

NET

SCHEME NEWS

The NET Section, Education Bureau

His hope

Let your hopes, and not your hurts shape your future

ESTUAK presents HIS HOPE A film by L&K ENGLISH DRAMA CLUB PRODUCTION
produced by VINCENT THOMAS, BRIQUET & TAYLOR

HOPE FOR THE STRESS

CHING CHUNG HAU PO WOON SECONDARY SCHOOL PRESENTS

- A DOCUMENTARY HELPS YOU RELIEVE STRESS AND ANXIETY -

PRODUCED BY

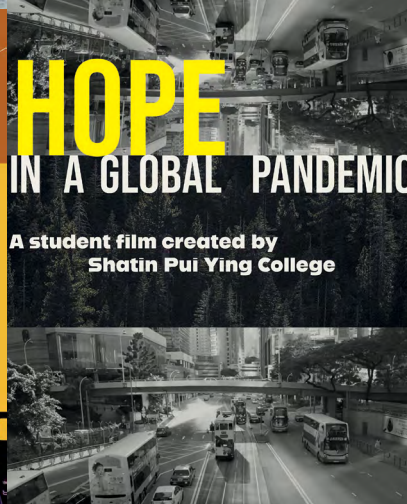
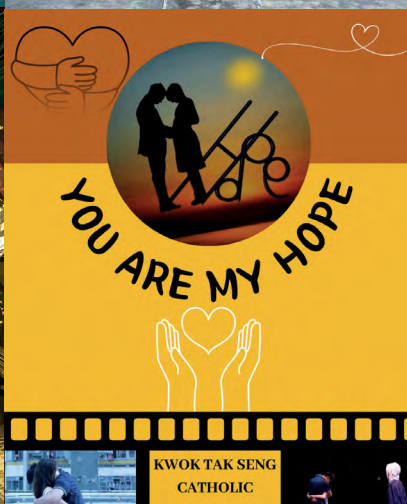
YIP TIN LOK
CHAN CHUN KIT
TONG YU SZE
CHEUNG KWAN YIU
YUEN TZE LOK
WU WAI KIN
PRINCESS

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

HANG ON TO YOUR DREAMS



AUGUST 2022





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This newsletter is prepared by the NET Section, EDB. All comments and suggestions on the newsletter can be sent to adyskywong@edb.gov.hk.

The POWER of HOPE

The cover design of this issue is composed of students' creative interpretations of 'The Power of Hope', as this was the theme of our Filmit 2022 Competition. When you think of hope, and the power it has, what comes to your mind? What came to the minds of the students who entered the posters session of the competition were the following statements to inspire us to believe in the power of hope.

“

“Be hopeful and make it happen”

“Believe in yourself; hang on to your dreams”

“I was lost, but I'm found because of hope”

“Believe in Hope, for it gives you the courage to ignore the voices”

“A simple act of kindness creates an endless ripple of hope”

”

Research shows that there is a relationship between hope, learning and wellbeing.¹ While hope sounds like it is focused on the future, it actually changes us now. When students live in the expectation that positive changes are on their way, they open themselves to a range of new possibilities. As educators, we understand the value and impact of building in our students such a positive mindset, an essential capability in the new era that will enable them to excel in this fast changing world.



Thoughtful design of students' values education experiences can be conducive to their whole-person development and help pave the way for a life of opportunity, contribution and fulfilment. An experience-sharing session on 'A Design for Life: Values Education in

English Language Education' was organised by the NET Section on 22 October 2022 at the Education Bureau Kowloon Tong Education Services Centre. A total of 19 primary and secondary schools shared their ideas for promoting positive values and attitudes in the context of English Language education in their schools through a plenary session and ten breakout sessions.



The articles in this issue of the NET Scheme News will tell you how our English teachers help build positive, value-rich educational environments through daily English learning and teaching. A drama show called 'Mr Nobody Becomes Somebody', a Seed project focused on 'What are the secrets of happiness?' and a Reading across the Curriculum and STEAM project called 'How to Fly in a Playful Way', are just a few of the many creative ideas of English teachers that have enriched students' English learning experiences that you can read about in the following pages. As Ms Maria Wong said in 'The Power of Hope: Building Optimism in Our Students' on page 13, "hope was about having the enthusiasm, passion, motivation, and determination to overcome difficulties and challenges. Ultimately, we wanted to make a difference in the lives of our students and let them develop happily and healthily with positive emotions."

At the beginning of this new year, may I take this opportunity to wish you a healthy and a fruitful 2023. Please check our website to keep up to date with news about learning and teaching and to keep track of the latest developments in the NET Section.

Iris Chan
Chief Curriculum Development Officer,
NET Section



¹ Griggs S, Crawford SL. Hope, Core Self-Evaluations, Emotional Well-Being, Health-Risk Behaviors, and Academic Performance in University Freshmen. J Psychosoc Nurs Ment Health Serv. 2017 Sep 1;55(9):33-42. doi: 10.3928/02793695-20170818-11. PMID: 28850649.

STCPS English and Reading Fun Day

English and Reading Fun Day aims to promote students' love of reading and nurture their positive values through an array of fun English and reading activities. The theme of the day was 'Embrace Positive Values'.

Students took part in various fun activities. These included watching a drama show, making bookmarks, reading books, shooting photos and playing games.

All activities were designed to cultivate positive values in our students. For instance, students were asked to design bookmarks with positive quotes written on them. The drama show delivered a message of hope and confidence. The customised theme-based game booths were related to positive values as well.

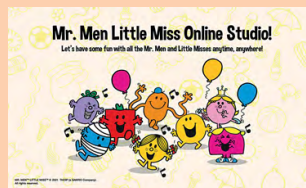
DRAMA SHOW

— Mr Nobody Becomes Somebody

The drama *Mr Nobody Becomes Somebody* was performed in the school hall. Mr Men and Little Miss characters spread positive messages throughout the hilarious live stage show. Performers interacted with students during the show. Students were highly engaged throughout the show. The hall was FULL OF LAUGHTER.



The message behind all of this? Hey, you are not a nobody. You are a SOMEBODY!



Have you ever wondered who you are and thought about your importance in this world? Maybe watching the play will help you learn more about the meaning of your life journey.



Puppets are a source of joy and imagination. Our performers created little quirks for their own characters, bringing them to life with their voices and hands.

PUPPET SHOW

— Little Red Riding Hood

P5 students performed a puppet show for their fellow schoolmates. It was adapted from a classic fairy tale — *Little Red Riding Hood*. The script, props, backdrops and puppets were creatively produced by the students and the training teachers. Our student performers used their great imaginations to create stories and adventures for their characters. The audience was surprised by this new version of *Little Red Riding Hood*.

INSPIRATIONAL BOOKMARKS

In the classrooms, students designed their own creative bookmarks with inspirational quotes written on them. Some students' gorgeous DIY tassel bookmarks were selected and presented to our P6 students as gifts of blessing, wishing them a bright and hopeful future. Let's spread our good vibes and positivity around. It will make the world a better place.



FUN GAME BOOTHS

We were grateful for our parent volunteers' and English Ambassadors' assistance. They helped with the game booths. Students played fun games at the booths in the covered playground. They threw bean bags, did matching games and much more. They had lots of FUN!



PHOTO BOOTH

Our parent volunteers, teachers and students all flocked to the photo booth to take pictures with our famous characters from 'Mr Men and Little Miss'. The room was lit up by these much-loved characters.

Get your props ready? Let's capture our memorable moments. Say CHEESEEEEE.....

LEAVES AND TREES OF HOPE



Students wrote messages of hope on the leaves of the Tree of Hope.

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English and Reading Fun Day provided an English environment for students to collaborate and interact with their friends in an enjoyable way. The fun activities, when adapted to a range of different learning styles, help the students to develop a sense of creativity and a competitive spirit. With the students not being in the classroom, they feel less pressurised and are more willing to converse in English. This is a joy to see, proving that English Fun and Reading Day can be a great confidence booster for the students.

Miss Gina Pang, NET

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Through English and Reading Fun Day, other ambassadors and I have learnt a lot from organising the activities. Before the event, we learned to design posters, came up with ideas for the game booth names and game instructions, wrote the video script and shot the video for promoting the event. Also, teachers taught us manners about being in charge of the game booths. On English and Reading Fun Day, we had activities like a drama show, fun game booths, reading tents, principal's story sharing and bookmark design. We really enjoyed all these activities!

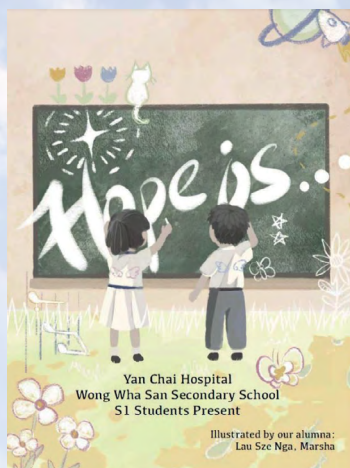
5B Rainbow Kwok, English Ambassador

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**Christie Tse, English Panel Chair,
Sham Tseng Catholic Primary School**

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The Journey of Hope at Yan Chai Hospital Wong Wha San Secondary school is a collaboration project between the English Department and the Guidance Committee to echo the values education-related initiatives of the EDB. With the support of the NET Section, the Peer Power – Student Gatekeeper Training Programme organised by the Educational Psychology Service (Kowloon 1) Section and funded by the Beat Drugs Fund, we were able to promote positive values with a kaleidoscope of events.



We started with having our students think about what hope means to them. With illustrations by our former students, we managed to put together a collage of what our S1 students think hope is!



Scan the QR code for more details of the publication

Join hands for Friends

In connection with the 'Read to Speak' (R2S) "Seed" Project, the English Department worked collaboratively with the NET Section. Through the project, our English teachers co-developed learning and teaching materials on 'Friendships & Respect Differences',

which was one of the themes during the campaign on "Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW) 2021/22" – Week of Hope.

S1 students had the chance to learn about different aspects of friendship and the beauty of diversity. By respecting differences, friendships become stronger and longer-lasting. A range of multimodal texts were selected for students to understand the notion of friendship and diversity in a more comprehensive manner. It is hoped that, through the learning activities, students can develop not just language skills, but also positive values and attitudes towards diversity and individual differences in particular. After all, we all need friends – let's be supportive and caring friends!



English teachers showing students how to braid a friendship bracelet in the workshops

Paint Your Hope



Our S2 students were introduced to 'Paint Your Hope', they were asked to express their image of hope with their Pastel Nagomi Art! Nagomi Art, also known as Art of Hope, is a form of therapeutic art originating from Japan. The word 'Nagomi' means harmony and calmness. Not only did this therapeutic and creative process enable students to find their inner peace, but it also provided the occasion for our students to represent hope through this art form.



Our Journey of Hope

Shots of Hope

In collaboration with the Design & Technology Department and the Guidance Committee, all our S3 students turned into mini-directors to showcase their short clips of hope! They needed to work on the storyboard from scratch in the form of a 4-panel comic and in their stop-motion videos, Lego mini-figures are spreading messages of hope.



Chan Sze Wing, S3A



Ng Ka Yan, S3B



Fook Pak Yin, S3B

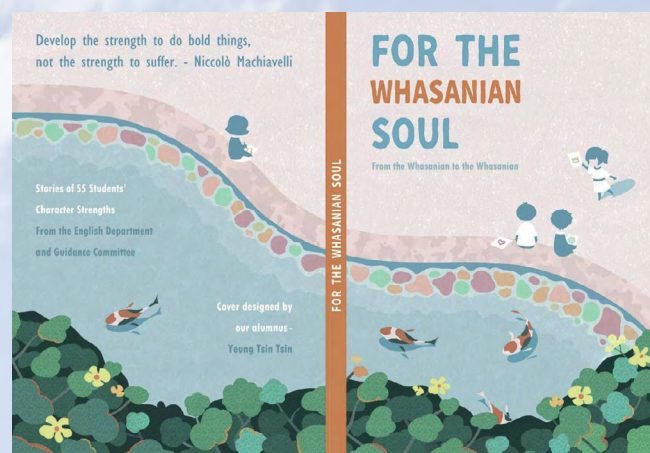
In Time to Catch a Dream

A dreamcatcher is a symbol associated with Native American culture. It protects the owners from bad dreams and keeps them safe with good dreams. Teachers helped our S4 students to weave their dreams in a workshop.



Doses of Strengths in 'The Whasanian Souls'

Prior to compiling the stories for 'the Whasanian Souls', our S5 students were asked to take the Character Strengths test, a scientifically validated psychometric test, which provides a wealth of information to help them identify their best qualities as well as to apply their strengths to find greater well-being.



To give up or not to give up

SA POON Wai Chi

Never give up, in other words, persist in the thing you want to succeed in. However wrong the situation may be, do not abandon it. Different from hope, it gives you the courage to persevere. Similar as they may seem, they are not the same.

When I was young, I guess about 10, I was diagnosed with obesity. I suffered from being the object of ridicule among my friends, not to mention bullying. Every day I experienced as if I went through hell once, sometimes twice. Under this circumstance, I refused to go to school.

Recalling one of the incidents. One day, after being satirized and beaten by some of the classmates, I sprinted to toilet immediately for an escape. While dashing through the corridor, I felt that there were many eyes staring at me, mouth laughing and discussing, not even one of them tried to render a hand. I felt extremely shamed, I slammed the toilet door shut, but I felt that there was a monster lurking outside the door, roaring and ready to swoop on their prey - me. Cutting me some slack was not one of their considerations. During the panic, the school bell saved me, it muzzled the monster to the classroom. After few minutes, skeptically, I went back to the classroom.

That was something I had never imagined happening at school, with

sents and intelligent teachers inside. As I least expected, ened the door, the teacher was looking at me. I put up my ever what I got was an angry reply. "Where did you go?" I shouted, "Please be punctual, everyone was telling me you ng sacks at the tuck shop again!" I tried to explain, yet interrupted me, "The class is better without you."

even permitted to learn just because of my body shape. accepts my existence. I left the classroom without a sound, as dering around aimlessly, I went up to the rooftop, thinking a nightmare. At that very moment, I heard an angelic voice, "ve up, they would be even happier, wouldn't they?" I was the voice. I ran out of the school and straight back home. transfer to another school." Even knowing my mum seldom my wish, I still had to give it a try. After a while of silence, turned her face from puzzled to merciful. "It should have nd time for you, right? My little girl." She stretched her arms. longer hold my tears.

s later, when all the application procedures were done. I was go back to school. Be that as it may, the scar would never fast, it deeply embedded in my heart. But still, I want to try. I went to school, confidently introduced myself, "I am was where my life truly began.

e plunged into an abyss. I was hopeless, but plight shouldn't e. It can never trap you forever. "If there's a will, there's o, you should give yourself hope, and that will give you a future by the motion it produced.

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Poon Wai Chi, S5A

Lennie Lam Ling Yee,
Assistant Principal and English Panel Chair,
Lam Wing Sum,
Assistant English Panel Chair,
Yan Chai Hospital Wong Wha San
Secondary School

Hope Springs Eternal

As a new Regional NET Coordinator, it seems to me that this focus on hope is a huge push in the right direction – especially after three such long, tumultuous years. It finally looks like (touch wood) that we are over the worst of it. Although it might take time for young people (for whom three years is a large chunk of their lives) to make amends for all the time lost, the message of optimism continues to ring out loud and clear through a variety of activities that I have been fortunate enough to see in action in my first few weeks on the job.

The “Week of Hope”-cum-“Seed” Projects Experience Sharing Session held at the EDB Kowloon Tong Education

Services Centre on 22 October 2022 gave me a real insight into the type of support that has been instigated in schools around Hong Kong and the enthusiasm of the teachers. The teachers’ presentations go to show just how much can be achieved from an initial sticking point to a successful outcome when positive discussions are about ways to overcome these challenges.

While this topic of the COVID-19 pandemic certainly binds us together and has given us a common sense of globalism, many schools have seen dents to their educational infrastructure, not only with the drop in numbers of staff and students, but also the considerable obstacles to learners’ progress. Meeting with a S1 teaching team for school-based support at a school in Tiu Keng Leng, teachers explained how online lessons had impacted their students’ pronunciation and prevented students from developing verbal fluency skills. Now, hopefully, as teachers reach out for help, we can all try to work together to redress some of these negative effects.

Now that students are back for full school days, the facilities, resources, and clubs are back in action; from the school gym to orchestras and bands, things are really getting back to normal. Ashley Measures, a new NET I met last week at the NET induction has so many students newly interested in debating that he is considering expanding his club to accommodate more teams from across year groups. Many students are excited about putting their ability to argue to good use!

A couple of weeks ago, I watched the Filmit awards ceremony, and met teachers and students who had been nominated for awards in categories from best film to technical awards. We were even fortunate enough to get live performances of street dancers. The message of hope had been interpreted through a dance display from Salesians of Don Bosco Ng Siu Mui Secondary School and it was encouraging to see how these boys have used this time to learn and hone new dance skills.



The team led by John Orams, the NET from Hong Kong Red Cross John F. Kennedy Centre, which was awarded the Spirit of Filmit award, told me how much the students loved taking part and collaborating to make their film, and was grateful for the opportunity for his students to showcase their talents and develop collaboration skills.



Students were keen to take photos to record the moment along with memorable quotations from the films and even signed four giant letters: H O P E with their own messages of hope.



All winning students were invited to give an acceptance speech which was a unique and meaningful opportunity to practise their public speaking skills in front of a wider audience. One cannot help but think how these shining examples are going to carry us forward into the next chapter with hope and optimism.

If, as us teachers often emphasise to our students, we need to come across new language in a minimum of 7 contexts to truly understand and embed this language, then I'm sure that our Hong Kong students have embraced this positivity and optimism and taken this message back to their classrooms, homes and playgrounds to spread the feeling.

Last week, I was involved in the Speak Up – Act Out! workshop for teachers who would like to do more improvisational drama in school. Many students love role play, especially the primary kids, but in secondary, it is also great opportunity for students to use their creativity and imagination to put themselves into new situations. If you're not enrolled for the competition this year, think about incorporating improvisation activities into the topics you teach to develop and diversify ideas as preparation for reading and writing activities. It is a wonderful way to develop empathy so students can get into the shoes of their characters and explore different perspectives for deeper understanding. It also offers hope as we search for the good in people!



I personally remain optimistic about Hong Kong, especially since I have seen friends come back to the city from overseas with a renewed realisation that Hong Kong still offers a wonderful environment in which to bring up children, and enjoy life with friends and colleagues, experience a diversity of languages and meet people from a rich variety of backgrounds and countries. And so, in the words of Alexander Hope, let's hope that 'Hope Springs Eternal'!

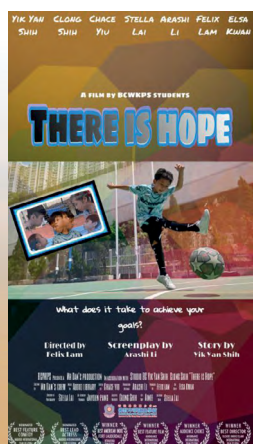
Hannah Standring,
Regional NET Coordinator, NET Section

Hope Shines Through in 2022

This year's Filmit 2022 Awards Ceremony was held on 12 November 2022. The ceremony was attended by Ambassador Thomas Gnocchi, Head of European Union Office (EUO) to Hong Kong and Macao, Ms Chan Pui Ka, Press and Information Officer of European Union Office (EUO) to Hong Kong and Macao, and Mr Ashley Leung, Principal Education Officer, Curriculum Support and Quality Assurance of EDB.



Students from Buddhist Sin Tak College emceeing the ceremony



This year's competition entries highlighted a great leap forward in students' film-making abilities. Attendees of the ceremony were inspired by the technical videography displayed by students from Kwok Tak Seng Catholic Secondary School. This school was awarded prizes for not just one, but two film entries this year.



From left: William Cheng, Ashley Leung, Thomas Gnocchi, Iris Chan, Chan Pui Ka

The global pandemic has been at the forefront of most of our thoughts in recent years. However, *There is Hope*. This was the title of the winning entry of Best Overall Film from the Primary Section from Buddhist Chung Wah Kornhill Primary School. Their narrative followed Yik Yan who was struggling to improve his football skills. Eventually, through motivational talks from his elder brother, Yik Yan became a star player of his school's football team.

The Filmit awards ceremony was a hit with both students and guests. Nominated films were showcased, emphasising the growth in film-making skills from both primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. In 2023 we are hoping for more schools to participate to open a world of possibility for our students.

**The Filmit Team,
NET Section**



Becoming a Champion of Hope

As teachers of students with special needs, we are in a unique position to empower both these students and their parents so as to achieve outcomes that will bring them profound and long-lasting benefits. At Hong Chi Winifred Mary Cheung Morninghope School, we always presume that our students have the ability to learn and we recognise the importance in supporting parents in their advocacy.

Using the 'Least Dangerous Assumption' in Educational Decisions

More than 30 years ago, Special Educator Anne McDonnellan first stated that, "in the absence of conclusive data, educational decisions should be based on assumptions which, if incorrect, will have the least damaging effect on the students". The least damaging assumption is to presume the competence of all students.

The idea of presumed competence is a component of the 'New Paradigm' of disability, and is to assume that a person with special needs has the ability to learn. This represents a major break from earlier definitions of disability, where differences tended to be seen as deficiencies.



Presuming competence is not wishful thinking. It is the mindset that every student has intellectual ability and an inherent desire to learn, to contribute and to be engaged in relationships with others. It is giving every student a chance and helping them access that opportunity in any way we can. How do we go about living the least damaging assumption and providing the opportunities that presumed competence generates?



We do this by:

- *focusing on who our students are becoming, not what they are doing;*
- *focusing on processes rather than products;*
- *believing that learning and growth are possible for all;*
- *providing access to robust support and instruction;*
- *focusing on teaching and providing enriching experiences;*
- *accepting what a student is able to do now and partnering for growth;*
- *using ongoing dynamic assessment as an opportunity to better understand the student and share their understanding with others; and*
- *introducing and teaching Assistive Technology such as writing support, speech-to-text, reading pens and word-prediction software.*

Helping Parents to Strengthen Their Advocacy

As teachers, we know the critical impact parents have on students' learning outcomes. How can we help parents strengthen their advocacy and become cheerleading voices for their children? We prepare personalised milestones and trajectories for their children to visibly demonstrate their progress so that there is recognition for families' hard work and validation for their aspirations. We motivate parents by making sure they have a chance to celebrate every 'small win' along the way as their kids pass these milestones and achieve these trajectories.

When parents have hope, we can rely on them to back their kids, to be in their corners, rooting for them. With their help, these kids can and will reach their potential.

**Miku Tsang, English Panel Chair,
Theresa Cheung, NET, Christy Chong and
Euchar Poon, LETs, Hong Chi Winifred Mary Cheung
Morninghope School**



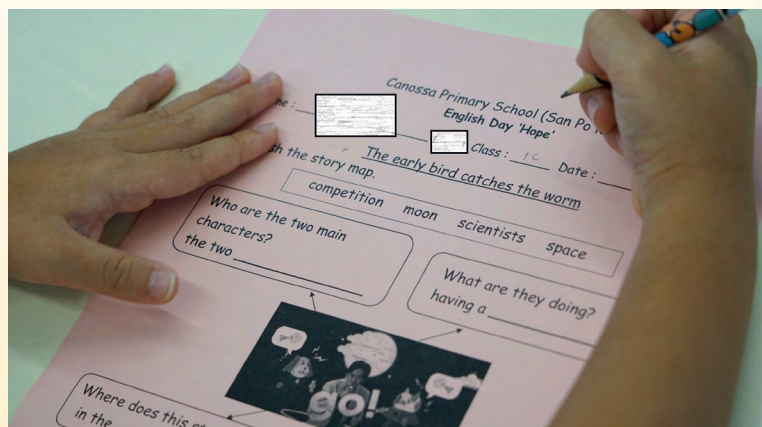
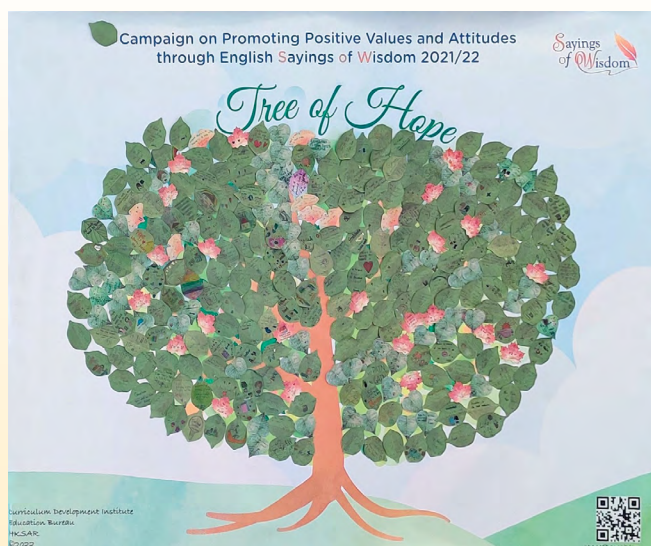
FUNTASTIC READING SCHEME



Back in 2017, our school implemented the 'FUNtastic Extensive Reading Scheme', an adaptation of a successful initiative of the National Library Board in Singapore who provides young readers of different ages with a 'Suggested Reads' booklet annually. The scheme aims to cultivate the love of reading among children and promote values education, including Canossian values. Each year we choose a selection of books linked to the school's values of the year, which we then promote on our school website and on weekly English Wednesdays. At the end of each term, we design a Home Reading Booklet recommending books we read and providing three activities identical or similar to the ones we introduced on English Wednesdays. This way our families know what their children read at school and they become more engaged.

THE WEEK OF HOPE

COVID-19 restrictions and the suspension of face-to-face classes in February and March 2022 completely changed our initial plans for the Week of Hope, which



eventually turned into an English Day. Designing activities for that occasion became a brilliant extension of our values education. Throughout the week embedding the English Day, our students, parents and teachers wrote their messages of hope on the leaves of a huge Tree of Hope provided by the EDB. All our students were also tasked with making their own mini trees. P1 and P2 students watched a video and explored the meanings and uses of the English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW). After watching short animations about hope, our KS1 and KS2 students worked in groups to memorise as many words and sayings of wisdom as they could. As the word/saying cards were displayed away from their tables, they had to take turns to run to them, memorise one and then report it back to their group so they could jot it down on their group's whiteboard. In addition, P3 and P4 students focused on mindful colouring, while P5 and P6 students coloured pieces of a rainbow, which they then put together to create a large collaborative piece of art. P5 and P6 students also played SOW board games in small teams.



THE POWER OF HOPE

Weaving the FUNtastic Reading Scheme into our weekly English co-curricular activities allowed us to promote family literacy and foster positive values in an attractive, child-friendly way. Both children and their carers are now very familiar with important values and exciting children's literature. The provision of relevant teaching experiences does not require any additional effort from the educators and values education is well-established in our students' daily lives. After all, every single text is meant to teach us a lesson, often related to important values – why not use them to our advantage?

Karolina Tomaszek,
NET, Canossa Primary School (San Po Kong)

The Power of Hope:

“Our story is about the power of hope. Hope gave us the determination and the motivation to keep going despite the difficulties and challenges.”

Children’s voices filled the air as they skipped down the corridor singing the song from the Song Campaign. Their spirits were high as they waved their leaves in the air, their destination the Reading Room. They oohed and aahed when they entered and saw the Tree of Hope. One student blurted out excitedly, “It’s amazing!”

The Week of Hope highlighted our school’s effort to promote positive values and attitudes. It aligned with our concerns to build a positive motivational state in our students: a lack of interaction during the suspension of classes was a possible factor. The key strategies were the Song Campaign and the Tree of Hope. We employed a cross-curricular approach, collaborating with the music and visual arts panels for the former, and using a whole-school approach for the latter.

We decided on a song campaign because our students love to sing. We utilised a cross-curricular approach owing to its benefits. First, the interplay between music, visual arts, and English is reciprocal. The language learned in the English lessons from song lyrics got recycled through the arts, which inspired students’ creative expression in drawings and colours. Second, for primary students, ‘hope’ can be abstract. We made it more tangible through art forms. The fans that the students creatively decorated personified hope. They could feel hope; they could grab hope!

To cultivate positive values and attitudes, the children have been learning positive affirmations like, “Believe in yourself,” “I try my best,” and “I can do it!” through daily routines. The children decorated the leaves with these messages to further spread positive vibes.



Building Optimism in Our Students

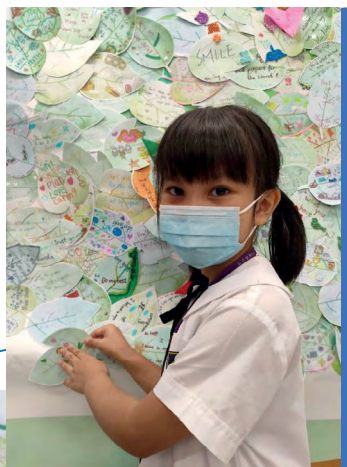


We followed up on the Week of Hope with informal conversations to assess the impact. About one-third of our students participated. We noticed they could use positive affirmations to motivate themselves, and the strategies they talked about showed their resilience and perseverance.

It was not all smooth sailing, however. As one visitor observed, she was touched by how little fuel we could run on, including few human and physical resources, and at times low engagement from the students. Yet she was amazed that we could still teach and sing with unbelievable passion, all because of the POWER of HOPE.

Indeed, hope kept us going. For us, hope was about having the enthusiasm, passion, motivation, and determination to overcome difficulties and challenges. Ultimately, we wanted to make a difference in the lives of our students and let them develop happily and healthily with positive emotions. At the same time, we strived to serve as their role models. We worked as a team and used a growth mindset to affect the students so that they could act more positively themselves. The latter is one way to sustain the Week of Hope's impacts. What are the plans for the coming year? We will continue to use routines as a strategy, embedding feeling check-ins and growth-oriented feedback, and enhancing our students' positive values and attitudes through scenarios.

Maria Wong, NET, Po Yan Oblate Primary School



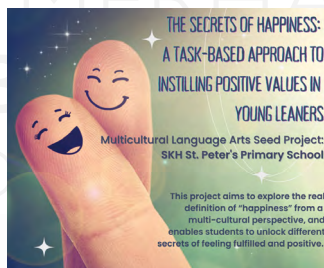
Glocalisation: Developing Students' Language and Intercultural Competence through a Multicultural Language Arts Programme in KS2

A step to prepare students to be global citizens in future

We all live in a multicultural world. When we encounter people from different places and cultural backgrounds, it is important to develop a level of intercultural competence that enables us to appropriately communicate with them. In this 'Glocalisation: Developing Students' Language and Intercultural Competence through a Multicultural Language Arts Programme in KS2' "Seed" project (as MLA "Seed" project in short), we aim to develop students' language and intercultural competence that will enhance their knowledge and skills to understand culture, develop respect, empathise with others and reflect on the intercultural experience. Most importantly, MLA "Seed" project prepares students to be ready to communicate and collaborate with people of different cultural backgrounds in the future. To help students understand the world, different forms of language arts inputs are carefully selected to provide students with the pertinent 'windows' (to learn about other cultures) and 'mirrors' (to reflect on one's own culture). In addition to the cultural aspects, values education as well as the 21st century learning skills are also highlighted in the project.

Different modules on various topics have been developed in collaboration with teachers. To celebrate the success as well as share the good stories from schools, we are honoured to have teachers from QES Old Students' Association Branch Primary School and S.K.H. St Peter's Primary School to share their first-hand implementation experience with teachers in 'Week of Hope'-cum-"Seed" Projects Experience Sharing Session – A Design for Life: Values Education in English Language Education on 22 October 2022. Participants were excited to learn about how they could prepare and equip students for future challenges.

Winnie Cheung, Curriculum Development Officer, NET Section



Food for Thought

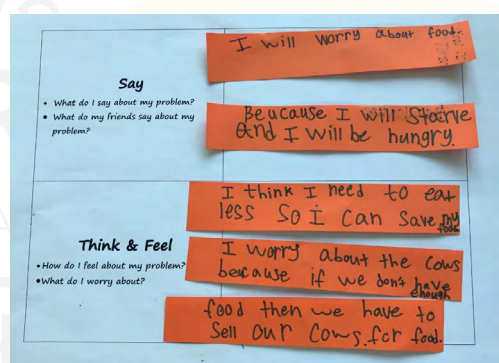
'Culture' was at the heart of the MLA "Seed" project implemented in our multicultural P4 classroom.

The Food for Thought unit introduced students to different cultures and global diversity which increased their awareness of their own culture and also what it means to be a global citizen.

Students were exposed to various multimodal texts and supporting activities related to the theme. Through the eyes of a girl from Mali, students put themselves in her shoes and empathised with her. Throughout the module, students learnt about various cultures from different persons and explored ways to build a better world. Suggestions made by students were thoughtful as well as practical.

Students enjoyed the module as it provided the opportunity to share their own culture and their special dish with classmates.

**Wandy Cheung, English Panel Chair,
Bui O Public School**



Inculcating Positive Values through Culture

It was our pleasure to join this MLA "Seed" project. We all agree that learning English is not confined to learning the four language skills, vocabulary and grammar. As an international city, our students are bound to encounter people from all over the globe. They will come across various cultures and may need to adapt to them. Therefore, raising students' intercultural competence is important in the English language classroom so that they can communicate effectively with different people in the future.

As teachers, our main aim is to see how our students have changed after our teaching. We successfully let them experience authentic learning in the classroom. They are more aware of their surroundings, be it the local or the global community. In addition, they use the four language skills to inquire and research in this project. They take an active role in learning. They become more respectful and more understanding towards other cultures and their intercultural competence has been enhanced.

In English language learning, we always emphasise learning in context and the use of authentic materials. All these elements are included in this MLA "Seed" project. This is the reason why we joined this programme in the first place. In the preparation process, some thinking routines were introduced, such as SCAMPER and the Empathy Chart. We can use these thinking skills and the thinking tools in other school-based units too. The MLA "Seed" project enhances teachers' professional development as well. We are more confident and ready to prepare our students to be global citizens of the world.

Rachel Chan, English Panel Chair, QES Old Students' Association Branch Primary School



What are the Secrets of Happiness?

P6 students from S.K.H. St. Peter's Primary School explored the true definitions of happiness and discovered various ways to achieve life satisfaction from the MLA "Seed" project last year. Students understood that 'pleasure' is not equivalent to 'happiness' but merely a fraction of it. True happiness stems from engagement, passion and life purpose.

Students came across and examined the direct relationship between a country's GDP and its citizens' happiness index and, at the same time evaluated the background implications and impacts. Culture also plays a major role in affecting people's perception of happiness. Students were exposed to different childhood games around the world and realised that the fundamental essence of 'games' is the fun and bonding shared between playmates. Life stories of people who are challenged by disabilities, such as Nick Vujicic and So Wa Wai, were introduced for students to understand the importance of gratitude and appreciation. Last but not the least, as the old saying goes, "It's more blessed to give than to receive," students read authentic examples of children helping out in their community and thus realised their own power and capability of doing the same.

Dennis Tam, English Panel Chair, S.H.K St Peter's Primary School



Festivals around the World

The MLA "Seed" project was implemented to develop students' language and intercultural competence in P6. From the unit on Festivals around the World, students were curious about the culture of different countries, including the traditions and customs of festivals, and they took the initiative to do their inquiry-based learning with the use of technology to further expand their knowledge of the countries. Teachers were glad to see that students have gained a better intercultural understanding of different countries through a range of activities. With the use of thinking tools, their thinking skills were also enhanced. Teachers also agreed that this project broadened students' horizons and helped to enrich their writing. Through collaborative lesson planning, classroom support and post-lesson reflections, teachers were encouraged to share, disseminate and explore effective learning and teaching practices.

Sanda Yeung, Project Coordinator, HHCKLA Buddhist Ching Kok Lin Association School



Networking through Regional Cluster Meetings

Recently the Kowloon Region held its first cluster meeting of the school year. The focus was on using thinking routines in reading lessons. Regional Cluster Meetings provide a platform for sharing effective English language learning and teaching strategies; enhancing collaboration between NETs and other English Panel members; supporting the implementation of the English Language curriculum in schools; and promoting communities of learning for ongoing professional development and support. When we invite teachers to present, we always encourage them to share ideas that other teachers can take back to use in the classroom. Cluster meetings are a great way for teachers to meet others in a less formal setting. They provide a forum for networking and making connections with others. Teachers have noted that these meetings make them feel included and supported. This is particularly important for new teachers to Hong Kong.



cluster meetings, so feel free to offer your premises if you can. Although the cluster meetings are regional, they are open to all English teachers across Hong Kong, and we were happy to see

that many teachers from outside of our region took the opportunity to attend.

The use of thinking routines in the classroom was the central theme of the cluster meeting. A range of thinking routines was introduced and briefly explored. In particular we looked at the routines called Tug of War, I used to think... now I think, See Think Wonder, Step Inside, 3-2-1 Bridge, and Circle of Viewpoints. Thinking routines are used in classrooms to introduce ideas, to dig deeper into concepts, and to connect, synthesise and analyse. There are also thinking routines which can be used for feedback. Tailoring the thinking routines to the work you are doing in a purposeful way is important, and this was modelled throughout the demonstration lesson given in the cluster meeting. This cluster meeting was run by the RNCs from the Kowloon Region, Richard Cowler and Luana Hasell.



The most recent cluster meeting was held at Queen Elizabeth School in Mong Kok. Teachers were appreciative of the library venue, which served our purposes perfectly. We are always looking for schools to host our twice-yearly

I attended my first regional (Kowloon Region) cluster meeting last week. As a new NET, and recent arrival to Hong Kong, participating in this event is important not only to build community but to also build my own continuing professional development. Starting a new job in a new city can feel somewhat isolating. However, by participating in cluster meetings, I am immediately engaged in a community of like-minded professionals, fellow NETs, new teachers and RNCTs.

Johanna Clancy, CCC Ming Kei College



The key objectives of this cluster meeting were to Learn, Explore, Discuss and Reflect. Participants moved through each stage and were engaged throughout the entirety of the meeting.

Learn

The presentation in the form of a lesson demonstration was given by Rebecca Martyn from Marymount Secondary School. She presented a lesson based on a textbook used in the school, *National Geographic Life (Pre-Intermediate)*. The moral dilemma created was based on the reading passage about two climbers caught on a mountain, where one fell and the other had to decide whether to hang on to the rope or to cut his partner free and ultimately save himself.



Rebecca incorporated thinking routines into the lesson. Teachers used Tug of War to consider their options and question if they were really making the right decision. The routine also allowed teachers to consider the consequence of their choice and

whether they felt it was justified in the context. Teachers noted that these routines allowed all students to have a role and encouraged more reluctant participants to become engaged in a more kinaesthetic manner. The authentic nature of the text and the way that only half of the passage was revealed to the class added interest.

Explore

In the demonstration lesson, teachers were placed in the role of students. They were asked about the best and worst decisions that they had made in their lives. It was heartening to note that many said that coming to Hong Kong to teach was in their 'best decision' category. The discussion of worst decisions was somewhat more lighthearted. Teachers worked through the routines and trialled ideas, contemplating the dilemma that their decisions could bring. Teachers enjoyed the very active approach and were eager to hear what others thought.



One teacher noted the differences between learning about teaching and actually engaging in teaching activities.

After having had so much theoretical input, the practical applications and on-the-spot brainstorming is genuinely refreshing. In the classroom, sometimes we all just fall into habit and it becomes monotonous after a while. The cluster meetings help formulate new perspectives and more creative approaches to apply alongside our established class routines

Iqra Munir, HKFYG Lee Shau Kee College

Discuss and Reflect

The discussion which followed was robust and interesting. The genuine sharing of ideas and extension of these into further classroom activities built around reading, writing, listening and speaking was valued by the participants. We used a gallery walk activity to enable quick feedback to follow the group planning and discussion. Teachers were able to ask questions and consolidate ideas, and they benefitted from the input and feedback from others. Domino Discover was a routine which was used to gather feedback, and teachers were encouraged to focus on listening to others to produce a summary of the discussion.

There is something for everyone at the cluster meeting. You'll always walk away with more added to your bag of teaching tricks!

We welcome feedback and ideas for future cluster meetings. Further meetings on thinking routines, drama, and writing were some of the areas which participants requested. We hope to see many teachers at the next Kowloon Region cluster meeting, which will be held sometime in June. In the meantime, we would like to thank people for attending at this busy time.

**Luana Hasell,
Regional NET Coordinator, NET Section**

Forward Thinking: Our Vision, Strategy and Implementation of Week of Positivity 3.0



We were very grateful to be part of Tree of Hope 2.0 in the 2021/22 school year. It gave us the opportunity to network with a secondary school and The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and to participate in the Design Thinking (DT) project.



We had never ever dreamt of using DT in an English event but we did and with great success. We took a forward thinking approach to see if DT could be an opportunity to improve the delivery of values education at our school. In our planning for the Week of Positivity 3.0, DT provided the framework to plan with the students, to deliver activities jointly created with the students, and for the students. Let me explain how we did that.



Having had an in-depth discussion on the theory of DT, we learnt that one must go through 5 steps: empathize, define, ideate, prototype and test to succeed. Firstly, for the empathize step, there is a necessity to better target our students' needs, meaning that activities could be more creatively customised to match students' culture

and interests. Secondly, for the define step, a shared vision and focus among teachers is a must: teachers set goals for students to achieve like overcoming barriers to using English and increasing their confidence level in presenting. Thirdly, like designers, we brainstormed (the ideate step) as many crazy ideas as we could together with our students, who came up with ideas beyond our wildest imagination. We then picked the achievable ideas and realised them swiftly in the prototype and test stages.

We feel this is rather similar to promoting an entrepreneurial spirit and practising entrepreneurial thinking. Our teachers and students learnt to look at things from different perspectives, to learn to listen to others patiently and select the best ideas boldly.

We have learnt that there are five essential guiding principles when approaching a task through the lens of DT. Firstly, being student-centred by involving students in decision-making. Secondly, that DT is an iterative process in which ideas and tasks are reviewed and repeated if necessary. Thirdly, that trial and error are key so we must face challenges bravely and be fearless about making mistakes. Fourthly, participation is key and as many stakeholders need to be involved as possible. Fifthly, that we cannot do without empathy: understanding our students more. These principles and a forward thinking approach help to guide teachers to plan a better campaign for the Week of Positivity 3.0 and also to complete an evaluation process afterwards.

Our vision in the coming year is to infuse the teaching of positive values further into the English curriculum and our strategy is to use DT to realise positivity. Our DT journey continues!

**Harriet Chow, Vice Principal,
Sam Shui Natives Association Huen King Wing School**



Scan the QR code for more information about 'Week of Hope-cum-Seed Project Experience Sharing Session: A Design for Life - Values Education in English Language Education'