Oasis 2012
Pui Ching Middle School
Dedication

The collection is dedicated to

God,

the founders of the school,

and

the inspiring principals

and teachers of Pui Ching,

who seek to make the school the best cradle

for nurturing talents and leaders of generations

in the past

now

and the time to come.
Foreword

Dr. Yip Chee Tim

It is indeed my pleasure to read all these wonderful pieces of literary works by our students. The articles, in one way or another, display the talent of the students of Pui Ching. They can write extremely well. I am deeply touched by their beautiful style of writing.

Their skills in writing bring forth special effects to impress those who enjoy reading. I am much impressed.

Good works speak for themselves.

Yip Chee Tim
Principal

4 January 2012
Words from the Editors

Subsequent to the previous revised publication of *Oasis*, there comes the heartwarming applause from various sides. With the precious experience and generous comments, we are now very honored to present to the readers yet another issue of this continual series, with a compilation of our students’ creative expression of their perception towards life.

*Oasis* is a collection of essays, which are primarily the creative work of our students who, through constant practice of reading and writing as well as shrewd observations of their immediate world, pour out their hearts in the form of short stories, novella, letters, diaries and articles. We understand that such precious perception and spontaneity towards life should never be allowed to be laid waste and it is our very aspiration to cultivate creativity in young leaders even at their early age. Sharing of insights, nourishing of the writing culture and appreciating of literary writing can inspire introspection and unleash the beauty of human minds, thus rekindling our passion for living. Linguistically speaking, it is indeed also our intention to help our students to master the language to express themselves more than adequately.

We are so blessed that teachers and students are so supportive in conceiving as well as giving birth to this publication, despite all the sweat and blood through the travails.

In taking greater pains to bring forth this issue into existence, we very much hope that when you are reading through the pages, savouring a line or two, may you envisage the oasis of freshness on the parched land of modern hectic life.

January, 2012
## Contents

Dedication
Foreword
Words from the Editor
Wholly Jolly

**Essays**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is Me!</td>
<td>Jack Yeung</td>
<td>1A 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The First Letter to a New Friend</td>
<td>Joey Man</td>
<td>1B 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Something about ‘Peter Pan’</td>
<td>Andrew Lau</td>
<td>1C 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Friendship with Jada</td>
<td>Toto Lam</td>
<td>1C 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Unpredictable Life of Summer</td>
<td>Michelle Keung</td>
<td>1C 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All about Me</td>
<td>Vincent Au</td>
<td>1D 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Smart Friend, Adi</td>
<td>Joe Wong</td>
<td>1F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Adventure of Ada and Candy</td>
<td>Adelaine Yu</td>
<td>1F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian Traditional Wedding</td>
<td>Jack Chan</td>
<td>2A 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Traditional Wedding</td>
<td>Jacky Yu</td>
<td>2A 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life after School</td>
<td>Jacky Yu</td>
<td>2A 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life after School</td>
<td>Tiana</td>
<td>2A 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New School Year</td>
<td>Jeffrey Tse</td>
<td>2B 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The New School Year</td>
<td>Winnie Fong</td>
<td>2B 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Letter of Advice to a Troubled Teenager</td>
<td>Angel Woo</td>
<td>2B 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Travel Article about Tsim Sha Tsui</td>
<td>James Li</td>
<td>2B 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What a Funny Dad!</td>
<td>John Lee</td>
<td>2C 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Good Plan Brings You a Happy End</td>
<td>Annette Chu</td>
<td>2C 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Letter of Advice to a Troubled Teenager</td>
<td>Jacqueline Lai</td>
<td>2D 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Dinner That Touched Mum’s Heart</td>
<td>Jeffrey Shin</td>
<td>2D 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Favourite Invention – A Device to Admire</td>
<td>Jeffrey Shin</td>
<td>2D 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Creations of God</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What a Perfect Day!</td>
<td>Max Tin</td>
<td>2D 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torches</td>
<td>Max Tin</td>
<td>2D 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Green Wedding</td>
<td>David Tsang</td>
<td>2D 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What an Unforgettable Meal!</td>
<td>Owen Lei</td>
<td>2E 42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never Give Yourself an Excuse</td>
<td>Vanessa Wong</td>
<td>2E 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Profile of Taylor Swift</td>
<td>Winfrey Siu</td>
<td>2F 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Mystery Unraveled</td>
<td>Lois Sit</td>
<td>2F 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadows</td>
<td>Jenny Pang</td>
<td>3A 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon and Darkness</td>
<td>Wing Luo</td>
<td>3A 51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concussions and Telekinesis</td>
<td>Isaac Tsui</td>
<td>3A 53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Layman’s Guide to Curing Insomnia  Isaac Tsui 3A 55
Sleep Tight, My Friend!  Carrie Cheung 3A 57
Say Goodbye to Sleepless Nights  Sarah Wong 3A 59
A Speech – Discard Your Unhealthy Lifestyle  Jason Cheung 3A 60
I was an Extra in ‘Police Report’!  Jolly Wong 3A 61
Let’s Get Rid of Junk Food in Our School!  Chris Au 3B 63
A Total Ban on Junk Food  Sharon Tse 3B 65
Let Junk Food Stay at the Tuck Shop!  Erik Chan 3B 66
Wealth or Health?  Charles Leung 3B 68
What’s the Most Essential Thing?  Sarah Tsang 3B 70
Being Healthy Makes One Beautiful  Crystal Chow 3B 71
I Dreamt of Sleeping Properly  Chloe So 3B 72
Having an Amusing Dream  Daniel Lee 3B 74
Handy Tips on Sound Sleep  Sophie Cheung 3C 76
The Story of Miss Havisham  Winnie Chan 3C 77
A Letter of Advice – To a Friend Who Suffered from Insomnia  Vicky Lam 3D 79
My “Unforgettable” Career Week  Christy Lam 3D 81
Blessing from Love  Vivian Siu 3D 82
Useful Tips to Get Rid of Insomnia  Yanica Chan 3E 86
Follow a Healthy Pattern of Sleep  Chantel Leung 3E 87
Co-Educational School Are More Beneficial for Students  Coco Lau 3E 89
The Secret of a Good Night’s Sleep  Gloria Au 3F 91
When Miss Havisham Was Young…  King Leung 3F 93
Hong Kong - More than Shopping and Working  Michael Ip 4A 96
Hey! Can I Switch on the Television?  Christy Tan 4A 98
Are Examinations Good for Students?  Emily Ho 4B 100
Support and Care – The Key to Curb Teenage Rebellious Behaviour  Quentin Li 4B 102
An Unusual Experience  Jason Tse 4B 104
A Heartfelt Lesson  Carrie Keung 4C 105
Say No to Drugs  Luby Lam 4C 107
A Tourists’ Paradise  John Lo 4D 109
The Many Facets of Our City  Joyce Wong 4D 110
What’s Wrong with Television?  Aishlyn Wong 4D 112
Don’t Turn on Your TV for a Long Time  Bella Liu 4D 114
The Worst Box that All Children Love  Lysander Yuen 4D 115
Welcome to Hong Kong!  Ray Chan 4E 117
Facebook and Its Influence  Ivan Yiu 4E 119
The Pros and Cons of Facebook  Rina Ho 4E 121
Teenage Drug Abuse
Low Birth Rate, High Stake Game
Saving Desperate Dolphins
Media Ethics
Is Cyber Bullying Inescapable?
Stop Cyber-bullying
So Wa Wai – The Legendary Success
Hong Kong’s Pride – Wong Wan-yiu
I Want That Phone!
Stop Dyeing the Cove with Dolphins’ Blood
Job Interview Tips for School Leavers
Teenage Drug Abuse
Advertising is Moulding the Youth into Materialistic Minds
The Truth
The Media: Power & Responsibility
Media Ethics
Media Ethics
Chaos on the MTR
Telepathy
Stop Being Selfish and Start Saving Dolphins
Save Them, Save Us
A Halt to the Cruelty
Should Freedom of the Media be Restricted?
Freedom of Expression – A Momentous Part of Democracy
Big Business is Not Only about Making Money
Hike Safe!
At the Crossroad: Marriage or Cohabitation?
World Peace and International Understanding in 21st Century
Big Business is Not Only about Making Money
Big Business is Not Only about Making Money
Safe Hiking
Hike Safe

Poems & Drama Scripts
Merry Christmas
Paris and I
I am Jonathan Lee 1A 276
Happiness is Kwok Tung 1A 277
School Would Be Beverly Chan 1B 278
Nervous Cally Mak 1B 279
Scream Vicky Lai 1B 280
I am Joey Man 1B 281
I am Leo Wan 1B 282
I am Mack Lai 1B 283
I am Stephanie Chi 1B 284
Pui Ching Middle School Alice Leung 1C 285
School is… Callista Chu 1C 286
School is… Janice Ling 1C 287
Happiness is… Gwyneth Wong 1C 288
Choosing Clothes Jason Siu 1C 289
Pain is… Constance Lee 1D 290
I am artistic Cherry Lui 1D 291
I am a shy girl Helen Yip 1D 292
I am a pretty girl June Luk 1D 293
I am a lazy boy Percy Wong 1D 294
I am Ella Wong 1D 295
I am Rachael Ho 1D 296
Oreo Chiu Oreo Chiu 1D 297
School is… Alex Tsang 1E 298
School is… Christy Ng 1E 299
SCHOOL IS Georgina Tse 1E 300
Happiness is… Kazaf Li 1E 301
I am a 12-year-old girl Emily Chan 1E 302
I am Tiana Tsang 1E 303
Ice Cream Clarice Lee 1F 304
I am playful kid Ellen To 1F 305
My Favourite Things Jillian Kwan 1F 306
Anger Sarah Kam 1F 307
Dreami My Dog Vienna Tam 2A 308
The Camera Karen Tung 2B 310
Politician Work Winnie Fong 2B 312
The Balloon’s Song Rainbow Cheng 2B 314
The Apple’s Song Joyce Yiu 2E 316
The Banana’s Song Ernest Poon 2F 318
Student Work Ernest Poon 2F 320
Student Work Allie Yam 2F 321
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Singer</th>
<th>Floor</th>
<th>Room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wanna be Yours</td>
<td>Christine Yam</td>
<td>2F</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanna be Yours</td>
<td>Neville Choi</td>
<td>2F</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanna be Yours</td>
<td>Winfrey Siu</td>
<td>2F</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let me be...</td>
<td>Jasmine Chu</td>
<td>2F</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to the History</td>
<td>Lucie Fan</td>
<td>3E</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wholly Jolly

a slapstick comedy
... I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

John 15:11

The secret source of humor itself is not joy but sorrow. There is no humor in heaven.

Mark Twain

Life is a tragedy when seen in close-up, but a comedy in long-shot.

Charles Chaplin
to the ONE who makes me sing and dance with crushed bones
to H.Y.
whose mere name can delight
GRANDPA – the couch potato
GRANDMA – the bed-ridden vegetable
FATHER – the husband [aka Mr. Follie]
MOTHER – the wife [aka Mrs. Follie]
BOOKWORM – the bookish daughter, always buried in books
WEIRDO – the odd-behaving son, always with a toy rabbit
ANNARIANNA – the domestic helper at Follie’s
UNCLE CHARLIE – Mrs. Follie’s brother
KID – Uncle Charlie’s kid [aka little Charlie], who plays hopscotch wherever he goes
house music: <Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring> by Johann Sebastian Bach

[BOOKWORM is reading at desk, buried in piles of books]
[GRANDPA is watching TV, with remote control in hand]
[GRANDMA is sleeping in bed, almost motionless]
[ANNARIANNA is doing household chores here and there, clumsily]

[FATHER and MOTHER are sitting at front stage in sofa, laughing somehow, gradually from giggles to ecstatic roars, continuously for half a minute]

FATHER: [panting vigorously] So?
MOTHER: [panting vigorously] So?
FATHER: [still panting] So, you mean we’ve lost the ticket?
MOTHER: [bitterly smiles] Well ...
FATHER: [with a fake smile, emphatically] Mrs. Follie, have we lost the ticket?
MOTHER: [embarrassedly] I’m afraid so …
FATHER: [wails, exaggerates] Good heavens, we have lost it!
MOTHER: [wails, exaggerates] Yes, Mr. Follie … we’ve lost the ticket …
FATHER: [suddenly becomes furious] But it was here, a moment ago!
MOTHER: But it’s gone now …
FATHER: Are … are you joking?
MOTHER: [stammers] Seriously, as you can see … I mean … as you can NOT see, the … ticket is … not here!
FATHER: [yells] Annarianna! Did you see the ticket?
ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don’t know …
FATHER: [to BOOKWORM] Hey, bookworm, did you see the ticket?
BOOKWORM: [indifferently] No.
FATHER: [to GRANDPA] Did you, father?

[Being slightly deaf and utterly devoted to the TV, GRANDPA does not realize he has been asked a question]

MOTHER: [to GRANDPA, volume up] Father, did you see the ticket?
MOTHER: Ticket!
GRANDPA: Why should I take it?
BOOKWORM: What’s the big deal? It’s just a ticket. Can’t you see I’m reading? Ah!! [growls and covers her ears with hands]
MOTHER: Oh, silly you, it’s not just a train ticket or a movie ticket!
FATHER: [emphasizes] It’s a Mark Six ticket!
MOTHER: [to GRANDPA] Yes, father, it’s a lottery ticket …
GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]

FATHER: Do you have any idea how important it is?

MOTHER: [retorts] Of course I do!

FATHER: We are becoming millionaires!

MOTHER: I know it! I know it! But the ticket has gone!

FATHER: What did you do to it?

MOTHER: I didn’t do anything.

FATHER: [rebukes] Then, why … why didn’t you do something?

MOTHER: [retorts] What was I supposed to do?

FATHER: Keep it!

MOTHER: But I wasn’t keeping it! YOU were keeping the ticket!

FATHER: Was I? I thought you asked Annarianna to keep it! Annarianna!

ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don’t know …

MOTHER: No, and I didn’t know where it was!

FATHER: But I thought YOU were keeping the ticket!

MOTHER: [immediately] No! You were keeping it!

FATHER: [louder] No, it was you!

MOTHER: [even louder] No, it was you!

[as they keep fighting, ANNARIANNA makes some tremendous noise while cleaning up]

[abruptly, both BOOKWORM and GRANDPA stand up, shouting in unison]

BOOKWORM &
GRANDPA: [shush the couple, violently] Keep quiet!

[BOOKWORM and GRANDMA resume their activities respectively]

MOTHER: Shh!

ANNA: [thinks she is being shushed at] Sorry Madam …

FATHER: Shush you!

ANNA: [thinks she is being shushed at] Sorry Sir …

MOTHER: All right, all right, so, what should we do now?

FATHER: And you are asking me!

MOTHER: [suddenly enlightened] Um … [sniffs, stoops down, quietly crawls about, whispers queerly] Hello? Where are you? Hey, where are you …

FATHER: [dumbfounded, watches curiously] What are you doing?

MOTHER: [turning her head] Trying to look for the ticket! Shh! [continues with a queer tone] Hello? Where are you?

ANNA: [on spotting a tiny card next to the sofa leg] Madam, are you looking for this? [picks it up]

[MOTHER crawls rapidly to that direction and grabs the card off ANNA’s hand]
MOTHER: [excited] I've got it! I've got it! [then frowns upon reading]
FATHER: Is that it? Annarianna?
ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don't know …
MOTHER: [reads the words printed on the card] Well … “Welcome, happy shopping” …
FATHER: What?
MOTHER: [disappointed] It's only for promotion…
FATHER: [waits] Ah … Where has it gone?
MOTHER: [stoops down again slowly, with a queer whisper] Hello? Where are you?
FATHER: [agitated] Can you stop that silly question? Do you think the ticket will talk back and say “Hello, I'm here” … [parodies in a queer tone]
MOTHER: But what else can we do?
FATHER: How do I know? [suddenly] Oh yes! Can you see your smart daughter over there?
MOTHER: You mean the bookworm?
FATHER: She might be hiding the ticket somewhere in her books!
MOTHER: So you mean we should go search her desk?
FATHER: Why not?

[both FATHER and MOTHER tiptoe towards BOOKWORM and start searching her books]

BOOKWORM: [irritated] Hey, what are you doing?
MOTHER: [tries to calm down BOOKWORM] Shh, just go on reading, darling.
BOOKWORM: Stop!
FATHER: [tries to calm down BOOKWORM] Hey, shh … shh … shh … your grandpa is watching TV!
BOOKWORM: [fed up, shouts] I said stop!
MOTHER: Oh my dear, the ticket may be hiding somewhere here. [to the books, in her typically queer tone] Hello? Where are you?
BOOKWORM: [angry] Hello! Have you both gone crazy? I've never touched your ticket and it's never … [throws books at them] … never in my place!

[ANNARIANNA picks up the book from the floor for BOOKWORM at once]

MOTHER: [looks at FATHER] So?
FATHER: So … what … what about your dad? [points at GRANDPA's direction]

[FATHER approaches GRANDPA]

FATHER: You know, your father might have taken it.
MOTHER: No, my dad would never steal it from us!
FATHER: [explains] I didn’t say he stole it. I just said he might have taken it without … without knowing it. Annarianna, am I right?

ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don’t know …

MOTHER: [ruminates] Uh-huh, that sounds possible, he’s becoming … forgetful lately …

FATHER: See?

MOTHER: So?

FATHER: [plots] Let’s search the old man …

MOTHER: Yes. [finger over her lips] Quietly.

[after communicating a bit with some funny sign language, with the help of ANNARIANNA, FATHER and MOTHER fumble with GRANDPA here and there, comically searching his seat, his pockets, his arms, his armpits, his hat, his nostrils, literally every inch of his being, while GRANDPA goes on watching TV undisturbed]

FATHER: [anxious] Did you see anything?

MOTHER: [anxious] No. Did you?

FATHER: Well, nothing in particular … except… this …

[ANNARIANNA raises a banana skin from behind]

MOTHER: [disgusted] What? Banana skin?

FATHER: [loudly] I think it’s from last Monday.

MOTHER: [more loudly] Yuck! The old man is sick!

GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]

[FATHER and MOTHER return to stage centre]

FATHER: [immensely agitated, to himself] Come on, where’s the ticket?

MOTHER: [turns to some other direction, in her queer tone] Hello? Where are you?

FATHER: [suspiciously] Oh, I see!

MOTHER: What? Is it here?

FATHER: [suspiciously] That’s why you keep saying that!

MOTHER: What did I say?

FATHER: [imitates] Where are you?

MOTHER: What’s wrong with that?

FATHER: You are trying to fool me with that question!

MOTHER: What are you saying?

FATHER: You are trying to brainwash me so that I may stop suspecting you!

MOTHER: Don’t be silly!

FATHER: [interrogates, now serious] Tell me, where are you hiding it?

MOTHER: I’m not hiding anything!

FATHER: How can I tell?
MOTHER: But I’m your wife!
FATHER: So what?
MOTHER: So you don’t trust me at all?
FATHER: But it’s millions of dollars!
MOTHER: [self-assured] Ok, you can search me.
FATHER: No regret?
MOTHER: Come on, and you’ll see that I’m perfectly clean.
FATHER: Let me see, then. [orders] Hands up!

[FATHER starts searching MOTHER, but she keeps shunning and laughing as she cannot be tickled]

FATHER: Can you stop swaying your body? Are you hiding it? Somewhere in your pocket?
MOTHER: Of course not … go on!

[FATHER goes on, but MOTHER keeps shunning and laughing involuntarily again]

FATHER: [stops searching] Honestly, are you hiding it somewhere?
MOTHER: No way!
FATHER: But you won’t let me search you!
MOTHER: Coz you keep tickling me! I can’t help it!
FATHER: Is it that hard?
MOTHER: You should try it yourself!
FATHER: Why me?
MOTHER: To check if you are NOT hiding the ticket yourself!
FATHER: And you’ll see that I’m cleaner than you, cleaner than paper!
MOTHER: [belittling] Yeah … toilet paper! Hands up!

[MOTHER approaches FATHER, trying to touch him lightly]

FATHER: [ticked and laughs] No … no! I mean … yes … oh no … yes … go on … please.
MOTHER: So, yes or no?
FATHER: [stretches his body in a funny way] Yes, I … I was just warming up, come … come on.

[MOTHER touches FATHER again, but FATHER can’t help moving]

MOTHER: Tell me, are you hiding the ticket?
FATHER: Of course not!
MOTHER: Then, should I continue?
FATHER: Yes, do go on …
MOTHER: Amarianna!
ANNA: Yes, madam …
MOTHER: Get me a ruler!
ANNA: Yes, madam …

[ANNARIANNA goes fetch a ruler from BOOKWORM’s desk without being noticed]

MOTHER: Hold his hands, and don’t let him move!
ANNA: Yes, madam …

[ANNARIANNA ties FATHER’s hands at his back]

MOTHER: Hold his hands, and don’t let him move!
ANNA: Yes, madam …

[ANNARIANNA points the ruler at FATHER’s armpit and moves it down along his ribs, while FATHER tries hard to stand the tickling, trembling, biting his lower lip, making some muffled sounds, but eventually fails to stand the itching touch of the ruler]

FATHER: [breaks free from ANNA and bursts into laughter] Wahaha …!
MOTHER: You are not being cooperative!
FATHER: [apologetic] I can’t help it …
MOTHER: See, it doesn’t really work.
FATHER: [struggles to prove his innocence] Well, then … what about this?

[then FATHER waves his limbs and jumps up and down nonstop hilariously, and nothing falls from his body]

MOTHER: What are you doing?
FATHER: [panting] See … I’m not hiding anything …
MOTHER: [convinced, but still suspicious] Ok, I believe you now!
FATHER: [still panting] So, what about you?
MOTHER: Of course I can prove myself too.

[then MOTHER does likewise hilariously, and nothing falls from his body]

MOTHER: [panting] See … I’m … I’m innocent … as much as you are …
FATHER: [panting, a while later, chuckles] Hah, you look funny. [then FATHER jumps up and down again, imitating MOTHER]
MOTHER: [panting, chuckles] Look at you! You jump like a pig! [then MOTHER jumps up and down, imitating FATHER]
FATHER: Yes a pig, you! [then FATHER jumps again]

[FATHER and MOTHER jump like two innocent children]

[WEIRDO enters]

WEIRDO: Hello father, hello mother. What are you doing?
FATHER: [stands still immediately, still panting, finds excuses] Nothing … we … we are just doing some exercise, you know, exercise … [then jumps up and down repeatedly as demonstration] Annarianna!

ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don’t know …

MOTHER: [still panting] And where have you been, son?

WEIRDO: Mother, I was taking my rabbit for a walk.

MOTHER: So how is he today? [to the RABBIT] Hello, how are you? [in her typically queer tone]

WEIRDO: [in an animal voice] I’m great.

FATHER: So, what have you got for lunch?

WEIRDO: Father, do you mean me or my rabbit?

FATHER: Ah … well … both …

WEIRDO: Father, I’ve got some French Fries. [in an animal voice] and I’ve got some bench flies.

[in his own voice] Yes, father, we’ve got a great day.

[MOTHER elbows FATHER, asking him to say something to WEIRDO]

FATHER: [plotting] So … um … son … well … have you seen our Mark Six ticket?

WEIRDO: Father, what is a … Mark Six ticket?

MOTHER: [to parents] Well … um … candy! He said “candy”!

WEIRDO: So, mother, are we lucky?

MOTHER: Well, sort of … lucky … and unlucky …

FATHER: [interrupts] If you can help us find the ticket, we’ll be very very lucky!

MOTHER: If you can find the ticket, we will buy you a lot of candies!

WEIRDO: [excited] Really?

FATHER: So, have you seen the ticket? It’s as big as your palm [shows his palm] and it’s …

WEIRDO: [nodding rapidly, lying] Oh … yes … I saw it!

MOTHER: [fascinated] Did you?

WEIRDO: [hesitates] Um … you know … me and my rabbit were taking a walk … and I remember the ticket was … here, right here! [then points at the rabbit]

MOTHER: [excited] And where is it now?

FATHER: Did it swallow the ticket? Get it to me or I’ll kill you, you stupid rabbit! [tries to grab hold of the rabbit]

WEIRDO: [in an animal voice] Help, help! [then runs around with the rabbit and eventually hides behind
GRANDPA[

[by now, FATHER and MOTHER talk to WEIRDO with GRANDPA sitting between them]

MOTHER: [hurriedly] So where is it now?
FATHER: [howls at SON, and GRANDPA too] Where is my tickeeeeeeect?
GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]
MOTHER: [gently] Darling, tell me, where is the ticket?
WEIRDO: [frightened, points at the door] I … I think it’s … it’s over there …
FATHER: [howls] Wherrrrrrrrre?
GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]
MOTHER: [gently] Darling, are you? [in her typically queer tone]
FATHER: [howls] Tell meeeweeeeww!
GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]
MOTHER: [gently] Darling, we’ll get you a lot of candies! Hello? [in her typically queer tone]

[WEIRDO comes out from behind GRANDPA’s back at last]

WEIRDO: [in an animal voice] It’s in the park!
MOTHER: [gently] Is that true?
WEIRDO: [nods his head] um, um!
MOTHER: [immediately turns to FATHER, resumes her normal tone] So?
FATHER: Okay, I’ll go to the park and look for the ticket. Annarianna!
ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don’t know …
FATHER: What do you know? Just come with me!
ANNA: Yes Sir …
FATHER: And you stay here, all right?
MOTHER: Well …
FATHER: [confidently] I’ll come back with the ticket soon!

[FATHER dashes out of the door with ANNARIANNA excitedly]

WEIRDO: [amid the silence] Mother …
MOTHER: What?
WEIRDO: Well, mother …
MOTHER: [agitated] What’s wrong?
WEIRDO: Mother …
MOTHER: [seriously, probing] Did you really see the ticket in the park?
WEIRDO: Well … mother …
MOTHER: [raises her volume] Yes – or – no?
MOTHER: [furiously] Why did you lie? I saw in your eyes you were lying! You know, good children should never lie!

WEIRDO: [apologetically] Sorry, mother …

MOTHER: [furiously] Give me your palm!

[WEIRDO stretches out his palm, MOTHER holds the ruler in mid-air, ready to hit his palm]


WEIRDO: Well … mother … because …

MOTHER: Why? You want to break my heart? Why?

WEIRDO: [barely audible] Because … because you never …

MOTHER: [dumbfounded, holds the ruler] What?

WEIRDO: [barely audible, slowly] Because mother and father never…

MOTHER: [dumbfounded] What?

WEIRDO: Because mother and father never … never go to the park. Because only me and my rabbit go … go to the park … [WEIRDO speaks bitterly to RABBIT]

[tongue-tied, MOTHER stares at WEIRDO, drops her hand slowly]

BOOKWORM: [amid the silence, shouts] Where is my ruler?

[WEIRDO takes the ruler off MOTHER’s hand, then, walking slowly, brings the ruler back to BOOKWORM]

[books the doorbell]

MOTHER: [confused, to the door] Is it your father? [to WEIRDO] Hey, did you say … the ticket was in the park?

[MOTHER moves curiously towards the door and opens it, only to find UNCLE CHARLIE and KID]

UNCLE: Hello, my beautiful sister! [then a smack on MOTHER’s cheeks with tremendous noise] Muah! Muah!

WEIRDO: [at seeing UNCLE CHARLIE, immediately rushes forwards for a hug] Uncle Charlie!

UNCLE: Oh, my darling boy! How are you?

WEIRDO: [obviously unhappy] … Bad …

MOTHER: [slightly crossed] Yes, very bad!

[scared of MOTHER, WEIRDO immediately joins KID for play, i.e. hopscotch]

UNCLE: Oh, what happened, my dear sister?

MOTHER: We’ve won the Mark Six lottery …

UNCLE: Oh, the Mark Six lottery! How is it possibly bad?
MOTHER: [enraged at remembering] But we’ve lost the ticket!
UNCLE: Oh, really? You sure you’ve lost it? Perhaps you’ve just … [hypothesizing] carelessly stepped on it and …
MOTHER: [interrupts] We’ve basically searched every corner of this house!
UNCLE: Oh, treasure hunting! Must be a lot of fun! So, how’s father?
MOTHER: Father? A couch potato, as always.
UNCLE: Oh, father, he’s just obsessed with the telly. What about mother?
MOTHER: Mother is as dead as a vegetable.
UNCLE: Is she making any progress?
MOTHER: [merciless] Progress? Never! It just kills me to keep her alive.
UNCLE: [sympathetically] Oh, don’t say that, dear sister.
MOTHER: [sarcastically] You’d better go and give her a good laugh. [contemptuously] Keep her alive, if that is what you want.
UNCLE: [hopefully] Oh, miracles do happen!
MOTHER: [sarcastically] Huh, miracles bring me money? [turns to kitchen, coldly] It’s surely a miracle now I make you some drink!

[MOTHER walks off to kitchen]

MOTHER: [yells from kitchen] Coffee or tea?
UNCLE: [yells back] Coffee please, dear! [to the kids] Oh, kids, come over to Uncle Charlie!

[WEIRDO and KID come over to UNCLE CHARLIE, by GRANDMA’s bed]

UNCLE: Let’s chat with dear grandma.
WEIRDO: But grandma is always sleeping.
UNCLE: Oh, you know, grandma is ill.
WEIRDO: Really? She’s ill so she’s always sleeping?
UNCLE: Oh, yes.
KID: Oh, yes!
WEIRDO: But why my teachers never like it when I’m ill?
UNCLE: Oh, why?
KID: Oh, why?
WEIRDO: They punish me when I sleep in class …
UNCLE: Oh, boy, that’s different! Grandma wants to wake up but … but she can’t …
WEIRDO: Can we help her?
UNCLE: Oh, yes.
KID: Oh, yes!
WEIRDO: How?
UNCLE: Chat with her. Cheer her up.
WEIRDO: So, Uncle Charlie, how did you cheer her up last time?
KID: Oh, papa sang her a song.

WEIRDO: A song?

UNCLE: A birthday song.

WEIRDO: Was it her birthday?

UNCLE: Oh, yes.

KID: Oh, yes!

WEIRDO: Did she hear it? Did she like it?

UNCLE: Oh, I think she liked it a lot. Because I made it very likable.

KID: Yes, very likable!

WEIRDO: How? Uncle Charlie, tell me!

UNCLE: This is how I sang it – [sings with his nose pinched, amusingly] happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear mother … [pauses, then slowly] happy birthday to you …

WEIRDO: [chuckles violently] This is funny!

KID: [amused] Yes, it’s funny!

UNCLE: And I thought your grandma even smiled at that.

WEIRDO: I bet, Uncle Charlie!

UNCLE: Oh, but your mother wouldn’t believe it.

WEIRDO: Why?

UNCLE: Oh, I don’t know …

KID: Oh, I don’t know …

UNCLE: Perhaps … because it was a … miracle.

WEIRDO: A miracle? But, Uncle Charlie, what is a … miracle?

UNCLE: Oh, boy, you know, sometimes life can be … sad, and a miracle is … it’s what happens to you that … makes you smile again.

WEIRDO: [proudly] And I always smile!

KID: Me too, me too!

UNCLE: Oh, good for you both. You know, grandma and grandpa used to smile a lot together; they were such a happy couple. [sighs] But one day grandma fell ill and she never woke up again, and grandpa never smiles again.

WEIRDO: Is that why he keeps watching TV every day?

UNCLE: Oh, he’s not watching, he’s only replaying the same old videotapes every day …

WEIRDO: I see, that’s why the programmes are always the same.

UNCLE: Oh, exactly.

KID: Oh, exactly!

WEIRDO: So, Uncle Charlie, will we do it again?

KID: Do it! Do it!

UNCLE: Oh, do what?

WEIRDO: Will we sing a song to grandma to make her smile again? Miracle?

KID: Miracle! Miracle!
UNCLE: Oh, but it’s not grandma’s birthday today …
WEIRDO: So, she can’t smile again today …
UNCLE: Oh, look, but I have an idea! [looks around]
WEIRDO: Tell us, Uncle Charlie!
KID: Tell me, papa!
UNCLE: Can you see the fan over there? Bring it close.

[WEIRDO and KID bring the fan close to the bedside]

WEIRDO: Then?
UNCLE: We can talk to grandma through the fan!
WEIRDO: What?
KID: What?
UNCLE: Grandma used to say it was her favourite game when she was a little girl.
KID: Oh, a game! A game!
WEIRDO: You mean talking through the fan?
UNCLE: And she used to speak through the fan whenever she was sad.
WEIRDO: What did she say?
KID: Say what?
UNCLE: [imitates the voice] “Jolly jolly!” that’s what she said.
WEIRDO: Jolly, jolly!
KID: Jolly, jolly!
UNCLE: Oh, yeah, jolly, jolly, and all of a sudden, she would smile again! Give it a try!
WEIRDO: Can I?
UNCLE: Of course!
KID: Of course!

[WEIRDO and KID squat in front of the fan, ready to say something]

WEIRDO: [turns back at UNCLE] But Uncle Charlie, what should we say?
UNCLE: Oh, say what you want to say to grandma.
WEIRDO: Alright. [clears his throat, then speaks through the fan] Testing. Testing. [then bursts into laughter at hearing his own voice]
KID: [follows suit] Testing. [then chuckles]
UNCLE: [smilingly] Oh, is that what you want to tell grandma? Testing?
WEIRDO: [explains] No, no, I’m just … ha-ha …
UNCLE: Go on then.
WEIRDO: [clears his throat, thinks a bit, then speaks through the fan] um … Grandma, I love you.
UNCLE: Oh, you better speak louder, or grandma won’t hear that!
WEIRDO: [speaks through the fan, loudly] Grandma, I – love – you. [then chuckles]
UNCLE: Oh, isn’t that fun?
WEIRDO: Isn’t that fun? Would you like to try? [to KID]
KID: Um … [then through the fan, very shy and cautious] Grandma, I love you.
WEIRDO: Louder!
KID: [through the fan, loudly] Grandma, I – love – you. [then chuckles]
WEIRDO: Good job! Uncle Charlie, what about you? Little Charlie is doing great!
UNCLE: Oh, yes, it’s my turn now! [squat, through the fan, loudly] Mother, I – love – you.
WEIRDO: [bursts into laughter] Ha-ha, Uncle Charlie, you sound like a child!
UNCLE: Oh, do I? [repeats] I love you, I love you!
WEIRDO: Ha-ha … Let me try once more! [kneels down, then through the fan, clears his throat]
Grandma, will you wake up now, grandma? [gradually louder, having fun with the voice]

[with the joined voices and laughter, the volume climbs higher and higher]

UNCLE: [overjoyed, yells] Look! Grandma is smiling again! She’s smiling again!

[enters MOTHER from the kitchen]

MOTHER: [yells] What’s the noise all about?

[having noticed the fan and all the mess, MOTHER scolds]

MOTHER: Can’t you just sit quietly for a moment? It’s enough for one day! I’ve lost my Mark Six ticket, and then I have to entertain your Uncle Charlie and I’ve spilt all the coffee onto myself, and I have to put up with all the noise and all the mess and all the crazy people in the house! Can’t you just sit quietly for a moment? Huh?

WEIRDO: [scared, and stammers] … But mother … grandma was smiling …

[terrified by MOTHER’s fierce look, KID and WEIRDO leave for play immediately, i.e. hopscotch]

UNCLE: Oh, dear sister, take it easy.
MOTHER: Children are really the most annoying creatures in the world!
UNCLE: Oh, dear sister, don’t you remember? We were once children!
MOTHER: … So?
UNCLE: Remember? We were always naughty and mother used to say “jolly, jolly” whenever she was annoyed by us.
MOTHER: Jolly, jolly?
UNCLE: Yeah, through the fan. Jolly, jolly! [imitates the effect]
[enter FATHER and ANNARIANNA]

UNCLE: Hello, my dear …

[FATHER enters the house without noticing UNCLE CHARLIE and cuts straight ahead to WEIRDO, who hides behind GRANDPA again immediately]

FATHER: Come out! You little devil!
WEIRDO: Father …
FATHER: [furious, almost screams] How dare you? I’ll blow your head!
MOTHER: What happened?
WEIRDO: Father …
MOTHER: Did you see the ticket? Annarianna?
ANNA: Sorry Madam, I don’t know …
FATHER: [furious] I swear I'll blow your head and tear your stupid rabbit into pieces!
MOTHER: The boy lied to us!
FATHER: [howls] I’ll kiiiiiiiiiiill you!
ANNA: Sir, stop!
WEIRDO: [screams] Help!
GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]
FATHER: [howls] Giiiiiiive meeeeee my tickeeeeee here!
WEIRDO: [screams] Help!
GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]
FATHER: [howls] My tickeeeeee here!
UNCLE: Stop!
WEIRDO: [screams] Uncle Charlie!
GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV! [fidgets with the remote control]

[With GRANDPA between them, FATHER tries to grab hold of WEIRDO, while UNCLE CHARLIE tries to pull WEIRDO away from any real danger. As they were struggling fiercely, with FATHER’s upper body leaning forward, almost tumbling, suddenly MOTHER, who is now standing behind FATHER, notices something and thus grabs hold of FATHER’s right foot]

FATHER: [turns back, looking at MOTHER] What are you doing? I’ve got to kill him!
MOTHER: [almost expressionless] It’s here.
FATHER: [still out of control] Yes, I’ll kill him right here!
MOTHER: [almost expressionless] No, it’s here. The ticket is right here.

[FATHER is stunned and freezes. MOTHER peels off the Mark Six ticket from under FATHER’s right sole]
MOTHER: [now extremely thrilled, screams] It’s here! [in her typical queer tone] Hello? Hello?
[gradually louder] Annarianna, am I dreaming?

ANNA: Sorry Madam, I don’t know …

MOTHER: You are back at last! Back at last! [kisses the ticket hysterically]

FATHER: [thrilled] Oh, Good heavens! We are becoming millionaires! We are millionaires!

MOTHER: Darling, I love you! [then hugs FATHER and ANNA]

[by now, BOOKWORM, being curious, has already drawn close to the crowd at front stage]

BOOKWORM: Father, why is it under your foot?

WEIRDO: It’s in the park!

MOTHER: [flattering] Your father is just amazing!

FATHER: [embarrassed, then proudly] Well, um … yes, of course … I knew it would be here
[staring at his sole ambiguously … here, sooner or later! Annarianna, am I right?]

ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don’t know …

BOOKWORM: [interferes with the excitement] But … hold on … is it the right ticket?

MOTHER: [stunned] The right ticket?

BOOKWORM: Well, perhaps it’s not THE ticket!

MOTHER: [gets restless, stammers] Is it … is it the ticket? Is it THE ticket?

FATHER: [nervous] Well, check the numbers, the numbers!

MOTHER: Let me see … [fidgets with the ticket, neurotic] 20 … 10 … 6 … 12 … 21 and … 27 …

FATHER: [mumbles the numbers to himself] … yes, yes! These are the winning numbers!

BOOKWORM: [interferes with the excitement] But how do you know?

UNCLE: You sure your memory is reliable?

MOTHER: [a moment’s hesitation] Yes, darling?

WEIRDO: Yes, father?

KID: Yes?

FATHER: [unsure of himself] Yes … how … how do I know …?

[the questions hang on air for a short while]

FATHER: [first dubious, then gradually more confident] Well, of … of course, yes, the TV keeps
repeating these numbers all day long! [sounds triumphant and points at television]

WEIRDO: [chuckles helplessly] Did you say the TV?

BOOKWORM: [with a fiendish laughter] The TV, all day long?

FATHER: [smells something fishy] Yes, the TV … what’s wrong? What’s wrong?

[the questions hang on air for a longer while]

MOTHER: [tries to support] What’s wrong with the TV? The TV is the TV!

WEIRDO: But grandpa …

xx
BOOKWORM: But grandpa is … ha-ha … [then bursts into laughter]
FATHER: [confused] What’s so funny? Annarianna?
ANNA: Sorry Sir, I…
MOTHER: [confused and scared] Stop laughing, you sound frightening!
UNCLE: [chuckles] Oh, don’t you know father?
MOTHER: What is happening with the old man? Tell me! Annarianna!
ANNA: Sorry madam … I think …
UNCLE: He is replaying the same videotapes every day!
KID: Yes, the same videotapes! [laughs]
WEIRDO: Yes, every day! [laughs]
BOOKWORM: Yes, over and over and over and over! [laughs]
ANNA: Sorry Sir, yes … [chuckles helplessly]
FATHER: [unbelievable] You mean … [looks at the ticket] … this … is not the winning ticket?
UNCLE: Oh, you are right.
MOTHER: You mean … the numbers … are not the numbers?
UNCLE: Oh, dear sister, it’s alright!
MOTHER: [unbelievable] Are … are you joking?

[the question hangs on air. FATHER suddenly bursts into a great [laughter, which scares everyone, then he becomes sane and silent again.]

FATHER: [seriously and slowly] Was that … was that supposed to be … a joke?
UNCLE: Oh, cracking jokes is … fun, but this is … the truth. [gently grins]
KID: Oh, the truth!

[hearing this, FATHER and MOTHER let out a much exaggerated wail, then they squeeze the ticket into a ball and throw it out of the window in fury]

WEIRDO: Father, mother, actually … I don’t want any candy …
ANNA: [amid the silence] I’m sorry Sir … and Madam, but … but it’s ok …
MOTHER: [gets hysterical] No! It’s not ok! It’s not ok!
FATHER: How is it ok when … when all the money just disappears in a day?
MOTHER: [utterly depressed, wails] Oh … I’ll never be happy again … never …
FATHER: [desperate] It’s over now! It’s all over now!
UNCLE: [tries to comfort] Oh, it’s not over!
FATHER: It’s over! It’s over!
UNCLE: It’s not over! The money is gone, but it’s not over!
MOTHER: It’s not over but I’m never gonna be happy again!
UNCLE: You don’t need money to be happy!
FATHER: But how can I be happy when I … look … [shows his empty pockets]
UNCLE: But you can be happy at any moment … look! [shows the surroundings]
KID: Look! [points to himself]
WEIRDO: Look! [points to himself and everybody]
BOOKWORM: Look! You don’t … have to be millionaires to be happy …
FATHER: [desperate] Then … how can I …
KID & WEIRDO: [cheers] Jolly, jolly!
FATHER: [confused] What’s that again?
KID & WEIRDO & BOOKWORM & UNCLE: [cheers together loudly] Jolly, jolly!
FATHER: Jolly, jolly?
UNCLE: Remember? Mother used to say it always … jolly, jolly!
MOTHER: Jolly … jolly …
UNCLE: Oh, you know, this is the secret!
KID: Oh, the secret!
KID & WEIRDO & BOOKWORM &
UNCLE: [cheers together again] Jolly, jolly!
FATHER: Oh, look at the kids!
MOTHER: [tries to instruct and demonstrate] … jolly, jolly!
BOOKWORM: No! Be cheerful! Be glad! From the inside! Jolly, jolly!
FATHER & MOTHER: [try hard, oddly] Jolly, jolly!
KID: No! Jolly! Jolly!
FATHER & MOTHER: [try harder] Jolly, jolly!
KID: [laughs] Jolly! Jolly!
FATHER & MOTHER: [chuckle] Jolly, jolly!
KID: [laughs] Jolly! Jolly! Wholly jolly!
EVERYONE: [laughs] Jolly! Jolly! Wholly jolly!

[the laughter rolls up and it is joined by all members of the family (except GRANDPA and GRANDMA, of course), like a choir, chanting rhythmically and joyfully]
GRANDPA: [all of a sudden] Can you keep quiet? I can’t hear my TV!
FATHER: [amused, cheerfully] Oh, dear father, it’s all over now, all over now!
MOTHER: [pats on grandpa’s shoulder] Sorry father, sorry, really …

[GRANDPA abruptly puts down the remote control, stands up from the sofa and walks towards the TV, tuning it to the right channel manually]

GRANDPA: Can you keep quiet? It’s time for America’s Funniest Videos now!
MOTHER: [puzzled] What? America’s Funniest Videos?
GRANDPA: [excited, like a child] America’s Funniest Videos!
FATHER: Aren’t you watching the old videotapes every day?
GRANDPA: It’s the new season tonight!
MOTHER: The new season?
GRANDPA: [shouts towards the bed, with eyes fixed on the television] Sweetheart! Wake up now! It’s time for the show!

[GRANDMA rises from the bed, stretches, chuckling all the way, half-hops to GRANDPA, then the old couple sit at the sofa together, watching the show, amusing themselves]

[everyone (except GRANDPA and GRANDMA, of course) seems completely confused]

FATHER: Amarianna!
ANNA: Sorry Sir, I don’t know …
MOTHER: What’s happening?
ANNA: Sorry Madam, I really really don’t know …
FATHER: Hey, the television should be playing old videotapes!
BOOKWORM: Don’t … don’t ask me!
MOTHER: And grandma should be sleeping!
UNCLE: [shrugs] I have no idea …
FATHER: So … the numbers … and the Mark Six ticket …
MOTHER: So … grandma and grandpa …

[FATHER and MOTHER gaze at each other]

FATHER & MOTHER: [exclaim] children!
WEIRDO: [whispers] Well, father … mother … [looks at KID]
KID: Oh, Grandpa and Grandma said it was a secret!

[FATHER and MOTHER gaze at each other]
[after a while, amidst the tense atmosphere, FATHER and MOTHER begin to chuckle gently, and after a while]

FATHER: Hey, honey, why are you laughing?
MOTHER: I don’t know, and you, honey?
FATHER: I don’t know.
MOTHER: Hey, darling, but … there’s one thing I do know!
FATHER: What?
MOTHER: Honey, you laugh like a child!
FATHER: Really? And darling, you know what?
MOTHER: What?
FATHER: Look at you, you smile like an angel!

[as the light dims, the gentle chuckles can still be heard echoing in the house]

curtain

acta est fabula plaudite

music: <Ode to Joy> by Ludwig van Beethoven
Dear Chris,

Hello! My name is Jack. I’m a friend of Sam. He has introduced you to me. I’m happy to write to you. I hope we can know more about each other and be friends.

First, I will talk about myself. I’m eleven years old. My birthday is on 7th April. My hobby is reading books, especially novels. Sometimes, I’ll listen to some pop music, but I don’t have any favourite stars. What kind of music do you like? And do you have any favourite stars?

I live with my parents and a younger brother in Homantin. His name is Shaun and he is studying at Pui Ching Primary School. I guess you have never heard of the place before because I don’t think you have been to Hong Kong, have you? Anyway, my home is on a hill. Although it is a little bit small, I still like my home. I hope I can live there forever. What do you think?

I am studying at Pui Ching Middle School. It is a famous school in Hong Kong. I like my school because it is large and has a big library. (Remember I love reading?) It is very good for studying.

After introducing myself, I want to know more about you. If you want to know more about Hong Kong, you are very welcome to ask me questions. All right, now it is time for bed. Hope you are well. Write soon!

Love,
Jack
Dear Chris,

Nice to meet you! My name is Joey Man. I am 12 years old. How old are you? My birthday is 2nd January. I live in Hong Kong. It is a great city and it is known as a shoppers’ paradise. There are many shops and you can buy most of the things you want in Hong Kong. Is Australia an interesting country? I would like to know more about Australia. Would you tell me more about your country? I hope I can visit Australia some day. Do you like sports? I like sports and badminton is my favourite sport. It’s fun!

How many members are there in your family? There are four members in my family. They are my father, mother, sister and I. My parents are business people. My sister is a Form 5 student. My mother and my sister love dancing very much. My father is a little bit lazy. He likes to sit on the sofa watching TV after dinner but seldom does housework.

How is your school life? I study in Hong Kong Pui Ching Middle School. I am a Form 1 student now. I love my class since I have many friends in my class. Besides, my classmates are friendly and helpful. My favourite subject is Physical Education, which is an interesting subject. We can play different kinds of sports, like basketball, badminton and football during PE lessons. I am a member of the school badminton team, too. I will take part in some inter-school badminton competitions in October.

Last week, I wrote a poem about myself during the English lesson. Here it is:
Joey
Serious, Energetic, Fun-loving, Intelligent
Sibling of my sister, Janis
Apple in the eyes of my parents’
An adorable girl
Who feels the need to be kind to others
Who needs more sleep and more time
Who cares about others
Who fears death
Who would like to achieve better results in exams.

Do you like my poem? Have you written any poem before?

I hope you will write back soon. I look forward to your reply.

Yours,
Joey
Dear Bryan,

How are things with you? I have not heard from you for a while. I hope everything is going well with you. Are you excited about your new school life?

Let me tell you about my new friend in my Form One class. He is called Peter. Since his last name is Pang, our classmates have given him a new nickname, “Peter Pan”. He is a very open-minded person so he actually enjoys being called this name! He is a tall guy with pointed ears. He looks quite handsome and his height makes him look all that better. Guess what? He is even taller than our class teacher, which is quite unbelievable for a Form One boy. During weekends, his signature outfit is always the combination of a graphic T-shirt and a pair of jeans.

Peter is an outgoing and athletic guy, who is talented at volleyball and basketball. Once, I ran across the school basketball court and I saw him playing against some senior students. Although he was a lot younger, he played very well and scored many points. Then he told me that he was the captain of his primary school’s basketball team. I think that he is going to be a great player in the Hong Kong Basketball Team in the future.

Peter is also a passionate and considerate person. He is always eager to help others. When I face a problem, he will be very understanding and listen to me patiently. I admire his kindness and he is a good example that I always ask myself to follow.

Although we have only met each other for a few weeks, I truly believe that we are destined to be good friends because we are always together. For example, we are in
the same class and we are assigned to the same groups in both English and PE lessons. We are even asked by our English teacher to form a duo for the Speech Festival. We did not plan any of these at all. The only explanation I have is that we are really meant to be good buddies.

Well, that’s all for now. Have you met any new friends at school? Write back soon and tell me all about him!

Love,
Andrew
My Friendship with Jada
Toto Lam

Dear Jessica,

Hi! Are things going smoothly in your secondary school life? Last week, you sent me a letter asking me to introduce my best friend to you. Now I am going to tell you some interesting things about her.

Jada is my best friend who studies with me in the same school. She has black straight hair, almond-shaped eyes, an oval face and a slim body. She also wears a pair of purple glasses. She is a good friend who makes me feel warm. On the one hand, she is kind and loves to smile, and on the other hand she feels nervous easily.

Jada and I are bosom friends because we always share our feelings with each other. We often listen to music together. Her favorite pop singer is Twins. She admires them very much because they are attractive and they sing well. Her hobbies are listening to music and reading. She always thinks listening to music is a good way to relax after a busy day, and reading novels can improve our knowledge.

Jada likes playing the piano and she is talented at it. She has passed the Grade 8 piano exam. She often gets prizes in music competitions. She likes to share her experience with us during recess time. She also encourages us to take part in more music competitions so that we can have improvement.

We have been friends for three years. In these years, we have had a lot of happy moments, such as breaking the rubbish bin in P.6, talking about our favorite singers, and reading newspapers every day. Every moment we shared is unforgettable. I think she is my best friend and I hope we can maintain our friendship in the years to come.

Well, that is all I have to say for now. Drop me a line and tell me all your news. I am looking forward to hearing from you.

With love,

Toto
The Unpredictable Life of Summer
Michelle Keung  1C

There was a university student called Summer who was talented at art. She was a gorgeous and helpful girl. Because of her hard work and gift in art, many teachers considered her one of the best artists in the school.

There was a touching story behind the name “Summer”. Summer’s father passed away shortly after her mother got pregnant. However, Summer’s mother decided to keep the baby and eventually gave birth to her in summer. To remember this, Summer’s mother used the season as her baby’s name.

During a holiday, Summer went home to visit her mother. To welcome her home, Summer’s mother prepared a nice meal for her. When Summer arrived, she hugged her mother and then went to the dining table to enjoy the great food with her mom. Soon after the dinner, Summer felt tired and fell asleep in her room.

When Summer got up the next morning, something tragic happened. When her mother asked her to have breakfast, she opened her eyes and realized that she had completely lost her eyesight. She was so scared but she managed to get out of her room by her hearing and sense of touch. Her mother took her to hospital immediately. However, even the most professional and experienced doctors could not explain such happening. They could not give her any helpful cure and Summer ended up being a blind girl.

Summer was very depressed. No matter how much encouragement her mother gave her, she was very disappointed and did not want to live as a blind person. Although her mother made her participate in different activities and classes, she could
not overcome her misfortune. She always locked herself up in her room and did not want to meet anyone.

One day, Summer went to a beach by herself. She sat on the sand alone and started crying. Suddenly, she stood up and started walking into the water. Since she could not see what was in front of her, she kept walking towards the strong wave and deep water. After a few minutes, she got herself into a dangerous position. Meanwhile, a policewoman spotted her and went into the water immediately to save her. At last, the policewoman successfully brought Summer back onto the beach. However, another strong wave hit the beach and the policewoman was swirled into the wave. She saved Summer’s life at the cost of her own life.

Summer’s mother told Summer what had happened and she broke out crying because she regretted trying to kill herself. She felt very sorry about the death of the policewoman.

From this accident, she had learned about the importance of treasuring her own life. Instead of blaming her sightless eyes, she now works very hard at a community center to help other people. She strongly believes that this is the best way to show her gratitude to the policewoman who sacrificed her life for her.
All about Me
Vincent Au 1D

16th September, 2011

Dear Chris,

Hello! How are you? I am Vincent. My classmate, Tom, introduced you to me. I hope you are well in Australia. Maybe you can tell me what life is like in Australia next time.

First of all, let me introduce myself. My name is Vincent. I am twelve years old. My birthday is on 28th February. I live in Lai King in Hong Kong. My hobbies are reading and cycling.

I want you to know about my family. There are four family members. They are my mum, dad and my younger brother called Terrence. My family likes to watch TV very much when we finish our dinner. My mum is an accountant and my father is a civil engineer working for the government.

Finally, I want to write something about my school. I am studying in F.1 at Pui Ching Middle School. The campus is awfully big. Once I couldn’t find the rubbish bin on my floor so I had to carry a big bag of rubbish and looked for a rubbish bin in the campus like a crazy guy. I think you don’t want to try that. I am in class 1D. I like my classmates very much because all of them are kind. There are more subjects in secondary school than in primary school. I like Mathematics and Science most because I like calculations and doing experiments.

Anyway, I’d better stop now. It is because I’ve got tons of homework to finish. I hope you’re not worried about homework like me now. I am looking forward to hearing from you soon. Let me know how you are getting on.

All the best,
Vincent
Dear Charlie,

How are you? I am sorry that I haven’t written to you for a long time. I have been busy with my new school life. How is your new school treating you?

This time, I want to introduce my best friend Adi to you. Adi is a clever and hard-working boy. He is 12 years old with short hair and a pair of small, black eyes. With his pair of glasses, he looks knowledgeable!

I met Adi in primary school. He always gets good results in exams. Therefore, his academic record is one of the best in our school! However, Physical Education is his weakness. He told me that he failed it when he was in primary 1.

Adi likes playing badminton with his parents at weekends. He also loves drawing very much. He has participated in many competitions and won a number of prizes! His favorite singer is Michael Jackson and he is very good at imitating his singing and dancing. His favorite book is Harry Potter and I sometimes borrow books from him.

Our friendship has already lasted for four years. However, we no longer go to the same school. I remember meeting him for the first time in the library. When I was reading a book quietly, he came up and talked to me. I found out that we had the same hobbies and interest. Later, we became friends. At school, we usually read books together and chat about our school life. We are both talkative boys and I like sharing with him very much. He is also my tutor! Every time I have any questions, he will explain to me clearly.

That’s all of my news. Who is your best friend? I look forward to hearing from you soon!

Love,

Joe
The Adventure of Ada and Candy
Adelaine Yu    1F

Ada and Candy were good friends. They were both hardworking students so they always went to the library together to read and borrow books home.

One day, they went to the library and found a book titled The Magic Land. It sounded very interesting to them. “I must borrow this book!” Ada said. Then, they went to the park and read the book together.

While they were reading the book, a strong light suddenly came out of the book. Candy screamed, “It’s a cool breeze!” After a few seconds, they arrived at a utopia with many amazing things, such as pink trees and singing flowers.

“Let me pick a flower and do some research on it,” said Ada. However, she could not pick the magical flower no matter how hard she tried. When Ada told Candy about this, a powerful man walked up to them and said, “Who are you? What are you doing here?” Ada responded, “Who are you? Are you the gardener? I am sorry about picking your flowers.” “No! I’m not a gardener. I am the warden of this place,” said the powerful man. Candy was confused and wondered why there were no other people in this place. The powerful man told them that it was the queen’s birthday and so all residents went to the castle to celebrate with her.

Although Ada and Candy could not really believe what was happening, they were very curious and decided to ask the warden if he could let them join the queen’s birthday party. The warden kindly accepted their request and walked a long way with them to get to the castle.
After a three-hour walk, they finally arrived at the castle. Inside the castle was a massive birthday cake and many delicious snacks. Since the two girls were starving, they ate a lot of food.

At last, Candy asked the powerful warden how they could get back to their own world. He simply told them, “Ask our beautiful queen for the key to unlock the magical door of our world.” At the end of the party, the queen thanked them for joining her and sent them back to their world with her key.
Italian Traditional Wedding

According to Italian tradition, when a man wanted to marry a woman, he would go to speak to the woman’s father. After the father said yes, presents were exchanged. The groom would place a diamond ring on his bride-to-be’s finger before the engagement.

Italian weddings were always held in churches for their religion, and also some folktales too! Marriage wasn’t allowed during the season of Lent or in May. Marriage in August was allowed but people thought that it would invite bad luck and sickness. All other months of the year were allowed for weddings. Most weddings were held on Sunday since it was considered the “Luckiest day” for the bond of matrimony.

On the day of a traditional Catholic wedding, the Italian bride did not wear a white dress, but a dress in the colour green instead, which symbolized fertility. For the groom, he would carry a piece of iron in his pocket, which was supposed to “ward off the evil eye”. This could also bring good luck to the couple. It is a “must” for guests to throw rice or paper confetti, which represents good fortune and money. The more that was thrown, the better it was for the couple. After that, a pair of doves were released into the air, symbolizing love and happiness.

No one goes home hungry after an Italian wedding reception. Firstly, cocktails would be served while the main dining began. It would serve antipasto (a kind of appetizing food), pasta, salads, soups, meat and fruits. Interesting to note that the wedding cake wasn’t served in some areas of Italy, but was replaced by decorative boxes or tulle bags filled with sugared almonds which is known as the “union of bitter and sweet”.
The couple would dance their first dance, followed by the members of the bridal party and the guests. After a few dances, everyone took their seats and then listened to speeches given by family and friends. The new couple is treated to more than their fair share of champagne toasts.

So mesmerizing as it is, these are all about the Italian Traditional wedding.
Chinese Traditional Wedding

Long time ago, China was a city of serious gender discrimination against female. Chinese marriage becomes a custom between 402 to 221 B.C. Whenever an unmarried boy wanted to find a girl to marry, he needed to follow the culture, and there are basically six rituals, generally known as the three letters and six etiquettes: proposal, birthdates, bride price, wedding gifts, arranging the wedding and wedding ceremony.

Proposal refers to the act that an unmarried boy’s parents find a potential daughter in law. They needed to locate a matchmaker to assuage the conflicts of interests and the general embarrassments on the part of two families to discuss the possibility of marriage. When the selected girl is matched with the boy, the matchmaker will match their birthdates and check to see if they are compatible with each other by traditions.

The next step is submitting the bride price or the betrothal gifts. The bridegroom’s family will arrange the bride price and the betrothal letter to the bride’s family. And the wedding gifts that the bridegroom’s family send to the bride’s family are some gifts like an elaborate array of food, cakes and religious items. After sending out the wedding gifts, two families would arrange a wedding day by choosing a day which is good for wedding in order to have a good future. But in some cases there may be no lucky day so the couple will have to review their chosen dates.

At the last part of the wedding etiquette is the wedding ceremony. Before the bride and bridegroom become a married couple, they needed to follow four wedding rituals. First, the wedding procession from the bride’s house to the bridegroom’s house. And the procession will consist of a traditional band and also the brides’ photos. Next,
the procession of the bride’s family will stop at the door of the bridegroom’s house. And there will be ceremonies to welcome the bride and her wedding procession into the bridegroom’s house. And the third is exchanging the vows just like the tradition in the west, the couple would be paying respect to the couple’s parents and other elders, and after that they will pay respect to each other. The last step is holding a wedding banquet and the banquet is known literally as “joyful wine”. This etiquette is sometimes far more important than the actual wedding. In the banquet, there are also some ceremonies like presenting wines or tea to the guests.

In the old days, women were not allowed to choose their husband by themselves. Nowadays, we have freedom to choose the person to marry. It shows us that there are differences between two wedding customs in different generations.
After my school life, I would like to be a baker because being a baker can bake many delicious desserts and some spongy bread or cakes. Also, as far as I’m concerned, I love to taste every different kind of desserts all over the world such as lemon cheese cake and chocolate soufflé.

The other reason that I want to be a baker is that I like to see the smile of my customers after they buy my cakes or desserts. It is really encouraging and satisfying that customers will be contented after tasting my products.

If I were a baker, I would like to open a café at the airport so that everyone from different countries can taste my desserts. I also hope that my café will be famous all over the world and there will be someone who can promote my café to every place in the world. And I will use all my abilities to create more different kinds of desserts.

My café will be white and tranquil. Coffee such as cappuccino and macchiato, desserts like cheese cakes and fruit tarts will be served. I hope my customers will feel comfortable and peaceful when enjoying the coffee and desserts I make.
“Bang ! Bang !” I heard the sound of gunshots outside of the hotel. A drop of sweat shed down from my forehead.

After my school life, I became a war correspondent. Just a week before, I had almost lost my life.

A week before, I was in Iraq. After 2010, this was the first time that a war started between Iraq and the USA. I felt so scared because I knew that many people died near me. However, I had chosen this job so I must finish until the end.

I had been staying in the hotel for five days already for my personal safety. Through the window of the hotel, I saw the soldiers keep using their guns to fight with their enemies. I heard the sound of the gun, the sound of the ambulance and the sound of the children who lost their families. I heard them cry. I really hoped that the war would end. However, I didn’t have this ability so my job was to tell people about the situation of the war and hoped they could stop it.

One day, when I was sending photos back to Hong Kong, suddenly someone knocked on my door. The one who knocked the door was one of my colleagues. He told me that the soldiers of Iraq planned to break into the hotel and make us the pawns so that the USA would surrender.

As soon as he had finished his words, two strong Iraq soldiers broke through my door and pointed their guns at us. Then they brought us to a room and we knelt down.
In the room, almost all the staff of the television station were there. The soldiers of Iraq took a photo of us and sent it to the USA with my computer. I kept praying to God at that moment and hoped he would save us.

After five minutes, an e-mail was replied by the USA. After reading the e-mail, the leader of the soldiers laughed loudly. They then kicked us and led us to the outside of the hotel. They pointed their guns at us and tried to kill us.

The soldiers used their guns to shoot us. I heard the sound of the gun and I suddenly saw everything turn black …

When I woke up, I found that I was in a hospital. I asked the nurse beside me and she told me that just the moment the Iraq soldiers shot us, the soldiers of the USA shot their hands and they lost their guns so we were saved.

At that time, I felt so lucky and I just wanted to say, “Thank you, Lord.”

Now I am in Hong Kong with a perfect body and mood. I’ll never forget this unforgettable experience.

A few days ago, I searched for the news which I reported in the battlefield. I found that the clip has been the most popular video on YouTube this week!
The New School Year

Jeffrey Tse  2B

Dear Jenny,

I’m so happy to receive your letter. It was a pleasant surprise that you wrote a letter to me.

I’m glad to hear that you had a great time in Japan during the summer holidays and got along well with your classmates in your new school. I hope that you will not forget us. During the summer holidays, my family and my aunt’s family went to Canada to visit our grandparents, uncles and aunts. We went eating, shopping and swimming with grandma. We stayed at Edmonton and went to Banff a week after.

The new academic year has just started and I am in form two now. Looking at the school calendar, I cheered my heart out. I have been longing for the F.2 Training Camp and the Christmas Celebration since last year because we could have a break from the busy class schedules and play with our classmates. What’s more, we don’t need to worry about homework and tests during those days. Do you remember that we played a mass game called “Newspaper Wheel” last year at the Training Camp? It was such an exciting and challenging game. We also played with water and had some ball games. I remember that you made me wet from head to toe. Also, Miss Chow didn’t let us start eating as some of our classmates were talking and laughing. I really wish you would be here with me this year.

You know what? This year, we have the Swimming Gala and the Commencement Ceremony again. The Swimming Gala is such a time-consuming event and I will have nothing to do during the competition. The Commencement Ceremony is also very boring because we, junior form students, could only sit and lis-
ten in front of the screen. I think it would be better if we could sit in the school hall with other students. My legs went numb as we were not allowed to move a single bit all through the ceremony.

Guess what! Our favourite teacher, Mr. Kao, teaches us again this year. Remember? We were all impressed by his friendliness and kindness. He went to the Training Camp with us last year. We all admired his sense of humour. You know, I always suspect that you have a secret love for him as I always found you chatting with him happily last year. He is our Life Education teacher this year. All of my classmates cheered when he came in. Jimmy even ran to him and hugged him.

We have quite a strange classroom this year. The computer, projector and the television in my classroom are so old as if they are going to fall. The drawers of the desks are also all locked. I have lots to do this year in class. There is so much homework and so many quizzes. By the way, all of our old classmates have got promoted to F.2. I really envy you that you have so little homework in your new school.

I have to go now. Take care and write back soon.

Love,

Chris
Dear Jenny,

I am so glad to receive your letter. I nearly thought that we would lose contact after you have left! It seems that you’ve been doing quite well at your new school. And I really envy you that you’ve got a well-facilitated, brand-new classroom. Do you know that this year all F.2 students need to study in small classrooms equipped with poorly maintained facilities?

Except the classroom, I think my new academic year is pretty good. This year, the school has planned plenty of activities for us and it seems most of them are quite alluring. I really look forward to the F.2 Training Camp. Do you remember the Training Camp last year? We were made to cross a river, and all of us got wet. I would never forget what happened that day. You slipped on some moss and fell into the water. I tried to ‘rescue’ you, but at last both of us fell into the river and we were soaked from head to toe. It’s really embarrassing when we climbed out of the water, as if we had been standing in the rain without an umbrella for hours. I think the Training Camp will be more exciting and challenging this year, as we are older and more mature. I’ll tell you about the Training Camp after I come back. I bet it will be loads of fun!

The Training Camp is fun, but I think the Athletic Meet is quite the opposite. I really hate that day. If I were a skillful athlete, I might like it. However, I am not. It’s really dull to sit there all day long, watching others compete. The worst of all is, the school doesn’t allow students to do anything else besides watching the competitions. I was nearly bored to death last year. Do you remember we hid in the toilet and played poker, and were caught by the prefects? I don’t dare do it again. It was so frightening when we were scolded by the teachers.
You’ve told me you like Miss Vera Leung most in this school. But I have to tell you bad news - she has retired this year! It’s a pity that you didn’t have time to join Miss Leung’s farewell party. Students across different forms gave her presents, and thanked her for her teaching. The party was so touching, and all of us burst into tears at the end when Miss Leung waved goodbye to us. I love her so much. She is so gentle, sympathetic and understanding. She is such a great teacher, and she is absolutely a role model for all of us.

This year something mysterious happened. The atmosphere of our class has changed. We used to be a class of elite students who were very serious about learning and classroom discipline. But things have changed. Yesterday, your best friend, Chubby, acted like a fool. He tried to juggle three balls like a clown during the Chinese Literature lesson, but he failed at last. All of us laughed madly, but I actually found it quite stupid.

Oh, I need to go for lessons now. Tell me more about your new classmates. What about that ‘Peter’? You mentioned him three times in your letter. Is there something special about him? Please send my regards to your family and classmates. I am looking forward to your reply.

Love,
Chris
Dear Joyce,

How are you? I am a peer counselor whose name is Jackson. I really sympathise with you after hearing your problems and I am going to give you some advice to solve your problems.

You do not have any real friends but just some friends that are a lot younger than you are. I suggest you need to be braver, more outgoing, more confident and try to talk with your classmates.

You are too shy and that hinders you from making new friends and you do not know how to get people to like you. I think you may join some school clubs that you are interested in, so you can find some friends who share the same hobbies with you. You can also go to church with your parents so you can make some new Christian friends. They may come from different schools, so you can tell them about your school life.

Appearance is not important. The most important thing is inner beauty. Maybe doing more exercises can help you lose weight. Don't forget to match it up with a balanced diet, so you will be slim instead of being overweight.

Don’t hate your hairstyle although your mum has a different opinion. Your mum regards thick, long hair as beautiful. So if you want to cut your hair, you should first explain patiently to your mother that hairstyles have changed over time and see how she feels about it. And you can explain to your classmates that you keep your long hair because you respect your mum and want to please her. Also, you do not get along
well with your mum. Share your feelings with your mum more.

I hope my advice can help you to become a more amicable person and help you adapt to the life in Hong Kong. I wish you have a happy life from now on.

Regards,
Jackson
A Travel Article about Tsim Sha Tsui

James Li    2B

Are you interested in Hong Kong? Tsim Sha Tsui is the place you need to visit when you come here. Let me tell you why.

Tsim Sha Tsui is our local landmark and it is such an interesting place because it is a place of great variety. There is always something for everyone in Tsim Sha Tsui. Also, Hong Kong people are very dynamic and their creativity is shown in the architecture of different buildings. The shopping mall stretching along Canton Road is a good example. It is well-known that several big shopping centers have been linked up to form a shopping walk along that road. In such a huge megastore, you can shop for anything you want there. Also, local famous restaurants and cinemas can also be found as well.

Kowloon Park is also a good place to visit. It stretches along Nathan Road between Hai Phong Road and Austin Road and was designed by local architects to make the park full of Chinese culture. It is also a spacious leisure park of 13.47 hectares. What makes it more special is that you can relax, slow down your pace and walk along the park in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the city. What’s more, there is also an indoor swimming pool inside the park so you can enjoy a cool swim during summer.

Apart from shopping in the shopping centers, you can also visit the Space Museum and the Museum of Art to quench your thirst for knowledge. Also, you can visit the mosque if you are interested in the Islamic religion. If you feel tired, you can also go to the Star Ferry Pier, sit on a bench, watch the waves and enjoy the beautiful sea view there!

Tsim Sha Tsui is such an amazing place and it can be conveniently reached. You can travel there by bus, ferry, or the MTR. Next time you come to Hong Kong, don’t forget to visit Tsim Sha Tsui!
Let me tell you an interesting story about my mum’s birthday last weekend.

Last Sunday was my mum’s birthday so we all gave her a big hug in the morning. When we were discussing where we should go to celebrate her birthday, dad had a wonderful idea. “We can cook a dinner ourselves! Mum cooks for us every evening. Let’s try to cook one for her to show our gratitude,” dad suggested quietly. My sister and I agreed cheerfully. “Mum, you may take a rest this afternoon and we will book a table this evening. You will taste the food cooked by a wonderful chef!” I gave her a mysterious grin.

Dad and we started to write a shopping list in the kitchen for the dinner. We decided to cook mum’s favourite dishes—Johnfish, turkey, cream soup, curry beef, scrambled eggs and banana with ice-cream for dessert.

We went to Vivian Supermarket to shop. We chose the best but the most expensive fish, a big frozen turkey, Japanese beef and red wine. After shopping for two hours, we went to the cashier to pay for the food. The shopkeeper saw that we had a full-loaded trolley and was a bit surprised. When dad looked at the bill, he was totally shocked! “$1520! Impossible!” he screamed. Unwillingly he took out his wallet.

We returned home in silence and hoped that we would not be seen by mum. Since my sister and I had never cooked before, dad promised to do everything. “Don’t worry! I often watch when your mum is cooking. I’ve learnt a lot.”

Actually, dad had only watched but never cooked in the kitchen. He heated the
oil and put the beef and curry powder in the pot. He put the turkey into the oven before it defrost. After 30 minutes, he opened the lid and the oven door. “Oh! No! My beef was burnt. Blood is coming out from the turkey!”

At the dinner table, all of us were quiet. Dad was so embarrassed because all the dishes looked ugly and the smell was strange. However, mum still enjoyed the food since it was dad’s first try. “Dear, it’s extraordinarily tasty! I like it,” mum praised dad. Dad was so happy but he promised he would not cook again.
A Good Plan Brings You a Happy End
Annette Chu  2C

Dear Peter,

How are you doing? I’m sorry to hear that you have had such a “Bad Day”!

In your letter, you mentioned that you woke up late in the morning because the alarm clock failed to ring. In my opinion, your alarm clock, which has been used for twenty years, is too old. You should buy a new one which will be more reliable.

Then you complained that you waited for the lift but it didn’t come. It is because you didn’t read the notice sent to you. I suggest you pay attention to the notices from the management company and read them carefully in the future.

You had worked hard on your homework but you forgot to bring it! If I were you, I would finish my homework a few days before the deadline so I would not have to do it until two o’clock in the morning. Moreover, remember to check your timetable cautiously and put your homework in the schoolbag no matter how late it is. You were unable to wake up because you worked until two o’clock. Everyone can tell you the solution.

Furthermore, I would advise you not to be superstitious because we’re not living in the Dark Age. Your ‘so called’ bad luck signs – the black cat or your teacher’s black dress is only a coincidence. I suggest you make a clear timetable to remind yourself what you have to do every day.

You decided not to join any event on Sport Days because it is a ‘Black Friday’!
Oh, come on! It’s really illogical. I have never heard a person being killed by a javelin in a stadium!

In my opinion, the best way to avoid ‘bad luck’ is that you should be more careful and hardworking. I know you can do it! Well, I do hope my advice will be useful and I look forward to receiving your letter soon.

Love,
Chris
A Letter of Advice to a Troubled Teenager

Jacqueline Lai    2D

Dear Joyce,

How are you? I am Jackson, one of the peer counselors of the school. You may not know me but I know a bit about you and your problems. I feel really sorry for you and I hope that my following advice can help you.

Let me start with the problem of making friends. My first advice is that you should try to join some school clubs according to your hobbies and interest. You would find making friends easy when you are with people who share similar interests with you.

Secondly, I think that you should be more outgoing and try to talk to people more. If you don’t talk to other people, they won’t be able to know and understand you even if they want to be your friends.

Next, let’s talk about your hairstyle. You should try to discuss it with your mom. Tell her how you feel and how you may be teased because of it. I’m sure she will understand your problem and hopefully she will let you change your hairstyle. Moreover, you should also explain to your classmates that you keep your hairstyle in order to please your mom but not because you think it is fashionable. By doing so, they would understand your situation more.

After talking about the “dos”, let us talk about two “don’ts”. First, you should not take diet pills to lose weight, and second, you should not have your hair cut without telling your mom.
The first method is quite risky and unwise. Effectiveness of the diet pills may be exaggerated to attract more customers. The producers may claim that the pills are effective and they may even say that the pills have no side effects, but how can you prove it? How can you be so sure? Therefore it is best not to waste money on diet pills. Being a bit overweight is no big deal as long as it is within an acceptable range. Besides, beauty is only skin deep. What counts more is your inner qualities. I’m sure your classmates don’t think your appearance is more important than your personality.

As for the second method, you really should not have your hair cut without telling your mom. It would not only worsen your problem but also worsen your relationship with your mom.

In conclusion, I think the best way to solve your problem is “communication”. Tell your classmates how you want to be their friend or they might see you as a quiet and unfriendly person. This is obviously not good for you. As for your mom, tell her you really hate your hairstyle. Tell her, explain to her and discuss the issue with her.

Joyce, I hope my advice would help you solve your problems. I hope to hear some good news from you soon. Good luck!

Cheers,

Jackson
Sun shone in a significant autumn day – it was Mum’s birthday! We woke up early in the morning and Mum’s face was already irradiated with delight. We hugged Mum tightly and a broad smile beamed over her countenance. The whole room was imbued with joy and happiness. As we were still considering about the birthday present for Mum, Dad suddenly came up with a fascinating idea. Feeling incredibly surprised, Dad, who had never cooked before, decided to cook a stunning meal for Mum.

No sooner had Mum gone to work than we rushed to the kitchen to search for recipes and write the shopping list. We deliberated for so long that we wasted much time. Although we didn’t come up with a definite shopping list, we decided to go to the market with a rudimentary one.

“Hooray!” my sister and I yelled. This was the very first time we had ever gone to a market. How could we conceal our excitement? Whenever my sister and I saw a store, we stopped and took a look. However, Dad just glanced around. I bought some fish and meat while my sister bought some fruits and vegetables. I wondered why Dad seemed so anxious and kept staring at the shopping list.

Afterwards, we went to the enormous supermarket nearby. Wow! How spectacular it was! There were different kinds of food everywhere. “Hey, this soy sauce seems to be wonderful!” I exclaimed, “Hmm … this can of beans looks delicious, let’s get some!” Then we placed different kinds of food in the trolley one by one joyfully. Dad’s face reddened.

“$1520 in total, please,” the cashier seemed to be flabbergasted, looking at the
cash register. Dad gave her the money embarrassedly.

On arriving home, Dad locked himself in the kitchen, concentrating on cooking dinner. However, I peeped at him and saw the fish overcooked. It was as black as charcoal. I wasn’t worried about my superhero though, as he always does things perfectly.

When Mum arrived home, Dad served the dishes. Everybody was dumbfounded. After a while, Mum broke the silence, “Oh! Did you cook for me? Amazing dishes!” In my eyes, the fish was black and the food was placed indiscriminately on the plates. They actually didn’t look like food at all. They were like cinders.

We refused to eat the food. To our great disappointment, Dad had cooked awfully. He was not my superhero anymore. Nevertheless, Mum didn’t complain. She tasted the food with satisfaction, “It doesn’t matter how you cooked, I am satisfied that you’ve tried your best to celebrate my birthday. I am happy, so don’t be frustrated.”

Although it was a wholly disaster on Mum’s birthday, I am really glad that Mum liked the celebration.
I truly believe that everybody has his own camera, no matter it is a small one or a professional one. It is used to take photos on ceremonies or when going on trips. The camera, however, is not that simple for me. It brings me confidence and it is certainly my favourite invention of all.

The camera was first invented by Louis Daguerre, who was a French painter, and his partner in 1839. He once went on a hill to enjoy the stunning view of sunset. He decided to paint the view. However, no matter how many techniques he applied, he was not satisfied because of the difference between the real scenery and his painting. Then he thought of an idea, why doesn’t he invent a device to try to capture the reality? Then he immediately told his partner his inspiration and they finally invented the first camera ever.

There were a great number of breakthroughs in the history of the camera. Kodak, a well-known company selling cameras, was founded by George Eastman. The company invented the first camera which can take colourful photos. Meanwhile, a big company Canon founded by a Japanese called Goro Yoshida invented the single-lens reflex camera which can capture nicer photos. I think its camera has got the best quality of all even nowadays.

Do you think cameras are only used to take photos? For me, they are not that simple. They can capture the precious moments in my life and also the magnificent views created by God. I like taking photos because I find it meaningful to record the happiest moments of my friends’ and my family’s. Furthermore, whenever I take a gr-
eat photo, it will make me satisfied and imbued with joy. And when I review the photos I have taken, it can recall my beautiful memories.

Sometimes when I am alone just walking casually on the streets enjoying myself in the city, I always like to go with my camera. Taking photos makes me feel not that lonely. I can focus on the happenings around me, and pay more attention to the things that we overlook in our bustling lives.

My first camera is Canon Powershot SX-30. It is not a single-lens reflex camera but it can train my sense of different scenes. My dream camera is Canon 60D. I really hope I can soon buy one because it does not require many professional skills to take beautiful photos.

Taking photos does not necessarily require a huge single-lens reflex camera though. Even a small digital camera can capture beautiful things. The root is, what do you think of the things around you. If you admire the creations of God, even an amateur can take good photos with a simple camera.
What a Perfect Day!
Max Tin 2D

Today, 10th October, is mum’s birthday. Every member in my family knows it so my sister, father and I planned a series of events to surprise mum.

Hardly had mum woken up from her bed when my sister, Karen, gave her a kiss on the cheeks, making my mother smiled broadly, which also affected me! My dad then scurried into the room when he heard mum was awake. He let out a grin on his face and declared, “Well, hmm… I, as dad, am now here to declare myself chef of the day. Mum, you just need to get some rest and recognize my ability to buy ingredients and cook you guys a supreme dinner.” No sooner had my father’s voice died down in the air than my father put on his shoes and rushed out. The door banged after him.

Then, the door banged shut again, and there came dad, but he was inside the house this time. He cried out without hesitation, “Ooops, I’ve forgotten the shopping list.” We all laughed together for a minute.

At the next minute, we were sitting still around the dining table not satisfied, for we could hardly think of anything to cook. “I know!” Finally dad exclaimed, “We can have five dishes! Hmm… let me think, pan-fried fish, vegetables and cream soup are a ‘must’, then we’ll think of two more dishes… hmm… roast chicken and ‘Ham and egg’ is alright. OK, everything’s ready… Let’s hit the road!” Again, we did not add our comments on the dishes.

Thirty minutes later, dad was yelling and arguing with the fishmonger in epic rage. We felt embarrassed and I decided with my sister to cover our eyes and shake our
heads to show our dissatisfaction, and it was my idea to head for another fishmonger and this time it was me who bought the fish while my dad covered his eyes and moaned. Meanwhile, my sister headed for the fruit store and bought some bananas quickly. She came back two minutes later.

We then went to the supermarket to buy other necessities. Dad said, “Let me do the shopping!” and I replied, “No, sister and I will buy the ingredients! You have caused enough trouble already!” We took our time to buy the bottles of sauce and the frozen ingredients, and even something not necessary – candies and frozen confections, etc. When we paid at the cashier, the cash register showed that we had to pay $1520, it seemed that we had bought “enough”. Dad didn’t look too good on his face but he gave in anyway, “OK, I’ll pay.” My sister and I had malicious grins on our faces.

We got home and dad hurried to cook. We watched TV while dad was cooking. A few moments later, we saw black wisps of filthy smoke wafting out from the kitchen.

At dinnertime, I couldn’t eat for I could only see four lumps of charcoal and one bowl of something stale on the dining table. Dad admitted that even he couldn’t recognize the “charcoal” himself, and he was totally fussed. What a “perfect” day!
Torches
Max Tin  2D

Without this invention, you may get lost in even the smallest maze in the dark, be scared by many of a fake dummy in a haunted house, or trip over a tiny little pebble when you are walking in the dark.

I bet you can guess what it is. Yes! It is a torch! I am addicted to using torches, so I am going to introduce my favourite invention to you.

Torches are famous for saving lives as the torch gives you light in the dark and enables you to see things and dangers in the dark. Most torches carry either a conventional fluorescent light bulb or a more advanced LED light bulb, which gives stronger light and consumes less energy. I like LED torches because their brightness is relatively stronger than the conventional ones, and they allow me to read a pile of books through the night without arousing my parents.

Torches can be used if there is an electricity shortage when there is no light source. They can also help people seek the way out when there is a catastrophe happening at night to save your life or sometimes other people’s lives. If you always go hiking at night, then the torch must be your buddy as illuminating the ground makes the road ahead clear and warns you of anything dangerous before your bumping into them. You can even send an SOS signal if you are in an emergency situation.

Now that I have introduced this invention to you, you may ask, “Who invented this brilliant gadget?” Let me tell you, the person who invented it was called Conrad Hubert and he invented it in 1896. Thanks to him, we have got torches to use nowadays!

Owing to advance technology, now you may even download some torches applications to your smart phone so you can use your camera light as a torch. How convenient!
A Green Wedding
David Tsang    2D

Green books, green buildings, green clouds, green sky, green water, green animals…. Imagine if everything in this world was green in colour, what would the world look like? I thought I would be mad if the world turned green, and I thought green was a horrible and boring colour, so I hated green.

I planted red trees instead of green. I coloured the grass red. As you could see, I hated green very much.

Today, my relatives invited me to join my aunt’s wedding. I looked at my schedule and I had time, so I promised to go to the wedding. When I arrived at the reception, my aunt still had not arrived yet. Suddenly, I heard a loud ‘pop’ and all the lights went out. A plant suddenly appeared on the stage in the wedding hall.

Of course, my aunt was not a plant. She was a human being, a real human. However, she was dressed in green, her lipstick was green, her eyes were green and her wedding dress was also green. I almost fainted. Later, I was told by other relatives that my aunt wanted an Irish wedding, so she decided to have everything in green. I could not believe what I had heard! Then, the groom appeared. The couple sang a song, made a speech, and then cut the cake together. Wait! The cake really surprised me. It was a green 6-tier wedding cake!

After the cutting of the cake, the guests began to dance. As the music started, people drank wine and of course, I took a green juice. I began to look around. It was not so bad after all to have everything in green. People wearing green suits came to me, and we chatted and laughed happily.
Soon it was 11:00pm, and all of us were tired and started to leave. When I got home, I fell asleep in no time. In my dream, there were a lot of green vegetables coming to me and we became friends. We even traveled around the world and flew around the space. It was a really good dream.

After this green wedding, I no longer hated green! I found it a comfortable, friendly and peaceful colour and to my amazement, I started to love the colour. Next time, if there is a green wedding, remember to invite me!
What an Unforgettable Meal!

Owen Lei    2E

From now on, I will never eat anything cooked by my dad!

Last week was my mum’s birthday. “What should we buy for mum?” my little sister, May, asked. “We can buy her a new bag,” I suggested. “Our wardrobe is full of bags. Maybe we can cook her a delicious dinner, so she could take a rest. Let’s give her an unforgettable birthday!” dad said. May and I agreed and cheered happily.

We discussed what we should cook. Dad gave us a lot of ideas as he loved to eat very much. After the discussion, we decided to cook mum’s favourite dishes—seafood and chicken. Then, we went to the wet market immediately.

Dad had never been to a market since all the meals were cooked by mum. It was hot and wet there. Dad was confused and irritated when he was standing in the middle of the market. May and I often went to the market with mum so we knew exactly where we could buy the things we needed. Dad tried to bargain with the hawkers. He said the fish was too expensive but he failed to lower down the price.

We rushed to the supermarket in a hurry as we did not have enough time. We put lots of snacks, drinks and frozen food in the trolley. Dad was bored and tired. After we had finished shopping, we went to the cashier to pay for the food. “$1520, please,” the cashier told dad. “What? Oh my goodness!” dad sighed and we sneered.

We went home and started cooking the dinner. When dad switched on the cooking stove, he turned it to the highest level since he wanted to finish cooking as quickly as possible. The fire was so strong that all the food was burnt.
“Ding dong!” The doorbell rang. “Mum is back!” May yelled. We set the table as fast as lightning. We opened the door and welcomed mum. Dad took out the food—a bowl of brown soup, four uncooked prawns and a burnt chicken. We were shocked and stared at each other.

Although the food was horrible, mum was happy and touched because we had done a lot for her. Finally, we went to a restaurant and had our late dinner joyfully. Dad of course had to pay the bill.

Next week is dad’s birthday. I hope that it will not be a disaster again!
Dear Peter,

How are you? Are you feeling better now? Sorry for replying late! My exam is killing me!

Well, after reading your letter, I have some advice which may help you. First of all, your alarm clock is too old. You should buy a new one to replace it. You waited for the lift for five minutes because you didn’t check any notice. Therefore, from now on, you must read the notice board in the lobby at least once a week when you are waiting for the lift.

There won’t be any empty bus on the road after 7 in the morning. Everyone is rushing to school or to work. Don’t wake up late again! Moreover, taxis are not allowed to stop at bus stops. If you really need one, go to the nearest taxi stand.

You were put in detention because you didn’t bring your homework. Please check everything before you go to sleep. Since you have forgotten your homework three times in a week, you can’t blame your teacher for not trusting you. If you were your teacher, would you stay clam? So you must prove that you are a responsible student. Keep handing in your homework on time and never be late again. Finally, no matter how busy you are, you must eat something before you go to school. If not, you may have stomachache again.

Hey, Peter, lucky charms are useless. Our future is in our own hands! Write to me after you have tried my suggestions. I’m sure you will be happy again!

Love,

Chris
A Profile of Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift

Taylor Alison Swift, born on December 13, 1989 is an American country pop singer, songwriter, musician and actress. She is famous because of her beautiful voice and lovely face.

Her Early Life

Taylor’s mother Andrea Gardner, is a homemaker. Her father Scott Kingsley Swift, is a stockbroker and her grandmother was an opera singer, that’s one of the reasons why Taylor wanted to be a singer. Also, she has a younger brother, Austin. When she was in the Fourth Grade, she won a national poetry contest with a three-page poem, “Monster in My Closet”. She is very talented in writing, especially poems and songs. When she was 12, she devoted an entire summer to writing a 350-page novel, which hasn’t been published.

Taylor’s Music Journey

At the age of 10, Taylor learnt her first three chords in guitar from a computer repairman. She was so happy because she could finally play her guitar while singing songs. She wasn’t happy at school because her classmates didn’t like her. She wrote songs to express herself because she thought she was just a lonely little girl, but after she talked to her mother, she felt confident about herself.

Taylor’s Success

After working hard for a few years, Taylor released three albums. They were “Taylor Swift”, “Speak Now”, and “Fearless”. Some of her famous songs are “You Belong With Me”, “Love Story”, “Picture to Burn” and “Tim McGraw”. She had got
many international awards and became very famous around the world at the age of 17.

Taylor’s Charity Work

Taylor is a very kind person because she gives away money to the poor people regularly. She even sings songs with them and plays with the children if she has free time.

Why I Like Her

Taylor Swift is a very talented singer, songwriter and actress. She is kind and won’t ignore people just because she is famous. However, the most important reason why she is successful is her hard work. I really need to learn this quality from her.

Taylor Swift not only sings and dances well, but also acts well. She can play the guitar very well. Many people around the world love her so much. I wish she could keep her promise “I won’t write songs that my fans won’t relate to”.
A Mystery Unraveled
Lois Sit 2F

No sooner had dad torn out a page of the calendar than his face turned pale and fear spread all over his face. The two tiny words “Mum’s Birthday” struck him unprepared. “How could I have forgotten it?” moaned dad nervously.

This is my dad, an absent-minded guy with a pair of huge glasses. He and mum have been married for fourteen years, but he forgets mum’s birthday every year. “Why on earth did mum marry him?” I was puzzled. “Aha! I have got a fantastic idea! Why don’t I cook dinner for her?” Dad snapped his fingers and whispered softly, making sure we were out of earshot. Danny, my brother grinned sarcastically. All of us knew dad could not cook.

We sat around the table, discussing what to buy in the market. Dad frowned with confusion while Danny and I were talking excitedly. Suddenly, Dad exclaimed, “Let’s cook fish!” The buzz of chatter went off. His wide eyes were glowing, he was pretty confident, “Let’s go!”

Wet markets have always been disgusting for me, especially because of the nauseating smell of raw meat and bloody scenes like cutting meat with an awfully scary knife. Therefore, I went to buy fruits while Danny was bargaining with the fishmonger. At the fruit stall, a beefy man with hardly a neck stared at me. I shivered. “Pl… Please give me some bananas,” I stammered. After buying the ingredients noted in the shopping list, we headed to the supermarket.

The supermarket was like a heaven to me. The cool and refreshing air-conditioning, the shinny-polished floor and the neatly arranged products always
appeal to me. We strolled through the supermarket, buying the rest of the things on the list. At the moment, I remembered mum once told me that she had been the cutest girl at school who had many admirers. One day, she was attracted by a super-ordinary nerd who was my dad. But the reason why mum married dad was still a mystery to me. Looking at dad, who was examining the products, I giggled.

Meanwhile, we finally bought all the things we needed. As we pushed the trolley to the cashier, “Ting”, the amount $1520 appeared on the cash register. It gave us a shock to see such a huge amount. “Making your mother happy really costs me a fortune…” dad groaned. Dad pulled out several bank notes for the cashier in dismay. Everyone headed out of the supermarket in a state of exhaustion.

Minutes later, we arrived home. Dad marched into the kitchen hastily and began to cook. At nine o’clock, everyone was starving. Suddenly, a nasty smell came out of the kitchen followed by dad’s terrible scream. I rushed into the kitchen and found that everything was overcooked and burned as though they were charcoal. Dark and dusty smoke emerged to the dining room. Since dad had not done the cooking-thing for ages, the dinner was screwed up by him.

“Are we going to eat charcoal tonight? Nothing tastes slightly more normal!” Danny moaned rudely. Dad gazed at the food embarrassedly. But to my astonishment, “Delicious! Marvellous! Thanks dad,” praised mum. As soon as dad looked up, mum gave dad a big hug, a really big one! I exchanged looks with Danny and burst into laughter. I tried a little bite of the fish and looked at mum and dad. Though it tasted atrocious, it was full of love and passion. The mystery was solved, it was the reason why mum married dad…
Shadows

Jenny Pang  3A

When the dark clouds were looming over the mountains, I realized that what they wanted from me was my shadow. I tried to break free from the strong grips, but that made the two men seize me more tightly. “We’re nearly there,” one of those men said nastily. It was a dark serpentine path from my house to the laboratory and without the guidance of the men beside me, I couldn’t have made it there.

As we stepped through the automatic glass door, a bald man came towards me swiftly and whispered, “Well, well, well, if it isn’t the daughter of our greatest scientist,” and ordered his colleagues to bring me in. The laboratory was painted white and had blinding lights on. However, I could still see the darkness of that cloud through the window so it made a huge contrast.

“Why my shadow?” I demanded as they forced me into a cube-shaped machine. It was dark inside and I couldn’t see a thing, but I could hear them talking, so I bet they could hear me too. I asked why once more and someone replied this time. “It doesn’t really matter if I tell you now, you won’t get the chance to tell anyone else anyway,” the bald man said. I swore it was him because I’d never forget his devilish, evil voice. “Your father has always been inventing a kind of technology secretly for us and that was how to take someone’s shadow. Oh, I guess I have forgotten to mention the purpose of inventing this technology is to start a revolution, because we have had enough of that inhumane, stupid government. They thought that they had the best weapons and armies in the world, so they can rule this city in whatever way they like. But now, we’ve finally found the best tool to create an indestructible army and destroy the government!” he then smirked wickedly. It seemed pretty obvious why all along my mother and I had been kept in that house and were never allowed to leave. They
threatened my father to work for them, no wonder he was always so gaunt whenever I saw him. However, I still had to make one thing straight before I suffered whatever consequences.

“But why shadows?” I ventured. “Shadows are immune to any weapons. You know, a shadow won’t get hurt even when it is shot at or stabbed, yet, it has more strengths than normal humans do. Powerful, isn’t it? And you are here to be our first subject in this experiment, just to see if it works,” the devil answered me right away. “How do you know that?” Maybe he thought that I was annoying enough, for he answered curtly, “According to your father’s theories. Enough questions, let’s get started.”

I could feel the little box I was standing in had started trembling and a giant spotlight was glimmering over me. A few seconds later, I blacked out.

I woke up on some humid grass, a black cloud overhead. There was no moonlight but I could still manage my steps. I couldn’t make out where I was in this total blackness, so I just laid there and fell into a slumber.

I lifted my eyelids into a seam as I could feel something poking my arm. I sat up straight away when I realized that it was a man.

“They took my shadow,” he said helplessly.

“Maybe staying here is not that bad at all. Although we are living in darkness, where they are is even darker,” that was all I said.
When the full moon was glittering in the pitch-black sky, I realized that what they wanted from me was my name...

That night, I was in my house tasting my red wine. Suddenly, the sound of the doorbell came to my ear. It took me a few minutes to get to the front door. The door was opened with a young man shivering in the chilly wind.

"Hey, brother. Nice suit." "What do you want, Richard?" I murmured. "I am here to beg you." There was silence. "Brother, look at the moon!" The man continued as the blue and red spotlight flashed. He rushed in and closed the door. "There’s nothing special about the moon." "The moon is special, brother. It got a name. I got no name." "Richard’s your name!" Someone knocked at the door and interrupted our conversation. "Brother, my name’s useless. However, yours is useful." Richard ran out of the house by a window and jumped into a car with a driver wearing black immediately. I opened the door and saw a cop...

"My name’s useful? I can’t give it to a suspect, my twin brother!" I shouted to the pitch-black sky. And the terrifying days arrived...

The moon was full but not shiny. I was rich but not happy. My families and friends died one after another. My factories, my houses were all on fire. Where all these incidents happened, where I would see a tall, thin man with black clothes, and he was following me these days. The only street lamp on the street shone on his arm, "Police Officer” was what I saw. Was this guy a cop? I couldn’t stand it anymore!

Under the lonely moon I called Richard, my twin brother, “It’s awful! You want my name? Okay, fine! Starting from now, you are me, Rick, and I am you, Richard!” “That’s great, my twin brother. We look exactly the same. No one will spot that we have exchanged our names. One last thing, give me your ID and your money.” “Wh-
at?” “You know that you must honor me,” I did what he had said.

One night without the company of the moon, I walked on the street with darkness. The “black clothes guy” disappeared since I had called my twin brother. I heard the cars roaring. The red and blue light was flashing like bullets. I tried to run but I failed. I was caught. “Sir, are you Richard, the suspect of ten cases?” asked a cop. “No, I’m not!” He checked my ID card and took me to the police office.

The moon didn’t shine. All in my mind was how my twin brother had stolen my money and my name. I was red and hot.

The chill wind blew me out of the police office. I, with a silver gun, was heading to my brother’s house, which had belonged to me. He had stolen my name, he had stolen my freedom, he had stolen my money, and I was here for him.

The black guy appeared again beside my brother’s armchair. What I could see was the word written on his arms, “Police Officer”, and some silver shiny things in his hands.

“Hey, brother!” I turned over and saw my brother. “Don’t be that angry. You agreed with this trade months ago!” “Enough!” I said, and pulled my gun out of my pocket. “Ha!” He said with confidence.

I loaded my silver gun. He looked so peaceful, like an angel. His eyes were looking at the black guy.

“The moon can be full or eclipse. Cops can be good or bad. I work for you, my dear master,” said the black guy with his horrifying voice.

I swallowed.

Bang…
When the full moon was glittering in the pitch-black sky, I realized that what they wanted from me was my name. As soon as I became conscious, the paramedic had demanded my name, shouting to make himself heard over the deafening roar of the helicopter's rotors. My mind went blank. The moon dimmed in the distance, hiding itself behind a dark cloud. The bloody gash on the side of my face seemed insignificant then.

I couldn’t remember my own name.

The psychiatrist said it was shock, the brain surgeon claimed it was amnesia. Either way, I was sent back to university two months later without a clue on what had happened to me. On anything that had ever happened to me, in fact.

Aside from losing nineteen years of my life, everything I saw had a blood red tint to it. Whatever was causing this, it was freaking me out. Maybe it was that head injury. Would I have superpowers too? I snickered at the prospect, dramatically raising a hand at a glass of water, as raindrops violently pelted the window panes, and half-jokingly envisioned it flying into my hand.

It did.

As I stared absent-mindedly at the glass, jaw wide open, a thunderclap snapped me out of my trance, I dropped the glass in surprise. However, as glass shards flew and water spilled, I slowly began to grin.
I tested my newfound abilities whenever I got the chance, but something seemed wrong. I started to take everything far too seriously and my forever grim expression coupled with the scar on my right face led to my classmates commenting on me as “creepy”.

Two weeks later- today. It was belting, just like the day when I discovered my gifts. Gently lifting the roll-down shutters with invisible arms I stepped into my final destination – the bank. “This is insane,” I whispered, but my body continued on its own accord to execute the robbery. I swaggered down the hall arrogantly like I owned the place, my footsteps echoing throughout the hollow hallway of marble.

Finally, the vault. The steel door gave way to my psychic powers, much to the despair of the bound guards writhing behind me. There was a perverse satisfaction in my actions. My powers had seized control of myself. Horribly conscious of what I was doing, I swept as many gold bars as I could manage off the shelves and into my backpack. And with a casual demeanour I exited.

So here I am, in this epic standoff between the police and myself. So this is how it’s going to end. Even as I plot my next move dozens of firearms are pointed at me. I feel oddly calm. Perhaps it’s because of the relief from having to live with a name that means nothing to me, with friends I never met nor knew. This is no longer my life. Might as well go out with a bang, I muse. I put my powers into overdrive as my vision slowly turns blood red. With a flourish of my hand the tarmac rips itself off the road and lashes out at the ranks of policemen. As I close my eyes amidst the roiling chaos I hear the sergeant scream “Fire at will!”

I knew nothing that happened thereafter.
Dear Edith,

So you can’t sleep? Well, it is no overstatement to say that your problem is shared by many others. But once you identify the source, insomnia is fairly easy to get rid of.

Most of the time stress is a major contributing factor to insomnia. Stress only occurs because you have work to be done and, have people you care about to please. However, it is hardly ever required of you to go berserk over your work, regardless of how urgent or important it is. Even though work is compulsory, you can invite some friends over and have some “heart time” over a hot drink. Chances are that they are just as snowed under as you are. When in doubt, just bear in mind that you’re not alone in this world.

Once you acknowledge this it’s time to tackle the workload. Stock up your room with snacks, stationery and reference books. If possible, optimally you should also have a pitcher of water and a music player on your desk. Do everything in your power to make your room a self-sufficient workspace so you don’t have to leave it every five minutes and break your brilliant train of thoughts on that essay.

At night, following the completion of your work, watch your favorite show / movie or listen to some music. Then, right before bedtime, have five minutes of revision. The reason for this is because you convert short-term memory into long-term memory the instant you drift into your dreams. And it’s no big secret that we memorize stuff better if we can link it to something we like. Finally, convince yourself that you
won’t be feeling anxious anymore after you get enough sleep.

To sum things up, your life does not revolve around that of others, and you are only given work that your teachers know you’re capable of completing. So next time, when you find yourself fretting over a project or getting pre-speech jitters, just understand that you have nothing to fear provided that you’d managed your time well.

Sleep tight,
Isaac
Dear Edith,

I am glad to receive your letter. I am sorry to hear that you’ve been seriously suffering from insomnia. I hope I can help you.

You said you felt deeply anxious and troubled. I think you have to try to relax before going to bed. You can have a warm bath or do some gentle yoga to relax both your mind and body. Don’t lie on the bed worrying about your schoolwork. You could listen to some quiet music to help you fall asleep.

Besides, you also said you had no idea on how to improve the situation. No worries, I think you don’t have enough exercise. If I were you, I would exercise regularly, such as go swimming or jogging every day. But please keep it in mind, don’t do vigorous exercise too close to bedtime as it may make you feel awake.

To improve your situation, it’s a good idea not to eat or drink too much. Too much food or alcohol can interrupt your sleep patterns, especially late at night. Instead, you should have a balanced diet! You should not drink too much coffee. Cut down on stimulants such as caffeine in tea or coffee, especially in the evening. They may interfere with the process of falling asleep and also prevent deep sleep. You can have a cup of warm milk instead.

It will be helpful if you can make sure that your bed is comfortable. It’s difficult to get restful sleep on a mattress that’s too soft or too hard, or a bed that’s too small or old. If you have a pet sleeping with you, you may consider moving it to somewhere
else. It would interrupt your sleep.

Don’t worry. Things will work out fine. I hope the advice helps. Fingers crossed!

Looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best regards,
Carrie
Dear Edith,

I am glad to hear from you, yet I am sorry to learn that you’ve got insomnia. You told me that you felt deeply anxious and troubled. I am going to give you some tips to beat insomnia.

First of all, I advise you to do more exercise, you may do moderate exercise on a regular basis, like swimming, jogging and walking. It can help you to relieve some of the tension built up over the day. Yet, remember that you should not do vigorous exercise too close to bedtime because it may keep you awake. Other than that, it’s also a good idea to make sure that your bed is comfortable. It’s difficult to get restful sleep on the lumpy mattress that you are sleeping now.

Besides doing exercise regularly and choosing a comfortable bed, keeping your rest place tidy and quiet is as well important. I know that you have recently bought a new dog called Bobby. Did you allow it to sleep in your room? If you did, consider moving it somewhere else because it often makes noise at night.

Apart from relocating Bobby, I know how much you like to drink coffee. Please cut down on stimulants like caffeine in coffee and tea, especially in the evening and before sleep. Do you know that they can interfere with the process of falling asleep, and prevent deep sleep? If I were you, I would stop drinking coffee altogether. I suggest you have a warm milky drink or herbal tea before bedtime instead.

I wish my advice can help you solve your problem soon. Please let me know how things turn out. Don’t hesitate to call me if you need any help.

Bye for now.

Best wishes,
Sarah
A Speech – Discard Your Unhealthy Lifestyle
Jason Cheung 3A

There are many people in the world who aren’t healthy, and some of them got ailments when they were born, they may die because of those diseases. And most of us are healthy. Nonetheless, many of us don’t cherish our first wealth. We keep smoking and having a poor diet. But these things are totally wrong; we need to have a healthy lifestyle.

Every unhealthy lifestyle choice we make has an effect, whether it happens now or in the future. In 2010, there were more than 42,705 people who died of leading causes of death in Hong Kong. Some of them had an unhealthy lifestyle, so just have a healthy lifestyle and you can stay healthy.

There are many people who are smoking in Hong Kong now, and it is such an unhealthy lifestyle. The World Health Organization has revealed that for every eight seconds, someone dies from tobacco use, and there are many such cases in Hong Kong. My classmates, be healthy, stay away from cigarettes and lead a healthy lifestyle. We can play together and sing together if only we are happy and healthy.

Discard your bad lifestyle, sleep more and you can be right as rain. Discard your bad lifestyle, don’t smoke so that you won’t be the one who dies of tobacco use. Discard your bad lifestyle, and we will be fit and cheerful, with pleasure that we are wealthy because we are healthy.
I was an Extra in ‘Police Report’!

Jolly Wong 3A

In June, my school conducted a career week. I took part in a scheme as a waiter. I went to a cafe to gain some practical work experience. The cafe I worked at was dirty but often fully-booked. My duties were to take orders and serve the dishes. It was rather boring, nevertheless, an interesting incident happened on the last day of my work.

A customer came in. He looked strange. He was wandering and looking around as if he was looking for something. I led him to his seat and he ordered a bowl of vermicelli with fish balls. What a strange combination! Right after I had served the dish to him, he looked around again, then he sneakily put a cockroach in his food. I was not sure why he did that, without thinking too much, I used my mobile phone to record his sinful act.

Honestly, I was in shock and didn’t know what to do. I looked at the picture I had taken and thought thoroughly, I said to myself, ‘Should I show it to the manager?’ ‘Will I be sacked?’ I stared at that man again, suddenly, my manager shouted at me and asked if I was daydreaming. I reluctantly showed him the photo. Other colleagues pointed their fingers at me and said I had made a fuss of it. The manager gazed at the photo, took a deep breath and decided to go forward and talk to the customer.

Right before the manager started talking to the customer, a woman in a police uniform jumped out and said, ‘there is a growing trend of this kind of cases, more and more customers are using the same method to cheat for free meals…’ After that, a man with a deep loud voice shouted, ‘Cut, good take!’ The manager and I looked at each other with our eyes wide open. Out of the blue, we realized that they were the crew
from TV filming ‘Police Report’. Soon, the director came forward, thanked us and apologized for any inconvenience caused. They said that they didn’t inform us beforehand as they wanted to make it authentic.

The manager admired my bravery and gave me a pay rise. He said that I was a good model for other colleagues. After this scheme, I have broadened my horizons and I have learnt the importance of honesty!
Let’s Get Rid of Junk Food in Our School!

Chris Au    3B

Recently, most students are discussing whether the tuck shop at our school should stop selling junk food. Some of them complain that it will limit their choice. However, I agree to the policy to stop selling junk food on campus.

First of all, if we eat junk food continuously, our health will be seriously affected. Junk food is undoubtedly delicious, as it contains a lot of fat and sugar but low nutritional value. It is believed that most of our students are attracted to those oily items. If we keep on eating these things and do not do regular exercise, we may suffer from serious diseases, such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease. Moreover, the artificial additives in junk food may even cause violent behaviour. It means students will lose their temper easily.

Another point which must be taken into consideration is that schools should not only promote healthy diet but also provide healthy food for students. In my opinion, it is contradictory that the teachers are telling us not to eat junk food but it is available on campus at the same time. Besides, students stay at school for many hours a day. If they can buy healthy food for their breakfast and lunch, they will develop a good habit of having a healthy diet.

Last but not least, unlike money-making organisations, schools should not give in to please students. For primary and junior secondary students, it is not necessary to give them too many choices, as they are not mature enough. They do not understand how harmful junk food is. If we let them choose what to eat, they will be spoiled and become unhealthy.
Based on the above discussion, I truly believe that all schools should have the mission to help their students grow up healthily. Therefore, it is hoped that the tuck shops in all schools will stop selling junk food immediately.
A Total Ban on Junk Food

Sharon Tse  3B

Our school principal is planning to tell the tuck shop to stop selling junk food, such as fish balls and fries, to promote healthy eating. I totally support his plan.

In the tuck shop, deep-fried chicken wings, potato chips, chocolate and soft drinks are the most popular snacks. Most of the time, many classmates rush to the tuck shop during recesses and lunchtime. In fact, these kinds of food are unhealthy. Most of them contain a large amount of trans fats, sugar and sodium. We call such kind of food “Junk food”.

Junk food is not only notorious for its low nutritional value, but it also contains high levels of calories and fats. If we eat junk food as a habit, many serious diseases may be caused, such as obesity and diabetes. Eating junk food may even lead to high blood pressure and heart disease. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), a woman needs about 1,500 calories and a man needs 2,000 calories a day. However, a hamburger meal contains about 1,000 calories. This is indeed astonishing.

To rectify the problem, I suggest that our school tuck shop provide healthy and fresh food for students, such as sandwiches and fresh fruit juices. Besides, we can put up some posters on school notice boards and in each classroom to encourage students and teachers to support this plan and have a more balanced diet.

Remember, junk food is detrimental to our health. The one and only one way to make this policy run smoothly is a total ban on junk food because students lack self-control. Therefore, the principal’s new policy against junk food is absolutely necessary.
Let Junk Food Stay at the Tuck Shop!

Erik Chan    3B

Recently, the school principal has suggested that we should stop selling junk food at school in an attempt to promote healthy eating. When the issue comes into the spotlight, most students cannot agree with the principal more and they even condemn how harmful and unhealthy junk food is. Overeating junk food, undoubtedly, does more harm than good to our health. However, there is still reservation about the suggestion of the principal. Is the total ban on junk food the only way to promote healthy eating?

Junk food is everywhere in Hong Kong. The existence of the convenience stores such as 7-Eleven and Circle K implies the convenience and easiness of getting junk food. Even if there is a total ban on it in the school tuck shop, it would be difficult to stop students from getting it outside the school.

Moreover, thanks to junk food such as cup noodles, instant noodles and hamburgers, students can finish their lunch more quickly. When compared with having a proper meal, having junk food can enable students to spare more time to finish their homework at lunchtime. Therefore, they can have more time to do revision after school. It is in fact beneficial to their studies.

Besides, junk food will not affect students’ health if they do not have it very often. Some students may just have it once a week or even once a month. Whether a student is healthy or not all depends on various aspects, including his or her eating habits and exercise, so junk food should not be solely to blame. Some nutritionists even claim that people will not be unhealthy if they have junk food no more than once a month, which means that eating junk food will not be harmful to our health if we are
cautious and self-disciplined.

After all, junk food is not necessarily detrimental to our health if we have good control on our diets and exercise more. Therefore, to stop selling junk food is not the only way to promote balanced diets and deter students from being badly affected by junk food. Hence, junk food should still be made available at the tuck stop. Please let it stay!
Wealth or Health?

Charles Leung 3B

“The first wealth is health,” says a famous quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson. Do you believe that the quote is true? Well, I believe so.

We must agree that we need to stay alive to get a job, we need to stay alive to earn money; we need to stay alive to become wealthy! So, if you want to be wealthy, first, be healthy.

Think about Steve Jobs, the heart of Apple. Steve Jobs was creative, he was imaginative, his products were innovative. Of course, he was wealthy too. But Steve Jobs died of cancer last month.

You have no authority to choose to live long without having a healthy lifestyle, but you have the authority to change your way of living and become physically fit and strong.

Do you want to own a lot of money but have no time to enjoy your life? Or having just enough money but full of happiness and have a relaxing lifestyle? It is your choice.

Now, let’s close your eyes and imagine, imagine that you are the richest person in the world. You live in a beautiful palace, you have plenty of limousines, you have uncountable cash. Unfortunately, you have some bad living habits like smoking and it has caused you lung cancer. You have only a month to live. You can’t take your money with you, all your wealth and happiness are deprived from you. Do you want to live like that? If no, you must put your health in your first priority.
Everyone, from today, let’s exercise regularly, sleep early and follow the Mediterranean diet, in order to treasure our body.

Remember, no health, no life. Wealth is an external and non-essential thing for living, but health, undoubtedly, is vital, is necessary, is crucial to you and me! Wealth or health? I choose health.
What’s the Most Essential Thing?
Sarah Tsang  3B

Health is the most crucial thing in your life. You can’t do anything without a healthy body. When you have an unhealthy body, you become ill. When you are ill, you can’t study to gain knowledge. When you are ill, you can’t work to earn money. When you are ill, you can’t stay with your family and friends to have fun together. When you are ill, you may lose everything.

Suppose you have 100,000,000 dollars. Among it, the ‘one’ in the front represents health, and the zeros behind it stand for your property, family, friends, reputation and other stuff that are necessary to you. However, health is the most essential thing in your life because if you lose the ‘one’, no matter how many zeros there are, it still equals zero. That’s why nothing means anything without health.

There is no doubt that health is the most vital thing in life. No matter how gloomy the surroundings are, and whether you are running out of money, as long as you have a healthy body, there is still a glimmer of hope. As the famous saying goes, “While there is life, there is hope.” So what is the most essential thing in your life? It’s health!
I want to be slim. I want to be charming. I want to be young. Regardless of what ages, sexes and races, everyone wants to be beautiful. But what is the definition of beauty? Does it mean having a model figure? Being thin? Being tall? Having no wrinkles? Everyone has a different answer but I think being healthy makes beauty.

Today, many girls, in order to become slim, are seeking dangerous means to lose their weight. They may take slimming drugs, have surgical operations or even refuse to eat. It is absolutely not advisable. The famous singer, Karen Carpenter, was a lovely girl when she was first known to the public, but she got a wrong idea that she was too fat and then she tried every effort to lose weight. Unluckily, she got anorexia, and died at last. It is a real life example letting us know the importance of health.

We should reconsider the concept of slimness nowadays. More than medicine, we need regular exercise. More than cosmetics, we need a balanced diet. More than spending time and money on clothing, we need enough sleep. After all, being healthy makes one beautiful.
Dear Edith,

How are you doing? Are you feeling better? Call me anytime, that’s what friends are for. Don’t you think so?

Actually, there are a few reasons for insomnia. Many people reckon that the physical environment affects your sleeping. My opinion is identical to theirs. Do your bed and your pillow suit you? Or is it noisy out there? If your answer is yes to these questions, they may be also the factors leading to insomnia too.

Another reason is that you may be suffering from anxiety and stress. Are you doing well at school? Does anything bother you? Are your parents giving pressure to you on your studies? If this is the case, feel free to call me, I really mean it. By the way, your sleeping disorder is also a key that makes you feel anxious. And your anxiety leads to your insomnia. It’s a vicious circle.

So in view of the above problems, let me give you some advice. I suggest that you should check if your bed and pillow are suitable. On the other hand, if where you are living is noisy, you may move and tell your family about this problem and see if they can help. One more thing, don’t drink too much water before you sleep as it may cause edema and you may also keep going to the toilet the whole night and you may not fall asleep again!

Expressing your emotions properly is an ideal way to get rid of anxiety. You may also talk to your family members, your teachers and your friends. Don’t try to
hide your feelings. Relax, Edith, relax. In school, just try your best, if you still can’t reach your goal or if the mark isn’t that high, don’t be frustrated, as long as you live, you’ll have the chance!

I would be delighted to meet a happy, powerful but not a depressed, stressful Edith, all right? Don’t disappoint me!

P.S. I will be visiting you soon.

Love,
Chloe
Dear Edith,

Long time no see, Edith. I’ve read your letter and I know your situation. Don’t be desperate! Things are going well. All you have to do is to relax yourself. Here is some advice that may help you to get rid of your detrimental illness.

First of all, if you want to alter your sleeping disorder, you must know the reasons for insomnia first. Stress is believed to be a critical ingredient of insomnia. One reason is that you have a hectic school life. You have a lot of homework to do. In addition, there is a vast number of exams and quizzes. Granted, you are exhausted from doing these boring tasks, you can never evade your work. Therefore, you must feel distressed and miserable.

Sleeping environment is also a key that can lead to insomnia. Are you lying on a cozy bed, sleeping on a soft pillow? These are undoubtedly vital to your sleeping quality. On the other hand, light pollution and noise pollution is also a cause of insomnia. You may find it difficult to sleep in such an odious environment.

In most cases, an abnormal sleeping cycle can result in insomnia. Due to your occupying workload, you may not have adequate sleeping time and you will destroy your sleeping cycle. Exceeding entertainment may also deprive you of your sleeping mood. It is no exaggeration to say that you have responsibility for suffering from insomnia.

I suggest you should work arduously to have a better sleeping cycle. Strike a
balance between working and sleeping. Be conscious that you should work efficiently. Complete your homework faster and recite the content you have to test earlier. Therefore, you can have an opportunity to sleep earlier and regulate your sleeping cycle.

One of the great men once remarked that, “Music can cure human’s heart.” Definitely, it will be conducive to reducing pressure if you listen to music. I suggest that you should listen to some music before you sleep, especially soft music. That can help you rest. Therefore, you can cater to your sleeping mood more easily.

As the old saying goes, “An apple a day keeps the doctor away.” Staying healthy is a life-long process. It is never too late to get rid of insomnia. If you follow my advice, I estimate that you will be fine one day. Just be relaxed! And remember to get a cozier bed. Hope you can enjoy an amusing dream soon.

Best wishes,
Daniel
Dear Jenny,

How have you been? Are you still bothered by insomnia?

I’m sorry to have heard about your problem. To be frank, I’m really worried about you. I know that insomnia is a troublesome sickness. Now, you’re not energetic all the time, so I would like to give you some advice.

As I know, insomnia is a terrible sickness. You usually find it difficult to fall asleep at night so the next day, you’ll be very tired. I’m sure it’s a grave problem to you as you have to go to school every day.

As for the suggestions, first, I think you may listen to some soft music before you go to bed. This is because when you listen to soothing music, it will comfort you and make you relaxed. If music itself is not enough, try also aromatherapy. It’s fragrant and a perfect match with music. I’m sure it can help you!

Next, you can do exercise for about 30 minutes before you go to bed. Jogging on the playground near your apartment is a good choice. When you’ve exercised, you’ll be very tired as you’ve used energy. After a hot shower, you’ll be very sleepy.

Finally, you can drink a cup of hot milk or read a short paragraph of story for a few minutes. This can help you to relax yourself easily. I always try it when I have jet lag. It is very useful. If those methods can’t help, I have the last resort for you – call me anytime. We’re bosom friends and I’m always willing to chat with you and accompany you. Remember, whatever problem you have, I’ll stand by you!

I really hope that these methods can help you, and you can recover very soon. Do write me back to update me!

Best wishes,

Sophie
The Story of Miss Havisham
Winnie Chan 3C

Long time ago, when Miss Havisham was as beautiful as an angel, she met him in a ball. At first, she was not interested in him. Until her friend, Elizabeth, gripped her hand and whispered excitedly and said, ‘Look at that gentleman. Oh my God, he’s looking at us!’ As Miss Havisham had attended so many balls before, she came across different men in the past. That’s why she was very calm. However, Miss Havisham could no longer maintain her calmness as this man was about to capture her heart.

When Miss Havisham turned her blue eyes to that man, she was also surprised to see such a heart-throbbing man. He started to walk toward the two ladies as he smiled to them.

“Good evening, beautiful ladies. It’s my pleasure to meet you here. I’m sure this is the most important reason for my presence in this ball,” said the man.

“It’s nice to see such a gentleman here too,” replied Elizabeth.

As they conversed, the dance music started. The man then invited Miss Havisham for a dance.

That was their first date. Since then, he had been visiting Miss Havisham every day. Whenever he came, he would definitely pick up different flowers on the road to be given to Miss Havisham. Their relationship was soon known by Miss Havisham’s parents. They strongly supported their dating. After six months, the man and Miss Havisham were engaged.
Sadly, this romantic relationship didn’t last long. Shortly after their engagement, the man changed. One day, when Miss Havisham wanted to go out for a walk, the man rejected and said he only wanted to stay in the garden and drink a cup of coffee. Since then, he had been keeping distance with Miss Havisham. Even though physically they were near each other, they were actually distant emotionally. After all, love at first sight is never reliable and crush on somebody would fade one day. The man discovered that he didn’t really want to get married with Miss Havisham, whom he hadn’t known much about, but he also understood that he could do nothing as he had already engaged with her.

On their wedding day, Miss Havisham was very happy. She put on make-up, which made her become the prettiest woman in town, and her wedding dress, waiting for the coming of her fiancé.

At nine twenty in the morning, the man didn’t show up. At four o’clock in the afternoon, Miss Havisham was still waiting, hoping that he would finally come. Until eight o’clock at night, Miss Havisham was still a spinster. She was waiting, with the ring put beside her, with the yell from the thunderstorm and the crying sky. She was unmarried.

Miss Havisham waited for 40 years. No one knew where the man had gone. Finally, he left her, without a reason, without an explanation.
Dear Edith,

Thanks for your letter. I’m sorry that you’ve been seriously suffering from insomnia which is a disgusting sickness that makes you feel deeply anxious and troubled. I hope that I can help you because I am one of your very best friends.

You told me that you did not know why the insomnia happened and you had no idea what you could do to help alleviate the problem. Let me tell you the symptoms of insomnia. You always feel tired or fall asleep during the day. You do not feel refreshed when you wake up or may wake up several times while you are sleeping as well.

My first advice is for you to keep regular hours. Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time every day will programme your body to sleep better. Having a routine for sleeping is good for your body, thus you will be in good spirit during the day.

My second advice would be exercising regularly. Moderate exercise on a regular basis, such as swimming or walking, can help to relieve some of the tension built up over the day. Remember not to do vigorous exercise too close to bedtime as it may keep you awake. Exercise is essential to our body, not only can it strengthen our body, but it can also prevent us from suffering various health problems, such as insomnia, high blood pressure and heart disease.

My third advice would be drinking less caffeine. You should cut down stimu-
lants, such as caffeine in tea or coffee, especially in the evening. If I were you, I would have a warm, milky drink or herbal tea instead of coffee.

Most importantly, you should always be optimistic and happy, which I think is a positive attitude to fight insomnia.

I hope my advice helps. Don’t worry too much, I believe things will work out fine. I wish you can solve your problem soon. Looking forward to hearing from you soon. Good luck, my friend.

Best wishes,
Vicky
My “Unforgettable” Career Week

Christy Lam    3D

Last week, I had my unforgettable career week. I chose to be a waitress in YumYum HaHa restaurant. Being a waitress, I needed to take orders from the customers, tidy up the tables and serve the dishes, yet these were not the things that gave me an unforgettable week.

Things were going fine in the first week, yet, on the last day of the second week, something strange happened. When I was serving a creamy lobster soup to one of the male customers, weird things happened. The male customer was in his thirties with a pair of big eyes, thick eyebrows, a big mouth and a straight nose.

I noticed something strange right away when I led him to his reserved table. Before he drank his soup, he put a dead cockroach into his soup. Things happened in a flash. At first I didn’t know what to do, then, when I gathered myself, I took a short video of his wrongdoing. After that, I showed it to my boss immediately. My boss and I decided to report it to the police as soon as we could, at the same time, I tried to keep the customer engaged until the police arrived.

Eventually, the police found out that he was actually a business spy hired by the restaurant that is adjacent to our restaurant. His aim was to destroy the reputation of our restaurant, he is as sly as a fox! He was caught and charged by the police. I was so pleased that all the other colleagues and customers said that I was an upright and brave girl. Some of them even praised me that it was very clever of me to film the video!

Right before the nasty business spy was brought into the police car, he threatened me, ‘Watch out! I will be back, Christy!’ I was shocked that he knew my name. It has been two weeks since he said that to me, yet, I still dream of the scene from time to time. It was really an ‘unforgettable’ career week!
She was lying on the bed, not talking, not moving. But somehow I knew she was crying. And it was all my fault.

I was an orphan. I spent most of the time trying to ignore those stupid kids who complained all the time. They always wondered if their parents loved them or not. To me, love is as useless as a discarded tissue. People always bring tissues with them, but never treasure them. Just like love, people never treasure love. Love isn’t worth nothing.

I graduated from Standard five years ago. I found a job right after graduation. I realized that money was the most important thing when I was only seven, while others still believed in Santa Claus. However, working in that small company didn’t satisfy me at all. I wanted to be rich, and be successful. At that time, I met her at a party. Her name is Melanie, my wife. She came from a rich family. She was madly in love with me, and so we got married.

I was able to go up the ladder in my career because of her connections. Alright, I was using her, and I was a jerk, I knew that.

She was a good wife, I admitted it. She could cook, did the housework and never interfered with my life. I am a successful man now, and I knew I really should thank her.

Nevertheless, things hadn’t gone that way anymore since two months ago. Melanie was hit by a truck. She didn’t die, but she couldn’t move her legs anymore. She didn’t talk to me after the accident. Seeing her like that broke my heart. It was then
I realized I had loved her ever since I met her the first time. I was the one who acted stupid all the time.

“Here, Melanie. I bought you something to eat.” I pulled a chair to sit next to her bed, talking to her softly.

She glanced at the food, then she finally said, “I hate congee.” She spoke to me, it was a good start, as I had decided to win her heart back. But what she said really made me feel ashamed. We had been married for four years and I still didn’t know that she hated congee. Oh man, I was such a bad husband.

“I will go buy something else then, what do you want?” I asked her patiently.

“No, I don’t want anything. Just stay, please. Stay here with me.” She held my hands and squeezed them a little while speaking. “I want to sleep.”

“Okay then, I will stay here. I give you my word.” I said.

“Thank you, Jared.” She closed her eyes and drifted away.

I gazed at her while she was sleeping. This was the first time I watched her face so closely. She was such a beautiful woman. Those eyes of hers used to shine brightly with joy, but all I could see in her eyes now was sorrow.

I should have believed in love. If I had done so, Melanie would probably not have been lying on a bed in hospital.

I visited her every day ever since the day she had asked me to stay with her. At day I worked. However, I couldn’t do anything as all I could think of was her. After
work, I went right straight to the hospital. I always bought some roses on the way to the hospital. She loved roses. Every time I arrived, she was usually staring out at the window, not making a sound. And when she noticed me, she would smile at me tenderly. I sometimes read her newspapers, sometimes I just sat there.

Today, when I entered the room, she wasn’t sitting by the window. Instead, she was sitting on her bed. She didn’t smile at me either.

“Jared, I have something to say.” After a while, she said.

“Yes?” I didn’t know why, but I sensed something wrong.”

“Let’s take a break from each other for a while,” she said. “It would be good for both of us.”

“No, it wouldn’t!” I trembled. She wanted to leave me…

“I know that you have no feelings for me. It’s okay, Jared, I understand.” She reached for my hands. Her hands were so cold. “I cannot walk anymore. I don’t want to cause you any trouble. You are always so busy. It’s too much trouble for you if you have to look after me.”

“It’s not like that!” I had always been calm, but I lost control at the moment as I feared I would lose her. “I have always loved you; it’s just that I didn’t want to admit it. I was scared. I always thought that love was no good for me. It’s because it reminded me of my loveless childhood. I was so stupid back then, I wasn’t brave enough to face my true feelings. I know you are going through a tough time, but I will not be that way anymore, I promised. Please, don’t leave me. I love you.”
“Jared…is that true?” Melanie looked shocked.

“Yes. Please give me another chance?” I asked sincerely.

“Oh yes…Jared. And I love you too,” she smiled, it was a smile of joy, a smile of love.

I walked to her and embraced her. At that moment, I felt like I was the happiest man in the world. And I was sure that I would stay with Melanie forever and would always love her.

Love, something I’ve always distanced myself from, has been a blessing to me. I was a fool for not believing in love. I’m glad I have found it now.

Sometimes, I thank God for hurting Melanie. You may think that I am mean, but if that had never happened, I wouldn’t have known how much I love her.

It was life-changing for me.
Useful Tips to Get Rid of Insomnia

Yanica Chan 3E

Dear Edith,

How are you? I feel sorry that you have been seriously suffering from insomnia and deep anxiety. I think the main reason is that the end-of-term examination is coming very soon. You feel worried and nervous, don’t you? I have some advice to help you improve the situation. Let me tell you now.

Firstly, you should calm down and relax yourself. You need to adjust yourself to the situation, so you will not be so nervous. And I think another reason for your anxiety is that you don’t prepare early enough for your examination. It would be a good idea to set a timetable and prepare early, in order to make good use of your revision time. By doing so, you can have enough time to prepare for your examination, and thus you will not be scared because you will have already prepared well enough.

Secondly, I think the best thing to do is to pray to God when you feel extremely worried. Although you are afraid of the examination, there can be miracles when you believe so. God will help you every time. If you need help, you can pray to God anytime. He will listen to you. In Matthew 11:28 of the Bible, Jesus said, “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” So, entrust your worries to God, and He will help you.

Thirdly, why don’t you drink a cup of hot milk before you sleep? It can help you to fall asleep more easily. On the other hand, you can listen to some soft music before you go to bed. It can also help you improve the situation.

Hope my advice can help you. Take care. Remember to calm down and relax yourself. If you have any problem, you can write to me again. God bless you.

Yours,

Yanica
Dear Edith,

How are you? Are you still suffering from sleeping disorder? I think you have probably got insomnia! Let me give you some advice.

Do you have a stressful life? I know that depression, stress and worries could be the causes of insomnia. However, sometimes it’s caused by pain, excitement, serious illness or even medication. I think your insomnia is caused by stress and depression.

You need to get away from your stressful life. What about going on a trip? You may also try to find out the reasons that make you feel stressed. In this way, you can be less stressed and have a good night’s sleep.

On the other hand, you can do something to help with your sleep. First, you should avoid having caffeine and alcohol late at night. This will make your sleeping disorder even worse. For alternative, you can have warm milk or chamomile tea with honey. Second, you can enjoy a warm, relaxing bath before sleep. It will be more relaxing if you add a few drops of essential oil in your bathtub. I prefer the scent of lavender. What about you? Also, you should make sure your bedroom is dark and quiet. The temperature is very important too, not too hot or cold. The most important of all is to build a routine according to your body. Our body’s biological clock has a specific routine and we should follow it. If you work out a regular routine, it will definitely improve your sleep. Don’t stay up too late or wake up until noon because it will mess up your biological clock. Sometimes, people think that if we don’t have enough sleep, we can always gain more sleep for compensation the next day. But this is a wrong con-
cept. So I suggest you stick with your schedule and work out a regular routine.

I wish I can help you with the advice above. In my opinion, having quality sleep is way more important than having long hours of sleep. Sadly, if you are still affected by insomnia after you’ve done all the aforementioned, I strongly recommend that you go to a doctor. Remember, don’t take sleeping pills without a doctor’s prescription because sleeping pills are addictive and may cause death!

Edith, keep in touch! I’m really worried about you!

Love,
Chantel
Co-Educational School Are More Beneficial for Students

Coco Lau  3E

Which type of school are you studying in? Co-educational schools or single-gender schools? I have studied in co-educational schools for twelve years. In my opinion, co-educational schools are much better.

The most important point is that students can develop better interpersonal skills in co-educational schools. In a few years, all of the students will be working in the society. They will have to get along with other people, including males and females. They should be given the chance to get along with people of both genders so as to extend their social networks. As a result, they will adapt much better in the adult world.

Besides, I think students can express themselves and overcome their shortcomings by learning from the opposite gender. The two genders have their own strengths. For example, females are usually more careful than males, whereas males are generally more sporty than females. When females and males have interactions, they will make improvements together.

Moreover, studying in co-educational schools can provide more chances for sex education. During puberty, teenagers naturally want to know more about the opposite gender. Studying in co-educational schools can reduce students’ curiosity towards the opposite gender, so teenagers will be less likely to express their curiosity through inappropriate ways.

On the other hand, most parents think that single-gender schools are much better because they have higher academic rankings. However, Alan Smith, a professor
of Education, carried out a research which revealed that single-gender education did not necessarily sustain good results. In fact, many single-gender schools have been private schools for many years, and thus they have the opportunity to choose students who have stronger abilities and better social backgrounds. That explains why single-gender schools often have good results. It is not because of the education, but just because of what the students already have.

Having said these, we know that studying in co-educational schools has many advantages. Also, now we know that single-gender schools have good academic results because of many other factors. Based on these reasons, co-educational schools are more beneficial for students.
Dear Edith,

How are you? I’m very sorry to hear about your suffering from insomnia. Have you got better?

I also had insomnia during the test period last year. My parents said that insomnia can be caused by various reasons. Life events such as fear, stress, anxiety, emotional or mental tension are all possible causes. Are you leading a stressful life? I have some suggestions for you here. Hope they can ease your life a bit.

First of all, you may do exercise in the daytime. Doing exercise can not only adjust the metabolism and control your weight, it is also useful for alleviating insomnia. According to the clinical experiment done by North Western University, doing aerobic exercise helps improve sleeping quality. Also, doing exercise can lower our level of stress. Just remember, if you have worked for the whole day, you need to take good rest. You can do aerobics like running, swimming and cycling. Such exercises are very interesting and helpful.

I also suggest you drink a glass of hot milk or water before you sleep. It is believed that drinking a glass of hot milk or water can increase the temperature of the central nervous system. It can increase drowsiness. Also, the calcium in milk makes you feel relaxed. When you are relaxed, I’m sure you’ll have a good dream.

Finally, don’t forget to adjust your “body clock”. Everyone has a “body clock” that controls our body’s natural rhythms. It tells us when it’s the right time to sleep, work and eat. If your “body clock” becomes normal, you won’t have insomnia any
more!

Well, I do hope my advice will be helpful to you and I hope you will get well soon. Do keep me updated. Looking forward to your good news soon.

Love,

Gloria
When Miss Havisham was young, she was as beautiful as an angel. Born in the Havisham family, she was the only daughter of Mr. Havisham, the wealthiest businessman in the town. As he was afraid that Miss Havisham would be kidnapped by bad people, he never let her leave home alone.

Three poor men went to the town. One of them, whose name was John, was so handsome that many girls adored him very much. They heard things about Miss Havisham and they planned to kidnap her for money.

One day, Miss Havisham was bored at home, so she decided to go out slinkingly. Sadly, she didn’t realise that she was followed by the three men. When she went to the quiet corner of the street, two of the men surrounded her, showing that they wanted to take her away.

“You’re the daughter of Mr. Havisham, right?” said one of the men.

“If we kidnap her, we’ll be rich, bro,” the other man added.

“True. Your papa will give us a lot of money in order to save your life.”

“Please let me go!” Miss Havisham begged.

Suddenly, John appeared. He saw the two men and shouted, “Stop! How dare you bully this lovely lady!”

“Help me. Gentleman, please save my life!” cried Miss Havisham.
Seeing that John had successfully gained her trust, the two men left immediately. John became her hero.

“Thank you,” said Miss Havisham wholeheartedly.

“Not at all. I’m John. Hope we will have the chance to meet again in the future.”

The next day, John intentionally went to meet Miss Havisham. Very soon, they became good friends. Miss Havisham liked him very much. Two months later, they fell in love.

When Mr. Havisham knew about her romantic relationship with a stranger, he was very angry.

“How can you trust a man whom you didn’t know in the past?” inquired Mr. Havisham.

“Trust me, dad. He saved my life. He must be a good man. It really hurts if you don’t allow me to date him,” begged Miss Havisham.

Loving his only daughter so much, Mr. Havisham had to recognise this relationship reluctantly.

Since then, Miss Havisham kept affiliating with John. Two years later, Mr. Havisham died and Miss Havisham inherited all his wealth. Just shortly after the death of Mr. Havisham, John proposed to her and they finally decided to get married. To Miss Havisham, she really looked forward to their wedding. To John, the poor girl would be trapped and he would get the money very soon.
On a sunny day, John told Miss Havisham that his mum was very ill. He needed a large sum of money to pay for his mum’s medical fee. He asked if Miss Havisham would be willing to lend him the money. As expected, Miss Havisham would give whatever amount he asked for in no time.

When John got the money, he said that he had to go back to his hometown for a few days to pay for his mum’s medical fee. He even promised to come back before their wedding.

Miss Havisham waited every day, but she never saw John come back. On their wedding day, she dressed in a wedding gown, longing for him to come back. But… he had left her, without a reason, without an explanation.
Hi everybody, welcome to Hong Kong. I am the chairperson of the school welcome committee. I am going to tell you about what you should see and what you can do in Hong Kong. I guarantee that all of you will be content with what I’m going to present.

If you are interested in watching landscape, there is no doubt that watching the night view of the Victoria Harbour on the Peak is the best option. That is the best place to do that in Hong Kong. Buildings will be flashing their lights every night at eight o’clock, so I suggest that you choose a best view before eight to enjoy this amazing show. What is more, there is also another place you may want to visit if you want to meet with stars, that is the Waxworks Museum. There are many super stars in the museum, such as Jacky Chan, Lady GaGa and Michael Jackson. If you are interested, you may go in and check them out. One more thing to tell you guys - there is only one way to visit the Peak, which is to take the Peak tram. It is difficult to find this transportation in other places.

There is another place to go to - Wong Tai Sin Temple - if you want to know about what traditions some Chinese people may have and how they adore them. If you have a lot of pressure, there is no room for doubt that going to the Canal Road Flyover and trying ‘villain hitting’ is a unique experience. It is a Chinese superstition, you can hit the one whom you hate with a shoe. Although it is just a photo, it is interesting and it helps you to release your stress.

After that, you may try the oldest, cheapest and slowest transport in Hong Kong, which is Hong Kong Tramways. In fact, chances are that you can take some nice pho-
tos of the city from the upper deck.

While many people believe that Hong Kong is just for shopping and working, I reckon that there are a lot of nice places to visit if you try to find them out. I hope all of you will have a nice trip.
I believe that watching television is not good for children. Nowadays, television is an indispensable form of recreation for all walks of life. Children watch television all the time, after school, after meals, whenever they are free, they sit in front of the television set and stare at the screen. Television has become one of the most important things in their lives. There are many kinds of TV programmes. Children seemingly can get a lot of fun from them, but do you know watching television is not good for children? My reasons are as follows.

Watching television is not good for children nowadays because the TV programmes have been packed with too much sex and violence and ridicule. Children will learn them, unfortunately, in the wrong way. They may follow it and misbehave naively. Some of the TV programmes are exaggerated and unethical. Children may think that this is life and hence learn from it. This may have a devastating effect on their lives.

It is no exaggeration to say that watching too much television is detrimental to children’s learning. Children may get addicted to watching television. Spending too much time on watching TV means less time for studies. Worse, it will pollute their mind and they might not be able to concentrate. In the long run, they might become unprincipled, venal and vicious.

In fact, some of the news articles recently revealed that watching television is not good for children. Last year, after watching too many fantasy TV programmes, a little boy wanted to follow a hero in the TV programme who could fly in the sky. Sadly he jumped out of a window and lost his life without saying goodbye. This shows that
watching television is not good for children, because children will follow suit. That’s why I firmly believe that watching too much TV is not good for children.

It goes without saying that watching too much television will influence the children, both physically and mentally. It will cause eye problems. Also, we usually indulge ourselves by eating junk food and snacks when watching television. We would not spend time doing exercise. We will become overweight and eventually obese.

While some insist that watching television is absolutely not good for children, I find that watching television can be a wonderful idea. We get happiness from watching TV. It can lessen our pressure and also bridge the gap of our lives. Sometimes we can get new information from the TV programmes. Nevertheless, since most of them are adult-oriented, children should really stay away from televisions.

From the above discussion, we can safely draw the conclusion that watching television is not good for children. Children should spend their time reading, studying school work, playing or doing physical exercise rather than sitting in front of the silly video audio machine that is nothing good for them.
Are Examinations Good for Students?
Emily Ho  4B

Examinations have become universal nowadays. Students have to face numerous examinations at school and their parents put high expectation on them. Due to the examination-oriented education system in Hong Kong, it has brought huge pressure and stress on students. As a student, I am against examinations!

Let me deal first with the disadvantages of the examination-oriented approach in Hong Kong. First, both parents and schools put too much emphasis on examination results. For example, they would ask students to go to tutorial classes in order to pass or even aim for ‘A’s in public examinations. Since students have to live up with their high expectation, they won’t let themselves fall behind and try to brush up their study skills in different ways. As a result, they will suffer from mental exhaustion and in long term, feel disinterested in learning.

Some say that examinations are the main goal of learning. I strongly oppose it. The purpose of learning is to enrich our knowledge. However, schools mould students to believe that getting outstanding examination results is the only criterion to have a bright future. The students therefore feel stressful and lose interest in learning, so they perform less effectively in exams.

On the other hand, some may say that exams can motivate students to study and help them to review what they have learnt in lessons. Some even claim that examination is an effective way to test how well students do and the result reflects their abilities. I strongly disagree with the assertion. Things like interpersonal skills, communication skills, conduct and leadership skills are also vital to make oneself a successful person, yet, they cannot be reflected in exams, therefore I am personally
against the idea of examinations.

Considering all the above points, it is crystal clear that the disadvantages of examinations outweigh the advantages. Under the exam-oriented approach in Hong Kong, students are stressed and may lose interest in learning, not to mention that examination is not an effective way to measure one’s ability. To conclude, I disagree with the exam-orientation approach in Hong Kong.
Dear Pat,

I am glad to receive your letter. How are you? I am sorry to hear that you are having problems with your siblings and family and I hope that I can help.

You asked me what you should do to improve the relationship between your sister and your mother. As a matter of fact, teenagers behaving rebelliously is a rather normal phenomenon. Peer pressure is one of the reasons that leads them to act rebelliously. They want to express and release their feelings like anxiety, frustration or even depression as they feel they have no control over their lives. Moreover, some of them are cynical and want to strike back. To withstand peer pressure, you should give your sister self-confidence so that she can resist peer pressure when temptation or opportunity arises.

Other than peer pressure, as Steve Jobs said, ‘People aren’t perfect!’ We don’t have to feel agonized when making mistakes. So in response to your question, it would be a good idea for you to invite a counselor to meet your sister. It does not only remind her of the immediate and definite consequences of shoplifting to others, herself and her future, but also reminds her that stealing is wrong and illegal. Other than telling her the consequences, you should also point out the importance of honesty and integrity.

To boost her self-esteem and improve her social skills, participating in sports and group activities can help a lot. My advice is to encourage your sister to participate in extra-curricular activities. It can help to keep her busy, at the same time, it also helps
to boost her self-esteem when communicating with other teenagers.

To resolve the problem between your sister and mum, if I were you, I would remind mum that she should be positive, supportive and caring. It is vital so that your sister will come to her with difficult issues or with mistakes she has made without feeling your mother will be unfairly judgmental. Besides being supportive, I doubt the way she punished your sister. To me, your mum’s punishment to your sister’s shoplifting was too harsh and not related to what she did wrong. You ought to ask your mum to aim her punishment at the wrong doing instead of your sister’s ego. This will make your sister aware of what she has done wrong, feel sensible and she will respect your mum.

If I were you, I would take the advice as soon as possible.

Hope this helps. Good luck!

Bye for now!

Warm regards,
Chris
An Unusual Experience

Jason Tse  4B

I found that the train was empty when I got up. I ran out of the train station and saw that the streets and buildings were all empty. Where had all the people gone? The bustling streets became so quiet that even the feeble sound of a falling needle could be clearly heard. Ultimately, I could enjoy a quiet moment that solely belonged to me.

Suddenly, a new green door appeared in front of me. On the door, it read, “Hong Kong 1000”. I opened the door! Oh! A beautiful fishing village appeared in front of me. There were fishing junks sailing in the sea and green trees everywhere. There was also a sweet fragrance as well. As soon as I stepped into the room, I fell into a hole and later I found myself lying in the train station again. It was still empty. At that moment, a great fear rushed to my mind. I felt so forlorn and forgotten. I just wanted to see the busy crowd!

I decided to embark the train again. I hoped it was just a dream. I tried my best to make myself asleep again. When I woke up, I found that I was surrounded by many flashing cameras and curious reporters. They said that I had appeared out of nowhere on the train!

It was a real experience! It was not a dream! Perhaps, I had just entered another dimension of time!
A Heartfelt Lesson

Carrie Keung 4C

Dear Joe,

How are you? How was your summer holiday? I had done something really meaningful and I would like to share my thoughts with you.

I had joined a study trip organized by World Vision Hong Kong. We went to an orphanage in Mongolia. While our coach was approaching the orphanage, all the children rushed to the barren ground where they usually played and spent their leisure time. A local volunteer explained that the children gazed longingly at us hoping that it was their relatives coming to take them home. I felt sorry for them and suddenly felt guilty arguing with mum and dad only because of some tiny little things.

On the trip, we had to teach the orphans. At first, we could not figure out what the orphans said as they spoke Mongolia and a little English only. Then, we tried to show our care through body language and taught them some basic English through playing games. Besides, we worked on the farm in the mornings and played ‘Hide and Seek’ and some card games together during our leisure time. Therefore, communicating with the less fortunate people is not so difficult as long as we show our genuine care. One day, we also had a football challenge. It was a thrilling game. Some of them could even play more skillfully than the volunteers. After the football challenge, one of the volunteers led us to sing some folk songs. We clapped our hands and danced in a circle happily. This was the first time I realized that ‘joy’ could be such a simple thing.

Before we left, I gave them a few packs of poker cards and some sweets and snacks. They looked content and happy. Looking at their faces, I was touched. I would
not have understood why they could be so happy living in a small orphanage on a barren ground if I had not joined the trip. Hongkongers work more than 12 hours a day for a materialistic lifestyle, such as scrumptious meals, new mobile phones, fashionable clothes and luxurious apartments. We keep working harder but forget to cherish precious things around us, like our family and friends.

I am now sitting in front of a photo I took with the children. I remember the local volunteers told us that the children did not smile much before our visit. However, in the photo everyone was smiling cheerfully. It makes me believe that our sincerity can affect them, and it’s how voluntary work becomes meaningful. I really hope we can join some community services programmes together. Our lives are rich and there are still a lot of less fortunate people who need our help. We can learn a lot and broaden our horizons.

Look forward to receiving your reply.

Best wishes,

Chris
Drug abuse has been a problem among Hong Kong youngsters in recent years. The number of teenage drug abusers is increasing at a skyrocketing rate, with figures showing a rise in arrests. The surging incidents of youth drug abuse have triggered public concern.

Drug abuse refers to the consumption of drugs without following medical advice or prescription, or the indiscreet use of dangerous drugs for non-treatment purposes. It is believed that it is not easy for teenagers to abuse or even get drugs. However, the temptation of drugs is everywhere. Besides buying drugs like cough syrup from unscrupulous pharmacies which sell soft drugs for huge profits, young people can also come in contact with drugs through their classmates, friends or even their siblings. It would be difficult for them to stay away from drugs.

Teenagers take drugs for various reasons. Some teens take drugs to be popular or to fit in with their friends. Psychologists say that there are three factors that drive adolescents to take drugs, namely peer pressure, curiosity and stress. Young people are reluctant to reject their friends. They are persuaded to try drugs and they often get hooked on it after they have tried it once. Once they are hooked, it is difficult for them to get rid of it. Drugs such as cannabis, ketamine and cough syrup are commonly taken by youngsters.

Abusing drugs will lead to loads of harmful effects. Long-time abusers get headaches, nosebleeds and may suffer from the loss of hearing and sense of smell. In addition, their bodies may demand more and more drugs to achieve the same kind of ‘ecstasy’ experienced in the beginning. Youth addicts will also find that their relation-
ship with their family and friends worsened. They may do something illegal such as stealing money to buy drugs. They will be discriminated by the society.

As a student, we can combat youth drug abuse by learning how to say no to drugs. We should learn more about the harmful effects of drug abuse from schools and the media. We should also lead a healthy lifestyle by taking part in extracurricular activities and social service programmes. On the other hand, the Hong Kong government should work hand in hand with other governments to stop drug trafficking. Furthermore, the police and the customs should work hard to cut drugs supplies. In addition, the government and schools can educate youngsters the harmful effects of drug abuse.

All in all, the problem of youth drug abuse is severe. In order to save our next generation, let’s work together and try our very best to fight against youth drug abuse.
A Tourists’ Paradise

John Lo  4D

Welcome, our dearest guests. It is nice to see so many friendly and enthusiastic faces here visiting our hometown for the first time. As the chairperson of the Pui Ching School welcoming committee, I gladly represent my school to welcome all of you from the bottom of my heart. Since this is the first time you are visiting Hong Kong, I will give you a brief introduction of this amusing place.

I know that many of you must have traveled all around the world, but I guarantee to show you the side of Hong Kong that is different from the world. I am now giving you a few ideas of what you should see in Hong Kong. Hong Kong, scenery of which is spectacular, is a city of hustle and bustle. Although Hong Kong is a busy city, you can still find many interesting things downtown. In Central, not only can you find brand name products, you can also get some good bargains. It is widely agreed that you can find good bargains in Central. There is no better place to go than the Temple Street if you want to have a taste of local Hongkongers’ daily night life. Without a doubt, if you go to the Temple Street at night, you can find a lot of shows, which are very enjoyable.

Hong Kong is crowned as the gourmet paradise. It is not difficult to find gorgeous food all around the streets, but when it comes to street food, Mong Kok is the most ideal place to go. Besides street food, in fact, Sai Kung gives you the best seafood restaurants in Hong Kong. If you don’t visit Sai Kung, you will feel regret. If you don’t want to spend too much time in the town and you want to go somewhere out of the city, there is no room for doubt that you should go to the Ocean Park. Ocean Park, where you can meet China’s natural treasure, panda, is the best educational theme park in Hong Kong. Chances are that you will fall in love with this amusing theme park.

To all of you, thank you for being here, welcome, and enjoy your time in Hong Kong.
As we know, Hong Kong is an international city which is described as the Pearl of the Orient. Hong Kong is not only a city of hustle and bustle, but also a multi-cultural city. Now, I am going to introduce Hong Kong to you.

It is no exaggeration to say that Hong Kong is a food paradise. We can taste different cuisine of various countries in Hong Kong. For instance, we can find Japanese restaurants or Italian restaurants easily on the streets. Moreover, Hong Kong is also famous for its street food, such as egg tarts, fishballs and stinky tofu. Many tourists love Hong Kong’s street food. Also, it goes without saying that Hong Kong is a shopping paradise. In Causeway Bay and Tsim Sha Tsui, we can find many brand name goods just in a few steps. On the other hand, we can also get some good bargains in flea markets and Mong Kok.

The Peak has become the most popular tourist spot not only because of the tram or the museum, the main reason is that tourists can watch the breath-taking scenery of the whole city from the Peak. In order to see the amazing night scenes, you should visit Victoria Harbour because it is one of the famous scenic spots.

Walking on the streets in Hong Kong, we can feel that Hong Kong is a city of hustle and bustle. Therefore, it is worth taking a day to visit Cheung Chau, which is a traditional island in Hong Kong. In Cheung Chau, we can feel a fresh breath of air. Moreover, we can learn more about the culture of Hong Kong and also try the food there. We can also enjoy the sun and the beach of course.

There is a lot of cultural heritage in Hong Kong. While some people are attract-
ed by Lan Kwai Fong, others prefer Temple Street. Although Lan Kwai Fong is famous and many tourists love going there, Temple Street is part of Hong Kong’s cultural heritage. There are many stalls on Temple Street selling everything from watches and leather goods to clothing and souvenirs. There are many singers on Temple Street, too. It is a place full of happiness and love.

Hong Kong is an amusing city that is full of love and energy. I hope you can enjoy your days visiting Hong Kong.
What’s Wrong with Television?
Aishlyn Wong  4D

It is said that watching television is bad for children’s development, for example, killing their imagination. But I think it is bad for children just when their parents do not stop them from wrong routines with watching television. Television can be good for children, my reasons for this go as follows.

First, television can broaden children’s horizons. In the past, people had to go on a long trip or spend a long time for observation if they were curious about the world, but now children can look around the whole world in an hour through a television, so they can gain more useful knowledge in a shorter time. I may cite a single example of a traveling programme called “On the Road”, which brings audience to many countries. The audience can, therefore, learn the cultures of those countries via the television programme. It is not difficult to see how it is good for children.

Second, watching television can let children feel relaxed and amused. Nowadays, children get much more stress than the past, even they are only primary school students. Watching comedies and cartoons can make them laugh and focus on the programmes, and they can forget the stress for a while. There is no wonder why some children like watching television so much.

Some research studies have recently revealed that watching television may easily bring a number of health problems to children, for example, eye problems and obesity. But without a doubt, those are because of watching too much television. Watching appropriate television programmes for appropriate time in an appropriate environment will never cause any harm to children, unless they do the opposite. Besides, parents also have the responsibility to keep their children away from watching
television programmes that are not suitable for them.

Judging from the evidence given, we can conclude that watching television is harmless to children but is, on the contrary, good for children. However, in a bid to protect children’s health, parents must keep their children away from watching too much television.
There has been a heated discussion for a long time about whether watching television is good for children or not. Like many others, I strongly disagree that watching television is good for children. My reasons for such a view go as follows.

There is no doubt that watching television has a bad influence on children in the physical aspect. When they watch television, they probably spend more than an hour. In doing this, they place all concentration with their eyes on the screen and they seldom move their body during the programmes. In a long run, eye problems such as shortsightedness, which is one of the most common problems to Hong Kong’s children, will increase.

It is no exaggeration to say that watching television will negatively influence their emotion. Children are not mature enough to choose the suitable programmes by themselves. Therefore, they watch all kinds of programmes including those violent and sexual ones without their parents’ guidance. A news article recently reported that a child broke his television just because he wanted to rescue a good person from a villain in the program. Initially, his aim to save people was heroic, but he had violently expressed his emotion in an extreme way.

While some appreciate the educational programmes that can build up positive values in children, I find it an undesirable idea. Nowadays, the time of showing educational programmes is decreasing sharply. Replacing these, more violent and sexual programmes are shown. Children will be indulged in television and build a negative value as they get in touch with those unhealthy programmes for a long time.

All the evidence above shows that watching television does more harm than good to children. Therefore, I hold firm to my belief that watching television is not good to children.
When it comes to television, many agree that it is beneficial for children. In my opinion, this is not the case. Without a doubt, television is tremendously harmful to children.

It is no exaggeration to say that television can kill children’s imagination. For instance, the dramas always have the same scene or even the same ending; it is just like products from a factory. All the products are the same and the plot is being inserted in children’s mind unconsciously. Their creativity is stolen by those television dramas. They will not be able to think more about any unexpected situations and they do not dare to do it.

Besides, the programs are not always good. There is a vast amount of unhealthy programs which are affecting children nowadays. They include some violent actions, sexual scenes or even abusive language. Unfortunately, they are not censored entirely. It is not difficult to understand why children are acting without manners nowadays. Children think that the way the actors behave is right and so they imitate their behaviours, believing that is what adults do in reality. Those unhealthy compositions cause the misunderstanding of the children of the society. They reckon the view in the drama is correct and they accept it to be the common view of the adult society.

While some appreciate watching television as an effective way for children to relax, I find that is an undesirable idea. Some research studies revealed that people usually feel tense or fearful after watching the drama that is shown at night. What about for children? They are weak in controlling their emotion. On the other hand, having an immature mind, children are not supposed to need relaxing themselves. Chil-
Children do not have a heavy workload like teenagers and adults. Therefore, I believe children should not watch television.

All the analysis confirms the idea that watching television is not beneficial for children. There are a lot of drawbacks of watching television for children. Therefore, I am sure that children should not be allowed to watch television.
Welcome to Hong Kong!

Ray Chan    4E

Good afternoon, everybody. I would like to welcome a group of overseas students visiting Hong Kong for the first time! Let’s give a big hand. As we all know, Hong Kong is a hustle and bustle metropolitan where East meets West. What are the attractions in Hong Kong? What kinds of delicious food can we try? Let’s find it out together.

Can you name one of the cities or countries which has been awarded ‘The Best Three Night Scenery Around the World’? You are right! Hong Kong is one of them. Take a harbour cruise or head to the waterfront promenades on either side of Victoria Harbour, you can enjoy this spectacular multimedia display. You know what? The Symphony of Lights is also renowned as ‘World’s Largest Permanent Light and Sound Show’ by Guinness World Records.

Some may ask: are there any bargain-priced products in Hong Kong? Of course! Ladies’ Market is one of the most popular street markets and a must-visit scenic spot for fashion lovers like clothing, bags, accessories, toys and so on. If you feel hungry, you may try a good variety of snacks from the street stalls nearby. They offer you the most delicious curry fish balls, grilled octopus, fried chicken wings, to name but a few. Do you know what is “stinky tofu”? Actually, ‘stinky tofu’ is a must-taste local food, even though it may not be everyone’s cup of tea. If you feel hot and thirsty, you can cool yourself down by buying a bottle of cold mango and coconut juice with coconut pulp inside. I bet you’d fall in love with this kind of refreshing and tasty drink!

Hong Kong has a world of luxurious, mouth-watering international dining options for us to choose from. As an international city, cultures and tastes of different countries are represented in Hong Kong’s world of dining. But I would like to intro-
duce a local tea house called ‘Cha Chaan Teng’ to you where down-home cooking is served. A variety of good food such as congee, wanton noodles or a Macanese specialty- pork chop bun is served. Also, you can’t miss a mug of strong Hong Kong styled milk tea. It is also called ‘Stocking Milk Tea’. Sounds shockingly interesting, right? Give it a try! You’d love it!

If you have a long-standing wish that is yet to come true, perhaps the place you should visit is Ten Thousand Buddha Monastery. It is situated in Sha Tin and definitely provides a peaceful escape from the bustling metropolitan. Although climbing over thousands of stairs takes you a great amount of energy, it is still worth visiting. All the Buddha statues were carved into various postures! You may make an earnest plea by saying ‘Hope every wish can come true’. Afterwards, you should definitely have dinner in the vegetarian restaurant where the best vegetarian meal is served.

Finally, I strongly recommend that you visit Tai O. Have you ever heard of ‘Eastern Venice’? That’s how we local people call Tai O and its village. You may enjoy the most magnificent scenery of the countryside and take pictures of those rare Chinese stilt-houses. You can take a deep breath and easily refresh your body and soul there.

To sum up, Hong Kong offers a great variety of memorable tourist attractions and you will feel amazed by the stunning cityscapes. What’s more, Hong Kong is crowned as “Food Paradise” where local, international and even fusion cuisine is available for you to try. Whether you spend a few days or a few weeks in Hong Kong, there are plenty of things to see, to do and to eat. Don’t miss it!

Have fun and go explore Hong Kong by yourself!

Thank you.
Facebook and Its Influence

Ivan Yiu    4E

Facebook has become a prevalent means of communication on the Internet via the frequent use of smart phones and personal computers. It is used by millions of people around the world. There are high school students, college students, family members and friends using Facebook to simply keep in touch or share their feelings with one another, while other entities have come to use it for commercial purposes. It has affected interpersonal and moral relationship with great impact on the way people communicate today. Nevertheless, it is the user who must determine whether this is a good or bad thing.

At the moment, Facebook can be considered a social networking site which offers its users an easy and entertaining way to stay in contact with people they know and trust. It is simply a way for them to connect with others, and it also enables its users to remain close to new and old friends regardless of where they live. Lots of people use Facebook to publish short messages or status to share what they are doing. They also use them to share photographs or web links.

Needless to say, using Facebook can broaden our horizons by meeting people around the world. Users can enter different interest groups to discuss a certain topic. There are also users who look for intimate friends. As a matter of fact, there are occasions where users meet their lifetime partners through Facebook. The convenience of connecting with others is one of the major reasons why Facebook has an enormous number of users.

However, Facebook has its drawbacks, too. Many youngsters spend so much time on Facebook that they do not have enough time to finish their homework as re-
quired by their schools or do physical exercise to maintain their physical and psychological health. In addition, there is evidence showing that online crimes such as phishing are used on a regular basis by computer hackers as a means to trick people into giving away their passwords. Consequently, gullible youngsters will easily be preyed. Some experts even argue that social networks like Facebook provide a lucrative hotbed of opportunities for fraudsters. Therefore, parents must educate their children about these risks for if they do not, their children are bound to suffer in one way or another.

Although Facebook does have some risks, we should not neglect the positive elements of this new technology as it is a good interactive tool among youngsters and parents. It can narrow the generation gap between them and make them get closer. What matters most is whether we can manage the way we utilize it.
The Pros and Cons of Facebook

Rina Ho 4E

In recent years, Facebook has become an emerging way of social contact. Many people spend a lot of time sharing what they are doing or feeling on Facebook. However, it is also a controversial issue which has a number of positive and negative influences.

To commence with, great attention should be put on the convenience of connecting with friends on Facebook. Using our real names to register for an account, we can not only find the people around us, but also friends who we have not seen for a long while, without having their email or work addresses. The late news of all sorts of organizations can be spread around immediately too. Shoppers can get messages of discount and teachers can announce homework on Facebook easily. We no longer need to send a number of emails to communicate electronically.

Moreover, we do not have to come up with solutions all by ourselves anymore. It is effective to ask questions on Facebook. Once, my mother was worried about how to clean a blot on our sofa. Then, I complained about it incidentally on Facebook. Astonishingly, I received loads of suggested methods from my friends and they worked. I never believed that I could deal with a difficulty so promptly.

Furthermore, the advantages of Facebook have been demonstrated by the Jasmine Revolution in Tunisia. The organizers expressed their dissatisfaction and spread the information of planned meetings through Facebook. As a result, the Tunisian military failed to control the current of public opinions on Facebook, and the authority was overthrown rapidly.
On the other hand, the disadvantages of Facebook cannot be omitted. Sad to say, masses of youngsters do not concentrate on their studies but waste their time and energy on Facebook. Subsequently, a series of problems are led to. For example, some students’ academic results are directly affected and the ability of face-to-face communication is diminished. In addition, privacy issues need to be considered. We forgo our personal information to enjoy the convenience Facebook provides us, which can possibly cause online crimes and bullying.

To my mind, it is hard to verify whether using Facebook is unworthy or not. We should use Facebook to shorten the distance between friends and us but not be the slaves of Facebook. After all, the fictitious space is much different from the real one, even though Facebook was originally meant to be a place for social contact. It is significant to keep in real touch with our friends and protect our privacy carefully.

Let’s make good use of Facebook.
A Student’s Opinion on the NSS System
Sunny Yiu    4E

Dear Editor,

Many students and their parents think that the New Senior Secondary System (NSS) fails to give an all-round development to Hong Kong students while causing students to spend too much time on their academic work. I would like to share my opinions on the issue from the perspective of a current Secondary Four student.

Firstly, most Hong Kong students have to sacrifice all their free time because of the unreasonable workload. Under the New Senior Secondary System, Hong Kong students will become horribly busy when they enter high school. They are often swarmed with an overwhelming number of assignments and tests every week so they do not have time to relax themselves. To make matters worse, they cannot even get enough time to have a good sleep at night. Often, it is already very late in the evening by the time they finish their homework, not to mention the fact that they still have to study for tests of various subjects for about three to four hours every night because they aim at passing their tests with flying colours. Consequently, it is not surprising to see the phenomenon of students going to bed no earlier than 1 a.m. Such habit hinders students’ development of a healthy lifestyle and in the worst scenario; causes them to suffer from fatigue or mental disorder.

Secondly, I think that Hong Kong students do not have an all-round development. Due to the New Senior Secondary System, students have to cope with additional assessments such as Other Learning Experience (OLE), which requires students to achieve a certain number of social service hours from doing voluntary work in order to get a pass. Unluckily, assessments like this will only create extra workload for students. I think that this is not good for students because students cannot do what
they really want to do. In other countries such as the United States, teenagers usually have many extracurricular activities after school such as playing basketball and learning music because they value the balance between academic work and extracurricular activities. They regard it as a very important and valuable part in the growth of children. However, the NSS (334) system shows that the Hong Kong government does not regard it as their priority.

Finally, parents of Hong Kong usually do not put enough trust in their children or provide them with personal space. The typical parents only encourage them to study and forbid them to do things which they deem unrelated to their academic work. To ensure that their children get good results, enter a good university, get a good job and make money in the future, parents do not mind spending thousands of dollars every month on tutorial classes. Nevertheless, it is questionable whether they are doing all these for the sake of the benefits of their children or themselves.

To alter this unhealthy phenomenon, all parties involved in the NSS system should refer to different education systems and attempt to come up with an optimal solution that will unleash students’ potential in a healthy and effective fashion.

Yours faithfully,
Sunny Yiu
Sunny Yiu
Are There Shortcuts to Fitness?
Joanne Hui 4E

The idea of ‘keeping fit’ is being overemphasized these days. Going to fitness centres and beauty salons has become a part of daily life for most girls and ladies in Hong Kong. I believe that this trend of ‘keeping fit’ is not beneficial at all.

First and foremost, going to fitness centres and beauty salons is not an effective way to slim down. Doing gym-exercise might not be suitable for everyone. It helps to strengthen our muscles, but it doesn’t burn many calories, same as the massages, treatments and high-technological therapies in beauty salons, which have been regarded as highly effective. But all of us should understand the proverb, ‘no pain, no gain’. Therefore, slimming down does take one’s time and effort. How can we be fit and beautiful without making any effort?

Besides, slimming down by these means is not healthy. Despite the fact that the pills given by the beauty salons are artificial, they may even have side-effects. A research found that some pills may cause hand-trembling, headache or unstable mental state. We may even get addicted after taking them. In addition, the treatments in beauty salons may give us a wrong idea of no matter what we eat and do, we can stay slim. Consequently, we may eat even more junk food and our health will deteriorate.

Last but not least, it promotes the wrong idea of ‘being thin is a symbol of vogue’, which is a promotion tactic used in the commercial world. Businessmen disseminate this lie to sell more weight-loss products. As a result, teenagers nowadays solely stress on how important one looks and dresses. In fact, inner beauty is far more important than appearance. Only the one who shows love and kindness to others gains respect.

All in all, it is obvious that going to fitness centres and beauty salons to slim down should be discouraged. Living a healthy lifestyle is the only means to be fit and we shouldn’t take any shortcut.
Being the chairperson of the school welcoming committee, I’m glad to see you all and I will give a speech at this party. Today, I am going to introduce some of the famous hotspots in Hong Kong.

It is no exaggeration to say that Hong Kong is generally considered to be one of the best international cities in the world. You can buy many good bargains, eat tasty food and go sightseeing in Hong Kong on the go. Now, I’m going to recommend the first place to you. Since Hong Kong is a food paradise, when it comes to local food, Causeway Bay is the most ideal place to go. I strongly recommend you eat stinky bean curd that smells bad but tastes good. You will be attracted by it after you eat it for once. Also, you can eat some traditional delicious street food. For instance, dragon beard candy, Bowl Young Wing and Niu Shen Car Noodle. While some people are attracted by street food, some prefer shopping. In fact, Causeway Bay is one of the places that people love to go as there are many shopping malls. You can buy some gadgets and costumes there at a lower price.

It is also worth taking a day visiting the Peak. You can buy a ticket from the ticket office and go to the Peak by a Peak tram, which is red in colour. After arriving at the Peak, you may go to the Peak Tram Historical Gallery. It is divided into 15 theme sections. It will take you back to Hong Kong in the 19th and 20th centuries like a time tunnel. Many years has been spent in collecting the items, some of which are more than 100 years old. What is more, there is also another place you may want to visit if you want to go sightseeing. You can go to the Peak Tower, which is one of the most stylish architectural icons in Hong Kong. Moreover, the Peak Tower boasts the highest 360° viewing platform – The Sky Terrace 428. Standing at 428 meters above sea level, The
Sky Terrace offers spectacular panoramic views of the vibrant city and Victory Harbour. You can watch the whole attractive scenery in Hong Kong. Many famous celebrities were attracted to go there by its reputation as a scenic spot. You will have a thrilling experience after you see the whole scenery of Hong Kong.

Actually, these are only parts of Hong Kong. There are much more places and traditional food that haven’t been mentioned in this speech. To find them out, you can ask some local Hong Kong citizens. But there is no room for doubt that Hong Kong is a famous city. I guarantee that you will be attracted by this place and do not want to go back to your home country.
Recently, there has been a strong dispute over whether the Hong Kong Government is doing a good job. Some people believe that the government has been trying its best to solve the social problems while others think that the new policies proposed by the government are either influenced by and ingratiating the Central Government or not so thoughtfully planned that they may not solve problems effectively. From my point of view, the Hong Kong Government is not very good because of its inability to solve problems in the society.

First of all, let’s take a look at the politics of Hong Kong. Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China, and the “One Country, Two Systems” is applied, meaning that Hong Kong can enjoy a high degree of autonomy. However, from several recent events, it seems like we no longer have a high degree of autonomy and the Hong Kong Government is to be blamed.

In theory, Hong Kong is supposed to have judicial independence though it does not. For several times, the Hong Kong Government asked for an interpretation of the Basic Law from the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress. According to the Basic Law Article 158, this can only be requested by the Court of Final Appeal, but the first three times when an interpretation was given, they were requested by the government or related personnel or authorities, showing that the actions were unconstitutional. This implies that the government has failed to protect the judicial independence of Hong Kong.

The death of Mr. Szeto Wa also shows that the Hong Kong Government has failed to do its job. When Mr. Szeto died in 2011, several activists wanted to enter
Hong Kong to attend his funeral, but were rejected by the Hong Kong Government. This clearly shows that despite the “One Country, Two Systems” principle, a lot of decisions made by the government are trying to ingratiate the Central Government, and some critics even expressed that the “One Country, Two Systems” principle is dead. From this incident, we can see that the Hong Kong Government fails to protect the autonomy Hong Kong should have.

Other than politics, the Tsang Government’s weakness is also shown in the economic aspect. The most serious problem is the inequality of income and wealth. Hong Kong’s Gini Coefficient is as high as 0.533 (in 2007), which ranks the 18th (the higher the number, the more serious the problem is) in the world, and is the highest among all well-developed countries or regions in Asia. This shows the difficulty of lives of people who are less rich, for they can hardly afford the rising price in this financially oriented city. Even though the government is trying to solve this problem by, for example, setting a statutory minimum wage, the economic problems still cannot be tackled. Taking the minimum wage as an example, because of a rise in the wage of the workers, the production cost of companies will increase. Then, the companies will increase the price of their products or services in order to cover the extra expenses, making themselves even harder to operate their business. Some companies will also lay off some of their employees, leading to an increase in the unemployment rate. This clearly shows that the Hong Kong Government is not thoughtful enough to solve problems efficiently.

In conclusion, the political and economic problems in Hong Kong are very serious but the Hong Kong Government fails to admit them, not to mention solve them. This shows that the government is not a good one and has the inevitable responsibility to the unsatisfactory conditions in the city.
Dear Pat,

Thank you for your letter. I’m sorry to hear about your problem. You have met a boy called Sam online and you wanted to meet him in Shanghai but your parents didn’t want you to meet him. So you are worried about how to convince them. However, I am afraid that I have to agree with your parents.

In my opinion, you should get more information about Sam because you have just known him for a few months and you have never talked to him face to face. You don’t know what he’s like, his background, or whether he is a conman. You only know him from what he says about himself. Therefore, to protect yourself, you should go on holidays with your parents instead of flying over to Shanghai to meet a total stranger. If you really want to see him, get to know more about him such as his job, where he lives and whether he has any criminal record. You shouldn’t trust everything he says but test to see if what he says is true from his friends and his parents. After you have gathered more information, discuss with your parents and ask them if they are willing to go with you to Shanghai to see him.

Also, I don’t think you should go on your own even if your parents allow you to do so. No one knows what will happen when you are in Shanghai and your safety is not guaranteed. You may ask some of your relatives who don’t have any holiday plans, to go with you. In this way, your parents will feel less worried.

What’s more, the best idea is to invite him to Hong Kong. You can tell him that
your parents don’t allow you to go on a trip alone and ask him to visit Hong Kong instead. I’m sure your parents will agree with this idea. It is much better than your going to Shanghai alone. After you two have met in Hong Kong, and if he is a nice person, then your parents will allow you to visit him again in Shanghai in the future.

Remember that your safety is very important. Act wise and do not believe in people that you meet online so easily. I hope that my advice is useful. Please write back to me soon and let me know how things turn out.

Best wishes,

Chris
Friend or Foe?

Natalie Huen    4F

When asked about whether watching television is good for children, it is commonly believed that it is bad for children. Most parents reckon that it causes eye problems and influences children’s studies, there are more disadvantages than advantages. I also think that the television is not good for children. My reasons for it go as follows.

The main reason why I feel television is bad for children is that it is full of fantasy. When we are watching television, there are many types of cartoons or TV episodes. Most of the time, the plot is fictional, which cannot happen in our world. I remember I have once heard a teacher tell me a news story. There was a TV episode and the plot was about a girl who committed suicide because she believed she could be more beautiful in her new life. Actually, it is not true. It shows that the television can instill wrong concepts into children because they are too small to determine whether the information is fictional or not.

Also, the television can be addictive. Without a doubt, it influences children’s growth. When they watch television for a long time, it may cause shortsightedness. Moreover, when they are indulged in the television, they do not do exercise, and it may cause obesity. Therefore, it is bad for children’s health.

It is said that when children admire an idol, he or she can be a role model for them. But how can we define a ‘good idol’? Sex and violence are being part of the attraction in the television nowadays. Some artists wear sexy clothes, they smoke and fight in bars, there are much more examples. When the children’s idols do these things, they are immature and they may imitate them. So is it good for children to watch tele-
vision, which includes sex, violence and wrong doings?

From the above discussion, we can safely draw the conclusion that watching television is bad for children. They are too small to verify the information on television and they may be instilled with wrong concepts. Not only are they given a wrong thinking, but this also causes a bad influence on their health. I think watching television is bad for children but if the children want to watch television, they should be accompanied by adults who can give them guidance.
The Controversial Television

Thomas Lai  4F

It goes without saying that television is an effective medium of information to children nowadays. It can affect their behaviour, moral values, emotions and also their intelligence. There has been a heated discussion for a long time about whether watching television is good for children. Like many others, I agree that watching television is harmful to children.

It is no exaggeration to say that some television programmes are violent, pornographic and advocate materialism. It can adversely affect children’s thinking and behaviour. Children may become abusive both physically and psychologically. For instance, there is a famous television programme called “Superman” in a Japanese version. It conveys a message to children that if you are good at fighting, then you will gain victory. So, children may think in a violent way and believe that they may use violence to solve problems.

It is not difficult to see how attractive television programmes are to children. So, they may be indulged in watching television. Then, it may reduce their time for studying and participating in extra-curricular activities. Also, watching television may tire children and cause too much pressure to their eyes. These will make it hard for them to concentrate on their studies. Therefore, they may perform badly at school. Besides performing badly at school, if children only sit on the sofa and watch television for a long time, they may lack exercise. Then, they may become obese after a period of time. It may cause heart diseases and also harm their joints because of the heavy weight.

Some people think that television is good for children if they are watching edu-
cational television programmes. Without a doubt, educational television programmers can widen their knowledge and points of view. In fact, nonetheless, there have not been many educational television programmes recently. Also, children prefer watching cartoons rather than watching educational television programmes.

From the above discussion, we can conclude that watching television may harm children physically and psychologically. We must face the problem seriously in order to prevent children from being affected.
Should Foreign Domestic Helpers be Given the Right of Abode When They Have Been Working and Living in Hong Kong for 7 Years?

Minnie Yim  4F

Since more and more foreign domestic helpers filed judicial reviews to strive for their right of abode in Hong Kong, this has become one of the hit topics among the public including political parties, social concern groups and even the government. While Hong Kong citizens are concerned about whether their interests and social resources will be potentially deprived of by foreign domestic helpers, others think that foreign domestic helpers should be given the right of abode according to the Basic Law. In my opinion, I think that foreign domestic helpers should not be given the right of abode.

Regarded as an equal and developed city, the Hong Kong Government and its citizens should recognise the contributions of foreign domestic helpers. According to statistics from the government, there are more than ten thousand foreign domestic helpers working in Hong Kong. This huge group of people undoubtedly brings great manpower to our society and can also lighten the burden of working women. As foreign domestic helpers do housework and daily chores, women can pay more attention to their career so as to earn more money for their families. At the same time, the gross domestic product of Hong Kong is indirectly increased simultaneously. While we allow foreign elites or investors to engage in local economic activities, why can’t we treat foreign domestic helpers in the same way and treat them as part of our union? Therefore, it is necessary for us to respect them and accept their opinions while considering this.

Yet, ideal is different from reality. We should not neglect the potential disadvan-
tages brought by such allowance.

One of the disadvantages is the financial burden added to the whole society. If foreign domestic helpers are given the right of abode, their family members may also ask for it. Although some qualified foreign domestic helpers have stated that they would not apply for it due to the taxation and high consumer price index in Hong Kong, there is still a large amount of them who would like their families to immigrate to Hong Kong for a better living standard, preferable welfare system and more working opportunities. Despite the fact that the government may receive more tax, the increase on expenditure should never be turned a blind eye to. If foreign domestic helpers have the right of abode, they can enjoy welfare such as public housing and 12-year free education in Hong Kong. What’s more, according to Professor Joe C.B. Leung from University of Hong Kong, the government will have to be responsible for assisting this new group to unite with the major group. For example, it has to provide more courses for them to learn Cantonese and may have to arrange more social workers to take care of them. When the government shoulders the burden, citizens will also be burdened.

In addition, as Hong Kong practises common law, all precedents are the primary source of law. This means if a foreign domestic helper wins the case, others can use that as an argument to file another judicial review. Then the number of applicants is likely to rocket. When their application is accepted, population of Hong Kong is likely to increase. Given the fact that we have a number of social problems like high property price, large wealth gap and discontent towards the government, allowing more people to live in Hong Kong will only intensify the problems.

In conclusion, I do not agree that foreign domestic helpers should be given the right of abode as that will bring more problems to Hong Kong. However, I do think that we should never neglect their contributions to our society. After all, they deserve our respect.
Dear Editor,

I am writing to express my concern about the problem of teenage suicide in Hong Kong. The situation now is alarming and deserves our full attention. According to the survey by the University of Hong Kong, it reveals that around 80% students are under different types of pressure and over 20% of teenagers have thought of committing suicide. The following are the main driving forces of teenage suicide.

Pressure from different aspects makes today's youth commit suicide. Undue academic pressure is one of the reasons why teenagers commit suicide. Hong Kong is a competitive society and its educational mechanism is exam-oriented so a lot of exams and much homework are assigned for students to acquire the exam skills. Adolescents perceive that the acquisition of a university degree is the only way to survive in society. Or else, it is difficult for them to search for a job. A lot of students cannot deal with it, thus they turn to commit suicide for psychological relief. Once they have no means to flatten their emotional ups and downs, they may feel a spark of frustration and consider ending their own lives. We should not overlook the problem of teenage suicide.

Another main reason for youngsters to commit suicide is the lack of care and over parental expectations. Parents want their children to succeed by forcing them to participate in different kinds of extra-curricular activities and tutorial classes. So, teenagers lack time to communicate with others and are forbidden by their parents from entertainment. Adolescents cannot express their negative emotions and they tend to tolerate it. That may cause depressive illness. Without support from others, they can hardly take the difficulties they encounter in their stride. Eventually, they may resort to killing themselves when they face daily hardships.
In order to come to grips with this grave problem, all the government, parents and schools should work hand in hand.

Firstly, schools must teach children to express their emotions. Campaigns should be launched to inculcate the correct values and anti-suicide messages into student's minds. Many methods of helping teenagers to express emotions, such as holding talks about emotions to introduce some ways of controlling sentiments to students. Therefore, teenagers' suicidal thoughts can be eliminated.

In view of the increasing problem of teenage suicide, the government has stepped up efforts to crack down on the problem. The government should allocate more resources to local communities. For example, the government should employ more social workers for adolescents that can give them some suggestions and psychological consultations for reducing their pressure.

Lastly, parental care is indispensable in the prevention of committing suicide. Adolescents feel that they are alienated and lonesome because of not having enough care from others even their parents. Therefore, parents should pay more attention to children and communicate with them. Parents should spend more time communicating with youngsters in order to understand how they feel. Let the youth think that they are being valued.

Our society should not tolerate a single suicidal case. Three stakeholders should shoulder the responsibility to help teenagers to combat the problem. People from all walks of life should go to great lengths to forestall further tragedies.

Yours faithfully,
Chris Wong
Good evening parents and teachers, as a Student School Council representative, I am glad to be granted the opportunity to share my thoughts with you. Let’s begin with two questions. Being a parent, have you ever thought that you give your children too much playing time? As a teacher, have you ever assigned too much homework to your students? If you answer ‘Yes’ to both of the questions above, you should help your children to strike a balance between work and leisure.

Parents and teachers, what if we lay emphasis only on work? Children these days are under undue academic pressure, they have many tests, examinations and quizzes, just list a few. Apart from these, they have to attend tutorial classes or extra-curricular activities after school. Teachers and parents, imagine you were one of them who were under the shadow of harsh competition and high expectation, would you be able to cope with these? Do you know your lovely students and children suffer mental and physical sicknesses if they are constantly under undue pressure? Conduct disorder, attention deficit disorder, behavioral problems, depression, and anorexia are just commonplace. To the extreme, children may even commit suicide to evade the responsibility from the reality.

In comparison, permissive parenting style is adopted by most western parents. They will allow much more freedom to their children. According to Helen Bee, a philosopher from the Stanford University, children who grow up under permissive parenting style lack motivation to strive for goals. Some of the children may not be mature enough to discipline themselves and they may prefer leisure activities to academics. Once children indulge themselves in entertainments, they will lose interest in learning. Adolescents like this may not be able to survive in this competitive society.
Striking a balance between work and leisure is of utmost importance and the Student School Council has a few suggestions for all of you. They are two ‘C’s.

The first C stands for compromise. Reaching a compromise is the main goal of communication. Once an appropriate compromise is reached, teachers, parents or children can have the same goal to strive for. They can have a clear direction. Teachers and parents could assign more work or have higher expectation if children can fulfill their compromise. On the other hand, children should never quit before they reach their compromised goals. Under this rule, conflicts would be minimised. It is a win-win situation.

The second C stands for communication. What if the compromised goals cannot be fulfilled? Mutual communication plays a role in it. Parents and children can sit together and discuss their expectations and difficulties. They should then have their goals reset. If both parents and children can stick to the plan strictly, parents will have nothing to worry and children will have more free time to relax. That’s the equilibrium between work and leisure!

Teachers! Parents! No more hesitation and practise the two Cs now! Please help your children to get the equilibrium of work and leisure. Let’s build a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere at school and at home. Thank you!
In his trademark black mock turtleneck, blue jeans and sneakers, he may look as ordinary as anyone in the streets. However, under his laid-back appearance, there is no doubt that he is a man who single-handedly made the world a better place. Hailed as one of the best inventors, Steve Jobs spent his life changing the world by improving the technology level of our lives. His inventions are widely spread around the world, as a lot of students nowadays are using iPhones, symbolizing that smartphones are no longer only for rich businessmen.

Surprisingly, Steve Jobs, who brought us into the new era of technology, didn’t live a glamorous life in his early years. Jobs’ adoptive parents sent him to Reed College in Portland but he dropped out after one semester. While returning Coke bottles for a living, Jobs started to experiment with IT products, which was a big step on the path of his career. It is definitely innovative, yet it is hard to imagine Steve’s early life while using his products. We couldn’t deny that Steve Jobs is a brilliant innovator and has done a great job despite living a hard life in his early years.

Years ago, in the technologically poorer age, when Apple products haven’t been a trend in Hong Kong, we could often hear people complaining about the inconvenience of their phones. Phones weren’t that user-friendly back then, lacking the iPhone-like widescreens and brilliant applications. However, Jobs brought us to a better world by introducing products such as MacBook, iPad and iPhone.

The first Apple product that I got was an iPod. I showed it to my friends and they were all jealous. I was amazed by its cool appearance and its functions. When iPhone was launched, I begged my parents to buy me one as everyone seemed to be us-
ing it. I soon found out that most people use iPhones not because of the trend. On the contrary, the reason that many people are using iPhones nowadays is that the phone has countless simple and user-friendly functions and applications. With Jobs introducing us such advanced technology, the game, ‘Snake’, seemed to be ancient and ridiculous when we recall it by now. There is no doubt that the culture Jobs has brought changed the world of phones and computers. It is obvious that Jobs hadn’t only brought us new products whenever he attended press conferences as pleasure and excitement were hidden in those electronic devices. That’s why Apple fanatics couldn’t wait to buy those products as soon as possible to experience the joy and convenience they could bring.

Apple products have accompanied me throughout a large part of my secondary life. I spent the first two years of my secondary life with my iPod and iPod nano. I remember the times when I was frustrated, I tried to relieve my pressure by listening to music through them. With my eyes blinking with joy, I received my first iPhone when I was in form four. The iPhone applications saved me from boredom while studying. Recently, I got my iPhone4 and I love how it looks, and a streak of delight would run across my brain whenever I take out my phone and feel the rectangular device with my hands. The design is amazing and it is fun to match my phone cases with my outfits.

It is a pity that Steve Jobs, who had inspired the world and improved people’s lives, left the world. However, I believe that Jobs had left us much more legacies to treasure than we thought. His silhouette would always appear in the hearts of Apple fanatics whenever they use Apple products, reminding us to ‘stay hungry, stay foolish.’
Dear Mr. Man,

Re: Weekend Visit to the Silk Road Resort

I would like to complain about your awful service and facilities in your resort. I have just returned from a weekend visit there and I am very disappointed with my experience in your resort.

I would like to start by commenting on the swimming pool. The swimming pool was very dirty. There were cockroaches, ants and other insects around the pool. I could also find aluminum cans and dead insects floating on the water. To my surprise, I saw a dog swimming in the pool. I wondered whether the pool was open for human or animals.

My next complaint concerned the Heavenly Health Spa. The place did not match with its name. There were rubbish and cardboard boxes everywhere. The path to the spa was bumpy. It was full of rocks and dead insects. Worse still, it was located near some scaffolding, which made me feel like I was staying in a construction site.

Another problem was the food in the Fortune Restaurant. The environment of the restaurant was fine but the food that we ordered was awful and unpalatable. The noodles were watery. The rice was as hard as rock. It remained in the bowl even when I turned the bowl upside down. Also, the vegetables were as chewy as rubber bands. I totally lost my appetite and wanted to vomit.

The thing that concerned me most was my bedroom. I was shocked to see how
filthy the room was. The curtains were torn off. The wardrobe door was broken and
there were some shabby clothes inside. Also, the pillowcases, the bed sheets and the
blankets were filled with holes. The carpet was stained and rubbish was found all over
the floor. How could I stay in this room for a night? I could not relax in such a terrible
environment!

I expect a written apology and a refund from your resort. If I consider your
response unsatisfactory, I will have no option but to contact the Consumer Council.

Yours sincerely,

B Chan

B Chan
Good afternoon, teachers and parents. How important do you think children should strike the balance between work and leisure? Or you actually don’t think that’s important at all. How many tutorial classes do your children attend every week? Three? Four? Or even more? It has become a typical phenomenon of students enrolling in plenty of tutorial classes nowadays. You might think that’s the right way to raise your children. But have you ever thought of their feelings? Do they really like having so many extra classes? If not, trust me, don’t force them!

As you can see, many students are overburdened these days. Some of them play truant, some of them run away from home or they even commit suicide in some extreme cases. Take myself as an example. I was overburdened due to high parental expectations and undue academic pressure. I was extremely upset, depressed, and I lost interest in studies at that time. What is the crux? It could be you, TEACHERS and PARENTS.

You might think that I lay more emphasis on leisure. NO, I DO NOT! It is perceived that children having too much leisure will lead to low motivation to work. They might also tend not to self-discipline themselves. What I’m pointing out is that either too much work or too much leisure is detrimental to raising a child. So, striking the balance between work and leisure is of utmost importance.

Have you ever heard about “Tiger Mom”? She made the cover of the latest issue of Time Magazine, and provoked the discussion about demanding Chinese parenting style, say no to grades lower than A, no sleepovers and no computer games. Tiger Mom argued that strict Chinese parenting would better prepare children for harsh
future competitions. Some Asian parents think that children need more guidance and discipline. The Western parenting style, in contrast, grants children more freedom to explore other possibilities besides academics. Most of the western parents lobby for a happy and playful childhood. They believe a relaxed learning environment coupled with quality education helps foster creative and psychologically healthy children. Whichever parenting style you prefer is not the matter. Whichever parenting style suits you and your kids is the best one. What’s more significant is that you should guide us and help us to find the equilibrium of work and leisure.

From my experience, it is essential to let children understand work and leisure are equally important. The key point is good time management. Why don’t you set goals and work out a timetable with your children? You should encourage your children to reach a compromise between what they want and what you expect. What’s more, do give them more encouragement, be it a hug or a few words to express your support.

Would you like to see your children become all-round and mature? No doubt, striking the balance between work and leisure is the way out! As I am always told, “WORK HARD, PLAY HARD!” Thank you!
Dear desperate F4 student,

I have read your letter and I am very sorry to hear about the problems that you are facing at home and school. It sounds truly terrible indeed. Please allow me to offer some advice. I hope it will help you.

From your letter, I understand that you don’t have any privacy at home. I know how you feel, for I also encountered similar problems before. My home is not very big and I need to share a room with my sister. I cannot concentrate on my work when she is in the room. My advice for you is to go to a self-study room. It is a quiet and comfortable place for you to study and do your homework. I bet that your results must be improved if you can concentrate on your studies. Remember, don’t give up easily!

As for your worry about not having enough money to go out with your friends, just remember that there are many things you can do with your friends without spending a lot of money. For example, you can play basketball and go swimming with your friends. I am sure you can relax with your friends by doing different kinds of exercise. Also, doing exercise is good for your health.

It seems to me the main problem is that you want to drop out of school and look for a full-time job. I do not think this is a good solution to your problem. Think about what kind of job you are going to do. You are only a Form 4 student, you do not have good academic qualifications and enough working experience to look for a decent job. Do you think jobs like salesman or waiter suit you? I do not think you can find your dream job or a well-paid job. Dropping out of school is a big thing. You should talk to
your parents and let them know what you think. Dropping out of school is definitely not a solution to your problems. You are so young and should be concentrating on your studies.

I really hope my advice is of some help to you. Talk to someone and do not suffer in silence. Problems can be overcome and I am sure you will soon find that things are more within your control.

Yours,
Nicky
While society is developing prosperously, teenagers nowadays seem to enjoy a higher quality of life than those in the previous generations. Unexpectedly, youngsters are also encountering a spate of temptations which their parents could not even have thought of in their adolescence.

Under the booming economy and conformity pressure from peer groups, juvenile over-consumption has become commonplace. As people are better off generally, adolescents receive more pocket money and have greater purchasing power. A survey conducted by Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council revealed that 61% of the interviewed teenagers were under peer influence when making decision in shopping. In order to create a brilliant personal image and be accepted by their friends, teenagers do not mind buying certain goods which they do not need. Smartphones, bags and clothing of prestigious brands are often owned by youngsters, although these luxuries are not necessity at all.

As one of the consequences of over-consumption, compensated dating has also turned into another juvenile delinquency worrying the public. The study carried out by Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service reported that most girls engaged in compensated dating due to the lack of cash to satisfy their desire for luxurious goods or the absence of family love. It is absolutely appalling that some adolescents are willing to trade themselves in a bid to cater to their fancies to sumptuous merchandise. Moreover, youngsters often neglect the possible outcomes of participation in the business. The miserable case of Wong Ka-mui, a 16-year-old who was killed by her client, reflects the concern about safety. These consequences, which may not be anticipated, can be irrevocable and fatal.

To tackle teenage over-consumption, parental education should be advocated.
Parents should teach their children to spend money wisely and not to earn it in any illegal means. Together they can help them cultivate the habit of saving money, and not to give them extra cash when they are out of their regular allowance. If this practice can be implemented since childhood, teenagers will be more likely to be responsible for their own expenses. They will have to consider the pros and cons before spending money on something they want only for following the trend. As parents are the pecuniary sources of their children, parental guidance is surely more effective than solely relying on the moral education provided at school.

Parental care is also a useful method to preclude youngsters from entering the industry of compensated dating. Parents should spend more time on communicating with their children and make them feel loved and cherished, so adolescents can understand that they do not need to accompany or even sell their bodies to strangers to receive a sense of intimacy. Besides, if parents keep an eye on their children, they will be able to notice any slightest difference in their behaviour and discover very soon if they are going on compensated dating. Measures such as consulting social workers can be taken as soon as possible to counsel the troubled youth.

What’s more, online police patrol should also be arranged to monitor deals of compensated dating on forums. Since the Internet, especially online forums, is the major platform for the girls engaged in compensated dating to find potential customers, police can follow suspicious users by keeping track of their IP addresses. Warnings and penalties should be given to the users who spread posts of promotion of compensated dating as a deterrent.

All in all, in this new age, teenagers are confronting various unprecedented temptations. Families should pay attention to them and emphasise moral education, so that the youth of today can grow with high ethical standards to be the mature adults of future.
The Balance between Work and Leisure

Natalie Lam 5C

Good evening, parents and teachers. What expectations do you have for your kids? Let me make a guess. Um…if you are parents, probably your answer will be “Doctor, lawyer, professor, but never a butcher.” If you are a teacher, I guess you will say “score five stars in the DSE, enrol in a famous university, and… learn everything that I told you.” Am I right? If yes, I am a bit sorry for the children.

Parents and teachers always hope that the children can have good academic results and perform well in extra-curricular activities. You always push them to work hard, but do you remember ‘Play hard’ besides ‘Work hard’? Striking the balance between work and leisure is the most important lesson that I suppose that all of us should learn with kids.

Have you heard of Tiger-mom? Tiger-mom is a mother of two girls who wrote a book called ‘Battle Hymn of the Tiger Mother’. The book is about how a tiger mother raised her daughters in a demanding way. Tiger-mom never allowed her daughters to score any grade lower than A, and they could never choose their own extra-curricular activities either. Maybe you are not as strict as Tiger-mom is, but do you force your kids too hard? Parents always hope their kids will succeed. But, what is success? Most of you may perceive that success means scoring high grades in exams and tests. I do believe that good academic result is one of the criteria of success. But is that all?

Parents, especially most of the Asian parents, adopt an authoritarian parental style. They are harsh and ambitious. They understand that their kids are living in a competitive society and they want their children to have a promising future. Therefore, they plan everything for their kids and demand excellent results from them. “This is for
your own good” becomes a “clique” of Asian parents.

Yes, I understand what all you do is for your children’s own good. But children have to know there is life outside classroom. Social skills and exploration are as important as schoolwork. Don’t you want your kids to be all-round? Parents and teachers, why don’t you free your children from sticking to their desks?

Don’t get me wrong. Living outside classroom doesn’t mean kids should attend too many extra-curricular activities. ECAs, which are the short form of extra-curricular activities, are significant nowadays as children are encouraged to learn more besides academics. But in these years, ECAs have been labelled as “Extremely cramped activities”. Don’t you think so? Most of the kids have a cramped schedule, they will have extra activities after school every day and even at weekends. Tiger-mom forces her daughters to practise the violin and the piano more than 4 hours per day. It’s just too much, isn’t it? Children can learn to shoulder responsibilities and foster friendships through joining different activities. It may also help them for college and job applications. But if they attend too many activities, it’s quite difficult for a kid to become an all-round student if the schedule is too tight.

A kid has to learn to commit but NOT to be burdened too much because there are many disadvantages when they are overburdened and under huge pressure. Children will feel exhausted as well as losing their interests in learning. At the beginning of this semester, the ‘Youthline’ of The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Group received more than 500 phone calls from the secondary school students saying they are under their pressure from their schools and parents. Worse still, they wanted to escape from school. It showed that their self-esteem will be weakened if we demand them too much. They’ll also lack social abilities and may develop conflicts with you. To the extreme, they may commit suicide or turn to drugs for psychological relief.
But of course, I don’t mean that it’s good for children to spend too much time on entertainment either. Too much leisure will lead them to becoming lazy and having less motivation to work. Parents and teachers, we had better not let kids’ entertainment override their work. It’s important to strike the balance between work and leisure, but how could we do that?

First of all, mutual communication is of utmost importance. We should communicate more with our kids and understand how they feel. We should not overestimate nor underestimate their abilities. You are highly suggested to help them set goals on their work and allocate time for both work and leisure. Reaching a compromise is essential. Furthermore, encouragement does help. Always encourage them to strive more when they face setbacks; a good rapport may help kids to strike a balance between work and leisure.

At a young age, kids should have an idea of what their targets are and what they want to attain. Learn striking the balance between work and leisure is indispensable, and it’s also a key to success. We are playing the role to help them to have a clear concept about that. We should guide our kids, but not pave a way for them. Thank all of you sincerely for being with us in our socialization. Thank you!
Dear Lucy,

Hey girl, I’m so proud of you! Congrats on your splendid offers! However, I know it’s been a hard time, as you’re faced with the dilemma of choosing between becoming a policewoman and a singer. True, the decision you’re currently making is of the utmost importance. But no worries! Let me give you some advice and I hope that it can help you make up your mind.

I’ve known you since we were toddlers. I bet nobody can understand you more than I do. And our mothers always chirp merrily about our cheerful childhood, especially your mum is always boasting about your ability to hum along the music at a very young age. I remember since nursery, you’ve developed a keen interest in singing. Normally, babies or little kids can merely mumble unclear sounds, but you can already create your own melody, your lullaby and your rhythm. What I want to say is that, Lucy, you should strive for your own dream. You wished to be a singer when you were young because you’ve got an unquenchable enthusiasm for singing. And I know that you still hope to be one. Now, a golden opportunity is right in front of you. Your aspiration is no longer a mirage or an imagination. It is now so close to you that you can reach out your hand to grab it and feel the glamour it brings. Believe me, you won’t regret your choice.

Lucy, I’m not persuading you to follow your heart blindly. You’re actually qualified to become a professional singer. Yep, I’m assuring you that you’re already famous and you’ll be loved by the public. Since being the protagonists in our school musicals and dramas and the leading vocalist of our band, you’ve gained considerable experience and a large group of fans. Remember the countless prizes you’ve got from
the singing contests? All these show your potential and your talent! Your mum wasn’t wrong calling you a “prodigy”. You are indeed a genius, Lucy! The most compelling evidence is the footage you’ve uploaded on Youtube recently. You were doing a cover of Katy Perry and the clip got 30 thousands views in a week! People have left so many complimentary comments and subscribed to your channel. You should feel proud because it’s a stupendous success and your talents are widely recognised. You can’t disappoint your fans. You can’t waste your singing techniques. I especially love your variations of pitch and the pacifying, gentle tone with a scent of femininity. Your unique voice is with personality. Cherish your special gift and spread bliss and blessings to others through your marvel of melody!

Having pointed out the upside of becoming a singer, I need to stress the drawbacks of being a police officer. You know what, I really couldn’t help laughing out loud when I heard the news that you had got an offer from the police training school. Well, don’t be mad at me. I just had those flashbacks and pieces of our past. You failed your P.E. exams every year at school so you were teased by all of us. The police force requires strong muscles, high level of coordination and flexibility of the body. Maybe you were really lucky that you were able to pass the fitness test in the interview, but I’m quite sure that you can’t fulfill these requirements. Worse still, you dread seeing blood, which makes you a totally unsuitable candidate for being a police officer.

Lucy, while I was writing this letter to you, I checked out the clip on Youtube again, and I felt really elated and ecstatic to have a mate as phenomenal as you are. The performance is indisputably riveting. Frankly, I’m really confident about your bright future being a star. Have faith in yourself and I’m always here to support you.

Lots of love,

Chris
Illegal Downloading

Lutus Lee 5D

Good morning, everyone. As you all know, piracy is rampant these years due to the great development of the Internet. People can now access any kinds of websites and download films or songs easily. However, we should also be aware of illegal downloading, as it may cause us a very serious consequence, like being expelled from school. Now, I am going to talk about the good and bad impacts of these issues.

Undoubtedly, it is good to have what we want for free, which is why people try to download films and songs from the Internet. But we should know that piracy is in fact theft of intellectual properties. People are stealing others’ ideas and trying to own them. This makes them no difference from robbers and thieves. It is important to prevent illegal downloading because it makes bad influence to creative works. Innovative producers could not get what they deserve if their intellectual properties keep being stolen and spread on the Internet free. No one would care about their talent. And so piracy is an infringement of the law as it is a very serious offence to those innovative workers.

Piracy culprits would have to face fines and imprisonments. For students, they may get black record and have negative impact on their future, such as having problems going into university or finding a job. No one would like to face this consequence as it makes us less competitive. At this critical time, every mistake could lead to failure. It’s not worth risking our future.

Producers are contributing to the entertainment industry so we should award them with respects; recognize the effort they paid and their capability by encouraging them to continue to produce good work.

So stay away from piracy would be good for both copyright holders and us. Thank you.
Save Our System!
Kevin Lee 5D

Dear Mr. Tsang,

Greetings, Mr. Tsang. I would like to start by pointing out two facts that we must agree to. First, there have been and will be many problems and challenges in the past, present and future of Hong Kong. Second, Hong Kong could not have achieved what it has today without having faced squarely and overcome these obstacles and needs to confront bravely whatever lies ahead in order to keep soaring. So, in an attempt to address issues that I have observed for some time so as to make Hong Kong a better city, I am writing to pinpoint several key problems in our educational system, of which you may or may not have realized.

The new 334 NSS curriculum has definitely not been popular in the frontline. We now have one instead of two exams leading to tertiary education, and that causes headaches at various levels in the society. For instance, the main thing at the level of the government is that it now has to convince the world that the HKDSE is equivalent or more than equivalent to the HKALE or at least the GCE and IGCSE AL level exams, all of which have been tailor-made for university entry.

At the teachers’ level, stuffing what was already a packed four-year higher secondary education into three years, with no HKCEE to cherry pick the best of the best, has just been a process calling for trouble. Working after hours, sleeping at school, extra lessons at weekends, starting school on the 15th of August…quite a few teachers that I know could claim as much.

Rather sadly, save for sleeping at school, it is also what has been happening to us students. Struggling teachers wildly trying to catch up with the monstrous teaching
schedule often leave jittery classmates tearing through pages like windblown leaves, trying to eye each side at least once and often failing to understand much. It is not unusual for us to desperately try to cram everything we can into our short-term memory right before an exam, not because we are lazy but because there is too much that we didn’t understand and had to just remember, too much that the too-unfortunate teacher didn’t say or answer. It may be just me, as I have chosen science subjects to study, but I have to say that I really want to get to the bottom of things, and that the 334 curriculum has pretty much disappointed me in this.

The expenditure of our government on education has been very high, comparable of that spent on healthcare. As a student, however, I am not seeing much at all. Besides, does it not seem absurd, that when we students step back and ask ourselves the ever-so-stubborn question, “Why are we here?” all we see day after day is that we are the slaves of our spoon-fed curriculum, of public exams designed for that curriculum, of school exams designed for our public exams, and of tests by our teachers designed for our school exams. Besides, what exactly was improved? The long standing problems right from the last generation are still here: lack of creative elements, emphasis on repetition and rote learning (i.e. if you recite everything, you will get a good mark), restricted choices in curriculum, and so on. How do you justify pouring taxpayers’ money without even answering to these most obvious, basic and yet debilitating problems?

Schools are the forge for the next pillars of tomorrow, which belong to this buzzing metropolis, the very society we cherish - Hong Kong. Now, Mr. Tsang, you are the great pillar. You said you would try your best and be a good Chief Executive. I do hope that you were, are, and will be, an honest person.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Lee
Jobs and the Giant Apple

Kevin Lee    5D

Was Steve Jobs an inventor? You could say he was, but he also was so much more. Was Steve Jobs as entrepreneur? It’s hard to define, especially when he had almost single-handedly created the most influential, not to mention the most valuable company on the planet. Steve Jobs may have been many things, but I think we can all agree that he is, was, and will be a legend, for many years to come.

Steve dropped out of university after two unhappy semesters. He hated to study what he had no interest in, and he vowed never to doom himself to the mundane concerns of commoners. He instead chose to attend many seemingly random classes, and the result—the neat and stylish fonts we see every day on our computers. Ever since he went home, away from those pointless disturbances of mere mortals like you and me, and started hammering and biting on that Apple in his holy garage, it grew. The more he bit it, the more it grew, until it had shadowed the entire silicon valley, with him right in the middle of it, its flowers bursting and blossoming in all whose hearts have been hooked, infected, pollinated.

Apple’s products were, in a practical sense, flawed to say the least. iPhone came out without 3G just as 3G was becoming the standard. iPod was released with admittedly less storage, less functionality and a heftier price tag than most of its peers. But everybody wanted it, because it looked as if it had fallen out of a time machine. Which is why nowadays, we all seem to prefer Apple that has been bitten into.

Steve Jobs has just left, at perhaps the very climax of his life. Surely the saga of Steve Jobs will shine down upon us for generations to come, and though we cannot distinctly spot him amongst the starry night sky, his essence will never be far away, because on every iPhone lurking incognito in your classmates’ pockets, on that very face of Apple, if you look closely, there is still a little saliva on the edges.
Today is the luckiest and the most unlucky day in my life. I’m a salesperson working in a jewellery shop in Mongkok. I’m now sitting on my sofa, watching the latest news about myself. “Good morning, three armed robbers looted a jewellery shop in Mongkok today…… ” the news reporter said. I know you want to know what has happened to me today. Let me tell you about it then.

Today was a beautiful day. It’s also my friend, Ben’s birthday. I woke up and tidied up myself then went to work. At around ten o’clock, Ben and his girlfriend came. His girlfriend requested me to choose a cool wrist watch for Ben. “I think you should choose it yourself, Ben will definitely think that the one you choose is the best,” I said. “Yes, please choose one for me, Mary,” Ben said. Mary looked shy. Then I took out some popular watches to let her choose. After a while, Mary picked a watch up and put it on Ben’s wrist. Ben raised his arm, looked at the watch and smiled. Mary also looked satisfied. After that, Mary paid the money and got ready to leave.

“BANG!” Suddenly there was a loud explosion. Smoke and dust were floating in the air, we couldn’t see what had happened. A few seconds later, three men wearing balaclavas and holding guns and rifles appeared in front of the broken glass door. One of them shouted, “Take out all your cash and jewellery. Walk to the corner and brace there. Don’t scream and shout or try calling the cops! You will die if you do that.” The three guys brandished their guns menacingly. Ben was scared of them and froze. On the other side, Mary was trembling and hiding behind Ben. The shop assistant opposite me had nearly fainted when she saw the three guys. The three men then lifted the metal club and pushed everyone to the corner. I didn’t listen to them and tried to press the al-
arm button. One of them discovered me, he shot at the button then pointed his gun on my forehead and said, “Try one more time and the bullet will go through you brain.” After that, I was also pushed to the corner. They swept the jewels and watches into their bags. Meanwhile, I was reassuring the other victims and waiting for a chance to press the button.

Finally, the robbers got ready to leave. When they walked out of the shop, I pressed the button. They heard the alarm, and stopped. The man turned over and saw me holding the remote control. Unfortunately, I was discovered again. The man’s face became cruel and walked towards me. He pointed the gun to my forehead and got ready to fire on my brain. At that moment, I was scared, I was scared to death. I wanted to go to Ben’s wedding. At the same time, we heard the police siren, the sound of hope. One of the robbers came up and stopped him from firing on at my head and said, “We have no time, go now!”

At last, they left. And the police chased after them. Some policemen asked me about the details of the robbery. I was thankful for not having been shot. Unfortunately, I lost all my money. And now, I’m sitting on my sofa watching the latest news to find out if the robbers have been arrested. So, this is the luckiest and the most unlucky day in my life.
“Are you sure this is going to work? I mean, can I really read others’ minds after drinking this glass of medicine?” I asked sceptically, holding a mini-sized glass of red, bubbling liquid.

“Yep, but only for one day, I’m afraid. You have my guarantee that this product has no side effects. It’s fully tested by authority so, you see, it’s perfectly safe,” said the salesman, wearing a fake, exaggerated smile.

Though still being a bit doubtful, after the clever persuasion by the salesman, I slowly handed him a hundred-dollar note. If I weren’t that desperate with my coming interview, I wouldn’t need to take a risk and buy something that I don’t even trust. After all, I learned all these from the Internet and this guy was quite suspicious. He suggested trading at a dark, silent alley! I thought this medicine was either fake or illegal. I knew this was stupid and dangerous, but the interview was so important to me and it was going to take place an hour later, so I needed to give it a try no matter what.

I drank the whole glass of medicine immediately. It tasted as sweet as raspberry soda, but was slightly bitter at the same time. My heart suddenly beat faster and my stomach churned tremendously. I felt like I was going to throw up. I looked around and saw the salesman watching me as if I was a clown in a show. Suddenly, all the pain was gone and everything seemed to be normal again.

“See, I told you it is going to work. Now you can hear my thought,” I ‘heard’ the salesman ‘saying’ that proudly, but apparently his mouth wasn’t moving, not even a bit.
I gasped. Oh my gosh, this was brilliant! I never knew this could really happen. Now I could know what the interviewers wanted. I was so excited that I couldn’t wait to try my superpower. I left quickly without saying anything, leaving the amused salesman behind.

Walking down the street, I suddenly saw my classmate Claire hanging around. I immediately ran to her and shouted gleefully, “Hi, Claire! What’s up?” However, when I saw her mournful expression, I regretted so much. It wasn’t a right time to be cheerful in front of a sad person. I cleared my throat, trying to sound more sympathetic, added, “Are you okay, Claire? You look a bit…Is there something wrong?”

She squeezed out a smile, shook her head and then said nothing. But she couldn’t hide her thought from me. A weak voice was whispering, “I don’t want anyone to know that my parents are getting a divorce. I just want to be alone. Can’t she leave now?” I was shocked. I instantly felt so guilty about penetrating her mind and knowing something that she didn’t want me to know. I knew I was wrong, but what could I do? I couldn’t control it; her thought just moved into my head somehow!

I patted her gently and said goodbye to her. I started to question myself whether it was right to read others’ minds as I kept walking down the street. Unfortunately, a young lady suddenly ran out from an alley nearby and knocked me down.

“What’s wrong with you?” I shouted painfully. She quickly pulled me up and apologized again and again. I was so surprised when I saw her horrified face. I added gently, “It’s okay. Don’t worry.” But she still looked terrified.

“I need to leave now before the cops are here. I need to stay calm or else this girl will suspect me. I can’t let anyone know that I’ve killed my husband even though I
didn’t mean to…” said a trembling voice that entered my head. Oh my gosh, she was a murderer! I was frightened and didn’t know what to say, so did she. An idea suddenly flashed through my mind. “Uh-oh, I think my legs are hurt. I don’t know if they are broken. I need to see a doctor. You will be responsible for that, won’t you?” I said in a threatening tone.

“She must be very painful right now. I didn’t mean to hurt anyone,” I could hear her thinking. “Of course I will. Here is my card; you can contact me later on. I’m really sorry about that but I must go now.” She looked terribly sorry. Frankly, she seemed to me a good-hearted person, not a killer. She might have her reason for killing her husband. However, I wasn’t the one to judge. It was still a crime. I had a glimpse at the alley and I knew what I should do. I took out my cell phone and called the police.

“Here is the card of the murderer. She knocked me down when she tried to flee from the crime scene. She doesn’t look like a murderer though. Maybe there’s a reason behind,” I told a police officer about ten minutes later.

“We’ll soon find out. Thank you for your help. You can just leave it all to us from now on,” he said with a stereotypical police tone. Then I ‘heard’ him thinking, “How on earth did she find out all these things?” I said goodbye to him straightaway.

Oh my, what a day! Maybe reading others’ minds wasn’t that interesting after all? Oops, I forgot about my interview! I did all these for this stupid interview but I missed it? Well, I couldn’t do anything about it right now. But if I had another chance, I wouldn’t use any tricks again. I just felt so wrong reading others’ minds, like I was committing a crime. After all, they were private, right?
As today’s society progresses rapidly, our living standards have greatly improved. Adolescents can satisfy all kinds of material comforts nowadays. Ironically, a luxurious life also creates different youth problems and adolescents buckle easily under pressure. These problems have certainly given a wake-up call to the indulgent parents and the public.

School bullying happens frequently on campus. This is a type of act that involves intimidation and humiliation. A stronger person vents his or her anger on a weaker person over a period of time. In the very beginning, the bully is just playing little tricks on the victim for fun. Yet, the bully never feels that he or she is wrong. Due to the victim’s fear of the bully, the bully may gain a sense of superiority. The victim always bears the pains silently and never reports the case to teachers or parents. Other students, being the bystanders, may assist the bully and ridicule the victim in order to protect themselves from becoming the next victim. Bullies are impetuous and overbearing. Conversely, victims are introverted and timid. Hence, bullying becomes an irremediable vicious circle.

Meanwhile, compensated dating is another issue of concern. It comes from the Japanese word “Enjo-kosai”, which was originated in Japan, where older men give money and luxury gifts to attractive women for their companionship and possibly sexual favours. Teenage girls who engage in compensated dating mainly come from broken and poor families. There are many factors for teenage girls to participate in compensated dating. Firstly, they may be curious about sex. As they want to discover more about sex, they may participate in compensated dating. Secondly, they may be influenced by their peers and want to gain a sense of recognition. They may desire to earn more money by engaging in compensated dating. Thus, they can buy brand-name
clothes and expensive accessories to satisfy their material needs and show off to their friends. Last but not least, the mass media also mislead teenage girls. Due to their precocity, they may be easily affected by pornographic magazines and movies.

To stop the teenage problems, every stakeholder should take action. For the victims of bullying, they should stay away from the bullies. They should also be brave to report the bullying to someone they trust and seek help. For the bystanders, they should not participate in bullying or assist the bullies. They should show their care for the victims and talk to them sincerely. For teachers, they should keep an eye on the students who are negative, physically hurt and anxious about attending school, since these are the common symptoms of the victims. They should actively deal with the bullying with no partiality and give punishments to the bullies or even report the case to the police.

To deal with the problem of compensated dating, the help from social workers is of paramount significance. Teenage girls should talk to social workers if they face problems and pressure. Social workers are good listeners and they should be able to give appropriate advice. Besides, schools and families have the responsibility to educate teenage girls. Schools should have moral and sex education. Parents should look after their children properly and teach their children not to have sex before marriage. Meanwhile, parents and schools should not push teenage girls so hard or give them too much pressure. Instead, they should give a helping hand to the vulnerable girls if they face problems in their lives so as to prevent them from doing something wrong.

The trends of school bullying and compensated dating are increasing and the future of our next generation is at stake. To stop these alarming trends, it is of crucial importance for adolescents to take charge of their own lives and to take responsibility for their actions.
Dear Lucy,

Hi, how are you my friend? I’ve read your letter and I’m sorry to hear about your problem. You’ve mentioned that it was difficult to decide whether you should choose to become a singer or a policewoman. In my opinion, you ought to sign the recording contract because of the following three reasons.

Firstly, you have an indisputably good voice which is not possessed by everybody. I heard your singing performance in the school annual concert last year. When you were singing, a sea of audience sitting in the concert hall were extraordinarily engrossed by your talented soprano voice, especially the coda of your last song with a multitude of very high-pitched notes. Your beautiful and apparent vibrato won the biggest clap that night. In addition, you won a major singing competition held by TVB. I can still remember what favourable comments the judges gave you. As far as I can tell, there’s no need to worry about accepting the recording contract offer at all.

Secondly, being a policewoman requires sturdy physical skills and self-discipline. Although you are disciplined enough to receive the training, I don’t really agree that you have sufficient physical ability. There is a far distance between your singing performance and your physical strength. My brother used to be a police cadet five years ago. He thought it was phenomenal to be recruited by the police training school because of the orderly uniform he would be able to wear and the pistol he would be allowed to carry. Unfortunately, he told me that he was extremely exhaust-
ed after the first week of training. He was demanded to run before dawn and sleep almost at mid-night. As a result, he quitted the ferocious training programme after two months. If I were you, I’d choose singing instead of working in the police force for sure.

Furthermore, if you become a renowned singer, you may travel to a myriad of countries around the world. You can expand your horizons and learn a lot from your experiences. Therefore, being a singer can without doubt enrich your life. On the contrary, even if you can become the Commissioner of Police or the Secretary of Security, you will just deal with some troublesome cases and be criticized by the citizens. Hence, the former seems to be a much wiser choice for you to make.

I hope that my advice is helpful and you will make this momentous decision cautiously. Time is really late and my mum is calling me to sleep. Please write and tell me how you get on. Bye!

Kind regards,
Chris
Say NO to Drugs and Compensated Dating!
Samuel Au  5F

With the rapid economic development, the standard of living in Hong Kong continues to improve. However, a materialistic life has led to a spate of teenage problems. The public is especially concerned about the situation of drug abuse and compensated dating. Taking drugs may cause permanent damages to teenagers’ body, so why do they still participate in such a dangerous activity?

First and foremost, teenagers are always curious, so they are prone to give in to temptations. They are not vigilant enough to consider the consequences of drug abuse. For example, cocaine may do harm to a person’s nervous system, whilst ketamine may damage the function of the brain, resulting in loss of memory. Nonetheless, drug dealers and traffickers usually downplay the adverse effects of taking drugs and sell them to youngsters. Out of curiosity, adolescents may find it difficult to resist the temptation.

Furthermore, youngsters may face conformity pressure. Teenagers are susceptible to their peers as they greatly value friendships. By gaining peer recognition, their self-esteem can be enhanced. Unfortunately, if adolescents happen to make friends with young drug dealers or abusers, they may try taking drugs so as to flaunt their courage in front of their peers. Otherwise, they will possibly be regarded as cowards and thereby losing face. According to a survey carried out by Breakthrough, sixty per cent of young drug abusers had their first try because of peer pressure. Therefore, young people will be likely to abuse drugs when their friends suggest them have a try.

Apart from drug addiction, compensated dating has recently become more popular among adolescents, which has unsurprisingly raised public concern. There are
plenty of potential dangers of compensated dating, including being killed. It was widely reported that in 2008, a teenage girl called Wong Ka-mui, who engaged in compensated dating, was murdered and dismembered. What are the reasons for teenagers to risk their lives to engage in compensated dating?

Adolescents may earn money by compensated dating so as to fulfil their desire to purchase brand new products and establish their own personal image. Deeply affected by the mass media and materialism, teenagers place a high value on money. They wrongly believe that money represents the social status of a person. Through compensated dating, youngsters can make a great deal of quick money. As a result, they would be able to afford to possess branded products, such as fashionable clothes, shoes, watches and handbags. Indulging in conspicuous consumption, teenagers may show off to their peers. Thus, they may gain a sense of recognition and feel respected. From their point of view, compensated dating is undoubtedly the best way to cater to their material needs.

In addition, teenagers often have the misconception that compensated dating differs from prostitution. Some of them may even believe that using their body to earn money does not contradict the moral values of society. By means of compensated dating, adolescents may not only earn money from their clients, but also gain a false sense of love and feel that they are being cared about.

To help alleviate the aforementioned problems, the government plays an indispensable role in taking the initiative to prevent the situation from deteriorating. In addition, schools and parents should give teenagers a helping hand.

For the problem of teenage drug abuse, the government should promote the disadvantages of drug abuse through different channels. For instance, the authorities
may make more advertisements through various mass media, including television, radio and newspapers. Moreover, the Narcotics Division of the Security Bureau needs to commission more officials or social workers to hold drug education talks to students more frequently, especially on the schools days before long vacations. It is because having their vacation, adolescents may have more opportunities to try drugs during their spare time. Advertisements and lectures can disseminate the anti-drug message among students in an effective way. They let students reflect on how horrible drugs are and know the importance of saying “no” to drugs in any conditions. Hence, promotion plays a major role in the fight against drugs.

To tackle the problem of compensated dating, education is crucial in order to correct the misunderstanding of teenagers. Schools should comprehensively include sex education in their curriculum, particularly in secondary schools. Concepts of sexually transmitted diseases and contraceptive methods should be instilled into the younger generation. Adolescents should also be taught to take care of themselves and treasure their bodies. They should learn that appearance and wealth do not represent one’s social status. It is obviously irrational to pursue branded products blindly. Students should strive to pursue their studies so that they can make contribution to society in the future.

All in all, adolescents should say “no” to drugs and compensated dating at all times. Parents, schools and the government should cooperate to promote moral values to youngsters. Since adolescents are the future of Hong Kong, society should give out a clear and positive message to halt the disturbing trend of drug abuse and compensated dating.
Who is the Culprit?

Crystal Tang 5F

What strangle the opportunities of the underprivileged youth in studying and finding a stable job? Their ability? Their attitude? Yes. These may be the reasons for the problem. Nevertheless, in my opinion, family income level does play the role as the culprit limiting the opportunities of these youth.

First and foremost, the quality of childcare has different effects on children’s success. According to a study conducted by the Urban Institute, more than two-thirds of children aged 5 spent a significant amount of time in childcare each week. High quality, center-based care is expensive and is simply not an option for many low-income families. Instead, they have to turn to the low quality ones. Apparently, there are not many choices available for low-income families. For instance, the high quality childcare centers provide a wealth of comprehensive services such as healthy nutrition and courses to monitor child development while the low quality care centers do not. There is no doubt that the different services between the two kinds of childcare centers affect the child’s development and thus children attending the good ones succeed greatly later in their lives. Therefore, the children from low-income families hardly achieve excellence.

Second, the lack of education is the obstacle for them to achieve success. Low-income families cannot support the enormous tuition fees of their children. As a result, their children are prone to dropping out of school early although some of them do have extraordinary abilities to handle their studies. However, our society is changing to a knowledge-based society which requires a lot of highly educated people. The youth that have not attended college will, thereby, be rejected by the society and find it hard to find a stable job. Do you agree?
Last but not least, poverty affects a child’s IQ, brain function and behavior, according to a study conducted by the University of California Berkeley and reported in the USA. Today, when comparing the brains of 9-to-10-year-old children from low-income and high-income families, the prefrontal cortex showed as much of a difference between these children from different backgrounds. This area of the brain controls problem-solving and higher-order thinking. It means that although some youth from low-income families can attend college, their other aspects of ability may be lower than the children from high-income families. Do you agree that it may weaken their competitiveness and thus keep them away from success?

By and large, I think family income level is doubtless a factor that determines a person’s success. Therefore, we should give the underprivileged youth a hand. If we do not give them help, who will?
Illegal Downloading

Crystal Tang  5F

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

As you all know, illegal downloading is very rampant nowadays. So what does illegal downloading mean? Illegal downloading is to download something without authority. In other words, downloading without paying money is illegal.

Maybe you are all surprised now because I think most of you have experienced illegal downloading on account of its convenience and free charge. However, illegal downloading is a very severe offence.

Illegal downloading does deprive copyright holders of the royalties they deserve. Therefore, it is unfair to the creators. Moreover, it discourages people from creating new products as such. As a result, it has bad effects on our knowledge-based society. Imagine if you were deprived of this, what would your feelings be? How disappointed would you be? You may feel that others are disrespectful of your personal property! Besides, it also has ill effects on DVD stores and cinemas as less people consume there!

For the reasons above, we should bear in mind that we will not download illegally. Also our teachers will have tighter supervision and prosecution. Once the school finds out that you are involved in this crime, you will be punished. Worse still, you may be expelled from school.

Actually, there are many ways we can watch a film and listen to music. For example, we can go to a cinema to enjoy a movie with our friends. Not only can we
support our idols by buying tickets, but we can also have a great time with our friends! Alternatively, we can buy a CD or DVD and enjoy it wherever you like provided that there is a CD or DVD player.

To come to a conclusion, we should bear in mind that illegal downloading is unfair to those who have worked hard to produce a film or song. Therefore, we should respect the copyright laws and never get involved in piracy. We must enjoy films and songs through a proper way.

Finally, I want to emphasize that everyone will be punished if he or she violates the rules! Therefore, my fellow students, take your future into consideration. Never ever get involved in illegal downloading!

Thank you!
Good morning, Principal, teachers and my fellow classmates.

I am Jeffrey Ng from class 5F. It is my pleasure to be here today to talk to you.

As we all know, computer users are proliferating in Hong Kong in recent years. People have capitalized on the advantages of using computers and the Internet. However, this is also the reason why computer crimes are common in Hong Kong. I would like to avail myself of this chance to share with you about piracy in Hong Kong.

To commence with, the problems of infringing intellectual properties on the Internet are rampant. With technology breakthroughs, sharing mp3 files and movies is no longer a complicated task. People can effortlessly download these copyright files using computer software such as ‘Foxy’ and ‘Bit Comet’. It is not hard to figure out why people would opt for illegal downloading other than buying genuine products from the shops. Undeniably, the exorbitantly high prices of the music CDs and copyright movies make many Hong Kong people turn to pirated CDs and illegal downloading.

Costless and convenient though illegal downloading is, people should put more emphasis on the impacts on our society due to illegal downloading. When you are enjoying a movie or music, have you ever thought of the person who produced them? To produce a great movie, filmmakers need someone to write the script, find suitable actors for casting and hire people to be the director and edit the final product. It may require ten-figure funding, let alone the time and effort that the filmmakers have spent. However, some people can illegally download and enjoy those copyright movies with-
out paying any cost. Do you think it is fair to the producers?

No, it is certainly unfair. If everyone is doing illegal downloading, the film producers and studio companies will go bankrupt. At the end, no one is willing to create music and movies!

Last but by no means least, infringing intellectual properties may lead to imprisonment and fine. There have been cases where people got sentenced to the jail for sharing copyright music via “BT”. Worse still, you will get a criminal record which definitely harms your future. It is not worthwhile to defy the law!

From now on, steer clear of piracy and join hands to maintain the goodwill of Hong Kong.

Thank you!
Dear Editor,

There has been much concern about excessive solid waste disposal among the lay public. A survey from Greenpeace showed that more than 9,000 tonnes of solid waste was discarded in Hong Kong every day. Household kitchen waste accounted for approximately 30% of it. What surprises me most is the attitude of citizens towards the excessive solid waste disposal, they don’t even realize how serious the problem is.

So, what is the problem? There are three landfills in total in Hong Kong. However, according to the statistics from the Environment Bureau, the landfills will reach their maximum capacity within 7 years. What about incineration? There is only one incinerator in Hong Kong, and it is not effective at all. For instance, food residue, which contains high water content, is unsuitable for incineration. To sum up, there are not enough facilities or measures to deal with the waste and the government should immediately find alternatives to tackle the problem.

The root of the problem is that no one wants to shoulder the responsibility. Edward Yau, the Secretary for the Environmental Protection Department, should be the leader and set up policies to protect the environment. Although the government has tried to open up more landfills and build more incinerators, that is obviously not enough. The government, however, should follow the role models of successful environmental protection and find other ways out. Japan and Taiwan are good models that the government could follow. Take Taiwan as an example, Taiwan has implemented a levy on household waste for 10 years. Under the stringent monitoring of the Taiwanese government, they successfully reduce 70% of the household solid waste. Edward Yau and the Hong Kong government should learn from Taiwan, discuss and
modify their policies to suit Hong Kong's needs. If Taiwan can do it, why not Hong Kong? In fact, the household levy has been discussed for a decade in Hong Kong, but the decision is yet to be made.

Excessive consumption is commonplace. Hong Kong people tend to buy more than they need. The interview conducted by Greenpeace showed, on average, a family bought approximately 2.7 boxes of moon cakes in 2011, but discarded 0.9 of them. Moon cake is just a tip of the iceberg. People buy things excessively and cause a lot of waste, which worsens the problem of solid waste disposal. The government should have further cooperation with green groups in Hong Kong, such as Friends of the Earth and Green Energy. More environmental campaigns and propaganda should be launched to inculcate the message of environmental conservation into citizens’ minds.

Corporations should not pass the buck. Catering industries can also help to solve the problem of solid waste disposal. They can recycle their unsold products by reproducing new products. Take moon cake factories as an example, they could sell the unsold moon cakes to group selling companies or donate them to the needy. Moreover, companies can reduce the packaging by replacing plastic with recycled paper. If companies can shoulder their corporate responsibility, it is for sure that the lay public would follow suit.

The problem of excessive solid waste disposal should be combated as soon as possible. All parties in the society should work hand in hand to have the problem solved. No one is immune to it. It is hoped that there will be a change of attitude of Hong Kong people towards the awareness of environmental conservation.

Yours faithfully,
Lai Sunny
My dear,

Have you ever met someone you are head over heels in love with, the one who becomes the song replaying in your brain ceaselessly? Well, I guess I have.

It was in Wimbeldon 2011, I first saw a flawless angel sitting in the nearest auditorium having got her eyes on me. I rubbed my eyes again and again. Being an atheist, I must confess I somehow started to admire God’s handicraft arts—such a pair of sparkling eyes you have, with a perfectly situated nose and cute lips. You played a strong echoing chord in my heart, as if a powerful bomb were ignited in core of my soul. As a result, my rationality was blasted away. All my nerves were entwined, but I knew they were all pointing right at you.

Undoubtedly I couldn’t be in great shape or maintain my competitive edge in the game. I started missing shots. I was so confused that I did not know what to do. Yet, I saw you. I spot your nervously twisted face. Suddenly, strength filled in every single pore in my body—there is no reason for me to let you down. I went to great lengths to strike the ball. Amazingly, I never failed sending the ball to the opposite court from then on. Miraculously, I was able to outplay my opponent to win the trophy in the end. The media even regarded this as ‘the biggest comeback in history’.

My dear, I have spent my entire life pursuing perfection. I can proudly proclaim that I have succeeded in playing tennis. I know it might seem odd to you but I cannot suppress my feeling to you any longer. Please forgive me for making such a request, could you make me successful in my romantic relationship, too? That chord in my heart is still echoing, and I hope I can keep on composing to make it a complete symphony with you. I won’t stop looking forward to receiving your reply.

Love,
Rafael Nadal
Advertisements are ubiquitous in our life nowadays. They can easily be viewed on TV, in the streets, on newspapers or even on billboards. Adolescence is a stage when the young absorb information anytime anywhere because they want to know more about this world. Undoubtedly, advertisements can capture their attention easily and teenagers thus learn from advertisements. In my view, advertising has undeniably become too great an influence on young people.

First, the phenomenon is made prominent seeing the products promoted in advertisements. Advertisers are bombarding viewers with their products making their merchandise become famous and popular in a fraction of a second. For example, the slimming products including slimming tea and slimming pills are purchased by young girls; food products like snacks promoted on TV have also attracted loads of adolescents to consume, whereas cosmetic products like masks and moisturizing cream appeal to lots of teenagers. Advertising encourages adolescents’ immediate consumption and thus changes their consumption habits.

Second, advertising leads the trend of teenagers. Some ‘in’ words spoken by teenagers are from advertisements and they have become fashionable because adolescents learn the language they think is cool in advertisements. A few months ago, there was a commercial selling Taipan moon cakes saying, “It’s not old-school eating moon cakes.” Immediately, teens copied the sentence pattern and “It’s not old-school …” soon became the common language among youngsters.

Products promoted by advertisements are leading the teenage market likewise.
Several years ago, advertisements promoting iPod were almost everywhere in Hong Kong using exaggerating slogans and airbrushed photos depicting the iPod as a chic, must-have gadget. Under the influence of the advertisements, there was a sudden surging demand for the product among adolescents.

What’s more, advertisements can also affect the values of adolescents as they may learn how to distinguish right from wrong from advertisements. A friend of mine no longer thinks smoking is cool and awesome after he has watched the anti-smoking advertisement emphasizing the fatal side effects of smoking. Teens may also learn positive messages from advertisements including “Say no to drunk-driving” and “Beware of pickpockets”, etc.

However, some advertisements can be misleading to teenagers. Since advertisers need to maximize their profits, a myriad of commercial advertisements are trying to advocate consumerism and materialism. In recent years, some teens are heading towards over-consumption addicted to buying luxurious products as the catchy advertisements have taken away their ability to make sensible decisions based on frugality and needs. Thanks to the brainwashing slimming advertisements turning teenage girls into disciples believing that ‘being slim is beauty’ that they go to great lengths to lose weight recklessly in a bid to pursue perfection at the expense of their health.

All in all, advertising can be an effective education and promotion tool as it serves the powerful function to disseminate information quickly to the lay public. However, when advertising is abused, it can have tremendous adverse impacts on young people.
“Advertising Has Become Too Great an Influence on Young People.” Do You Agree?
Frizen Lee 6A

“Advertisement” is derived from the word ‘advertise’ which means ‘to tell the public about a product or a service in order to encourage people to buy or to use it.’ But one may wonder, ‘Do advertisements bring more harm than good?’ I would say no and below are my arguments.

Undoubtedly, adolescents may become addicted to buying useless products or famous brands because of the catchy, flamboyant advertisements. Being oblivious of the undue influence of the beautified photos or videos of products in advertisements, the youth may easily go to great lengths to pursue fancy products or brands as advertisements often contain misleading information. The youths are in the age of puberty with impressionable minds, so they cannot distinguish good from bad and thus may get addicted to buying or pursuing unnecessary products and brands without careful consideration based on thrift and their actual needs.

However, the pros of advertisement are more prominent than the disadvantages.

It comes without saying that advertisements are the most efficient and effective way to send messages to customers, who can then choose the most suitable products and services for themselves. Since most of the enterprises want to be frugal, they will opt for the most efficient way to persuade customers to buy their products. Therefore, customers can get the most useful information from the advertisements. Likewise, teenagers can know about the latest products and services and pick the products and services according to their needs. Advertisements are important for customers because they do not need to search for further information of the advertised products so preci-
ous time will be saved.

Furthermore, advertising also has educational value to teenagers. Advertisements are ubiquitous and have become an inevitable part of modern life so teenagers can easily get in touch with advertisements in different forms of the media like leaflets handed out in the streets, animations broadcast on TV and posters stuck on massive billboards. In the media, there are a lot of educational advertisements produced by the government on preventing drug abuse and how to handle domestic violence, etc. They are very crucial for teenagers as teenagers are in the age of puberty. They do not have enough experience and knowledge to solve problems, and they are also the possible targets of criminals like drug peddlers so they may easily fall into the trap of criminals. In such cases, educational advertisements can be reminders to the youths, making them aware that drug abuse is wrong and will cause disastrous consequences including permanent brain damage to their bodies.

All in all, advertisements have both positive and negative impacts on young people, but the pros outweigh the shortcomings. In fact, there is no consensus if advertising is good or evil – it all depends on how it is used and who uses it.
I was on the MTR playing a game on my mobile phone when a huge man started quarreling with a tiny old lady standing in front of me. I was so curious to know what was happening so I stepped forward and turned on the recording button on my phone and started filming the scene.

It was so noisy that I could barely hear the woman’s whimpering, however, I could still hear somebody criticizing the huge man. A man whispered, ‘I saw that huge man steal the wallet from the old lady!’ ‘Oh! Really, that’s a crime!’ I responded.

The old lady blubbered louder and louder making everybody on the MTR notice her and the huge man. After a few minutes, the police came to investigate the quarrel. The police inquired, ‘Did you steal the mobile phone from the tiny old lady?’ The huge man answered in Mandarin and nobody could understand what he was talking about. Suddenly, the huge man took out a bomb from his bag. A second later, the bomb exploded, the MTR derailed and everybody was killed on scene.

My head was in excruciating pain like thousands of needles were poking into my brain. At the moment, my eyes caught sight of an illuminated light. I opened my eyes and found that I was back on the MTR again. The huge man and the old lady were still there and everything was back to normal. Then, the same episodes just happened again. Wait! If everything started all over again, would I have to die again? No!!!! I exclaimed. I swore to myself, ‘I can’t let this happen, I have to stop this!'

After a while, the police came again. The police officer asked the same question and the huge man answered in the same way. This was the moment – I dashed towards
the huge man and tried to pin him down on the floor. However, he was so sturdy that I could not even steady myself. Soon, the man took out a bomb from his pocket trying to intimidate me. I was so afraid that my brain went blank. I did not know what to do and was on the verge of tears. Suddenly, the old lady took out an electric gun and assaulted the huge man making him burn in fire. Everyone was flabbergasted and petrified but the time bomb was still counting down with just fifteen seconds left before explosion. We could do nothing but watch the bomb went off.

I died again. I questioned myself, ‘Is this the end of my life?’ At this moment, everything started and repeated all over again.
A Surprise Party

Sharon Yu 6A

Yesterday was our class teacher’s birthday. My class teacher, Ms Choi, was a responsible and nice teacher that all of us would like to do something to thank her. So, we decided to organize a surprise birthday party for her.

We had prepared the party for a whole week. All of us took part in it, some were responsible for the decoration of the classrooms, some were responsible for designing the birthday card and some were responsible for buying food and drinks. The big day had come at last. Jenny and Nancy started to decorate the classroom after school. Our class monitor, Nelson, invited other teachers to come.

After we had finished all the decoration and other preparation, Jenny went to fetch Ms Choi while the rest of us waited quietly in the classroom. We were all very excited. Everyone wanted the party to be a big surprise to our wonderful teacher. When she appeared in the doorway, we shouted loudly, ‘Surprise!’ Ms Choi was flabbergasted when she saw the classroom was decorated with colorful balloons and ribbons. All of us clapped hands to welcome her. Jackie played the piano for us and we sang the birthday song loudly together. Then, Jenny brought the birthday cake to Ms Choi and we asked her to make a wish. Ms Choi was so touched that she could not speak a word. After a moment of silence, Ms Choi murmured, ‘I’m so happy that you did this for me! It is really the most memorable birthday that I ever have.’ We were all very happy to hear what Ms Choi said. Nancy then presented her our DIY birthday card. Ms Choi was really thrilled and said that it was a very creative and thoughtful card.

At the end of the party, we took photos with Ms Choi and we gave a birthday present to her. It was a photo album. Every one of us had put our photos in it with some
messages added alongside. We could see that Ms Choi loved the album as she looked at the photos and messages with a smile on her face.

The party was a great success as we were sure that we had put Ms Choi in an excellent mood. We were happy to have such an unforgettable time, too. What made the party more memorable was the email that we received from Ms Choi the next day. Ms Choi thanked us for the lovely surprise. I hope we can prepare something more surprising for her next year!
Good morning Principal, teachers and students. Let me begin with a question. What are the things that you will do every day? Eating, washing…right, these are the things that we do every day, but how about turning on the computer and surfing on the Internet? I bet that the majority of students in front of me will do this too.

With the advanced technology, the Internet has become a convenient place for us to search for information, read interesting articles and so on. However, have you ever realized that it has also become a dangerous place for teenagers now? Have you ever seen people posting nasty comments on the Internet? Have you ever seen any offensive words in blogs, Xanga or Facebook? With the improvement of technology, the Internet has become a new weapon for bullies. As a result, many people are affected by cyber-bullying.

Cyber-bullying is any deliberate psychological, emotional or textual sexual harassment or harm done to a victim via electronic communication devices or technology equipment. This includes text messaging. So you can imagine, if we do not do anything to stop it, the situation will definitely get worse as internet access is easy for teenagers. If someone posts an insulting message on the Internet, it will be viewed by many other people who surf in the net in just a few minutes. What’s more, think about the consequences of seeing nasty comments about yourself on the Internet every day. How will you feel? This definitely causes great discomfort to the victims. There have been cases of victims trying to end their precious lives worldwide.

This problem drives us to address the issue promptly. Both the government and parents play a role in tackling the problem. For the government, it is important for
them to think about setting up new laws to deal with cyber-bullying. As for parents, it is their duty to have more care to their children in order to spot out their problems. But most importantly, victims should learn how to protect themselves. Victims should call for help immediately. Teachers and social workers can give suggestions and advice to help them get out from the plight. In addition, victims should take things easy. By ignoring what the cyber-bullies do can put them at ease and help them face the problem positively.

There has been an alarming rise in the number of cyber-bullying cases. We all should give a helping hand to stop it. Just put yourself in the victims’ shoes and you will know how they feel. The world will be better if there is more understanding. Thank you.
Dear Editor,

Recent statistics show that the number of drug abusers under the age of 19 is continuously on the rise. This suggests that the problem of drug abuse among young people in Hong Kong is getting more serious. I would like to discuss the severity of the problem and provide some methods to address it in this letter.

Some potential drug-related problems are outlined below. Firstly, drugs may affect personal health. Cannabis and Marijuana are the illegal drugs commonly seen in teenage drug abuse cases. The young drug abusers think that these illegal drugs can bring them ecstasy. Actually, what they think is just a mirage. Such psychiatric drugs can affect our brain and make us feel exhilarated. In the long run, they will cause permanent damage to our brain. Moreover, if the teens take too much dangerous drugs, their kidney function may be impaired. A former drug abuser featured in the government anti-drug TV commercial says that abusing illegal drugs caused the shrinking of his kidney capacity and he has to urinate every 15 minutes. It is a sad truth that once our organs are damaged, we can do nothing to repair them.

Secondly, young people taking drugs may bring extra pressure to the already tense relationship between them and their family and friends. As most illegal drugs may affect our brain function, many drug addicts find it difficult to control their emotions. They may experience extreme mood swings or even lose physical control of themselves. Their friends may persuade them not to take drugs anymore. But a lot of illegal drugs are highly addictive. It is not easy for drug addicts to quit suddenly. Some drug abusers may even lose their judgemental power and think their friends are persecuting them. Young drug addicts may suffer from brain damage and even psychiatric disorders that render them incapable of thinking sanely and logically.
Actually, teenage drug abuse has become a headache to our society. If the youngsters become addicted to drugs, their physical and mental health may be at risk. They may lose the motivation to work and support their family. If our society does not have enough manpower, our productivity will drop. To tackle the problem at its root, the government has to allocate more resources to combat the problem of teenage drug abuse. The teenagers are the pillars of our future society. Maintaining a physically and mentally fit workforce for Hong Kong should be of top priority in the government’s agenda.

In order to deal with the problem, some suggestions are made below. It is suggested that the best possible approach to the problem of drug abuse is education. Schools can invite speakers or even former drug addicts to share their opinions on and experience of taking illegal drugs and teach students how to avoid feeling pessimistic towards life and how to cope with losses, disappointments and failures.

Also, the government has to step up efforts to combat cross-border trafficking and illegal use of drugs. The government or some non-government organizations can launch anti-drug campaigns to inculcate anti-drug messages into young minds. We all hope that youngsters can be self-disciplined enough to say a firm “no” to drugs.

The problem of drug abuse deserves our full attention. We should not adopt a wait-and-see attitude and watch the situation with folded arms. It is hoped that parents, the schools and the government can work together to bring about a drug-free society for our youngsters.

Yours faithfully,
Chris Wong
Low Birth Rate, High Stake Game
Kelvin Wan  6B

Dear Chief Executive,

Low Birth Rate, High Stake Game

In recent years, the birth rate of Hong Kong is remarkably low. This issue has aroused concerns from scholars from various fields, and has an urgent need to be addressed, as many negative effects may come along with it. Most notably, it adds even more pressure to the city’s ageing population. I would therefore like to provide a few suggestions regarding my opinions on how to deal with this issue.

I would suggest increasing the flexibility for allowing mainland pregnant women to come to Hong Kong to give birth. I am very aware that it is a slippery slope, of which a slight tip over one edge of the balance may enrage the local public. But come to think of it carefully, it does have certain positive effects on the society, which is why we should not leave out this option. Hong Kong’s husbands and wives may be unwilling to support the lives of two or more kids, so we may perhaps lend a hand from mainland couples. It is a highly sensitive issue, as seen from how intensive the arguments surrounding it are, so exact fairness and high adaptability are crucial to the entire plan. Settling local mothers-to-be must be the undoubted priority, but as long as there are extra spots left, the government should let in the mainland mothers-to-be. Yet, the “first-come-first-served” principle should always be the cardinal rule while distributing the relevant resources in order to eliminate foul play and interjections from the highest bidders.

Bettering Hong Kong’s housing arrangements is also a probable solution. It may sound irrelevant to the problem of low birth rate, but in actuality, they are closely interconnected. Currently, the property market is overheated, making the public, espe-
cially the grassroots, to deem buying their own houses as a “Mission Impossible”. They criticize real estate developers for monopolizing the market, leaving them hopeless while watching the ever-increasing price tag. I did not bring this up for the intention to debate about whose fault it is, but to point out that by addressing these problems, the problem of the low birth rate can also be dealt with. That is because young married couples are among the most eager to purchase a flat that belongs to their own, thus it seems reasonable to put their plan to start a family on halt, until they are able to buy their very own flat. Therefore, if the price of housing properties can be stabilized, the general public will be capable of being flat-owners, and couples can settle down and welcome the arrival of a baby. Re-launching the Housing Ownership Scheme would definitely be the unanimous choice by the public. Giving the rebuilding project a green light can cool down the red-hot property market, and give Hong Kong people an affordable choice of accommodation, as well as a cradle for new lives.

My last suggestion would be initiating propaganda. It may sound like a cliché if it is a mass appeal to “boast” birth rate, but what I think the government should do is to instill a sense of good family planning into the young generation, especially among the newly weds, telling them that having more babies is not putting loads onto their backs if they have prepared in details for nurturing a newborn, till it becomes his responsibility to take care of his parents.

Having gradually less and less children in Hong Kong does not merely mean that we can hear fewer laughter on the streets, but will also mark a possible decrease in Hong Kong’s future labour supply, and that will hinder our city’s long-term development. I hope that the government will handle the problem using the best and most suitable ways, and keep the new blood flowing into Hong Kong’s veins, filling them up with vividness and the joy of life.

Yours sincerely,
Kelvin Wan
Dear Mr. Yamazaki,

I am writing on behalf of the ill-fated dolphins which are getting slaughtered every year in the Cove in Taiji, and the people who have sworn to protect them and rescue them out of their misery. I, along with other activists, are enraged by the Japanese government’s constant use of sophistry to disguise their money-oriented dolphin massacre. This outrage is a disgrace to mankind and is unacceptable to civilized men around the globe.

From April to September every year, tens of thousands of dolphins are captured by fishermen of Taiji in the Cove. These dolphins are doomed the moment they are forced into the fishing nets, as escaping is not an option, and the only thing lies ahead is the tip of a harpoon. The once picturesque and serene shelter is instantly turned into a ruthless killing field. The water is dyed red by the blood of the poor cetaceans, yet the cold-blooded hunters show no remorse and celebrate over another triumphant body harvest. The carnage of these fishermen is no different from a dolphin-genocide, which is why it has to be stopped right now.

The only thing that defines man is that we have the ability to judge right from wrong, a thing that ordinary animals cannot do. Having a sense of morality is what humanizes us, but that does not mean that we are superior to all living things. If we kill at will to satisfy our personal greed, we will simply be a bunch of savages. Dolphins are not like livestock ---- they belong to Mother Nature, they should be roaming free in the vast blue oceans, not in a net where people get to kill them for their flesh or purchase them like a household pet. We should stay out of their lives and respect them as one of the many creatures out there that have a spirit.
I understand that you are in a very difficult situation, caught in the middle between local Taiji fishermen and foreign oppressing countries. But sincerely I hope you realize that we are in a “do-or-die situation” here, the lives of many other dolphins that may fall victims to more slaughtering in the future can be saved in a nick of time if you have the will to act.

The efforts of dolphin preservationists around the world have yet to bear any fruit, and neither we nor your government is willing to back down in this negotiation. There is an urgent need for both sides to find a way out of this impasse before more innocent dolphins get slaughtered. I hope your government can quit this indecent business and withdraw from being a partner in crime, so that the Japanese people will not be remembered as inhuman butchers who have blood all over the hands.

I regret saying that we, despite being merely ordinary men with no outstanding talents, are still willing to do whatever it takes to keep our conscience unscathed, because we cannot simply turn a blind eye to such immoral violence towards defenseless souls. I sincerely wish that you can take the matter into your own hands and put an end to this mayhem.

You are not obliged to take this letter as an ultimatum, but please take our determination into consideration. It would be unpleasant if we have a fallout, forcing us to go for extreme ways, such as exposing the fishermen’s act of tolerable cruelty with substantial evidence. Therefore, please be kind enough to act immediately in accordance with the greater good of human beings, thus clearing our name of a mass murderer who deprives other creatures of their right to live.

Yours sincerely,

M. Pane
Had you ever seen the sensational pictures of Edison Chan’s sex photo scandal? How did you obtain these pictures or the information about this scandal? Well, the answer to this question is obvious. Unquestionably, media can make us keep abreast of the social happenings and broaden our horizons. But their malpractice also misleads the public’s minds.

According to the introductory video to media ethics on Youtube, the role of the media is to seek truth and report it, minimize harm to the subjects, act independently and be accountable to the viewers and readers. Is the media in Hong Kong really an impartial public witness and commentator?

The problem starts here with the media putting too much emphasis on good circulation and profit-making. To arouse readers’ curiosity, many media reports are flooded with sex and violence, but not unveiling the truth. Media groups like Oriental Sunday and Next Media published sex photos of Edison Chan in a bid to boost circulation and profit. Although these two magazines have removed some parts of the photos, the articles and photos are still comprehensive and sensational. Using comic strips and graphic details, Oriental Sunday and Next Media highlight sex and may mislead youngsters that disclosing others’ privacy is acceptable. Readers are concerned over sensational reports and disgusting pictures shown by some newspapers. Many are also dissatisfied with the unethical practice of certain media groups when gathering and reporting information for their news reports.

That brings us to the big problem--the sensational headlines and exaggerated articles used to attract public’s attention. The public is misled. Thanks to media organi-
zation like Apple Daily. The “moving news” of Apple Daily always mislead the public using sensational expressions in the headlines to exaggerate the facts. Of course, the details in the reports are different from that described in the headlines. It breaches the code of ethics of media.

Also, we can see a striking difference in the American and the international media coverage of the crisis in the Middle East in the documentary “Peace, Propaganda & the Promised Land”. According to the documentary, most Americans sympathized with Israelis. Fifty-two percent said so, while only 10 percent sympathized with the Palestinians. What happened to the Americans? We can see that the press have wielded great power by moulding public opinion and manipulated information channels. This is because the public almost has no alternative access to information and is thus easily shaped by the media reports.

To address the potential ethical problems, media should first exercise self-criticism. The print and electronic media should not allow themselves to be driven all the way by the markets. They should take notice of the impact they would make on the community in return for good circulation and profit-making. Also, news media online should report the truth but not faking details in a news story. And media must not abuse press freedom to report violence and sex. It should raise press ethical standards.

Then take the next step– Hong Kong government should look into the problem and take action. For instance, setting up a press council with the power to penalize media organizations and introducing media ethics legislation may help mitigate the problem.

Well, there is no immediate antidote to the problems of media malpractice. All
of us can act as media watchdog. There are many more things we can do to solve this problem. We can make a personal commitment not to buy or read newspapers and magazines which are notorious for unethical practice unless they start changing and report the truth. Only if we insist on our principles will media improve their professional standards.

Looking ahead, the media should make their reports accountable and try every means to restore their credibility. And every one of us should act as a media watchdog and exercise our own judgment in supporting the media organizations that uphold media ethics.
Is Cyber Bullying Inescapable?
Jessie Wong    6B

Good morning Principal, teachers and students. Do you know what cyber bullying is? Recently, there have been incidents of cyber bullying among our junior secondary students in our school. Cruel messages were posted online about some students and one of them was away from school for a week as a result of being bullied. So I am here to explain to you what cyber bullying is and why it is a serious issue for all of us. I will also give some suggestions on how we can protect ourselves from cyber bullies.

Cyber-bullying refers to any deliberate psychological, emotional or textual sexual harassment or harm done to a victim through information and communication technologies. There are different kinds of cyber bullying. For example, the tormentor will disseminate some unflattering, embarrassing photos and videos on the Internet as a hatchet job on the victims. Sometimes, the bullies may post some offensive messages on discussion forums or social networking websites to taunt others’ appearance or characters. In some serious cases, the bullies may make intimidations to the victims anonymously. They will post victims’ names, phone numbers or even home addresses on the Internet.

You can image how serious the impacts of those malicious hoaxes can be. To rub salt into the wound, the nature of the Internet allows the nasty photos and comments to spread to thousands of people within a few seconds. Those hoaxes can devastate their relationship with others and leave a trauma to them eternally. They will be terrified to meet people. It is also difficult for them to trust other. They may even have delusion of being commented or taunted. As a result, they will become pessimistic, depressed and hopeless. Worse still, they may try to commit suicide.
There are things which we can do to protect ourselves. First, we should let our parents and teachers know if we are being bullied. Don’t be ashamed to complain to adults. Second, if we receive any hurtful or threatening messages, we should ignore them and block the sender immediately. Remember, we should always think positive. Don’t forget that there are always people who love and care about us.

My dear students, cyber bullying is not inescapable. If you know anyone who is being bullied, you must let us know. Let us work together to prevent cyber bullying from happening in our school again. Thank you.
Good afternoon teachers and students. I am very happy to have a chance to talk to you.

I believe that most of you have already heard about the incidents of cyber-bullying among junior secondary students in our school. One of them was seriously affected by cyber-bullying and has been absent from schools for a week already.

What is cyber-bullying? It is any deliberate psychological, emotional or textual sexual harassment or harm done to a victim via electronic communication devices or technology equipment. It is a serious issue. Imagine if someone puts some harassing messages on your Facebook wall or discussion forums, how will you feel? In some worse cases, the victim’s photos are uploaded by others with some nasty messages added alongside. Maybe you think putting vicious comments and embarrassing photos on the Internet are not a big deal, the bullies are just doing it for fun, but let me tell you, this is not fun at all. What you post on the Internet can cause great discomfort to the victims. Like the victims that I have talked to recently, I found that they are suffering from great anxiety and depression. Some of them even become too afraid to meet people or even go online. There is no doubt that these cruel messages can make the victims’ lives a misery.

We should respect others and care about their feelings when disseminating messages, photos and videos on the Internet. As mentioned before, cyber-bullying can seriously affect the proper growth of young people, so it is important for everyone to do something to combat this problem. I think the Internet companies, social networking
sites and mobile phone companies have responsibility to stop the problem. For example, YouTube has set up the Beatbully YouTube Channel to enable the victims to fight back. Also there should be punishment for the cyber bullies such as setting up new laws. However, instead of waiting passively for what other people can do for us, you should take action to protect yourself from cyber-bullying. Remember to save the unpleasant messages or photos as evidence and immediately ask your parents, teachers or me for help.

Cyber-bullying is definitely an issue that needs to be dealt with. If you know anyone who is being bullied, please tell your teachers. Remember, you can also help combat cyber bullying from happening in our school again. Thank you.
“If you lack confidence, you are destined for failure,” So Wa Wai, an ‘ordinary man’ bestowed with the champion of the Paralympics Games in the relay of 200 m in 2008 said, with an angelic smile, relaxing posture and irresistible charm radiating among him. His winning was not a feat, but an inspiration for high-flyers to ‘catch’ their dreams, a proof of the ability of the impaired, and a model for normal people to emulate. Reasonably, So was honoured as ‘Person of the year for 2001’. Once he faced failure which set him back, but his confidence in himself woke him up, and led him to fulfil his dream.

Unlike others, So was born to be different. No one would like to be born with severe diseases, but So accepted it; no one would like to suffer from pain and discrimination since birth, So endured it; no one would like to bear the inequality between ordinary athletes and disabled athletes, but So bore it. Born to imbue with various impediment, So never gave in to fate. “I was lucky, because my disability has granted me with such an achievement, I am satisfied,” said So, in a reverent manner. Although his road to success was a bit rocky, clustering with difficulties, So never gave up. His preservance has brought him the achievement.

Thanks to the dedication of So’s coach and his own talent and affection for running, So has won 26 gold medals. “This is enough, it is more than what I expect,” So replied modestly. How many medals So got was not the cornerstone, but how he could overcome his weaknesses and turn his stricken life into a brightful one is more important.

So met his waterloo in Paralympics Games in 2008. Cheers from speculators exerted pressure on him, expectation from his coach put him on nerves, and support from Hong Kongers and his family made him hard to take a fresh breath. Lamentably,
So was stricken by intensive setback. He merely ranked 6th in the 100m relay and 8th in the 400m relay. His fantasy of striving for three gold medals was smashed and his only hope was the 200m relay.

“I would use ‘poignant’ to describe my feelings at that time, just despair and desperation, and there was nothing left I could think of,” So dwelt on his memory and recalled. But confidence and belief had pushed So to achieve a breakthrough.

He meditated on his unsatisfactory performance, and he reached a conclusion: though facing failure, I would not yield to the reality. Wake up So Wa Wai, you are going to give an astounding surprise to everyone. In his belief, he championed in the 200m relay. With the applause of the audience, So burst into tears, and only tears could express his confidence in himself, his zeal to running and his efforts in getting over his weaknesses.

“I have little memory of how the claps of watchers and the atmosphere were like at that moment, but the feeling of turning desperation into hope carved deeply in my heart. The story of So Wa Wai is an inspiration for all those who are undergoing failure and have been demoralized.

Whenever facing plight, the cornerstone is to fight back. Giving up is not the deal. What we can learn from So is his preservance and confidence. He was born to be “unfair”, but he endured it. He met his waterloo, but he managed to stand up and fight against adversity. It is the confidence and faith we should learn from him. The big thing about So is not his success or his fame, but his pursuit of hope and aim.

Achieve a breakthrough in your life! Learn from So, learn his unyielding spirit, and learn his obsessive determination!
The scene of Hong Kong cyclist Wong Wan-yiu, ‘Person of the Year (2011)’, picking up herself after a heavy tumble at speed at the Asian Games should have been moulded into the hearts of all fellow students in our school. Perhaps not everyone can remember that she finally won the silver medal, but her determination, her persistence and her unbelievable bravery to stand against adversity should never be forgotten.

Her determination has not only brought her the silver medal, but also brought her all the way through her career as an athlete. “Failure is part of an athlete’s life,” she said. “But the determination to succeed has helped me endure the hardship.” Few of us may have known that the tumble at the Asian Games was not her first failure. In fact, previous injuries, including torsion of muscle in the left leg and a broken bone in the right arm, forced her to give up her chances to participate in the Asian Championships in 2004 and 2005. The suspension of training made her drop from her peak condition. However, giving up her dream of being a successful cyclist was definitely not on her list of choices. She strictly followed the recovery programmes assigned by her coach. Despite the pain of stretching muscles and lifting weight, her persistence was finally proven worthy. When asked what suggestions she would give to those who face challenges in their academic studies. She answered without a second thought that determination is of utmost essence. “Be determined to do something, be it a doctor, an athlete, or even a farmer. Then focus and go straight to your goal,” she answered with a firm tone.

It seems that Wong’s persistence alone is her path to success. Nevertheless, it is not the case. During the interview, she laid much emphasis on the importance of the guidance of her coach, the support from her peers and the love and care of her parents.
“As a teenager, I was also searching for my way of living. Unfortunately, I chose to isolate myself, as I naively thought that the isolation could help me concentrate on my sports and studies,” she told the reporter with a sigh. She later understood that without friends to share with, she might have been inundated by a myriad of negative thoughts and feelings. Without the kind reminder of her parents, she might have neglected her health, which is indeed indispensable to a sportswoman. “No man is an island,” she concluded. Her experience illustrates how crucial family’s and peers’ support is to one’s success.

Not all of us are sportsmen, but her story of success has great implications on our way to realise our dreams. We may not break our bones, but we fail in our tests. At those moments, please remember Wong’s story, and tell yourself that only determination can bring us out from adversity. We may not lock ourselves up as Wong did, but we may refuse others’ care. Again, please remember her experience, and tell yourself that you cannot succeed without others’ support.

“Success is always within one’s reach,” Wong added when she left.
I Want That Phone!

Angel Leung    6D

I was on the MTR playing a game on my mobile phone when a huge man started quarrelling with a tiny old lady standing in front of me. Overhearing their brawl, I realized that the sturdy man was the son of that meager old lady.

“I want that phone!” the man shouted himself hoarse pointing at the mobile phone I was holding in my palm. It made me extremely embarrassed and I abashed. I put my phone back into my pocket stealthily and swiftly, however, everyone in the compartment was staring at me! I could hardly bear the curious gaze of others!

The gaunt woman tried to soothe her son by caressing his back as if he was a toddler. Yet the giant baby started whimpering and told the passengers how badly he had been treated by his mother. Some of his audience simply shrugged or nodded, while the others got off when the train arrived at the next station in order to get rid of the weirdo. Every commuter in the compartment was uneasy and frightened. In fact, I too did want to get off but I was on my way to work and would definitely be late if I took the next train. Without any choice, I stood at the far corner trying to stay away from the muscular ‘baby’.

Not getting any response from his mother, the man started blubbering letting his temper run wild and crying louder and louder. Then, he soon started screaming and growling, jumping in the compartment like playing lope-skipping and holding the hand straps like playing gymnastic rings. It was like I had got on a train in a horror film in which the freak made grimaces to scare everybody!

After messing around in the compartment, his gloomy feeling soon turned into
rage – he then cuffed and kicked the train like a professional boxer. All of a sudden, everybody came to a complete standstill as the train window smashed into glass fragments scattering all over the floor. The train stopped and the alarm went off. The man squatted down, trembling and shivering.

I did not know what happened next as all the passengers were evacuated and guided by the MTR staff to take a shuttle bus to the next station. However, I could see the forlorn lady bowing and apologizing to the staff on the verge of tears. When I got on the shuttle bus, I heard someone say, “That old lady was really stupid to take such a monster with her! They’re wasting my time!”

I felt sorry for that merciless guy because I really admired the old tough lady.

In the end, of course, I was late for work!
Stop Dyeing the Cove with Dolphins’ Blood

Joyce Fong 6D

Dear Mr. Yamazaki,

Stop Dyeing the Cove With Dolphins’ Blood

This might be the thousandth letter urging you to put a halt to dolphin slaughter, but I still hope that you will finish reading it patiently and thoroughly since Japan’s responsibility is absolutely undeniable in this issue, and it is time for Japan to stop and confront her blunders.

About how severe the situation of dolphin slaughter in Japan is, you may know far more than I do. Yet, until dolphin slaughter is eradicated in Japan, I think reminding you of the fierce and cold-blooded killings is still a need. In Japan, over 23,000 dolphins are killed every year. In September and October, the number is much more shocking: over 1,000 dolphins are circled and killed daily in Taiji. The dolphin meat is provided to local schools and the market, but it is not the main reason for people to slaughter dolphins as dolphin meat is not as popular as salmon or tuna. In fact, the slaughtermen kill dolphins like how they eliminate pests, because they fear that the abundance of dolphins would deteriorate the amount of and thus their gains from other fish species like tuna, one of the most popular food in Japan. The most unbelievable thing is that such ridiculous and proofless rumour is spread from the local government!

I used to have a very good impression on Japan, but when its darkness was revealed by a documentary film called ‘The Cove’, I was totally shocked and disappointed about Japan. I believe not only me, but people all over the world would have the same feelings towards Japan if they are informed about it, and would even link Japan and dolphin slaughter together.
Human is probably the dominant species in the globe, but it does not mean that we can arbitrarily damage the environment to fulfil our own desires. Humans have no wings, we cannot fly as birds do, so people invented aeroplane; Humans cannot see in darkness as owls and cats do, so people invented bulb and built numerous power plant. Things invented undoubtedly make people’s lives more convenient while the cost is the environment and natural resources in Planet Earth. When humans stand in front of the Nature, we are always insignificantly small and lowly. So why can we still survive? Is it because human has higher intelligence than other organisms? If ‘yes’, can our intelligence save our lives without the natural resources from the Nature? This is why the Nature has to be respected. Dolphin slaughter will fatally disturb the marine eco-system, and at last human will painfully pay the price for it.

The thing that concerns me most is that the dolphin meat which contains excessive mercury is sold to the market, and even can be found in local schools’ lunch menus. School is where students receive education and go through socialization so as to follow the norms, develop righteous values and contribute to the society in the future. Providing dolphin meat to students is such a hideous behaviour that involves using students’ innocence as a tool to normalize and rationalize dolphin slaughter, while people’s health is lethally neglected. Too much mercury in the human body may cause teratogenesis, which is definitely something we do not want to happen.

The scandal of Japan’s dolphin slaughter can no longer be hidden from the world. For humanity, the environment, and Japan’s own image on the world’s stage, Japan has to eradicate dolphin slaughter before it becomes irreversible. Dolphins’ blood is flowing out from Japan, and it is time for redemption.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Wong
“Tell me why? I’ve already got my resume and certificates ready, why can’t I seek a job?”

“Same here. I still get unemployed after going on more than 40 job interviews!”

The above dialogues are probably no unfamiliar to young graduates. Being graduated from university, young people are confronted with another great challenge as they step into the society and start a brand new page of their diaries of lives. They think they have got everything prepared, but opportunities just don’t knock on their door. Is that luck, or is that some other qualities that never come across their minds? What is missing, but unfortunately fatal?

To answer the questions, you, being one of those would-be unemployed, have no other choices but to be aware of the following tips.

You may ask “Excuse you? I don’t even know what it is like at a job interview!” Don’t panic, a job interview is only a place for you to present yourself, or, in other words, a stage to perform your talent, a chance to impress the employers. Usually the setting of a job interview will be very formal. Interviews may be individual or in a very small group. Some interviewees may be asked about the reason why they apply for the company, while some may be given questions about problem-solving or alike. There is almost no uncertainty about the situation you are going to face in a job interview, as everybody does the same. Therefore, the crucial criteria for employers to decide whether you pass or not is if you are well-prepared, or even outstanding.
So, it soon comes to another concern – how should you prepare for a job interview, and what should you do to present yourself?

Basic elements you could immediately think of would be CV, photocopies of certificates, personal profile, or, if not, dress codes, maybe? But that is not what makes you stand out! Imagine an employer, sitting in the office and seeing hundreds of similar faces wearing similar clothes, saying similar things like “Hello I am John.” Will he or she remember you? Probably not! To mold your face into their hearts, you have to get brilliant and fresh appearance, and simultaneously a little bit of gestures showing confidence and character, which distinguish you from other competitors. Employers care about non-verbal expressions in fact, just because they already have enough talks of “I am good at graphics and design.” When they are fed up, their ears will simply close and won’t receive whatever messages anymore! So impress them with adequate movements of your body, your hands, your limbs. Let them swing naturally. Let them deliver your ideas.

When you are qualified from the judgment of outsiders, it’s time for you to consider the insides. Most candidates won’t be aware of the background information of the company at which they are being interviewed. You have to defeat them by showing how knowledgeable you are to the information of the company. It reveals the eagerness of yours to seize the opportunity to get into it. That makes you different from others. Employers can be easily convinced and touched with the fact that you really want this chance to help them by no means. There you got it.

It seems that if you have the aforementioned qualifications, you can undoubtedly get employed. But there is one thing I bet not many of the interviewees will bear in mind. It can be effortlessly neglected, yet it is indispensable – the attitude, the attitude from the bottom of your heart. You must attach utmost importance to this
job interview. Value it like it is the one and only one opportunity to show off, but, at the same time, don’t believe you will definitely be employed, Cultivate the passion and humbleness in your heart, and everything will be just fine, be it manner of other preparations, because you take it as a matter of consequence, and you are going to show your best.

As a student helper at Careers Centre, I sincerely hope every one of you can grab a brighter future. With the above tips, I am sure you will be able to present yourself in the best possible way. Don’t forget that your destiny is in your hands. Waiting for luck to knock on your door is, without any doubt, standing to lose.
Teenage Drug Abuse
Caleb Chan    6E

Dear Editor,

As a regular reader of your column, I am writing to voice my opinion on the issue of teenage drug abuse in Hong Kong. Adolescent drug over dosage has long been a headache to both the desperate parents and the society, though, the number of drug abusers under the age of nineteen is on an alarming surge. Why is it so severe and why is the situation deteriorating? What should we do to rectify this collective nightmare?

Recent statistics show that the overall number of drug addicts is on the rise while, deplorably, the number of young users is mounting dramatically. At a tender age, a lot of teenagers find it difficult to deal with the temptation of drugs. This situation may pose a great menace to our society and the teenagers themselves.

Undoubtedly, drug abuse contributes to the surging number of psychiatric patients. The former teenage drug user in the government anti-drug TV commercial says, “At the very first time I took illegal drugs like heroin, I felt high temporarily and it did not affect me neither psychologically nor physically. However, the nightmare fell on me on subsequent drug uses. First of all, I had a frequent urge to urinate. I needed to urinate every 15 minutes. It was by no means the end. My vision and hearing were impaired.” No one is immune to health risks, not to mention the people who are obsessed with illicit drugs.

In concord with health aggravation, drug abuse also adds fuel to the conflicts in various interpersonal relationships. A social worker stated in the newspaper that the arguments invoked by drug-related problems between relatives, if not friends, were ubiquitous.
Eastern parents are often quite strict to their children. They often have unrealistically high expectations for their kids. Once they notice their beloved ones are preoccupied with drugs, they are heart-broken and fierce argument or harsh punishment is often the means they would resort to. The relationship between them may turn sour or even fall apart. On the other hand, drug abuse may damage friendship too. Good friends may persuade the young addicts to quit their drug habits. Yet, it is quite often the case that the young addicts are so infatuated with drugs that they would turn a deaf ear to their confidants, hampering their relationships.

In fact, drug abuse is in no way an individual matter. It also constitutes a threat to our community. The most prevalent and flagrant one is the commission of drug-affiliated crimes. Police reports reveal that more than half of the juvenile crime is related to drugs such as compensated dating, burglary and common assault. Lamentable yet true that once hooked, drug addicts may resort to crime to fund their drug habits. To make things worse, most of the crimes like illicit cross-border trafficking are controlled by triad gangs. In other words, they are contributing to the expansion of the triad groups, which will definitely exacerbate the problem of teenage drug abuse.

In light of the problems stated above, teenage drug abuse deserves our full attention. We should terminate the culprit with our collective endeavour so as to bail over future mainstays out the dreadful predicament.

Inculcating students with correct values and anti-drug messages is of pivotal importance. The school can make use of assemblies to educate students on the devastating consequences of drug-addiction and teach them not to feel pessimistic towards life, whatever adversities they confront. With an optimistic attitude, they will make the most of their lives. Under no circumstances will they buckle to peer pressure
nor will they take drugs despite the mammoth temptation.

In tandem with education, the government should launch a large scale anti-drug campaign to alert the public to the adverse effects of drug abuse. Not only should the government utilize the mass media like the television and the radio to convey the message that abusing drugs is equivalent to committing a gradual but lethal suicide, it should also fund local youth organizations such as The Youth Space, which often holds activities that target at youngsters and cultivate correct attitude towards drugs in young minds. Only after we all put our heads together can the problem be eliminated.

On no account should we adopt a wait-and-see attitude and behold the plight with folded arms, nor should we leave youngsters to their own devices. It is time we took resolution and precautions to prevent this social time bomb from explosion.

Yours faithfully,
Chris Wong
Chris Wong
Advertising is Moulding the Youth into Materialistic Minds

Leo Li 6E

Advertising seems to be ubiquitous and has become an inevitable part of modern life. No matter where we are, we are always surrounded by advertisements, like the animations broadcast on TV, posters stuck on massive billboards or video clips on websites. The original use of advertisements is to tell the public about a product or a service in order to encourage people to buy or to use it. However, the objective of using advertisements has somehow been changed, therefore I agree that advertising has become too great a negative influence on young people.

It is no doubt that advertising can be very educational, especially those advertisements produced by the government about the disadvantages of some bad habits, for example, drug abuse, smoking, gambling or drink-driving. These bad habits are harmful to the people affected, or even their relatives and friends. Just like one of the advertisements which talks about the harmful effects of drug abuse, the slogan in the advertisement conveys a clear message, “Say no to drugs”, and the advertisement lists the fatal effects clearly. Therefore, teenagers can be educated by the advertisements.

However, there is another side of the coin when advertisers have abused advertisements. Identical advertisements are played on TV repeatedly each day, and the same posters can be seen in many places, thus teenagers will be unconsciously influenced by those advertisements as they will instill some wrong values into the youngsters. For instance, some advertisements promoting slimming products disseminate the misconception that being slim equals to beauty, or outer appearance is more important than inner beauty. Advertisers deliberately invite some famous artists
to help them promote the products, so teenagers may learn wrong values as they naively want to imitate their idols.

Besides, advertising encourages consumerism and materialism making people think that owning a famous brand product is a symbol of fame. Under the influence of advertisements, people will think luxurious products are indispensable, and they soon become slaves of materialism. Advertisers go to great lengths to boost their sales; therefore they persuade consumers to buy commodities they do not really need, like the iPhone. Actually, one may just want to buy a phone which allows communication with others by talking or sending messages, however, he soon finds out that iPhone can do far more than that from the advertisements, including playing music, videos, or connecting to the Internet, and so on. Those extra functions may attract the customers to buy the product, which in turn encourage consumerism and tempt adolescents to buy products which are not necessary.

Doubtlessly, advertising is a useful tool to reach customers, also it is the most efficient and effective way to send messages to consumers. However, the government should monitor the content of the advertisements to minimize the bad impacts on the adolescents, as we can hardly escape from the world of advertisements.
I was on the MTR playing a game on my mobile phone when a huge man started quarreling with a tiny old lady in front of me. It drew my attention and forced my eyeballs to stay focused on the man.

“You should surrender yourself to the police, all evidence is pointing at you. You have no chance to escape,” the old lady persuaded. “But I did not commit the murder, I’m innocent. Trust me, grandma. I have to leave now,” the man whispered.

“This is the Hong Kong Police. Don’t move. Put your hands behind your head, you can’t escape this time, Tom Riddle,” I shouted and pulled my gun out at the same time. Tom started to run immediately and a chase began.

Tom sped through several compartments in a few seconds. I could barely catch up with him, but when the train was about to leave the station, he suddenly jumped onto the platform with the doors closed behind him. I could do nothing but to watch the suspect of a murder case walk free.

I am a detective, solving crime cases and seeking the truth is part of my job. Therefore, I returned to the crime scene and tried to figure out if Tom was telling the truth. If it was true, then who was the killer?

At the crime scene, I saw the victim, Peter Haward, lying in a puddle of blood with a bullet hole on his left chest, and his cause of death was excessive blood loss. We identified Tom’s and Peter’s fingerprints at the crime scene but we also found an anonymous fingerprint. Besides, we found the same gun shot residual on both the victim’s shirt and the weapon retrieved from a rubbish bin at the car park where the
body was found.

Moreover, we discovered Tom’s fingerprints on the murder weapon, which made me believe that Tom had killed Peter, but I had to collect Tom’s clothes in order to prove my assumption accurate.

Yet, we were still investigating other evidence found at the crime scene. At last, we found the owner of the mysterious fingerprints – they belonged to a man called David Johnson. Therefore, we invited David to come to the police station to help our investigation.

“I’m a friend of Peter’s. I had a drink with him that day and we went to the car park. I must have left my fingerprints then,” David explained. After questioning David, we asked him to hand over the clothes he wore that day.

We did forensic tests on the clothes but we could not find any gun shot residual on the shirt. However, we did identify a small amount of gun shot residual in the inner corner of the right sleeve of the shirt. An order to arrest David Johnson was then sent to all police stations immediately.

Meanwhile, David was planning to leave Hong Kong. A video captured by a traffic camera showed that David was on the way to the airport. I instantly asked my colleagues to set up roadblocks so as to stop David before he could leave.

“Stop your car, David, or I’ll shoot,” I warned. David did not stop, instead he tried to run over our cordon. He made a few sharp turns and passed through the roadblock. “BANG! BANG! We shot the car aiming to break the tires to halt him. Unfortunately, it did not work and the car was heading to the airport at full speed.
I contacted the airport police and asked them to watch out and arrest David immediately if they saw him. Then, I drove to the airport. By the time I arrived at the airport, David had already been under siege. He was grabbing an old lady as a hostage. I recognized the old lady who was Tom’s grandmother.

“Drop your weapon or I’ll kill this woman,” David threatened and pointed a knife at the woman’s neck. Some police officers dropped their guns and kicked them away. Simultaneously, one officer tiptoed to David’s back, shot his leg and handcuffed him in a split second.

After that, we took David to the police station and started the interrogation. “We found gun shot residual on your clothes, and the sample matched the residual we found at the crime scene. You’d better provide a logical explanation or I’m sure you’ll spend the rest of your life behind bars,” I remarked.

“I’ll tell you what happened that day. “Peter called me and threatened that if I did not return the money I borrowed on time, he would hurt my family. We went to the car park together and I noticed an abandoned gun in the rubbish bin, so I picked it up and hid it inside my pocket. When we were alone in the deserted car park, I put on gloves and pulled the gun out. I begged him to give me more time but he refused, so I shot him. Then, I threw the gun back into the rubbish bin and left the scene. I did not mean to kill him. I’m sorry,” he sobbed.

“You are under arrest for the murder of Peter Haward,” I said. Then, I handcuffed him and left the room. After that, I paid Tom’s grandmother a visit. I told her the truth of the murder case and she was delighted to know the truth. She called Tom immediately to share the good news and I turned around and left the room.

Freedom and happiness are priceless. We should treasure them always.
Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Just now, while you were taking the MTR or a taxi to get here, what did you do? Did you take a video of any funny scenes and upload it to Youtube? Did you check out your Facebook and update your location? Or did you refresh your blog with some posts? If you have 3 yeses to the above, no, even if you have only 1, we will hire you. Yes, you got it right. I said ‘we’, not ‘I’, and we are the new media.

Today we talk about the power and responsibility of the media. You may have a question, “we are discussing the media like newspapers, magazines, radio and television. What is the new media? And how is it related to our topic?” Of course, those media I’ve mentioned is the mainstream. But don’t overlook the new media – the Internet, which is rising sharply and, seemingly, will override the existing ones. Even Cambridge Dictionary gives it a definition: the new media is the service that provides information or entertainment using computers or the Internet. What is it exactly? Youtube, Facebook, blogs, and anything you can release information. The new media is something that can better the world, and can destroy it at the same time. With it, every single one of us here can change the world.

The power of the new media is strong beyond belief. In recent years, most cases of food scandal in China were uncovered by netizens, which then circulated through the Internet across the world. Meat with industrial additives, spoiled chicken in packages, fake dairy products, and many which are detrimental to health are disclosed by anonymous informants on the Internet. With a post, we can denounce those malicious merchants and warn the public of the problematic food. With a picture, we can release a piece of solid evidence of the criminal act and stir the crowd to urge prosecutions. With a ‘like’ and a ‘dislike’, we can set up the model of a responsible corporation with quality products and condemn those who do not follow. The new me-
dia vests anyone of us the power to supervise the market, fight for our own rights, and change the world.

It does not only allow us to monitor the world; the new media also allow us to better the world. On the 27th March every year, there is always a little notice on my Facebook reminding me of the Earth Hour event. To switch off the lights for an hour doesn’t sound a big deal; but with hundreds of millions of people switching off their lights, it saves the planet hundreds of million hours. Even though it’s only a one-day event, we cannot deny the power of the Internet, which helps millions of us to cohere. The might of one may be weak, but the might of millions can better the planet. The call-up of the new media can summon the positive power from people at every corner and better the world. This is the power of the new media.

Everyone is the new media; everyone can be as powerful as that. But with irresponsible use, the new media can turn the world upside down.

Has anyone of you here heard of internet vigilantism? Internet vigilantism is the phenomenon of groups of people taking action through the Internet to prevent crime, or to catch and punish someone who has committed a crime in an unofficial way. This sounds positive. But by some irresponsible users, it becomes public shaming on the Internet. One of the notable examples is the case of the ‘Dog Poop Girl’. In 2005, bloggers in South Korea targeted an undergraduate who refused to clean up after her dog had defecated on the floor of a Seoul subway car, labeling her "Dog Poop Girl". Another commuter had taken a photograph of the undergraduate and her dog, and posted it on a popular Korean website. Within days, she had been identified by the internet vigilantes, and much of her personal information was exposed on the World Wide Web in an attempt to punish her for the offence. The story received mainstream attention when it was widely reported in South Korean media. The public humiliation put undue pressure on the girl and her family; eventually, it led the undergraduate to
quit university. Yes, the behaviour of the girl is morally wrong, but thousands of million insults do not seem to be correct either. Those offensive and threatening words, some of which are even not related to the case, can be regarded as libel and intimidation. But of upmost importance is that the life of the girl and her family has been seriously interfered with the overwhelming news reports nationwide. The new media has destroyed her life, and it can destroy the life of us as well, with the irresponsible use of some netizens.

The irresponsible use of the new media can in fact destroy the world. Once during the SARS outbreak, a teenager claimed that Hong Kong had become an infected area on the Internet, which immediately stirred the crowd to agitation. Although that was a fake message, it had already induced social instability. How about a message asserting that aliens are invading the world? If no one believes it, how about a thousand messages? It can easily cause a world of people to be panic, triggering unnecessary but extensive turmoil. The irresponsible use of the new media can turn the world into chaos.

The new media can better the world, but can also destroy the world. It all depends on our use. Everyone is the new media; everyone has that great power. We need you, every one of you, to be a responsible netizen so as to ensure that the new media is doing good to our world. That’s why, we need to hire you. Hire you to be a responsible user of the Internet. The world is in our hands.

Thank you.
It is no exaggeration to say that the world is controlled by media nowadays. In the age of information explosion, what would people do when they wake up? Watching news reports on TV, reading newspaper, listening to the radio or checking emails and the news feed? No matter what it is, it is related to the media. One of the problems with the popularity of media is that with the aim to entertain their readers, media malpractice has become more rampant. With the unprecedented popularity, media malpractice has a profound effect on our lives.

But let us go back to the root: What is media ethics? An introduction video to media ethics on YouTube says, “Journalists should seek the truth and report it, minimize harm done to the subjects, act independently and be accountable to readers and viewers.” It seems that the media is reliable and upstanding. How did media malpractice come to be? Well, it all goes back to readers’ preferences and political influences.

In the face of the era of information explosion, people often opt for media that can meet their visual needs and satisfy their curiosity. In a bid to meet consumers’ demands, certain media groups, like Apple Daily, “infotains” news. They even use animation to tell news stories. Can you imagine an animated bird reporting the news? How accountable would a bird-told story be? I hate to say that, but it is quite entertaining.

The media are also trying to feed people’s stomachs of curiosity. The paparazzi even intrude the celebrities’ privacy to the extreme that they even scratch every inch of their carpet to find “interesting news” for the gossip-hungry readers. Well, they may
have fulfilled their role in investigating and gathering information thoroughly but they are not paying respect to celebrities’ basic human rights. The paparazzi are not treating celebrities as human beings!

The situation goes even worse in the Middle East. With regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, most Americans sympathized with the Israelis, while few sympathized with the Palestinians. But in fact, Palestinians’ are living in a much more hostile situation than the Israelis! Many Palestinians did not receive appropriate medical treatment because they were not allowed to pass through certain checkpoints on their way to the hospital. Even ambulances are also not allowed to cross the border. Yet the Israelis are enjoying the U.S.’s subsidies. These war crimes are committed by the Americans beloved U.S. Army. But the Americans know nothing about the crimes. Thanks to the American media. How do they do it? Simple: they distort the truth. The ABC says that Israelis are in need because “the evil Palestinians” occupied their land. But they never mention the Palestinians’ situation. That’s how prejudice takes root in Americans’ minds and it rationalizes the act of sending troops to Israel. People are misled by the media.

It’s time we restored the credibility and prestige of media.

That starts with making personal commitment to not buying or reading the production or published products of any irresponsible media firms. Yes, it takes a bit of fortitude not to put our nose into others’ business, but who would rather pay attention to certain strangers’ romantic relationships than issues related to their jobs, lives and deaths? We can deal with it.

There are many more things we can do to solve the problem. Lobby your city officials to put a ban on sensational and exaggerated press. Take action now.
The journalists can take the next step – set up a press council with the power to penalize media organisations and introduce media ethics legislation. There will then be motivation for the media to exercise self-criticism, look into the problem of ethics in the industry and improve their professional standards. The council can monitor and deter the media from resorting to immoral means when gathering information.

The unethical media can no longer poison our mind! We’re proud to grab an SCMP or a Ming Pao and we feel ashamed for reading Sharp Daily. We can choose useful and healthy information and say no to unethical media practice.
Good morning everybody. How will you comment on the local media practice in recent years, well, in only one word? Which word appears in your mind? Is it the word that starts with an ‘I’? Like, say, independent, impartial, or, injustice? What about the coined term “infotained” for infotainment, the combination of information and entertainment?

The poll of a survey of 560 respondents shows that media ethics were worse than a year ago, with newspapers having a reputation more notorious than that of television and magazines, and there is general dissatisfaction with the local media practice among the public. And you may ask, ‘Why?’

Well, the public thought the answer to this question was obvious. Sharp Daily, a free newspaper published by the Next media group, is the best example to illustrate the problem. A heated debate has been sparked off among the public over the ethical standards of Sharp Daily in recent months. You may wonder how ‘sharp’ the newspaper is. Is it ‘sharp’ in terms of its credibility? Of course not! Otherwise, controversy would not be provoked. Is it sharp in its images and fonts? Sometimes, sometimes not, I don’t know, but they are not the major cause for concern. Actually, what make it ‘sharp’ are its sexual content and its over-exaggerated reports.

The problem starts here with the low public image of media. The public are concerned over sensational and disgusting pictures shown by some newspapers. They are also dissatisfied with unethical news coverage which features too much sex, over-exaggeration and ‘infotainment’.
I have come across a video on Youtube which is about the changing media standards, and the code of ethics of media. According to the video, journalists should seek truth and report it, be independent and accountable to the viewers and readers, and minimize harm done to the subjects. In short, media should be balanced, unbiased, righteous, and its duty is to expose social injustices. Nevertheless, media freedom has already been abused by some of the media practitioners, aggravating the problem of local media malpractice.

In fact, the privacy intrusion of celebrities has become a cause for concern. The media reports celebrities’ privacy in extraordinary great details. ‘It is totally unbearable. The paparazzi have intruded our privacy!’ said artist, Bosco Wong, who was photographed walking naked at home. The photos were published without his permission. The paparazzi nowadays have become more like stalkers and have posed a menace to the celebrities’ privacy and even safety. Originally, media’s duty is to unveil social injustices, but when did it become a tool to intrude the privacy of celebrities? It is a disappointing “evolution”.

In return for good circulation and profit making, media allow themselves to be driven all the way by markets. It features too much sex, over exaggeration, infotainment, and even privacy intrusion in their reports. Yes, it takes a great effort for us to rectify this long established practice, but I think we can handle it. How? By M.E.D.I.A, ‘media’!

That starts with ‘M’, monitor. The government should set up a flexible centralized mechanism to monitor any misconduct of the media. Also, as the former Chief Secretary for Administration, Anson Chan, has more than once called on the media to set up an effective mechanism, we can see that a mechanism to monitor the media is necessary.
Then, take the next step—‘E’, education. Faced with increasing sensationalism in media, media education lessons can help promote correct values and ethics among students and prevent youngsters from absorbing everything the media conveys to them like a sponge.

Better still, ‘D’, demand. Those sensational and exaggerated articles will only exist when there is a market. If there is no demand, those publications will no longer exist. In this sense, the public is the culprit of declining newspaper ethics.

Furthermore, ‘I’, intervene. Although intervention of the government will be reprimanded as gagging press freedom, when media malpractice has gone out of control, appropriate intervention is acceptable. However, this should be the last resort.

And yet, the last, ‘A’, action! Actions speak louder than Words!

There are many more things we can do to solve the problem. The good news is: it’s already started, the society has reached a consensus to restore the declining media ethics. ‘Rome was not built in one day’, we, the readers and viewers, must lobby for improvements on media ethics. Remember, M.E.D.I.A, ‘media’!

This is the end of my presentation, thank you!
After watching the video entitled “Media Ethics”, I have noticed that currently a heated debate has been sparked off over the declining media ethics. Undoubtedly, media cannot evade the responsibility of playing a significant role in monitoring and exposing social injustice. But do you think all of the media groups, including newspapers, televisions or magazines, have fulfilled these responsibilities? The answer to the question is obvious.

It is generally felt that the media is no longer objective. A poll of survey shows that over 30% of respondents thought that some of the newspapers such as Apple Daily and Oriental Daily often over-exaggerate facts, and some of the magazines such as Next magazine and Eastweek are severely intruding public figures’ privacy.

The problem starts here: Media should seek truth and report it honestly, fairly and courageously, and they should act independently, free from the influence of any authorities. But nowadays, most of the media has no longer put unveiling the injustice in the society in top priority, thanks to self-censorship. The Chairperson of Hong Kong Journalists’ Association Mak Yin Ting said, “Seemingly, journalists in Hong Kong are enjoying unfettered press freedom, but actually, they don’t.” Most of the media companies would twist the truth and favor their investors or sponsors or the government, to make more profit. In June, a magazine, Esquire, fired a reporter who wrote an article about Tiananmen Square Protests of 1989. It is an apparent sign of gagging press freedom.

Well, imagine your house is surrounded by paparazzi and they are watching you around the clock. I believe none of you can accept this unbearable supervision. A few
months ago, a well-known actor, Bosco Wong, was snapshotted by the paparazzi while he was unclothed at home and the photos were posted on the cover of Sudden Weekly. “Our personal lives at home are our own business, not something of public interest,” he said. Home is supposed to be a private place where you can do whatever you want to, but now, it is no longer safe for celebrities. To boost circulation, media tends to report incidents or subjects that the general public is interested in, no matter they are important or not.

It is time we rebuilt media ethics.

That start with restoring the credibility of the media. The media is currently suffering a low public image, they should form a self-regulating body to assure the readers, listeners and the viewers that the media has decided to reform and practise self-regulation.

If the above method does not work, the government may have to legislate against violation of media ethics but it will to a certain extent restrain press freedom, which is the last thing you and I and all the Hong Kongers want to see. If you want to help to raise press ethical standards, say no to the over-exaggerating magazines and newspaper.

As the film said, it is a core problem to weigh between public morals and the role of journalism, and the relationship between media and the politics. So I think both you and I agree that it is always arduous to stike a balance between public’s right to know, celebrities’ right to privacy and paparazzi’s right to report. But this is not the only way out. Take it easy. We can handle it. Thank you.
Chaos on the MTR
Andrew Mok    6F

I was on the MTR playing a game on my mobile phone when a huge man started quarreling with a tiny old lady standing in front of me. What’s so urgent that they must wrangle on the MTR? Do they realize that they are disturbing others? Notwithstanding playing on my mobile phone and wearing earphones, I could not help glaring at them. However, since I was not interested in their conflict, I started playing on my mobile phone again.

“Why do you lie to me?” the tiny old lady demanded.

“Mother, if you had not restricted me so much, I would not have deceived you.”

The man and the old lady kept arguing in front of me and unwillingly, I overheard all their conversation with the background music of my favourite pop songs from my earphones. Their argument was so annoying that my wrath was approaching the point of explosion. I told myself I should calm down as wrangling is never the best way to deal with a problem, as the two people had continuously shown me. However, witnessing such a brawl in my vicinity, I could not help expressing my feelings to restore a quiet environment.

“Excuse me, …” Hardly had I finished my sentence when another voice cut in.

“Shut up you stupid or I’ll shoot you!” a man brandishing a gun growled.

The passengers in the train compartment became hysterical, searching for somewhere to hide and escape. The bickering man and the lady did not produce any
sound anymore as they raised their hands. At this moment, I was incredibly calm thinking of possible ways to defuse the crisis.

The man who was holding the gun had long curly hair and was wearing blue glasses. But the weirdest thing that attracted my attention was his broken nose. Seeing his gun and his malicious-looking face, it was simply facile to anticipate that he might be a criminal with his rage sparked off by the noisy argument. No one knew how we could subdue the man and none of the commuters dared take any reckless actions against him.

“The next station is Quarry Bay…”

There was a split second of quietness and peace. Including the criminal, all of us were pondering what would happen when we arrived at Quarry Bay. The criminal suddenly rushed to another compartment. As quick as a spark, I jumped to his back trying to pin him on the ground. Meanwhile, the train doors opened. Almost ten policemen got on and the criminal was captured red-handed.

I was delighted to have survived the incident. Everyone in the compartment must have shared the same feeling, especially the man and the old lady. Why do unfortunate things always happen on me? I just hope that I will never encounter similar nerve-racking incidents again.
“You surely want to try?” The woman with a black veil, whom I met in a little fortune-telling shop in Egypt, asked me in her husky voice. “No matter what consequences you may face?” “Yes, please!” I said eagerly, “I love my boyfriend very much, and I hope to know more about what he needs to make him happier.” “Bravo, my dear. The ability of mind reading...people are starving for it!” She glanced at me with her mysterious beautiful eyes, stirring the bright purple liquid in the copper crucible. “But you know, I have seen too many of them drinking it, and they...Oh, it’s ready.” The woman poured the liquid into a small glass bottle. I closed my eyes tightly and let the surprisingly cold liquid slide down my throat. “Good luck, my dear. The ability will only last for a day.” I ‘heard’ what she said, as she did not move her mouth.

I met my boyfriend in a bar nearby. He was chatting with some people. I hesitated, and then walked to him with a cheerful smile. “Hey, honey, you’ve got some local friends?” I put my hand on his shoulder. “Hi, sweetheart,” he said, “Just an easy chat. Ah...It’s eight now. Where would you want to eat?” But I heard another lower voice from him: “Gosh, this annoying woman has come again. Why can’t she just keep herself away from me? I wish I could get rid of her as fast as possible!” My smile froze. “W-W-What?” I murmured in a trembling voice. If that was really what he thought, it would tear me into thousands of pieces. “What happened, dear? Are you alright?” he asked, and afterwards I heard that lower voice again: “She is weird! Stop acting like an idiot!” “Nothing...Let’s go to that barbecue house we went to last night.” I calmed down, trying to act as if nothing happened.

We sat face to face in the little cramped restaurant. The air was stuffy and hot, filled with a mixed scent of barbecue food and sweat. People were talking loudly in
Arabic. I knew I looked terrible, as I could never disguise my mood. I loved my boyfriend so much that I did not want to lose him even when I discovered how he really felt towards me. He was playing with his phone absent-mindedly, and I heard the lower voice: “She looks terrible. Maybe she is gonna break up with me. Or, should I tell her I can’t bear her anymore? No, before I find a new job or a new girl, I still have to rely on this rich stupid woman... She is really useful when I ask for money...” “Enough!” I shouted. I could not control myself anymore. “You said you loved me! You scurvy cheater!” “What? What are you talking about, my honey? I love you, I really do! Oh, it must be too hot here...” he explained. “No. I will trust you no more. I know everything! Go get your girl somewhere else!” I cried. He shrugged, “I don’t know what you are talking about, but... It’s your freedom to leave me.” He stood up, went out of the restaurant, and I kept crying and crying hard until midnight fell.

The woman with a black veil smiled, peering at the crystal ball in front of her. “Ahh, the 42nd miserable girl,” she thought, “I wondered if they felt as painful as I did when he left me. Anyway, having invented this medicine, I am sure I am no longer the only one who would feel the pain!”
Dear Mr. Yamazaki,

I am writing to express my opinions on the brutal dolphin slaughter in Japan. Capturing dolphins, selecting them and selling them to make profits has long been a tradition in Taiji, and it's understandable that this is the dominant income of the vast majority of fishermen. However, when it results in a massive slaughter of unselected dolphins, I see no reasons why this slaughter is legitimate and should be tolerated.

Dolphins are marine mammals, and they are meant to be living freely in the ocean. Capturing them and forcing them to amaze the crowd by performing various acrobatics in theme parks is already an extremely inhumane selfish act. And when you are killing dolphins and depriving their rights to live just simply because they aren’t suitable for human to make money and take advantage of, what is the difference between you and a beast? Perhaps you are only a beast in disguise. Therefore, I’m urging the Japanese government to implement strict polices to protect living creatures in the world.

Let’s put the moral consideration aside, killing dolphins and eating dolphins’ meat would have detrimental effects on the ecology and people in Japan. In the ecological aspect, massive massacre of dolphins will cause a drastic decrease in dolphin numbers in Japan’s oceans. In fact, dolphins are friends of us whom we often gain benefit from. For instance, dolphins will fight off the sharks when swimmers are being chased by sharks, and dolphins will guide a lost ship back to places where sailors can locate themselves. But most importantly, dolphins help maintain a normal number of fish in the ocean and hence the balance of the ecosystem. When the number of dolphins decreases, there’ll be an increase in fishes and other kinds of sea creatures.
whose quantities are originally controlled and regulated by dolphins. Decrease in dolphins’ number will unleash the possible negative effects on the food chain and disturb the marine ecology.

Killing dolphins for dolphins’ meat will also deteriorate the health of people who often consume dolphins’ meat. Although it’s well known that there’s high content of mercury in dolphins’ meat, some irresponsible businessmen still mix dolphins’ meat into some food product or even sell dolphins’ meat by claiming the meat as ‘whales’ meat’. Therefore, people are consuming mercury unconsciously every day, and when the mercury gradually accumulates in people’s bodies, one day the mercury level will be high enough to cause mercury poisoning. People who suffer from the disease will completely lose the ability to work and eventually die. This lowers the labor force in the society and may have serious adverse impacts on Japan’s economy and society.

Frankly speaking, after the disclosure of dolphin slaughtering in Taiji in the documentary – The Cove, the international image of the Japanese government has been ruined. The Japanese government has lost its credibility and integrity when it’s found that the government has been trying hard to hide the truth of slaughter of dolphins in Taiji from the world. However, until now, nothing much has been done by the government to improve the current situation. Therefore, if the Japanese government still wants to be respected and have a say in international affairs, it should do something to compensate for its wrong doings to show its determination towards tackling the slaughter of dolphins in Taiji.

First of all, the government itself shouldn’t tolerate the current situation and allow a few to benefit while depriving others’ rights. It should implement strict regulations and laws to deter irresponsible businessmen from selling dolphin meat. It can also carry out a massive food certification scheme to test if any products in the
supermarket contain dolphin meat. But most importantly, the government should forbid
the slaughter of unselected dolphins and stipulate that all unselected dolphins must be
returned to the ocean safely. Quota period for dolphin capturing should also be set up
in order to prevent a drastic decrease in dolphins’ number in the ocean.

To conclude, the slaughter of dolphins is totally unacceptable and we are
calling a halt to it. Immediate actions must be taken in order to save your nation and
the world. Stop it or Japan will be blamed for its brutal murder and dictatorship of
lives.

Yours sincerely

Chris Wong
Dear Mr. Yamazaki,

The miserable screams, the painful gasps and the breath-taking scenes of bloody water are all undeniable evidence of cruel, cold-hearted dolphin slaughter. The ruthless act has not only exploited the lives of the dolphin, but also stained the name of Japan and destroyed people’s health, bringing about an unpredictable dire effect on Japan as a whole. We definitely need to take action immediately to save the innocent creatures, to save Japan. Now is the time.

How can such behaviour be tolerated? Dolphins are murdered for their flesh, merely for humans’ pleasure and self-satisfaction; the harmless creatures are stabbed to death just out of people’s selfish purpose to minimize the cost of capturing whales and replace dolphins with whales to cater for their material enjoyment. The superficial fulfillment of material needs can never compensate for the sin of bringing the alive-and-kicking creatures, our closest friend, to death. Dolphins, our precious friend from the nature, have contributed to humans by performing excellent tricks and bringing joy to all walks of life. At the same time, they are admired for saving humans from danger, from the attacks from sharks and from the threats of flood. How can we requite our friends, our heroes with such sufferings? Where are humanity and morality when we are only concerned about our own interests selfishly?

Not only do the dolphins themselves suffer in the inhumane act, but also the ignorant citizens who are unaware of having eaten the rather poisonous dolphin meat. Deformed foetus and mentally retarded offspring because of mercury poisoning seemed to be the retaliation of the dolphins, as their silent revenge on human. Who will eventually suffer in the dolphin slaughter? It is so ironic that while people intend to kill
dolphins for greater profit, they have actually put their lives at risk; they are indeed actually killing themselves. Looking ahead, the economy will eventually collapse due to the deficiency in labour; the medical staff will face a tremendous burden; the fishermen can gain nothing but ill health and the dirty money, together with the never-vanishing guilt deep inside their hearts. The whole society will then fall apart.

To add fuel to the fire, the cruel act has, without doubt, tarnished the nation’s reputation, staining the name of the country. Despite the regulations on protecting our friends, dolphins, Japan, as a member of the Dolphin Protections Association has violated the rules itself by turning a blind eye to the dolphin slaughter. Such irresponsible and hard-hearted act of our nation and the failure in meeting the pledge for saving the dolphins have undoubtedly left our nation’s name stained. The impression of irresponsibility and ruthlessness will be crowned on our nation forever. No one would like to respect such irresponsible country anymore, would they? This act has definitely hindered the local economic development as well as adversely affected the international image.

Something has to be done; we, the local Japanese, definitely need you to guide us to save the dolphins, save the ill people and save the entire Japan.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Wong
A Halt to the Cruelty

Kiki Ng 6F

Dear Mr. Yamazaki,

How time flies like an arrow. It has been a month since your appointment as the Prime Minister of Japan, and everyone knows that you are working around the clock every day to deal with the mess brought about by the sorrowful Tohoku earthquake and tsunami that took place half a year before in April 2011.

The disappearance, injury and death of around 25,000 innocent citizens of your country are to be mourned. However, while natural disasters, the main reason of these casualties, are unavoidable, one should brook no concession on stopping man-made calamities. In fact, an estimate of around 25,000 dolphins has been slaughtered at your country every year, yet despite the rising criticism, no actions have ever been taken by your predecessors.

Standing up and being selected by your people amid this woeful and tough crisis after the Earthquake, there is no doubt that you have the milk of human kindness in addition to not being afraid of any difficulties. You must well understand that lives are invaluable for all animal kinds and there should not be discrimination against dolphins, especially when they are regarded as one of Earth’s most intelligent animals. However, the truth is that dolphin hunting still takes place on a large scale in Taiji, a town of your country which is gradually getting more notorious. Moreover, numerous eyewitnesses have reported brutal killings of dolphins by slitting their throats, which causes them to suffer unbearable pain along their roads towards death. Such inhuman acts are to be stopped without doubt.

For sure, it is easier said than done in face of the prevalence of such slaughters
in the town as a local culture. However, to be in your citizens’ shoes, one would not wish to worry more about food safety after the frightening humor of radiation-polluted food due to the explosion of nuclear plants in the tsunami, yet the high levels of toxic mercury, cadmium, the pesticide DDT and organic contaminants in dolphin meat are indeed undeniable. Most sarcastically, while being labeled as premium whale meat, it has posed formidable threat to the health of ignorant citizens, most of whom regard dolphins as friends of human-beings. Such a teeth-chattering fact has been suppressed for too long that it could not stand for silence anymore, which could be shown by the growing number of protests and demonstrations worldwide.

In fact, ever since the premiere of the rewarding documentary ‘The Cove’, the establishment of green groups asking for a halt to dolphin hunting has been unremitting and millions and billions of emails with photos of stunning scenes of dolphin slaughters have been crazily forwarded in the world of Internet. This has been a black dot on your country’s reputation. Following the beaten track and treading in one’s footsteps are not what your citizens who want to make a change would like to see.

The dolphin hunting tradition is ill habits gathered by unseen degrees. To change the conservative mindset of the villagers of the town, who wish to obtain immense profits of dolphin meat by trading in the market must be prohibited with the help of the government. It is better late than never. Fortune favours the brave and the flesh is never weak when the spirit is willing.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Wong
Freedom of the media is the foundation stone of a democratic country. However, some media abuse this freedom, such as the Sharp Daily posting seductive sexy pictures of teenage models and the ATV news mistakenly reporting the death of Jian Zi Ren. These events make the public think twice of whether freedom of the media should be restricted. I strongly disagree that the freedom of the media be restricted.

The media serve a lot of functions. One of the most important functions of the media is to monitor the government. The press can criticize government policies and monitor ethics of the main officials to see whether they have secret meetings or have received bribes from the business sector, which may result in biased policies and collusion. This can protect the public from ineffective governance and make sure government policies are impartial for the benefits of citizens.

The second reason why freedom of the media should not be restricted is for the competitiveness of Hong Kong. Hong Kong scored 10.75 in 2010’s Press Freedom Index, ranking 34th in 178 countries. It indicates that the Hong Kong government has allowed a lot of freedom to the media and the city has been famous for its freedom of speech and the media. Compared with other Asian countries such as China and Taiwan, Hong Kong is more popular among foreign companies because of its freedom. If freedom of the media is restricted, it may adversely affect Hong Kong's economy and weaken our competitiveness.

One more reason that the freedom of media should be protected is that the media is the mouthpiece of the people. The media can attract public attention easily. Problems of public concern can be revealed easily. For example, the skyrocketing pro-
perty price in Hong Kong was disclosed by the media and therefore the government initiated the Home Ownership Scheme again. The media can also acknowledge the effectiveness of government policies. A well-known example is the Old Age Allowance. The elderly living in Guangdong province could not receive any money due to rigid restrictions on the days of residence. After the media have reported the issue, the government took action and relaxed the restriction. If the freedom of the media is restricted, the problems of the public can never be revealed and the elderly will be left impoverished.

To conclude, the freedom of the media should not be restricted due to their undiminished power of monitoring the government, helping the public to voice out and the most important thing – keeping Hong Kong a free place to make Hong Kong a highly competitive society. We should honour the freedom of the media.
Freedom of Expression – A Momentous Part of Democracy

Kevin Cheung 6F

With the advent of the computer and the new media, the influx of information has accelerated and increased exponentially. Beyond question, the mass media cast an important role. By exercising the rights of expression, the press help to spread news and information. Notwithstanding its strengths, the press can also be a double-edged sword, which may open the Pandora’s box and infringe people’s rights. Should freedom of expression be restricted? It remains an open question for discussion.

Conspicuously, some media abuse the freedom of expression. More often than not, they are the paparazzi. The paparazzi stop at nothing to boost their circulation. That being the case, they tend to pander to mass taste. Some may publish obscene texts and salacious pictures on the headlines, as appeared in the Sharp Daily; some may use scandals to hype up their magazines while some intrude into the celebrities’ privacy. For instance, the pop singers Twins are remarkable examples. In order to maximize profit, the reporters of Eastweek sneaked backstage and took candid photos when Guillian was getting changed. Though condemned by the public, Eastweek defended its unscrupulous behaviour with the notion of freedom of expression, which in this case has apparently degenerated into a tool to evade responsibility.

As aforementioned, though the freedom of expression may lead to dismal endings, still it is fundamental in Hong Kong for significant reasons.

It stands to reason that freedom of expression is the panacea for social development. There is a consensus among sociologists that freedom of expression is a momentous part of democracy. With such freedom, citizens dare condemn the faults of
the government and therefore are able to ensure that the ministers cannot shirk responsibilities and would be held accountable all the time.

In addition, the mass media act as the flag bearer and watchdog helping citizens to voice out. By unveiling the truth, journalists help citizens to keep abreast of social happenings. In an ideal situation without censorship, the press report the fact and the mass can express their feelings, or even lash the government in the newspapers. At the same time, the government has no choice but to take action to gratify the dissidents. It is a typical case showing how important freedom to expression is.

What is more important is the function of sustaining economic development. Hong Kong is recognized in the territory to have possessed unparalleled freedom of expression. As a result, international enterprises are willing to invest in the city due to the free flow of information. The mass media report the truth and keep the entrepreneurs abreast of the social happenings so that they can respond in no time and make swift business decisions.

I was caught in a dilemma when considering if the freedom of the media should be restricted. My answer is ‘yes’, but only to a small extent. Indubitably, freedom of expression is beneficial to our democratic city provided that it is not abused. That being the case, it should not be restricted.
Big Business is Not Only about Making Money

Hannah Shum 7A

It is widely perceived that every businessman aims at attaining wealth maximization, especially in the money-minded financial hub—Hong Kong. Yet, all the prominent local-based enterprises such as Cathay Pacific, Maxim’s and Esprit are actually established and consolidated by the industry of their employees, the consumption of the public and the ample resources from our mother nature. Thus, it is tycoons’ responsibility to repay these benefactors while expanding their business kingdom.

To become a notable company, concerted effort is cardinal. Without employees’ commitment, none of an integral firm can be formed and flourish. However, in a bid to maximize the revenue or in another word, minimize the costs, employers tend to sacrifice employees’ remunerations and welfare. For example, company owners usually request their staff to work overtime, like until 10 pm but without giving them extra pay. This act, in fact, is rather unscrupulous. The latest Community Business research on the state of work-life balance among employees in Hong Kong shows that 53% of employees regard flexible work arrangements indispensable. What’s more, 39% of them say they would consider leaving their current job for better work-life balance. Accordingly, employers should retain and reciprocate these scrupulous workers by arranging flexible working hours. For instance, permitting career breaks, unpaid or paid personal leave and sabbatical leaves can enable employees to have a chunk of time to do a course, travel or look after a sick family member. For the commonly-seen working mothers in Hong Kong, enterprise should allow them to work remotely or from home sometimes. This is the first responsibility an employer needs to shoulder other than making money.
For the sake of magnifying income, commodities must be of high quality and made of superior raw materials. Nevertheless, these valuable natural resources are being excessively exploited due to human’s greed and nearly come to extinction. For example, the global beverage giant Coca-Cola became entangled in a controversy over its water use at a bottling plant in India which resulted in a dramatic drop in the level of the region’s groundwater. For supply maintenance, Coca-Cola started a water-stewardship program under which water-flow data with predictions of population growth, economic development and climate change give the company an idea of the challenges its various plants can expect to face in the coming century. Obviously, disruption of raw material supply can give rise to cessation in the manufacturing progress. Consequently, protecting the environment is the only way to guarantee companies’ supply chains. Coca-Cola acted as a perfect example and its counterparts in Hong Kong, such as Vitasoy, should learn from it. Treasuring the environment should then be the second duty of an enterprise in addition to the pursuit of revenue.

After acquiring enough workers and successfully manufacturing products, it is the consumers who purchase those goods. Apparently, customers are the source of income of a company. Therefore, every merchant has the obligation to pay back the “debts” by taking the social responsibility. Being conscientious, for example, telling no lies in the advertisement and providing merchandise of quality, is only the rudiment. Entrepreneurs should step further. Recently, the Hong Kong government established the Community Care Fund. Under the plan, the government and the business community will each contribute HK$5 billion so as to help the underprivileged, ranging from ethnic minorities to disabled people, and promote a culture of social responsibility and philanthropy in our society. The fund will be able to provide swift and targeted support, including special medication, food supply and in-place elderly care, filling a void left by the current system. Better still, it will help create some opportunities for upward mobility, in particular the young. It’s high time the CEOs re-
quitied the society with the money they earned. Donating to the Community Care Fund is only one of the numerous ways to do so.

I am not to overlook the importance of making money since it is truly a huge incentive for both the entrepreneurs and the general staff to work tenaciously to gain profits. However, big business is not only about making money. There is something more valuable that a company should pursue. It is hoped that companies in Hong Kong can become less utilitarian but to be responsible to the lay public and the environment in the coming future.
Big Business is Not Only about Making Money

Jeannie Chan 7A

What springs to your mind immediately when you come across the names of big businesses such as New World Development, PCCW and the McDonald’s? Well, they earn a lot - the profits they make within a year is beyond our imagination. However, from my point of view, big business is not only about making money. Those well-off businessmen should be scrupulous and caring and shoulder some corporate social responsibility simultaneously.

To commence with, enterprises should take their employees’ needs into account apart from making profits. Those who exploit workers in a bid to earn more are unethical and selfish. Café de Coral, one of the Hong Kong’s most popular fast food restaurants, is one vivid example. In order to circumvent the newly-implemented minimum wage law and reduce labour cost, the restaurant discounted the workers’ rest days and meal breaks, being ignorant and indifferent to the arduous and toilsome life they lead. What the restaurant did has hit the headlines and sparked off grave concern and criticisms over the society. Why? It is because companies should have the responsibility and virtue to treat their works fairly and reasonably besides making money. They should never view employees as slaves and squeeze money out of them as they have also made contributions to the success of the company. Not only should companies pay their workers decently, good working conditions and encouraging incentives should be provided as well. Bonuses, subsidies, discounts on products and regular campaigns are some of the suggestions. From this, a warm employer-and-employee relationship can be formed and more importantly, when workers feel valued, their performance, productivity, staff loyalty and retention are better, which in turn benefits the companies’ reputation and development. All in all, big business is not only about making money. It should also uphold the codes of ethics,
practise the principle of righteousness and virtue by taking good care of the employees.

Paying attention to the employees’ needs is just rudimentary. What big business should focus on next is the lay public. Large companies are under obligation to reward the society. And most recently, government officials have launched the Community Care Fund, under which the wealthiest are asked to make donations and cover gaps in the existing safety net. Cheung Kong Holdings Limited, which is founded by Li Ka-shing, has already donated HK$5 billion to help the city’s underprivileged. It shows that big business with social responsibility is not only about making money, but also giving money to those in need. To pay back the society and help the vulnerable groups, big business also makes donations to different charities, such as Tung Wah Groups of Hospitals and Po Leung Kuk, by making sponsorships and cutting prices of its products directly. In addition to this, big businesses should also help promote healthy and positive messages. For example, MTR has promoted equal opportunity by providing wheelchair access for the disabled. Also, a number of companies in Hong Kong have launched a mentoring programme for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees to show respect and equality to sexual minorities. All these can arouse the society’s attention towards sensitive issues and help inculcate healthy and correct values into people’s minds. Therefore, big business can make great contributions to the society via different ways apart from making money.

Last but not least, big business should strive to protect the environment and reduce destruction while making money. Commercial activities always consume a lot of resources, such as electric power, paper and water, which causes unnecessary waste, showing that business is also one of the culprits of Hong Kong’s worsening pollution. As eco-awareness has been raised in Hong Kong this decade, big business should work on preservation of natural resources apart from making money. For example, China Light and Power Limited and Hong Kong Electric, two leading power companies in
Hong Kong, are developing wind power in Sai Kung and Lamma Island respectively. This shows that big business can be environmental friendly when making money. And a great number of companies have also participated in the Hong Kong Green Label Scheme to show a sense of environmental protection. And that is also a win-win situation as companies can reduce production cost and improve public image. Therefore, big business should also help protect the environment besides just making money.

Big business is not only about making money. It has also an obligation to act to benefit society at large. While companies are earning support and money from the society, they should have the sense of paying back, be it to employees, the public, or the world.
Hike Safe!

Jeannie Chan 7A

Hiking is a popular pastime and sport that is enjoyed by a multitude of Hong Kong people. Yet, recently, there have been several reports of accidents that have happened to people hiking on their own in remote areas. It shows that some potential accidents may occur if people do not pay adequate attention to safety measures and precautions. Let us now give all of you some advice on safety measures that you need to take into account when hiking, thus ensuring you a pleasant and safe hike!

To commence with, choosing a route which is suitable to your level is of utmost importance. For professional and veteran hikers, they have much experience in hiking and they may have much confidence in their hiking skills. It is acceptable for them to choose a route with some difficulties. Yet, for students, who are most likely just amateurs, you may only have some dilettante knowledge on hiking. It is unwise for inexperienced hikers to take uneven, bumpy and rugged routes as certain accidents may come about. Therefore, a majority of you should do adequate research on trails in Hong Kong to choose the most appropriate one to hike beforehand. In my opinion, the Maclehose Trail is a suitable and safe route for newcomers.

Apart from selecting a suitable route to hike, you should not forget to inform your parents and friends about your hiking destination and itinerary. Don’t think it is useless and unnecessary as they are the one who can bail you out if you encounter emergencies when hiking. You should give your hiking companies’ phone numbers to your parents as well for fear that they cannot reach you.

This leads to another paramount advice: never go hiking on your own! If you hike solitarily, nobody can give you a helping hand when you are in peril. Don’t have
overly high expectations of yourself. It is vital to have your friends’ company when hiking and it’s even better to have a hiking trainer accompanying your group of friends.

You should also pay heed to your clothing. No matter you are a male or a female, wearing a light-coloured and long-sleeved shirt and a pair of long trousers is recommended. For shoes, you had better wear a pair of sneakers which are designated for hiking. And you should remember to bring one more set of clothes and also a jacket in case of emergencies and overrun of duration.

Last but not least, there are a myriad of belongings that you need to take care of when hiking. Sufficient water and food such as chocolate bars should by no means be forgotten. If accidents occur, they are those that help you maintain your life. Apart from food and beverages, a personal first-aid kit including bandages, swabs and so on should be brought. You should also ensure that you have charged the batteries of your mobile phones so as to keep contact with your friends. A compass and a map should be brought as well to prevent you from getting lost. An umbrella and a torch should not be overlooked also.

Understanding the aforementioned safety measures that you need to take when hiking can certainly help you get rid of a variety of problems and accidents. But it does not mean that you can evade them all. Below are the actions you can take in case of emergency.

First of all, you may encounter a number of dangerous animals and insects, ranging from venomous snakes, offensive wild boars and crocodiles to aggressive and repellent bees and mosquitoes. In this case, you should first stay calm. If you overreact, those animals and insects might be frightened as well and may attack you. Therefore, I suggest you keep quiet and slip out silently.
However, you may still have the possibility to feel sick or get injured when hiking. For example, breaking your leg, twisting your ankle and abrasion are some common injuries of hikers. Suffering from heatstroke and dehydration may also occur when you have already been hiking for a long period under sultry weather. What you should do is to stop hiking immediately and rest for a while. If you encounter serious injuries and are on the brink of unconsciousness, you or your friends should contact the police directly and let them save you from ordeal.

Also, sudden and unexpected weather changes such as heavy rain, thunderstorm, lightning and hill fire may happen in a hike. In this case, I suggest you go back to your starting point as quickly as possible and do not take rugged and rough routes as they may be very slippery and risky. If you really could not wrestle with such natural hazards, you should also make a call to the police.

Above are the safety measures that you all need to pay attention to when hiking and things you should do in case of emergency. I believe that you all can enjoy your hiking time with your company if you have taken all the precautionary measures well. Let’s hike safe!
Gone are the days when cohabitation is regarded as a rebellious act to depart from social norm. But now, this notion is thrown into doubts and we all witness the emergence of the growing trend of cohabitation in the territory. Whether it does infringe the ethics is a matter of opinion. That there is a wide spectrum of opinions on cohabitation is not astonishing. As far as I am concerned, cohabitation is a mixed blessing that the most crucial is how we weigh the values of pros and cons.

First and foremost, cohabitation isn’t abided by law leaving the couples more freedom. As the proverb goes, ‘Wedlock is the padlock’, there is a certain truth in this remark. The perspective in which marriage is tantamount to a life-long commitment still prevails in our society. Only after marriage will the couples need to comply with the hard-and-fast rule in accordance with the Basic law. Moreover, their parents-in-laws are likely to exert tremendous stress on the couples to behave like what they crave, be them having offspring or making more money. They also need to adapt to the pulse of their partners, let alone the lifestyle. On the other hand, staying unmarried and living together can enable the couples to ward off the above constraints from marriage.

What is more, cohabitation can offer a cooling period before marriage. A recent research done by Family Planning Association revealed that an overwhelming majority of divorced cases has profound relevance to insufficient understanding between couples. While living together can offer an ample opportunity for couples to ameliorate their relationship and foster their love towards each other. It can avert their decision of getting married from just a sense of impulse. Only if they find they can get along with each other smoothly will they get married. As a result, the divorce rate may plunge as
the better their understanding is, the less they dispute with others.

There exist, however, some drawbacks in cohabitation. People may incline to be promiscuity if they cannot uphold the integrity to their partners. As I have mentioned, lacking of commitment is the characteristic of cohabitation. It may benefit of those who strongly desire for freedom. But freedom is not tantamount to indulgence. If one perverts “freedom” and merely pursue a sense of excitement and satisfaction from cohabitation, not only will it hurt the sentiment of his/her partners but also lose his/her moral virginity. Ultimately, everyone is doomed to be losers.

To my mind, cohabitation is a double-edged sword. Whether its impact is constructive or destructive to the couples’ relationship hinges on their mindset. If the couples are determined to safeguard their moral virginity and cherish every relationship, cohabitation can help paving the ground for their marriage. Finally, respecting your partners’ will is of utmost significance. If you have divergent opinions on whether living together or not, communication is the only way you can resort to. Always remember that under no circumstance should we rush into any resolution on cohabitation before we give a due consideration to the influence of it.
World Peace and International Understanding in 21st Century
Stefany Lin 7B

It comes as no surprise that rarely does a day go without wars, tortures, massacres, bonds and deaths. These deplorable incidents really send a chill down the spine of everyone in the world. These also arouse our full attention. The government of every country has realized the gravity of this problem and has been thinking of some countermeasures for it. As a matter of fact, it seems that world peace is the ultimate answer to all these problems.

In the 21st century, when the two world wars passed long ago, most of us are under the mistaken notion that our world is quite harmonious. Conflicts between countries, in fact, never cease to happen, consisting of Taiwan and the Mainland, Japan and the Mainland, South Korea and North Korea, the USA and Afghanistan, you name it. The essence of world peace can never be underestimated since only if world peace is introduced can conflicts be resolved in a non-violent means, wars be avoided and precious human lives be protected.

It is beyond dispute that world peace is of paramount importance to our lovely world, but how can we achieve it? I am of the belief that good international understanding is the best resort to prevent myriads of conflicts from happening. Not only are world leaders obliged to promote international understanding, but also teenagers, the pillars of our future world. They can help in the following three ways.

To start with, international understanding can be reached effectively by utilizing the powerful tool of the Internet. I convict that it is the most accessible method for people, youngsters in particular, to take part in this task. It is expected that there will be
a proliferation of social network in the coming years. Through these strong potential channels, teens can easily transcend personal, ethnic as well as geographical information to people in other parts of the world. More importantly, instant message devices are prevalently used in this century such as MSN, ICQ, Skype and so on. They can talk to each other more boundarylessly. As these virtual-reality contacts are established, young people can have a deeper understanding of other cultures, which can truly help promote international understanding.

As young people need to communicate with people over the world via the Internet by speaking the international language --- English, English proficiency cannot be neglected indeed. If the youngsters are poor in English, barely can they express themselves well. Worse still, they may misinterpret others’ meanings which may gradually give rise to misunderstanding. Other than learning grammar skills and a variety of vocabulary, international understanding also requires some pragmatic aspects of foreign languages, including idioms, slangs and so on. This may be conducive to better acquaintance with each other.

As the old saying goes, ‘travelling around the world is better than just reading books’, participating in exchange programs is a far more explicit and practical way for young people to explore and understand the world. Besides, through studying overseas for a period of time, youngsters may gain an in-depth insight into the culture of the place. The understanding gained in this way is not merely factual, but also personal and affective. The daily interactions with local students, host families and teachers give them an opportunity to experience the true nature of a particular culture. As these experiences accumulate when students visit some other countries, young people will have a true understanding of the various natures of our world cultures. Being more receptive to new ideas is an omnipotent basis for promoting international understanding as well as world peace.
In short, youngsters should not adopt a wait-and-see attitude towards the alarming situation of surging wars and watch it with folded arms. What they need to do is to take the initiative in promoting world peace. Only with their collected efforts can the world become a pleasant place to live in. It is earnestly hoped that young people in the world will join hands with each other to achieve better international understanding in the foreseeable future!
Big Business is Not Only about Making Money

Alan Chan

A few months ago, there was a video on Youtube about a Catholic father, Mr. Lo, giving comments on the “poverty hegemony” in Hong Kong. He also criticized Li Ka-shing, the owner of Cheung Kong Limited, for raising the property price and selling inflated buildings to gain profits and described him as an evil. Compounded with the recent protest against the Link REIT, a kind of hostility between the big businesses and the public is exposed apparently in Hong Kong. Most critics point to the big businesses, accusing them of going to any lengths to make money only. These critics are not unreasonable. In fact, I do perceive that big businesses in Hong Kong have a trend of making money only.

To see whether a company is a money-making machine or not, just look at how they treat their employees. A few months before the implementation of the minimum wage law, Café de Coral, a popular fast-food chain in Hong Kong, announced to cut the lunch-hour wages of all the workers. Further investigations exposed that a few more fast-food chains also applied this policy. While these big fast-food shops are having millions of dollars of net profit, they are exploiting their employees who can just earn a living for themselves. Apart from slashing wages and demanding overtime service, paucity of employee welfare also becomes usual in Hong Kong these days. All of these are the tricks of the big businesses to cut cost in order to make more profit, setting side the basic respect to the staff. Money, probably, is everything in their eyes.

Some may argue that some big enterprises in Hong Kong have been doing a lot of charity work, so it seems to show they are not profit-oriented. Undoubtedly, there are some conscientious enterprises which would really shoulder the social responsibility to do charity work to give back to the community, but I think more are
regarding “charity work” as an advertisement tool, or as a “public image builder”. Its incentive is to make more money. When MTR hangs the banner “Let’s fight against inflation!” or McDonald’s urges customers to donate money to help kids in the third world, the public is duped by the healthy image they have built and is more willing to accept them. In fact, MTR is going to raise the ticket price by 2% to 5% this year and McDonald’s is giving $16 per hour to their frontline staff before the legislation of the minimum wage law. The truth is that, charity work is only an investment to those who have a craving for more money and recognition.

I think the main factor causing this trend is the general values of the society—cost effectiveness. Not only enterprises adopt it, but the whole society does. We can see tutorial schools swarmed with students who are looking for good grades. We can see parents who are pushing their kids to a heap of extra-curricular activities so as to get into well-known schools. Therefore, it is no wonder that big businesses are making money desperately under the pretext of “protecting shareholders’ interest”. We all do the same.

Big business should not only be about making money, neither should students nor parents harbour the same notion. Maybe it is the time for us to rethink what values we are adopting and what we are striving for.
Big Business is Not Only about Making Money

Wallace Cheng 7C

What we saw in the retreat of Information Technology giant Google from the “evil, privacy infringing” China in the first quarter of 2010 had served as a proof of the above title in a remarkable manner. That’s what a big business could be and should look like. Why? That’s what I am going to answer in the following. It firstly comes with a question: “As we peep into the reality, who is the actual judge of one company’s success?”

According to the context of Hong Kong, some companies have excelled in their customer services. In that way, efforts paid were consequently returned. Two giants in the field of electricity supply in Hong Kong, The CLP Group and its counterpart, Hong Kong Electric, both as the salt of the earth, have been providing undoubtedly wholesome services to Hong Kong citizens for a hundred years. In fact, their district monopolization has never corrupted their attitudes towards the lay public. Regular inspection and preservation of electricity equipment have usually prevented accidents and emergencies. The Hong Kong and China Gas Company also made an example. Long-term enterprise-customer relationships were bonded in these cases and continuously benefit both partners. It reveals that big business is not only about making money, but the money-spinner’s foundation first and then good money. Like what green scientists call sustainable development.

As growing a business is like planting a tree, staff welfare is also crucial as soil. One of the rudimentary elements to operate a company well is the gear. Adroit personnel ensure every component of the party can function as expected and generally compound to the productivity. The sound employee welfare and vocational training provided by The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation is one of the instan-
ces. As it is perceived, the fair monthly wages and flexible working hours in HSBC always attract local and foreign talented graduates to attend job interviews. However, what’s more highly appreciated would be the grand stability of income and good opportunities of promotion. Professional courses which are likely subsidized and suggested by the company are also welcomed by the employees who pursue on-the-job training. It is believed to contribute the company by the revaluation of manpower. Likewise, the counterparts of HSBC, for example, Standard Chartered Bank and The Bank of East Asia, also provide the equivalent staff welfare for the enterprises’ sustainable development. As a reminder, the Hong Kong government does the similar favor to the public servants in a bid to achieve the same goal.

The third reason I give to advocate the saying that “Big business is not only about making money” is the importance of energetic creativity and positive public image. No success could be sustained by a boring and obsolete company which stops inspiring its customers. Moreover, only business embedded with the right codes of ethics carries out a positive image which gains real support from the crowds. Radio Television Hong Kong is doing a great job in this field. For instance, documentary about the problem of racial discrimination and gender stereotype in Hong Kong had been arousing public awareness and reflection on the particular social issues. The current discussion on environmental protection in Nam Sang Wai was also triggered off by one of the RTHK’s successful productions. Anti-drug, alcohol and anti-gambling messages are also regularly delivered through this channel. It always brings positive image to one company. Except for RTHK, TVB news and lots of other mass media, such as Ming Pao and South China Morning Post, report faithfully. Instead of mass media, other enterprises can also do charity work or make a donation from their profits to acquire lay public’s recognition. The Hong Kong Marathon, sponsored by Standard Chartered Bank, exemplifies the truth annually.
To conclude, back to the instance of Google retreating from China due to intolerance of customers’ privacy infringement, Google motto, “Don’t be evil” has a word to say: big business is not only about making money. It is hoped that the three mentioned reasons above can convince everyone who is reading the school magazine.
Safe Hiking
Jasmine Chan 7C

As we all hiking-lovers may have noticed that there is a myriad of reports of people hiking in remote areas coming across accidents, you may be worried about if the same hapless situation will happen to you and are hesitating whether to continue exercising this activity or not. But this kind of thoughts can be eliminated once you have read this article as it is going to reveal the safety measures you need to take in your journey.

The first safety measure you need to take is, as our club has always emphasized, finding companies for your trip. The recent accidents reported all happened to the one who went hiking alone, which is a taboo of hiking as you have no one to turn to once you run into an emergency. Yet, if there is somebody accompanying you, you can look after each other even if any mishap happens. Even if you insist on hiking on your own in order to enjoy the serenity and peace in rural areas, you should tell your family or friends about the schedule of your trip beforehand so they can call the police and locate your position more easily in case of any accidents.

Secondly, checking the weather early is also a crucial measure to ensure a safe trip. If the weather on that day is not suitable for hiking, then it will be dangerous if you keep on going. For example, if the temperature is too hot, then you may possibly get sunstroke or even die if you do not receive immediate medical treatment. Or if that is a rainy day, then the ground will become wet and you may easily slip and get injured, which may then lead to infection and inflammation. So, a nice weather can help secure a safe trip to a certain extent.

Thirdly, the choice of location is a determining factor to the safety of your trip.
If you are an amateur like many of us, you should choose a place that is less steep which you can easily handle such as the trail at the Peak. If you are an advanced and experienced hiker, you can then choose a more challenging place as your destination such as Tai Mo Shan. If you choose a right place according to your ability and experience, you are then less likely to encounter accidents.

Fourthly, you need to bring along some hiking equipment with you so as to prepare for any kind of situation. Compass, hiking pole, map, whistle and GPRS mobile are all useful tools during your trip in order to keep your pace stable and avert losing direction. First-aid kit is also fundamental to an accident-free journey. Since there are different kinds of dangers lurking in the wild like bumpy roads, rough rocks or even a tiny mosquito carrying dengue fever or Japanese Encephalitis, a first-aid kit is thus essential to keeping you immune from sting and endless bleeding or other kinds of injuries.

Nevertheless, fate is always unpredictable, you may still be the one caught up in an emergency even you have adopted the above-mentioned safety measures. Any kind of accidents can occur during your time of hiking ranging from hill fire to sudden storm, from injuries to exhaustion. After all, they are all incidents that keep you trapped. As our country leader Xi Jin-ping has once put it, ‘There is always more solutions than problems’, it is true for the case of encountering emergency during hiking too.

Firstly, keeping yourself calm is of the utmost importance. If you are fanatic, then you cannot make radical decisions and you may be messed up eventually. You have to be calm and use the tools you have got to figure out your position and direction to let you escape or receive a better mobile phone signal so as to connect to the outside.
Secondly, you have to stay close to your companies so you will not be disconnected from each other and get lost separately, which will result in compounding the problem as much time will be needed for you to find them in such a spacious landscape.

Thirdly, you need to shout out loud for help, or in a better scenario that you have a whistle to get other hikers or even the rescue team’s attention. You should seek help in a position where the sound can be projected far enough so that it can be heard clearly and you will be saved as soon as possible.

Despite all the potential dangers, hiking is a safe activity if you acknowledge all the precautious measures, possible emergencies and their counterplans. I hope everyone can find themselves replete with the joy of hiking!
Hike Safe
Richard Yeung 7C

Hiking is a mesmerizing activity. The tranquil nature and the brisk breeze are something that no other sports could be in match with. That being so, hiking has its potential risks that require thorough preparations beforehand as well as imperative golden rules within the journey. In this article, the school hiking club would offer tips on safety measures needed when hiking and give advice in case of emergency.

The first thing you need to do when planning for a hike is to check for weather. Sometimes weather could be so adverse that could put you in peril. Dehydration occurs when you hike under high temperature compounded with low humidity. Heavy rain could blur your vision as well as turn the road muddy that could cause slippery. The key point is never attempt to hike under unusual weather conditions.

The next thing you need to take into account is the equipment. Map and compass are crucial as they could save you from getting lost. Mosquito repellent should be applied as fatal diseases could be transmitted just by a single bite. You should also bring plenty of water and probably a hat to keep yourself from dehydration. Light snacks rich in glucose are a fine choice to bring as they could charge you up within a short period. If possible, bring a satellite communication device that could allow you to seek help.

The last thing you need to do before hiking is to inform your family and friends of the destination and itinerary. This could insure you against emergency case such as robbery or physical injuries since they could seek help for you if you did not return as expected.

Apart from the safety measures before hiking, there are also precautionary measures that you should pay heed to. Firstly, never change your itinerary planned on a
whim since your family or friends will not be able to locate you. In addition, as you are not familiar with the new route, you may probably get lost. Unexpected dangers like venomous snakes are also a problem that could put your life at stake.

Secondly, never choose a route that is not popular since robbers always choose areas that are remote. Furthermore, the roads are not planned or specially constructed for hiking. There is a higher chance for you to get physical injuries.

What if, unfortunately, you are stuck in case of emergency? The first and foremost thing you should do is to stay calm. Being nervous could rip your rationality off and often aggravate the problems. The most common emergency case is physical injuries. You should first clean your laceration with water so as to prevent septic. After that, apply gauze plaster on the place to stop the bleeding. Use the satellite communication device to call for help if necessary.

The second-most common emergency case is losing directions. This case is easy to handle as you could simply use your mobile to seek help. That being so, you should try using your map and compass to locate yourself first since probably you don’t want to be reported in newspaper tomorrow.

The last and worst case is certainly facing robbery. Remember that you should never fight with the robbers as they usually carry weapons. What you should do is to stay calm and wait for help. Since your family and friends were informed beforehand, it is likely that you can be rescued and need not face the dark and cold night alone in the mountain.

Hiking is a highly rewarding activity as it could strengthen your body and also relieve your study stress. Hope we could see you later on in the hiking club and enjoy the thrill and fun in hiking.
Merry Christmas

Merry Christmas and happy New Year
Everybody is full of cheer
Ready for fluffy snow from the sky
Remember your love and hold your dear
Young and old all come near

Come on, come on Santa Claus
His flying sleigh twinkles like glass
Reindeer lead the way to town
I can hear jingle bells sound
See the beautiful Christmas tree
There’s a drink of milk for you that’s free
May the cookies be to your taste
A bite, then leave the presents here
So long, see you again next year!

Cheryl Lee  1A
Paris and I

Paris is an elegant city
Attractive yet arrogant
Roads are wide and green
If only the dogs were clean
See you in Paris!

A mysterious palace
Nothing is ordinary there
Do you know Paris?

I love Paris.
I am

I am a naughty guy who is like a clown.
I wonder who owns a diamond crown.
I hear the horrid bumble bees and flies surrounding me.
I see the cats playing in glee.
I want to go to Ocean Park without paying a fee.
I am a naughty guy who is like a clown.

I pretend that I’m a phoenix in the sky.
I feel all the birds flying behind.
I touch the moon and the sun.
I worry about how I can make my poem more fun.
I cry for why I can’t be a real phoenix in the sky.
I am a naughty guy who is like a clown.

I understand that is so hard to write a poem.
I say that we are the best.
I dream I can be a billionaire.
I try to find a good barber to cut my hair.
I hope I can find a girl called Blair.
I am a naughty guy who is like a clown.

Jonathan Lee  1A
Happiness is

Happiness is we can go to school.
We can learn what we should do.
And learn which things are true.
Like addiction we shouldn’t do.

Happiness is I meet a girl.
I love her and she loves me.
We walk in the park.
And swim with the shark.

Happiness is I will be married.
I will be married with Mary.
“I do” “I do”
I am being a husband soon.

Happiness is Mary is pregnant.
And Mary gets a twin.
One is Kenny, one is Kelly.
Kenny and Kelly are very funny.
School Would Be

School would be fun if there wasn’t any homework
School would be fun if there weren’t any quizzes
School would be fun if there weren’t any dictations
School would be fun if there weren’t any exams

School would be joyful if I could wear whatever I want
School would be joyful if I could bring whatever I want
School would be joyful if I could study whatever I want
School would be joyful if I could go wherever I want

School would be amazing if it started at 10 a.m.
School would be amazing if recess could be longer
School would be amazing if lunch time was longer
School would be amazing if we had more holidays

School would be wonderful if there weren’t any prefects
School would be wonderful if the lessons weren’t boring
School would be wonderful if my best friend was in my class
School would be impossible with all of the above

Beverly Chan   1B
Nervous

Next week I’m going to dance in a show
Everyone will see me on the stage
Rachel, Vicky and all my friends
Very nervous and feeling scared
Oh dear! It’s driving me mad.
Unless I can be brave
So, I’ll try my best to succeed.

Cally Mak  1B
Scream

Sound is coming out of my mouth

Cannot stop shouting loudly

Running around the house

Energy fills my body

A kind of anger is coming out

May I scream? I want to scream out.

Vicky Lai 1B
I am

I am a guy who likes playing computer games.
I wonder if I am a character in the game.
I hear the warriors shout, “Stop fighting.”
I see many people die in wars.
I want to be a hero to save lives.
I am a guy who likes playing computer games.

I pretend to be the fighter in the game.
I feel dangers around me.
I pick up the sword of God.
I worry if I can finish this mission.
I cry for the help from God.
I am a guy who likes playing computer games.

I understand I must be brave to face the devil.
I say to myself never give up.
I dream I am brave enough to defeat the devil.
I try to kill the devil with the sword of God.
I hope to save people’s lives.
I am a guy who likes playing computer games.

Joey Man 1B
I am

I am an interesting guy who likes Angry Birds.
I wonder what the world and I will be like on 21st December 2012.
I play the game Angry Birds every day.
I see the Angry Birds flying up to the sky.
I want to create a game which is even better than Angry Birds.
I am an interesting guy who likes Angry Birds.

I pretend that I am Bruce Lee.
I feel that I can defeat anyone.
I touch the sun, the comet, the shooting stars with my hands.
I worry about dictations, quizzes and exams.
I cry when I fail and have detention.
I am an interesting guy who likes Angry Birds.

I understand the frustration of being cheated by friends.
I say there is hope in the world.
I dream to defeat Bruce Lee.
I try to be smarter.
I hope I can live until 120 years old.
I am an interesting guy who likes Angry Birds.

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Leo Wan 1B
I am

I am a genius who likes daydreaming.
I wonder what I will look like ten years later.
I listen to relaxing music which makes me sleep.
I see many beautiful flowers in the field.
I want to have 30 hours a day.
I am a genius who likes daydreaming.

I pretend that I am the richest boy in the world.
I feel my head is as heavy as a mountain.
I meet the cartoon characters that I like.
I worry about my exam results.
I cry for the people who lost their life in earthquake.
I am a genius who likes daydreaming.

I understand I will succeed if I work hard.
I am the hero of the world.
I dream of flying over the ocean.
I try to do my best in my whole life.
I hope that there will be no disasters forever.
I am a genius who likes daydreaming.
I am a humble guy who likes hamsters.
I wonder what I will do in the future.
I hear a ‘click click’ sound in the silent night.
I see a hamster running on the wheel.
I want to play all the time.
I am a humble guy who likes hamsters.

I pretend that I’m the caring angel.
I feel happy to help people.
I touch the earth, the clouds and the ocean.
I cry for the death of all my friends and my family.
I am a humble guy who likes hamsters.

I understand God has always been here with us.
I know helping people is the happiest thing in my life.
I dream of going to Ocean Park with my dear friends.
I try to do my best to make everyone glad.
I hope I can live happily with my family forever.
I am a humble guy who likes hamsters.

Stephanie Chi 1B
Pui Ching Middle School

Pui Ching’s like a big family
University is our target
I learn here and I’ll never forget

Crowded playground, busy classrooms,
Having so much fun here
Improving myself with every test
Never want to be late, because it’s
great every day!

Marking all the key points
I study as hard as I can
Don’t give up
Do your best and try to keep up
Learning is very important
Enjoy every moment of school life

So many friends here
Can help to solve my problems
Hooray! (we say after the exams)
Obey the prefects and respect the teachers
Out-perform the other schools
Love and care for Pui Ching!

Alice Leung  1C
School is…

School is a happy place
School is full of love
School fills my heart with warmth
School is our home

School is a special place
School fills us with knowledge
School has lots of lovely faces
School gives us wisdom and love

School is a challenging place
School has lots of examinations and tests
School encourages us to aim for the best
School can give us glory and success

School is an unforgettable place
School is full of memories
School is wonderful
School is Pui Ching

Callista Chu      1C
School is...

School is a place where I study
School is where I found my buddy
School is where I arrive in a hurry
School is...

School is full of buildings
School is full of singing
School is full of chattering
School is...

School fills me with delight
School is usually closed at night
School is a place where rules are tight
School is...

School has lots of flowers and trees
School is where my mind feels free
School is where we all should be
School is...

Janice Ling 1C
Happiness is...

Happiness is French fries with ketchup
Happiness is reading a book.
Happiness is when I’m making handicraft
Happiness is when I’m travelling

Happiness is when I receive a friend’s letter
Happiness is when someone gives me a present
Happiness is when I see my friend
Happiness is when I share my experiences

Happiness is when I make others happy
Happiness is when I’m not alone
Happiness is when I succeed
Happiness is when I have hope

Happiness is when I have peace
Happiness is when I see the sunrise
Happiness is knowing Jesus
Happiness is writing this poem

Gwyneth Wong  1C
Choosing Clothes

Choosing what to wear is very hard for me

Let me wear shorts

Or are jeans more suitable?

That’s why it takes so long to get dressed

How can I do it faster?

Each piece of clothing looks nice

So, what should I choose?
Pain is...

Pain is a paper with no colour
Pain is only you but no partner
Pain is you need to hide in a dark corner
Pain is you are growing older and older

Pain is when you hurt your knee
Pain is a forest with no trees
Pain is when you’re stung by a bee
Pain is the feeling when you can’t see

Pain is a world that’s cold and dark
Pain is a test paper with a zero mark
Pain is being chased by a shark
Pain is when you can’t go to Ocean Park

Pain is a farm without seeds
Pain is when you can’t walk on your feet
Pain is if you’re the only one who can’t eat
Pain is something we don’t need

Constance Lee  1D
I am artistic

I am artistic and fun
I wonder why the sky is blue
I hear fairies singing their songs
I see goblins dancing in the forest
I want to join them
I am artistic and fun.

I pretend I am playing the violin
I feel that the world depends on me
I touch an angel’s wings before I fall asleep
I worry I will fail my exams
I’ll cry if I fail
I pretend I am playing the violin.

I understand that I am brave
I say that’s what makes me special
I dream a lion is playing with me
I try to touch the lion
I hope it can be my pet
I understand that I am brave.

Cherry Lui  1D
I am a shy girl

I am a shy girl who likes to play
I wonder what will happen next May
I hear someone drinking tea
I see the moon smiling to me
I want to sit on the clouds in the sky
I am a shy girl who likes to play.

I pretend I am the king of the forest
I feel a kiss from a mighty dragon
I touch the wind
I worry about a test without any hints
I cry for the result of my dictation
I am a shy girl who likes to play.

I understand being punished by Mum is terrible
I say we all need to be humble
I dream of eating lots of chocolate
I will try to be wise when I’m old
I hope I can travel around the world
I am a shy girl who likes to play.

Helen Yip  1D
I am a pretty girl

I am a pretty girl who loves music
I wonder when my family will take me on a trip to Vienna
I hear wonderful classical music everywhere
I see my first live concert in Vienna
I want to visit Salzburg where Mozart was born
I am a pretty girl who loves music.

I pretend I am the most famous pianist in the world
I feel so proud of myself
I play the piano in The Vienna Musikverein
I worry if I’ll be nervous in front of the audience
I cry because of all their applause
I am a pretty girl who loves music.

I understand it’s not easy to have a concert
I say thank you to all who support me
I dream my concert will be so successful
I try to practise all the songs
I hope I can have a second concert
I am a pretty girl who loves music.

June Luk
I am a lazy boy

I am a lazy boy who likes eagles
I wonder if I’m terrible
I hear a sound like breaking glass
I see an eagle swimming with a shark
I want to have a happy life
I am a lazy boy who likes eagles.

I pretend I am an eagle flying in the sky
I feel the wind blowing
I touch the sky, the sun and the moon
I worry that the air is dirty
I cry for birds which die because of air pollution
I am a lazy boy who likes eagles.

I understand I can’t be an eagle
I say I just wish I could be like one
I dream that I can become a pilot and feel the wind
I try to study hard to be a pilot
I hope my dream will come true
I am a lazy boy who likes eagles.

Percy Wong  1D
I am

I am a simple girl with wild imagination.
I am a clever girl who likes cats and dogs.
I wonder what marks I will get from my reader report.
I hear a dog growling at midnight.
I see a cat controlling the rocket.
I want to have a beautiful castle for my home.
I am a clever girl who likes cats and dogs.

I pretend that I am the queen of the world.
I feel great when everyone listens to me.
I touch Jupiter which is the aliens’ home.
I worry about global warning.
I cry because of my English exam results.
I am a clever girl who likes cats and dogs.

I understand the sun rises from the east.
I say I am a dreamer.
I dream I can be a billionaire.
I try to get high marks in the exams.
I hope I can save the world.
I am a clever girl who likes cats and dogs.

Ella Wong  1D
I am

I am a happy girl who likes painting.
I wonder why there are so many colours in the world.
I hear birds singing with the worms.
I see a rainbow hanging very high.
I want to beautify the world with my heart.

I am a happy girl who likes painting.
I am a funny girl who likes smiling.
I wonder why there is happiness in our lives.
I hear people laughing happily.
I see the sun shining in the sky.
I want to beautify the world under the shine.

I am a funny girl who likes smiling.
I am a happy girl who is made by God.
I wonder why the space is so big.
I hear God’s creations singing.
I see all the things under the sun smiling.
I want to beautify the space with my eyes.
I am a happy girl who is made by God.

Rachael Ho  1D
Oreo Chiu

Oreo Chiu is my name,
Ringing up the hand bells to God,
Empty before but full of peace in Jesus,
Filled with joy which comes from the Lord.

Christianity would be my religion forever,
Harmony inside my heart when I sing hymn,
I hope to be a missionary to tell people about Him,
Understand the deep meaning of the Bible is what I need to do.
School is...

School is a family where teachers and students stay.
School is a comfortable place where we feel warm and safe.
School is when we are altogether.

School is a wonderland when we play hide-and-seek.
School is a joyful place where we laugh and play.
School is when we are altogether.

School is a treasure box where we sing and dance.
School is a lovely place where we pray and praise.
School is when we are altogether.

School is a knowledge base where we gain and learn.
School is a place that makes me feel proud and confident.
School is when we are altogether.

School is...
School is...

School is a place for us to learn.
School is a place for us to make friends.
School is a place for teachers to teach us.

School is sacred and solemn.
School is friendship and cooperation.
School is the pillar of the society.

School is hell for people who are lazy.
School is paradise for people who are curious.
School is an important element for growth.

School is a part of my life.
School is never late for you and me.
SCHOOL IS...

SCHOOL IS a place for students to learn.
SCHOOL IS a place for teachers to work.

SCHOOL IS full of love.
SCHOOL IS full of happiness.
SCHOOL IS full of joy.

SCHOOL IS a fantastic place.
We meet teachers and schoolmates there every day.
They are all my dearest friends.

SCHOOL IS a community.
We share our knowledge.
We share our joy.

SCHOOL IS WONDERFUL!

Georgina Tse  1E
Happiness is…

Happiness is having ice-cream.
Happiness is playing with my team.
Happiness is the colour green.
Happiness is…

Happiness is receiving gifts on birthdays.
Happiness is sleeping late on Fridays.
Happiness is playing in summer holidays.
Happiness is…

Happiness is going out.
Happiness is swimming.
Happiness is shopping.
Happiness is…

Happiness is playing my toys.
Happiness is doing things I enjoy.
Happiness is having my own choice.
Happiness is…

Kazaf Li 1E
I am a 12-year-old girl

I am a 12-year-old girl who loves kittens
I want to become a famous writer
I hear my books talking to me
I see a flying silver pen
I want to have lots of time
I am a 12-year-old girl who loves kittens.

I pretend I have lots of things to do
I feel a lot of words beside me
I touch the air and talk to it
I worry that I can’t remember things
I cry because I don’t have time
I am a 12-year-old girl who loves kittens.

I understand I can’t do what I want to do
I say that I will follow the rules
I dream that someday I can fly
I try to read as many books as I can
I hope I will fly in the sky one day
I am a 12-year-old girl who loves kittens.

Emily Chan  1E
I am

I am anxious and horrified.
I wonder if ghosts really exist.
I hear something talking to me at night.
I see something bright behind me after midnight.
I want to escape from this haunted house.
I am anxious and horrified.

I pretend that nothing happens.
I feel there’s something following me.
I touch this bright object.
I worry how this something will react.
I cry because I am afraid this something may hurt me.
I am anxious and horrified.

I understand that this something is not human.
I say this something is definitely not human.
I dream about becoming a friend of this something.
I try to forget that I am terrified and scared.
I hope I can make contact and talk to this something.
I am anxious and horrified.

Tiana Tsang 1E
Ice Cream

It is hotter and hotter

Cause it’s midday, Summer

Eating something cold will make me feel better.

Creamy ice, icy cream,

Ready for some cool ice-cream?

Eat it fast, eat it all.

A cold feeling will cheer us all.

May I have a little more?

Clarice Lee 1F
I am a playful kid

I am a playful kid who likes to read
I wonder how many stars are in the sky
I hear the stars singing
I see the stars dancing
I want to travel to outer space
I am a playful kid who likes to read.

I pretend I am in space
I feel like an astronaut
I touch the moon
I worry that the sun is too hot
I cry for the Earth because of global warming
I am a playful kid who likes to read.

I understand that stars are real
I say my dream can come true
I dream that I can dance with the stars
I try to go to outer space
I hope humans can live on the Moon
I am a playful kid who likes to read.

Ellen To  1F
My Favourite Things

My favourite toy is… a yoyo, which is my favourite toy!

Father makes my favourite dessert
Always I can eat a whole cake by myself.
Vita Soy is my favourite breakfast
Oh it’s really, really yummy!
Unfortunately, I can only have it twice a week.
Roald Dahl’s books are my favourite,
I’ve read “The Fantastic Mr Fox”.
That was the best, but my
Egg and ham were even better!

The egg was smooth, the ham was good!
Having salad for dinner? Yummy!
Is there anything else I like?
No or Yes?
Guess?
Sure! Yes.
Anger

Any minute I’m going to get angry,

Nobody in this world can ever stop me!

Going nuts and very mad,

Everything just makes me sad!

Really, you shouldn’t bother me!

Sarah Kam  1F
Dreami My Dog

Dreami, my dog, Oh! Dreami, my dog,
Why do you tap on the floor?
Why do you rub on my hand?
Why do you hold yourself straight
when you are mediating?
Why do you sniff the banana skin?
Why are you curling in the corner?
Why do you burst into my room?

Dreami, my dog, Oh! Dreami, my dog,
Your bite caused a tingle in my finger,
You melt my coolness,
You breathe a sigh when
you are waiting for me,
You lift your leg when
you are dancing,
You crush my clothes when
you are in my arm,
You race with me in the park,
You dissolve my heart.
Dreami, my dog, Oh! Dreami, my dog,
   Sit beside me when I am alone,
   Watch me when I cry,
Pass my bed quietly when I am sick,
   Warm me when I am cold,
I am smoothing your golden hair,
And they are shining under the sun,
You are everything to me,
   Dreami, my dog.

Vienna Tam  2A
The Camera

This is the camera
Mum started using 17 years ago
When she found
Her first job,
When she fell in
Love with a handsome young man,
When she got married
With the man she loved,
When she first knew that
She had got a baby,
When her baby was born
And took the first photograph of her family
When she used it to
Keep a baby book,
This is the camera
Mum started to use 17 years ago
She always keeps it in her bag
At that time.

This is not the camera
Mum is using now
When she is using her
Phone to take photos,
When her baby
Has grown up,
When she stopped
Playing peek-a-boo with her baby,
When she becomes a workaholic
Both in the office and at home,
When she becomes more
Easily irritated,
When she can’t
Tolerate loneliness,
This is not the camera
Mum is using now
But those precious moments
Will be kept in our hearts forever.

Karen Tung  2B
Politician Work

I’ve got the meeting to attend
The signature to append
The Minister to meet
The contract to complete
Then votes to canvass
The political affair to harass
I’ve got information to sort
The progress to report
I’ve got cases to follow
The made-mistaken assistant to bellow
I gotta finish the paperwork
Then give a speech
And the political program to preach.

Stun me, Whisky
Hypnotize me, Cocktail
Bring me away from the reality, Burgundy
And create a sweet dream for me.

Champagne, knock me out
With your strongest power
Let me stay unconscious without a doubt
Till I can recover.
Relax my brain, Medoc
Comfort my nerve with alcohol
Powerful hugs and
Let me get rid of work tonight.

Cider, Brandy, Cognac
Muscatel, Hermitage, Sangria and Port
Sherry perfume, Chablis allure
You’re all that I can rely on to drive away sleeplessness.

Winnie Fong  2B
The Balloon’s Song

Twist me with your fingers
Blow me with your mouth
Stretch me, squeeze me, shape me
Growing bigger and bigger
Till I hold my arms up
With my palms as big as cups
Then you pull my legs
And make them thick
Please keep on blowing
I’ll never stop growing
I was a dog
One minute ago
But a few minutes later
I became a goat
What will I be next?
A ball for one to kick?

“Pang” oh no
My body stops growing
I feel deeply sorry
For the boy I see
As he burst into tears
It hurts my ears
So please, next time
If I still have a chance
Give me to him
Without thinking
I promise you’ll see his face smiling

My life, I guess,
Is here to end.
So remember this message
I want to send:
Send my love
Send my joy
To every child who deserves a toy.

Rainbow Cheng  2B
The Apple’s Song

I am listening to my teacher
Thinking about what to eat at lunch.
How about some fruits?
If I can eat an apple,
I’d love to tap it with my finger,
Rub it with my sleeve,
Hold it in my hands,
Sniff it with my nose, and
Peel it with my knife.

I love curling it round and round
Till it bursts out white and cold.
Then it will tingle in my palm
Until it melts in my mouth.
I breathe
Waiting for the minute I lift it and crush it.
Then it will race through my head
Then dissolve on my tongue.

I am sitting on the chair,
Thinking about red yummy apples.

I am looking at the clock as time elapses
Waiting for the bell to ring
Wondering about delicious apples.
My eyes are shining.

Joyce Yiu 2E
The Banana’s Song

Look at me with your eyes
Don’t buy me if I have any black spots.
Look at me, hold me, smell me
Rip me slice and slice
Till I become white as snow
From my yellow T-shirt
And feel your hand temperature
As if I’d alive
Staying there for seconds
Of delight when you put me
Near your mouth and bite me
Feeling sweet and scrumptious.
I wriggle in your stomach
And leave the sweet smell in your mouth.
I am held gently
In your warm palm
And look at you when you bite me
Feeling satisfied.
Are you hungry yet?
My heart is racing.

Ernest Poon  2F
Student Work

I’ve got homework to do
The test papers to go through
The books to study
The housework to do for my mommy.
Then the girlfriend to find
The poem to rhyme.
I’ve got a project to present
There are classes to attend
There is vocabulary to check.
I’ve got to tag my photo
Then listen to my friends’ sorrow
And live a better tomorrow.

Ernest Poon 2F
**Student Work**

I’ve got the school bus to catch

The half-sentences to match

The dramas to play

The passages to say

Then the poems to recite

The compositions to write

I’ve got a race to run

The homework to be done

I’ve got numbers to sum

Then score good marks to impress my mum.

There are books to study

I’ve got to teach my buddies

Then stop the timer

And help to collect the papers.

*Allie Yam  2F*
I wanna be Yours

Let me be your toothpaste
Kissin’ you day and night
Let me be your slave
Surrender you all my rights
Let me be your cat
If you would like a pet
You are the greatest master I ever get
I wanna be yours,

Let me be your shadow
Follow you anywhere
Let me be your pillow
Savin’ you from nightmares
Let me be your shoes
Through pain and sorrow I will carry you
I will treasure you for sure
I wanna be yours.

Christine Yam   2F
I wanna be Yours

Let me be your sport car
Taking you every where
Let me be your luxurious spa
Giving you health and care
Let me be your hubby
I can cook with the best recipe
You'll never feel hungry
I wanna be yours

Let me be yours sneakers
I'll walk with you all around
Let me be your CD-player
I'll make you wonderful sound
Let me be your cute little pet
I won't make you feel sad
I'll give whatever you want to get
I wanna be yours
I wanna be Yours

Let me be your pillow,
so I can hold you in your sleep.
Let me be your window,
so I can let you see those lovely sheep.
Let me be your shelter,
so you don’t need an umbrella.
You are always safe no matter what,
I wanna be yours.

Let me be your flower,
so you won’t have a fever.
Let me be your shower,
so I can keep you clean forever.
Let me be your telephone,
so you can talk to me when you’re alone.
I know you’ve already known,
I wanna be yours.

Winfrey Siu  2F
Let me be…

Let me be your tissue
Use me when you’re wailing
Let me be your tiramisu
Eat me when you’re starving
Let me be your projector
Shows your memory of the years
You are pondering deeply over the matters
I wanna be yours

Let me be your cape
I will give you warmth
Let me be your correction tape
I can cross out your unhappiness
Let me be your magnifier
Refresh your eyes and never tire
I won’t be anger and fire

Jasmine Chu 2F
[An extremely boring History class with no one listening to Miss Wan about World War One except Celia. She is a hard-working girl with many friends.]

Miss Wan: Both French and German hated each other during the First World War. Therefore, in the end of the war, Germans……

[The bell rings]

Lucie: Hey Celia, do you want to go to the playground to relax?
Celia: (studying the History textbook) No, I want to know what’s going on in the war.

[A forest picture in the textbook moves and all of a sudden Celia is in a forest]

Celia: (anxiously) Where am I? What’s going on? I must calm down. Now the important thing to do is to find the way out. (Some noises of carriage from far left) Oh! Wait, there must be someone.

[She walks for a long time until she heard a lady speaking French].

Celia: Oh! What a disaster! I hate French, now it is hard to communicate with them! Excuse me….
French lady: (speaking in French) What do you want? (Turns to English) I mean what do you want?
Celia: (relieved) Luckily, you know how to speak English. Where’s this place?
French lady: (what a great surprise) What! You don’t even know where this is! You are in Paris and you’d better move to another place because there’ll be a big war soon. Also, I need to go now. Good Luck!
Celia: (suddenly realized) It must be World War One. (With determination) I must stop the awful war and change history, but what can I do?
[Celia walks to a beautiful building and stares at it, she meets Georges Clemenceau the Prime Minister.]

Georges: (powerful and speaking in French) What are you doing here, young lady? You are probably an orphan, come with me and I’ll adopt you.

[Celia looks confused]

Celia: (scared) What are you going to do with me?

[A translator appears and tells her all the things Georges says.]

Celia: You are a good translator and I can’t live without you. Let’s be friends!

Translator: I would be pleased to be your friend. (Turns serious) But be careful when living with the Prime Minister, he loses temper easily.

[Georges is sitting in a room reading a telegram.]

Translator: Now he definitely needs a cup of coffee.

[Celia gives him a cup of coffee.]

Georges: Nice!

Celia: (speaks to herself) At least I know what it means!

Narrator: The Prime Minister likes this cute girl very much. They live happily for a week when one day they meet the German Emperor.

[In a big hall, Celia sits between George and German Emperor, the translator helps to translate everything to Celia]

(Translated)

German Emperor: (angrily) You are not going to get Morocco, French Prime Minister.

Celia: (whispering to herself) It must be the ‘Second Moroccan Crisis’, if they have a successful negotiation, there may be no World War One.

(Turns to talk to German Emperor and Georges) Could I share my
opinion?

(Translated)
Georges: Yes, of course.
Celia: God creates us and he wants us to love each other, not to hate. We are all friends so can we stop arguing? Why don’t we give Morocco back to Moroccan people. They have their right to live there.

(Translated)
Georges: Today you (German Emperor) are lucky! We are not going to argue anymore since Celia wants us to be friends and the words she said are correct.

[German Emperor is touched by Celia’s words and nods his head.]

(Translated)
German Emperor: I agree with what your daughter said and we can be friends but can I also be friends with Celia? She’s really a beautiful girl.
Celia: (happily) I’ll be glad to be friends with you.
Narrator: They are all friends now. Also, Celia becomes famous for helping to prevent the big war. Princess Stephanie is jealous of her because everyone used to like her when Celia is not here.
Stephanie: (with hatred) I must get rid of Celia, she mustn’t be the one being liked, because I am the one. I must kill her!
Narrator: Princess Stephanie and Celia meet each other in a ball and Stephanie pretends to be friends with Celia.

[Stephanie waves her hands at Celia].

Stephanie: (Speaks arrogantly in French) Nice to meet you.
Celia: Sorry, I don’t understand French.
Stephanie: (wickedly smiles and speaks in English) Oh, I see. You must be the famous Celia, I am Princess Stephanie and hopefully we could be friends.
Celia: I’ll be happy to be your friend. (Whispering to herself) I don’t think she’s kind, I can’t believe that she wants to be friends with me.
[Stephanie suddenly brings out a sharp knife and wants to kill Celia. Celia is shocked, she spills the wine from her glass as she’s talking. Stephanie falls back immediately. All the people look at them and see Stephanie’s knife. Stephanie runs out of the ball room embarrassedly]

Celia: [sympathetically running after Stephanie] Stephanie, are you all right? I don’t know that you are scared of wine but why should you hurt me?

Stephanie: Don’t follow me. Go back and live happily but it won’t last long. You are evil, you know that I’ll be sick touching wine and so you spilt it on me.

Celia: I am sorry, I really don’t know, but I can help you because we are friends already!

[Celia stops Stephanie and brings her to the place Celia lives.]

Celia: (calmly) Now, I promise to help you but we must be true friends afterwards.

Stephanie: Fine.

[Celia gives her some pills and Stephanie gets better day after day]

Narrator: Stephanie is really amazed by Celia’s kindness. She can even be so nice to a person who wanted to kill her before. Therefore, Stephanie is not jealous anymore, she’s happy to have this friend. One day, they are walking on the street while Celia hears something important.

An old man: In the west side of the city, there’s a mysterious forest where no one can come out after going inside.

Celia: (talking to herself) I need to go there as soon as possible.

Stephanie: Where are you going?

Celia: Oh! Nothing. It’s nearly night time, let’s go back.

[They go back and have dinner. After dinner, they go to bed.]
Celia: (very concerned) I must go there at midnight, so no one will see me.

[Twelve o’clock at midnight, Celia creeps out and makes sure no one sees her, but she doesn’t notice that Stephanie is following her.]

Stephanie: (whispering) What is she doing?

[They go to the forest and suddenly there is a bright light. After the light, they found themselves in a classroom.]

Miss Wan: In the end, Germany and France had a successful negotiation so there’s no world war luckily.

[The bell rings]

Stephanie: What’s going on here?

Celia: (laughs) You are just the same as me when I went back to history. It is life-changing for us!