



# NET

## news Scheme

Keeping Stakeholders Informed

Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective. ■ *Martin Luther King Jr.*

### Welcome from our new CCDO (NET), Rosana Chong



## Welcome

to the 18<sup>th</sup> issue of the NET Scheme Newsletter. In Chinese culture, '8' is considered a lucky number as it sounds like 'prosper' in Chinese. Do you still remember the Beijing Olympics? It started at 8pm on 8/8/08. I hope therefore

this 18<sup>th</sup> issue of our Newsletter will bring to our readers plenty of good fortune.

But what is good fortune? That depends largely on our perspectives, which is the theme we have chosen for this issue. The experiences as shared by two of our NETs, one teaching at the primary level and one at secondary, illustrate just how entering the world and role of another person can give learning a new dimension and a totally different perspective.

Apart from disseminating good practices in English language learning and teaching, we would also like to promote healthier and happier living among the teachers, especially our NETs who might need some advice and tips on enjoying living in Hong Kong more. We have therefore included in this issue two short articles introducing interesting places to visit in Hong Kong during the weekends. Admittedly, Hong Kong is best known for its fast-paced and exciting life style with people and high-rises everywhere. Hopefully, reading about Hap Mun Bay and Tai O will give our readers a different perspective about Hong Kong. I do urge our

teachers to explore this other side of the city and relax in the natural beauty it has to offer.

To encourage our teachers to explore, we have included a 'Go surf; Go search' section in our Newsletter. The 'link' is provided so that by following the 'link', teachers can explore for more ideas and insight for both their personal and professional development. In this issue, we hope teachers will be directed to the path to harmony, which is hugely important in Hong Kong as there will be plenty of faces to greet every day, and plenty of challenges to meet along the way, both in the classrooms and in the city itself.

Since taking up my post in May 2010 upon the retirement of Mr. Simon Tham, the former Head of the NET Section, I have gained plenty of fresh new perspectives through working with my team and with the NETs. I am sure my feelings are shared by our new NETs, one of whom has written for this issue about her experience as a new NET. I have no doubt that we will be having more dialogues and exchanges in the days to come, enlightening dialogues that will broaden our perspectives and thereby deepen our understanding. Feel free to write and tell us about your school events and share your innovative teaching ideas. Send us the pictures too. Of course, do come and join us in our professional development workshops. You are always welcome.

Enjoy your reading, share the experiences, and search for more. All the best.

*Rosana Chong*  
Chief Curriculum Development Officer

## Primary's Corner

### Interview : Primary New NET

'The first term of school is the busiest.' This phrase rings true for schools all over the world and especially in Hong Kong. New NETs are frantically trying to settle into academic life and wishing that there were actually 36 hours in a day!

When I first arrived in Hong Kong keeping up with the pace of life was an exciting adjustment and after a year here I have only scratched the surface of what the city has to offer. I was delighted to learn that I would be going to an induction programme to learn more about life here and what to expect as a new NET. Okay, so the induction programme doesn't exactly lighten our workload but it is important. You learn lots of interesting facts and not just about your school administration but you are also given the tools that allow you to explore and make the most of Hong Kong on a social level.

I have met other NETs who have the same uncertainties and questions that I have been pondering since the start of term. It is a huge comfort to know that the Hong Kong Government values information sharing and actively encourages networking among its employees.

It is helpful to know that we have the capacity to create contacts which I hope, in time will be called 'friends'.

*Photo taken at Induction Programme for new NETs*



**From L-R**

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Leigh Brown       | Kwok Man School                                   |
| Jessica Kuwata    | HK Student Aid Society Primary School             |
| Amandeep Chahal   | Christian Alliance SY Yeh Memorial Primary School |
| Elizabeth Grobler | SKH Chai Wan St Michael's Primary School          |

I have learned a lot from my peers through the induction programme and know that we will be there for each other in the future. The sharing of knowledge and experience between people can only be a good thing that will enrich our personal and professional life.

*Leigh Brown,*  
NET

### Primary CPD Upcoming Events

#### Nov (2010)

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 1       | Support Programme for new NETs<br>(Session 3: The Central and School-based English Language Curriculum) |
| 16      | Principals' Workshop (conducted in English)   |
| 17      | Principals' Workshop (conducted in Cantonese)   |
| 19      | Support Programme for new NETs<br>(Session 4: Curriculum Emphasis on Reading)                           |
| 23 - 24 | Engaging students in reading through effective questioning techniques and follow-up activities          |
| 26      | Engaging P6 students in authentic communication through an interview / conversation class               |

### A Journey in the Dark



What is it like to be blind? The students of Shak Chung Shan Memorial Catholic Primary School found out first hand as they experienced the challenges and difficulties of being blind on a fieldtrip to Dialogue in the Dark. 21 students from P.5-6 participated as part of the school's English Enrichment Programme.

Dialogue in the Dark is an exhibition that took the students on a 75-minute journey in the dark on a "tour" of Hong Kong. The students learned how to use their senses as they navigated their way using a white cane through a park, onto a ferry, a market place, across a busy street, a cinema, and finally to a café where they bought drinks and snacks. Being in the dark even gave some students the courage to speak more in English.



The best part of the fieldtrip was the opportunity to interact with their visually impaired guides. For many of the students, it was their first time to meet and talk with a person who is blind. The students asked insightful questions in English and they learned that people who are visually impaired are no different from those who can see. What is most important is how we see with our hearts.

*Hester Lo,*  
NET

#### Dec (2010)

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| 1, 4    | Induction for new English Panel Chairs (EPCs) and School English Teachers (SETs) |
| 7 - 8   | Making the most of readers' theatre (Part 1): Introduction                       |
| 14 - 15 | Developing skills in using a process approach to writing                         |

#### Jan (2011)

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 21      | Organising an English Day   |
| 25 - 26 | Understanding multiple intelligences and its application on English Language teaching |



## Hansel and Gretel in Drama



The Strange Story of Hansel and Gretel, directed by NET Richard Cowler, brought the language arts alive at S.T.F.A. Seaward Woo College last year. This wasn't the cosy, sickly-sweet fairy tale. It went back to bare infanticide and cannibalism. It was like a nightmare... but with a happy ending!

‘Every year Mr. Cowler’s production has been a significant theatrical event in STFA Seaward Woo College. The performance of Hansel and Gretel was no exception. It was bursting with dramatic effects and visual details. The chorus created huge tension, and the story left the audience with so much to feel and so much to ponder. An arresting experience for our students!’

■ Miss Cynthia So, English Panel Chair

‘This year’s drama team took on the challenge of storytelling, drama and physical theatre. They were outstanding. They needed to fully throw themselves into it, and they did. I was delighted.’

■ Mr. Richard Cowler, NET.

Each year a team of student actors at Seaward Woo College is trained in drama and then prepares a performance for S1 in afternoon lesson time, as well as an open performance after school for students, teacher and parents. The S1 students complete some pre- and post-performance work that introduces them to the story and gives them the opportunity to reflect on the play and performance.

‘I thought the drama was exciting when the witch wanted to kill and cook Hansel. My favourite character was Gretel because she was very clever and brave. She wasn’t afraid of the witch.’

■ Chan Mei Lan, Mandy (1E)

‘Our performances have served two purposes. To stretch the ability of the student performers and to broaden the horizons of the student audience. This is one of the ways Language Arts has made an impact in our school.’

■ Mr. Chiu Hung Piu, Principal

### Do the student performers benefit?

‘My English has improved a lot, especially my pronunciation. I also learnt how to use space, cooperate with and be forbearing of others.’

■ Cheung Sum Mui, Anna (1E)

‘Drama is more than I thought it was. It’s about making a concerted effort as a team. People from different backgrounds and skills come together and work through many days and evenings till the day of the performance. I did not realise my English was improving too, until I found myself more confident when speaking. I love English more than ever before.’

■ Heloise Samantha Lam (1E)

‘I have learnt a lot of things in the drama team, but most importantly I have built up my self-confidence.’

■ Cheng Tsz Yiu, Athena (6A)

### Finally, what does the NET think?

‘The drama team is great company throughout the year. It’s a fun part of my job here and it’s very rewarding pushing them to perform to the best of their ability.’

■ Mr. Richard Cowler, NET

### RNCT PD Workshop Calendar

|            |    |  |
|------------|----|--|
| Nov (2010) | 4  | Responding to Social Issues in the English Classroom through Forum Theatre |
|            | 25 | Briefing Session for ‘Shorts’: A Short Story Writing Competition           |
| Dec (2010) | 2  | Speak Out – Act Up! Briefing Session                                       |
|            | 9  | Using Poetry for Reading and Writing                                       |
| Jan (2011) | 20 | Preparing Students for Classroom Debating                                  |

# Healthier & Happier Living

## Hong Kong Getaway

There are times you feel you just have to get away from it all. You think about cool breezes, white sand and crystal blue waters. Hmmm... Philippines? Thailand? Vietnam? All so far away. But here, on our very own doorstep, you can have cool breezes, white sand and crystal blue waters and a quick getaway from Hong Kong for about \$20 return. Where?

Get down to Sai Kung waterfront on any Saturday or Sunday and you will be harassed by local fisherwomen to buy a return sampan ticket to Hap Mun Bay, one of many inlets around the Sai Kung Peninsula. (Shouldn't be more than \$20 return so don't forget to barter!) Take note of the colour of your ticket (blue or yellow) and the flag on the sampan. A 20-minute ride brings you to Hap Mun Bay. Before you get on the sampan though, may I suggest you pop into the Park and Spend in the main street and get some picnic or BBQ supplies. (Don't forget your plastic wine glasses and trusty corkscrew!)

## Go surf ; Go search

'Wherever you stand, you're in the centre of the universe. There's neither big nor small. Galaxies and electrons exist only in your own perception. Everything revolves around you. Everything goes out from you and returns to you...

I used to believe that there was a you and a me. Then I discovered that there's no you, that in fact you are me. There aren't two to take care of, or three, or four, or a billion. There's only one. The relief of that! It's enormous! "You mean there's nothing to do? That if I'm okay, everything is okay?" Yes, that's exactly it. It's self-realisation. Everything falls sweetly, effortlessly, into your lap...'

*A Thousand Names for Joy: Living in Harmony with the Way Things Are by Byron Katie and Stephen Mitchell*

If you are interested in the above quote, do surf and search:

- Byron Katie
- Taoism



Arriving early on the beach means you can get a spot in the shade of the trees to set up your picnic lunch. If you want to BBQ the chicken wings, there are BBQ pits and more shady trees on the ridge. Heaven!

The sampans keep chugging in and out of the bay all day, so when you are ready to leave, just keep an eye on the colour of the flag. One Chinese New Year, I wanted to show some visitors that there were beaches in Hong Kong and we had the whole beach to ourselves. Try it! You'll love it.

*Jolanta Karczewski,*  
RNC

## Looking for something different?

Here's something different you might like to try over the weekend. Head off to Tai O at the far northwestern coast edge of Lantau Island to see a rare example of a Chinese stilt-house community. Tai O is the home of the Tanka people who have built their homes on stilts for generations as they don't feel safe on land or the high-rise building that the government has built for them nearby.

This place is an amateur photographer's paradise. You can spend the day wandering or getting lost in the myriad of small walkways or just relaxing on the verandah of one of the many cafes or eateries.

*Mary Scanlan,*  
AT

### How to get there:

Catch the ferry from Central Pier 6 to Mui Wo then bus 1 to Tai O. Or take the MTR to Tung Chung and take bus 11 to Tai O.



## OUR NEWSLETTER TEAM

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