achievement and enjoyment from English Language learning.



The two teachers who met me at the airport way back in '02 still work alongside me today. It has been great to build up relationships with kind, welcoming and committed teachers over the years. We feel comfortable and prepared to take risks in each other's company. Ideas are exchanged at co-planning sessions and lessons are happily co-taught, although admittedly this NET does tend to find it hard to take a backseat!! At the end of the year when we reflect on our successes and failures, it is satisfying to know that many of the teachers feel more confident to incorporate some of the strategies used in our NET lessons into their own lessons - teaching dictionary skills, phonics, chunking, songs, chants, games, teaching pronunciation of thirty/thirteen... the list goes on. These practices have the enthusiastic support of our Principal.

Mr Chung and Ms Lit, caring, considerate Principal and EPC respectively, have been so welcoming and open to the NET Scheme objectives that the necessary symbiotic relationship between NET and Principal has worked effectively during the past 10 years. They have been sympathetic to the needs of an expatriate teacher and understand how the distance from family can sometimes mean that certain considerations need to be acknowledged.

Our school was undergoing 'building extensions' on my arrival - certainly a culture shock and a challenge teaching above the cacophonous sounds of jackhammers. My teaching position has since then evolved from working with 2200 students fortnightly in two schools to working with 300 students in just one school, where I can do guided reading in groups of 6 in a lovely, peaceful English Room. It is wonderful to see how much the students' reading has improved over the years, and the way they excitedly take books home to read to their families. We have set up a pen-friend scheme with a school in Manchester after they paid us a visit. All of these practices are new and exciting to students from a low-socio economic background where they hardly have any chances of meeting or talking to a native English speaker.

Supportive fellow-NETs sharing their resources, ideas, frustrations and successes has been another fundamental necessity of life here. It can be a challenge to come up with new ideas all the time, so bouncing ideas off each other over a glass of red or two is one way to keep up with it all.

So to all the BWCSS school staff and those fellow NETs out there, thank you! Without their support, the ten would have been just two!!

Marysia MARCHANT, NET
Buddhist Wong Cho Sum School

Ten Wonderful Years as a NET

The summer of 2002 is when I fell in love with Hong Kong. On a holiday trip to visit a good friend and former colleague, I discovered a vibrant international city. From that moment on, I wanted to make Hong Kong my home. So, I applied to the NET Scheme and was recruited the following school year. I took a year off from my teaching position in Quebec City, packed up and came over. I've never looked back.

Now ten wonderful years later, I've been fortunate to work at the same school for the entire time. I enjoy working with local students, and my colleagues have become friends. There has been a lot of 'evolution' in my workplace, from in-class teaching to setting up an English Reading Room.

Nothing warms the heart more than a student telling me that English class is interesting. That's what it's all about.



Cheryl BRENNAN, NET
SKH Ka Fuk Wing Chun Primary School

Ten years of shared history and fond memories

As an advisory teacher, I had the luxury of being able to ask Ms. Florence Chui, the Deputy Principal of SKH Ching Shan Primary School, a few questions about her ten years with the school NET, Mrs. Virginia Daley.

Ten years ago, Ms. Chui and her English Panel Chair telephoned Mrs. Daley, (who was at that time living in Australia), and interviewed her for the NET position in their AM and PM school. What began as a simple phone call in the summer of 2002 turned into a ten-year journey that has developed into a relationship of friendship and respect.



When Ms. Chui reflected on the journey of the past ten years, she said that Mrs. Daley has changed the environment of the school. She fitted right in when she came and got along well with everyone. She not only worked with the teachers and students in a cooperative teaching mode, but also engaged the parents and principals as well. She created a mum's English class to make English a part of the parents' lives so that they could pass their love of English on to their children.

Ms. Chui also remarked that Mrs. Daley brought the outside world to Ching Shan. She brought her culture and personal experiences to festivals, enriching them and making them come alive.

To the ten years of shared history and fond memories, and a friendship that goes on and beyond, I offer my heartfelt congratulations.

Sterling WU, AT
NET Section

The Primary Native-speaking English Teacher (PNET) Scheme 10th Anniversary Conference, to take place on 2 February 2013, at CCC Heep Woh Primary School (Cheung Sha Wan), has invited Professor Bev Derewianka and Dr Rodney Jones to speak at the Keynote sessions. Below are their messages to our readers in anticipation of the Conference .



It is my great pleasure to participate in the celebrations of the 10th anniversary of the PNET Scheme. During this time, the PNET programme has made a significant contribution to the English proficiency of hundreds of Hong Kong students through the provision of in-class support and learning materials. I congratulate the PNET programme on its many achievements and wish it success in its future endeavours.

Prof. Bev DEREWIANKA



I am delighted to be asked to share with participants in the conference my thoughts about how to motivate students to learn English when they (the students) often seem more interested in posting pictures on Facebook and playing online games. For the past decade I have been involved in research on the effect of computer use on students' English literacy. Last year I published *Understanding Digital Literacies: A practical introduction*, which contains information and advice for teachers and students about how digital media has changed the way we communicate and how we can develop these 'new literacies' in a critical and self-reflective way. I very much look forward to hearing about the experiences and ideas of NET and local teachers in Hong Kong on these issues.

<http://www.facebook.com/UnderstandingDigitalLiteracies>

Dr Rodney JONES

Programme for the PNET Scheme 10th Anniversary Conference

Date: 2 February 2013

Time: 9:00 am – 1:30 pm

Venue: CCC Heep Woh Primary School (Cheung Sha Wan)

8:30 am – 8:55 am	Registration
8:55 am – 9:00 am	Pre-conference Slide Show
9:00 am – 9:10 am	Welcome by Mr Joe LEUNG (Chief Curriculum Development Officer, NET Section, CDI, EDB)
9:10 am – 9:15 am	Address by Dr Catherine K. K. CHAN (Deputy Secretary for Education)
9:15 am – 9:20 am	Voice from a 10-Year NET by Ms Marian TIGHE (Pui Kiu Primary School)
9:20 am – 10:20 am	Keynote Session 1 – by Prof. Bev DEREWIANKA (University of Wollongong) Session Title: Literacy Challenges in the Transition from KS2 to KS3
10:20 am – 10:40 am	Refreshment Break
10:40 am – 11:25 am	Parallel Sessions A
11:25 am – 11:35 am	Break
11:35 am – 12:20 pm	Parallel Sessions B
12:20 pm – 12:35 pm	Break
12:35 pm – 1:10 pm	Keynote Session 2 – by Dr Rodney JONES (City University of Hong Kong) Session Title: Motivating Children to Learn English in the Digital Age
1:10 pm – 1:30 pm	Presentations to NETs Having Served in the Scheme since 2002 or 2003 – by Mr Simon THAM (Chief Curriculum Development Officer, NET Section, CDI, EDB, 2002-2010)

10-year Serving NETs

Christopher
GRAY

Aaliya JAFFER

Anne MACPHERSON

Margaret O'BRIEN

Brandi KATZ

Jeanette
McCABE

Bernice NG

Kieran
MINOGUE

Haydn MILFORD

Donna WILLIS

Janis HALL

Kiat AU YEUNG

Dermot CREAM

Daniel
HANNAH

Jesse FENG

Geoffrey
BROWN

Jeffrey GRIFFIN

Gary KNIGHT

Marysia MARCHANT

Terrence
MARTIN

James
STEVENSON

Jeffrey GRIFFIN

Jeremy STERLING

Lynn
CHAPMAN

Linda HO

John
BURCHELL

Michael
KREMMER

Kimberley
DURAN

Ian FRASER

Izabela
RYTERSKA-STOLPE



Mitchell ROBINSON



Senthmarai
PILLAY



Muriel MORGAN



Marian TIGHE



Joy
Jacqueline
USSHER



Nareshini GOVENDER



Jack ROBB



Neil STEWART



Raewyn RAYNEL



Rachel COLLINS



Christopher
RAWLINSON



Rachel EARNSHAW



Jonathan
SMITH



Russell LAYFIELD



Shirley WONG



Laura
DI SISTO



Cheryl BRENNAN



Benita SABEAN



Simone
KIRKLAND



Simon BOLDY



Thi Thu Thuy DONG



Gordon
ARTHUR



Virginia DALEY



Miles KEEPING



Allan
WOOD



Thomas
BECKETT



Mark
JACKSON



Binnie PATCHA



Jeanie JORDAN



Marie McRAE



Kirsten FREEMAN



Vince ZANGARI



Kenneth McNEILL



Lan Vinh LAM



Michele DAVIS



Gregory BAKER



George TAX



Lionell HORN



Karin NGAI



Jeffrey WALL



Leah PRESLEY



Ty CHIEU



Carolyn FRANKLIN



Geoffrey BROWNIE



Kathryn DAVIS



John WONG



Phillip SAMS



Angel BOW



Carolyn BUTLER-WHITE




Paul MALLIA



OUR NEWSLETTER TEAM

- Editor-in-chief : Teresa CHU
- Team Members : Garlanda KWAN, Cicely SHUM, Phillip WEBER, Sterling WU, Kit YONG

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

All comments and suggestions on the Newsletter may be sent to  teresachu@edb.gov.hk