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GENERATION NY

NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

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If you have been down to the NYGH carpark this year you may have noticed the setting up of our very own makerspace. Makerspaces are about far more than just creating or making. They are the home of communities of people – students, teachers, parents, adults, children, experts, novices – with common interests. These interests are usually based around STEM/STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths). Interests commonly focus around computers, machining, technology, science, digital art or electronic art.

Maker Culture can refer to many things: repairing things that have broken instead of simply replacing them; repurposing things for another use; tinkering; or generally just a technology-based extension of DIY Culture. In the last few years, many countries around the world have seen a resurgence of interest in Making. It has even been referred to as the next step to what Singapore hopes to be – a smart nation.

Traditionally, Design & Technology (D&T) lessons emphasise building skills – “Learning to Make” – but Maker Education is more about learning through the design and making process – “Making to Learn”. The idea of the community is also very strong; sharing and learning together is very much part to Maker culture.

In 2015, The Connected Classroom (TCC) initiative pioneered the concept of Making in NYGH. Through this, the Secondary 1 TCC students were exposed to basic ideas on design, building with LEGO, understanding 3D drawings as well as working on projects of their own design and making. Though somewhat small in scale (and sometimes appearing haphazard), the programme was a success with the students, many of whom recall it as one of their favourite parts of Secondary 1 TCC.





OFF TO THE MAKER FAIRE

As an extension of our small effort in Maker Education last year, some of our TCC students had the opportunity to apprentice under Lead Makers of OneMaker Group (OMG) to eventually engage the public at Maker Faire. Nanyang's participation at Maker Faire also involved the work of Mr. Stephen Robertson, our then Art teacher, and his Secondary 2 AEP students with their iterations of Italian Futurism. This year our Maker SIA teams hope to share their learning at Maker Faire Singapore 2016.

With the key ingredients in place - the space, the tools and our very talented part-time technical support, Mr. Wayne Wang, we have hosted groups of students from Odyssey of the Mind (OOTM), Maker Student-Initiated Assessment (SIA), Art Elective Programme and CCA.

A MAKER'S COMMUNITY EDUCATION (ComEd)

Aside from making for competitions and subject-related projects, some of our Secondary 2 TCC students, for Community Education, worked under the tutelage of Sustainable Living Lab (SL2) to learn repair skills for their engagement at Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled. This experience spawned reflections on the needs of the 'invisible' in our society, and our own wastefulness: "How could [the residents] live with all the hand me downs donated by the public?... Taking forever to scrub the rust off the wheelchair with sandpaper, it got me thinking about how much I actually waste. ...Many think that they are recycling just by dumping their unwanted things into the recycling bin. We are becoming a wasteful society. Sit down and take your time to repair something. A small act like this can make a big difference [to] the environment and the quality of our lives. Slow down and be more attuned to things that we are blind to. Don't let the speed of the 21[st] century chase you." (Wang Li Ting, as featured in their Community Education newspaper)

For more information on upcoming workshops and after-school drop-in sessions, contact Mr Mark Shone.

NYGH DOUBLE WIN AT PESA

In 2015, Nanyang Girls' High School was the Overall Champion on the 29th YMCA Plain English Speaking Awards (PESA). Cheyenne Ong Yan Lin (class of 2015) and Tammy Yim Si Yue (314) both came in first for the Upper Secondary category and Lower Secondary Category respectively.

"Through the training and preparation, the girls put into practice all the speaking skills they have learnt in Language Arts lessons. They also have to think on their feet and stay very calm in planning and delivering the impromptu speech. They learn to listen to their own thoughts and be receptive to feedback as well. PESA is one adrenaline-pumping platform for our girls and I am very proud of all the contestants who represented our school."

~ Mrs Deline Victoria Soh, Language Arts teacher and teacher trainer for PESA

"PESA has made me realise that speaking good English does not necessarily mean an excessive use of jargon or flamboyant language. Instead, the use of regular words can accurately bring across a message and convey a feeling. This is what makes plain English so wonderful.

The entire experience has been a nervous one. However, this anxiety fuelled my adrenaline, which bubbled up inside me in excitement. This was what kept me going.

For my final speech presentation, I was delighted to know that the topic we had to talk about was "Balestier", which was where my father grew up. Thus, I was excited to tell the memories of his childhood. I was humbled by the opportunity to present my speech during the award ceremony, in front of parents and distinguished guests as well as during my school's morning assembly. I would like to thank my friends and teachers for their endless support, and also my parents who have always guided me."

~ Tammy Yim (314)



Team NY



Group Photo of Finalists



NY5'S 5TH ANNIVERSARY

"NY5 started as an experiment. The best part about it is that it's still an experiment today: in each episode we can try something we have never done before; each year the composition and focus of the show is different based on the members involved."

My favorite moment of leading NY5 is when we have our regular meetings. That's when I get to hear what Nanyang girls are thinking: what Youtube stars make them excited, which Korean pop bands are famous, and which fanfiction they have been reading. And if they want to talk about school work or grades I cut them off. Being a student is so much more than exams. It is about learning to know and then expressing oneself. I see NY5 as a platform that gives students room to speak, to play, to communicate."

~ Mr Michael Chang

"A point of pride with NY5 has always been that it's run by students. Rarely, if ever, do we get everything perfect, but the team is allowed to make mistakes and learn from them. In contrast to the way school life guides us with structure, NY5 is almost radical in the way it treats structure. Ideas for features are never pre-determined, but spontaneous; seniors don't necessarily lead juniors. We all just tumble around together."

~ Chang Yi Ning, Class of 2014

看着空挡已久的录音工作室和设备，成立NY5小组的想法开始萌芽。经过六个月的筹划，张翕如老师 (Mr Michael Chang Hsin-Ju) 录取了一些来自英文学会 (English Society) 和视听学会 (Audio Visual Club) 的学生，成立了第一个NY5小组。NY5代表“南洋5分钟”的意思，因为是五分钟的展播时间。我们的第一次播出十分受欢迎，此后每两个星期的播出内容越来越丰富，时间也慢慢加长。所涉及的内容兼具幽默与严肃，且形式多样化。如今，它是同学们期待的节目。因为有了它，大家不单领悟新知识，还能在享受欢笑的过程中，感受南洋精神。

~ 符杰敏

OUR YEAR HEADS IN 2016

The Year Head team believes that students are all works-in-progress; they all have potential yet to be fulfilled. We work to provide a supportive school culture and environment through establishing clear guidelines for student behaviour, where we guide them to learn from mistakes and encourage them to demonstrate the right values.

The Year Heads actively get to know students as individuals, as a class and as a level in order to understand them and thus meet their needs. We hope that the students see their Year Heads as their mentors who are always there to lend them a listening ear, give them good advice when they are in a dilemma and cheer them on when they feel down.

When they leave the school gates at the end of Secondary 4, it will be with a clear sight of the path to becoming a respected member of society.

"Live life with no regrets!"

~ Mdm Yeo Pei Li, Sec 4 Year Head

"Find meaning in what you are doing and respect others."

~ Mdm Ko Hak Chin, Sec 4 Year Head

长久以来，我母校的校训——“公、仁、诚、毅”深植我心，并成为我的信念与行为准则。

同时，我也希望把这样的信念传承下去，让我的每一个学生受益。

学生们，我不怕你学得慢，就怕你缺乏意志力；我不怕你学不会，就怕你没有自我管理的习惯。谢谢！

~ Miss Tay Soo Eng, Sec 1 Year Head

不经蜕变的痛楚，哪来成长的彩翼？让心跟随你的梦想起飞，你会发现，原来世界比我们想象的更加美丽浩瀚！

~ 李晚辉老师, Sec 2 Year Head

"Be silly.

Be honest.

Be kind."

by Ralph Waldo Emerson

~ Miss Lydia Teo, Sec 3 Year Head



World Scholar's Cup: An Education



*"I am a part of all that I have met
Yet all experience is an arch where thro'
Gleams that untravell'd world
Whose margin fades
For ever and for ever when I move."*

~ Alfred Lord Tennyson, *Ulysses*

It never fails to amaze me how a few lines of poetry can so accurately capture an experience almost too precious to be put into words. The first time I read Alfred Lord Tennyson's *Ulysses* in preparation for the World Scholar's Cup (WSC), I was deeply struck by the titular character's thirst for knowledge, adventure and exploration—the very spirit of WSC.

In WSC, learning is truly a humbling experience. It offers a glimpse of the wider world from a myriad of fascinating angles—examining great thinkers' ruminations of the inner workings of society, dissecting key scientific developments and historical events that altered the course of human history, and mining the works of eccentric artists and authors for gems of wisdom and insight. As I learned more about the

world, I realised how shallow and limited my knowledge was, which sparked my curiosity and drove me to delve deeper.

While WSC provided great intellectual fulfilment at the individual level, the experiences at the competition itself—both the Global Round in Kuala Lumpur and the Tournament of Champions held at Yale University—formed the most memorable part of this journey. With over forty nations taking part, WSC is a truly international competition, with remarkable cultural diversity. The differences that divide us shrank into insignificance when we shared in the exhilaration of dancing at the Scholar's Ball, huddled together in a freezing Connecticut autumn trying to complete the Scholar's Scavenge (an Amazing Race-style bonding event), or revelled in shared admiration of a favourite poet or musician.

Perhaps it seems paradoxical for an academic competition to have taught me that achievement and all its trappings are of secondary importance. Results, rankings and certificates will gradually fade from memory, but the love of learning and the connections forged at WSC will stay with me for a lifetime.

~ Pang Sze Ann (314)

TOP RESULTS FOR 2015 WORLD SCHOLAR'S CUP

TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

Senior Champion : Caitlin Wee (5th Top Scholar), Chan Wen-shuen (6th Top Scholar), Nicole-Ann Lim (2nd Top Scholar)

Junior Runner-Up : Khong Yan Yi, Vivien Tan, Pang Sze Ann (1st Top Scholar)

GLOBAL ROUND

Senior Runner-Up : Caitlin Wee, Chan Wen-shuen, Nicole-Ann Lim (5th Top Scholar)

Junior Champion : Khong Yan Yi (5th Top Scholar), Vivien Tan, Wong Zi Ling

SINGAPORE ROUND

Senior Champion : Caitlin Wee, Chan Wen-shuen (5th Top Scholar), Nicole-Ann Lim (1st Top Scholar)

Senior Runner-Up : Pang Sze Ann (2nd Top Scholar), Shauna Tan, Xiao Wanlin

Senior 5th Place : Cheyenne Ong, Joanne Tan, Kwok Pei Xi

Senior 7th Place Team : Rachel Tey, Vera Goh, Zhang Shenjia

Junior Champion : Khong Yan Yi (4th Top Scholar), Vivien Tan (1st Top Scholar), Wong Zi Ling (10th Top Scholar)

Junior 5th Place : Lee Xuan (7th Top Scholar), Li Anqi, Poh Yu Jun

Junior 6th Place : Eunice Lee, Koh Ro Zen, Michelle Chang (9th Top Scholar)





IN GOOD COMPANY

On 13th March, 2016, Nanyang Girls' High School and Nanyang Primary School performed in a fund-raising concert in aid of the Nanyang Girls' High School Building Fund. With guest musicians, Tee Khoon Tang, Jessica Thompson, Olivia Jeremias and Yuki Kasai, the string ensembles from both schools created a night of music to remember. They were also accompanied by student violinists, Kimberly Serafina Lo Hui Wen and Lynette Koh Rui Ning, as well as young harpists, Yap Min Hui Vera Ann and Sapphire Melody Ho Wei Shao.

How was it working with Nanyang String Ensemble?

Jessica Thompson: This was my first time working with Nanyang and it was good.

Olivia Jeremias: It was very nice. Students were attentive and tried to do the things we told them. It is very rewarding.

Yuki Kasai: You can see sparkle in their eyes when starting a piece. It is very special.

Tang Tee Khoon: Students are very receptive and very attentive. They really try to do what they are talking about and they actually do get results quite quickly.

What more can we offer our students?

Tang Tee Khoon: They have their plates full with school and outside school activities. But if they did not have all these experiences playing with visiting artists, it would diminish the arts education quality in schools.

Do you have any advice for our String Ensemble girls?

Tang Tee Khoon: Keep playing, keep having fun, keep learning. And keep being open to learning.

Yuki Kasai: Keep growing your horizons, and keep plenty of interest in a lot of things.

Jessica: Listen to recordings, go to concerts, hear different people's musical perspectives and you know, figure out what you like and why and what works for you, and what interprets your musical understanding.

Olivia Jeremias: And don't forget to live your life just as you want - having fun, finding a balance. It is really important, especially for music. You can only feel something for music if you have experienced many things in life.**

** Jeremias means that they should be willing participants in life to get the best out of their music experience.

"During rehearsals, we raced in pursuit of perfection, as we readied ourselves to perform alongside world class musicians, violinists Miss Tang Tee Khoon and Yuki Kasai, violist Jessica Thompson and cellist Olivia Jeremias. A masterclass with these accomplished musicians showed us how much we could still improve.

On the big day, under the warm lighting of the auditorium, we played, not as individuals in a CCA with select guest players, but as an ensemble. As the pulse of the music breathed rich harmony, we connected with each other and with the guest musicians not only in the name of music, but in friendship and the spirit of contribution. Our time was indeed spent in good company."

~ Gao Chen, Ivy (414), Quarter Mistress, Nanyang String Ensemble



CAPSTONE PROGRAMME:

Nanyang Students in the Philippines



In November last year, several Secondary Four students participated in the Capstone Programme, which took them to Southeast Asian countries such as Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

The Capstone projects are part of the school's Global Classroom Programme, and provide students with an invaluable overseas service-learning experience. Besides committing fully during the actual trip, students also spend months preparing for the trip, learning about their destination and the work they plan to do there, as well as fund-raising. As part of their fundraising efforts, Capstone Philippines had a car-washing initiative, which took place after the year-end examinations.

Capstone Philippines worked closely with the indigenous people of the Agta tribe, and all of the funds raised were channelled to the materials needed to improve the quality of the school for the village children, as well as the construction of a nursery and community hall. Other service projects included: mangrove reforestation in the Baseco urban slums and documentation of the people living in the Payatas landfill area.



"After the Philippines trip, on which we really reflected and discussed a lot, I realised I wanted to take in more of the world – not necessarily by travelling more widely, but by paying closer attention to the things that were already around me. In Philippines we had journals – it was the first time I ever finished using a notebook. I learned a lot when I took time to observe what was around me and to think about the things around me."

~ Nicole Wong (Class of 2015)

"This trip has taught me to live in the moment. I enjoyed myself immensely being with the villagers in the mountains and coastal areas. Once when I was washing my clothes by the river, I suddenly thought how I felt completely happy then, in the most unadulterated of ways, and I remember thinking that maybe this is what I've been searching so hard for".

~ Ng Yuci (Class of 2015)



"In the SPA school, they do not place that much emphasis on the usual academic subjects we normally learn in schools. Instead, emphasis is placed on indigenous knowledge, which is a combination of their traditional indigenous history and culture and practical skills such as weaving, planting, construction and fishing. The other thing that struck me was their strong family and community spirit. There are literally no locks on doors, and some of the houses don't even have doors. No monetary transactions are seen. The villagers enter one another's houses freely to borrow things, help out, or just to chat, and it is almost as if the whole village is one big family. This stands in stark contrast to Singapore, where we always carefully keep our doors locked. Are we being overly paranoid, locking ourselves up at the expense of relationships with our neighbors and our communal ties? Within their families, they have more interactions and communication than we do. Even without any form of electrical entertainment that we so freely have access to in Singapore, they can talk for hours after dark and spend more quality time together".

~ Penny Shi (Class of 2015)



高淳特校体验式服务学习

坐落在中国江苏南京的南京市高淳区特殊教育学校是一所十五年制特教学校，教育对象是当地学龄前至高年龄的特殊儿童。

从2012年11月开始，特校正式成为我校中三年级环球课室计划的“一间课堂”，在那里，同学们已经连续进行了四年的体验式服务学习。

在高淳特校的学校网页中，他们这样描述着我们：

“活动过程中，南洋女子中学的师生一直保持高度的热情，她们每天都会参与到特校学生的课堂中，和残疾孩子们一起做心愿卡。每天下午第一节的特色课，串珠、扎塑、丝网花，教室里都挤满了学生，用他们灵巧的双手制作着精美的小礼品。她们还参与到特校学生的生活中，为学生们分发水果、精心制作了美味的饼干，整理图书。特校的学生们还和远道而来的姐姐们开展了丰富多彩的文艺活动，交流着跨国的友情。在这4天中，南洋女子中学的学生与特校学生们同吃同住，产生了深厚的友谊。分别时，双方互赠自己亲手制作的小礼物表示感谢。活动虽然结束，孩子们却是依依不舍，临别时纷纷落下了眼泪……本次实践活动不仅让学生们感受了生活，锻炼了能力，培养了意志，更增添了深厚的友谊。”

作为活动的组织者及连续几年的带队老师，我发现每年参与活动的同学都展示了她们对此活动的喜爱之情。特殊儿童的生理缺陷固然会引发同学及老师们的同情，可更重要的是特殊人群特有的善良和纯真深深地触动着我们的心，激发着我们内心深处潜藏着的至真至淳的爱力量，同学们愿意给予特校的孩子们最热忱的拥抱，陪伴他们，关心他们。服务的同时，同学们也从特校的孩子们身上感受着、学习着那份独特的坚强及克服艰难的勇气。每一次，离别时的不舍都让女生们潸然落泪，即使她们回到新加坡仍然会心系远方的伙伴，与他们通信往来。

我坚信一颗爱的种子已经在南洋女生们的心中植根，我也期待有朝一日种子能够发芽茁壮，最终成为擎天巨树撑起一片大爱的天空，也不枉学校寄予她们的厚望，成为对社会有贡献的人。

~ 李晓辉老师

~ 蔡谚彤(311)



"China has a strong emphasis on hospitality, and when the principal and teachers briefed us on their schedule for us, we realized how meticulously planned it was, down to the detail of the refreshments they prepared for us daily. Interaction with the students was particularly humbling – we wanted to be able to contribute to their lives, but we learned so much more from them. They showed responsibility as they cleaned their classrooms and toilets, care as they looked after younger students, and perseverance as they solved sums and threaded beads. Most importantly, they became our friends and showed us what service was.

In service it is never what we can do for others, but what they need. We volunteered to wash our dishes after meals to try to be useful, but were not allowed to wash the students' dishes, and in the end caused more trouble for the kitchen workers as they had to do it all over again. The students even turned out to be better than we were at rainbow looming, showing us methods more complicated than those that we had come to teach.

Instead, they needed friends, just like any one of us, and so some of us made particular effort to spend time with them, bonding over henna and rainbow looming, and discussing the music of TFBoys and BY2. There was no distinction between giver and receiver, teacher and learner; we came together as friends. Despite our differences we engaged in what was perhaps the most meaningful: connection."

~ Tan Joy (411)



Homecoming Funfair 2016



As Nanyang enters its 99th year, we begin the lead-up to our centenary year with a funfair that promises to be fun and to bring together the energy, creativity and teamwork of our Nanyang family.

The funfair is a homecoming event for our alumni, and a get-together for our students, staff, partners, friends and other stakeholders. With its theme centred around our Nanyang family ("家"), we look forward to this event on the 6th of August as a time for all to come together in the Nanyang spirit. Fund-raising for our state-of-the-art underground Sports Hall is only one reason for this funfair. This event will be an opportunity for all in the NY family to work together. There will be lots of new experiences and rich opportunities for learning with the preparations and planning that such a project entails.

Work is already underway for this exciting project: ticket sales were launched during the Chinese New Year period, our students have started planning their stalls, and our partners such as the PSG and Alumni have all stepped in.

We invite all with a stake in NYGH, both past and present, to be part of this exciting event.

Here are some highlights to look forward to!

Project Dengzi

12 contemporary artists have been invited to re-interpret and create artworks from antique traditional Chinese stools from the 1950's. A metaphor for stability and support, these stools have been transformed into collectors' items under the hands of masters such as Tang Da Wu, Zen Teh, Justin Lee and Yeo Shih Yun.

These beautiful art pieces will be up for bidding.

Our very own AEP students and well-known figures from school are also part of this Aesthetic project. Keep an eye out for this, as well as its launch in the Art Outreach Gallery at Gillman Barracks.



Special Performances

Every hour, on the hour, our NYGH CCA groups will be performing in the Auditorium during the funfair. Watch our young talents as they put on the highlights of their CCA performances.

Besides CCA performances, we've lined up some special items by teachers in the hall. But because we usually teach, we need to be persuaded to sing, dance and showcase our other talents. Persuade our teachers to perform by showing your support with your coupons!

Cooking Sessions

In the pipeline are a series of classes that will appeal to your culinary senses. We have, in July, classes conducted by pastry chefs from Les Amis and Les Patisseries. Support the school building fund and have fun in our kitchen with these renowned chefs!



Art pieces - Transformed dengzi

Artist at work - 陈子凯老师

Odyssey of the Mind 2015 - Nanyang Winners



The Odyssey of the Mind (widely known as OOTM) is an international educational program that provides creative problem-solving opportunities for students from kindergarten through university. Team members apply their creativity, and work together to solve fun problems that range from building mechanical devices to presenting their own interpretation of literary classics. Following 4-5 months of hard work, teams will proudly bring their solutions to compete at a national, and then international level if they manage to emerge Champions or First Runners-up. Teams must also participate in the Spontaneous portion of the competition, which requires OOTMers to come up with witty solutions to a question given on the spot. Enthusiasm and creativity of the responses earn the OOTMers bonus points! Thousands of teams from about 25 countries participate in the programme each year.



NATIONAL FINALS

SEC 2 TEAMS

Problem 1 Division 2	: 1 st place
Problem 2 Division 2 Team A	: 3 rd place
Problem 2 Division 2 Team B	: 1 st place
Problem 3 Division 2 Team A	: 2 nd place
Problem 3 Division 2 Team B	: 4 th place
Problem 4 Division 2	: 1 st place
Problem 5 Division 2 Team A	: 3 rd place
Problem 5 Division 2 Team B	: 2 nd place

SEC 3 TEAMS

Problem 3 Division 3	: 1 st place
Problem 5 Division 3	: 2 nd place

2015 has indeed been the best year for Nanyang OOTM yet, with 7 teams earning the honour of representing Singapore at the International Odyssey of the Mind competitions held at Michigan State University, East Lansing.

In May 2015, the Nanyang contingent, consisting of the teams as well as 2 student mentors and 5 teacher coaches, embarked on the second part of their Odyssey of the Mind journey. For the 3-4 days leading up to the competitions, teams not only worked hard in preparation for their big day, but also had the time to explore the university campus, make many new international friends, and engage in a popular OOTM World Finals activity - pin trading. Each country has their own set of pins, with intricate designs unique to the country's culture.

WORLD FINALS

SEC 2 TEAMS

Problem 1 Division 2	: 6 th place
Problem 2 Division 2 Team B	: 2 nd place
Problem 3 Division 2 Team A	: 8 th place
Problem 4 Division 2	: 20 th place
Problem 5 Division 2 Team B	: 8 th place

SEC 3 TEAMS

Problem 3 Division 3	: 5 th place
Problem 5 Division 3	: 8 th place

"OOTM has been life-changing. Those four months in the carpark were probably the most meaningful to me as I watched myself and my team grow. I think the most important takeaway was learning how to work with people. It's a project that is very intense, and that means plenty of fatigue and stress. With seven tired and stressed people working together, we all had to tolerate each other and be incredibly understanding of each other's feelings. But these were the same people who kept us afloat while we were struggling. The passion that we had for OOTM brought us to greater heights. Even though it sounds like we went through hell and back during this project, the rewards we gained were even more satisfying. We overcame all the obstacles and worked through all of our problems to finally have our eight minutes on stage. You don't really think about it while you're performing but after that, you realise how proud you are of those minutes. They were golden. OOTM may seem flashy and fun because of the bright costumes and eye-catching props, but it is the hard work of turning scraps of wood and random materials into these beautiful props that really matters. Similarly, the bonds between our teammates and other OOTMers became very important and special. I know my team will always look back on the memories we have created together!"

~ Nicole Chia (309), P3D3 2015; Emma Huang (412), P5D3 2015



NANYANG'S 2016 CCA SCHOLARS

Meet this year's recipients of the CCA Scholarship, which provides a comprehensive developmental programme for talented students. It includes mentoring and subsidies for instruction to enhance their skills. Each year, the scholarship is awarded to students with outstanding achievements at the national or international level.

"I started playing Pipa when I was in Primary 3. My first performance was at the Esplanade along with a few other students. I could remember that I was really looking forward to that performance and thus excited. In December 2014, I participated in the National Chinese Music Competition, which was my first time participating in a competition so I felt that I need to practice hard for the competition. On stage, I felt very nervous and scared. But when I heard that I had clinched second prize in the Junior Category, I was more than elated that my hard work had paid off. I have discovered joy and the beauty of music through the pipa, and also that a certain strength within me: I will never give up when encountering failures, setbacks, or challenges."

~ Dong Jiayun (102), Chinese Orchestra

"I can still recall the first time that I set out to the vast sea, embarking on my first sailing adventure. I immediately fell in love with the sport as the sea is ever alluring to me. I really have my big sister to thank for this as she was the one who introduced me to this sport.

The sea has its temperament and as a sailor, I also have my ups and downs in this sport. Not every day at sea is smooth-sailing and I soon discovered that it indeed takes a lot of hard work before I can say that I am a competent sailor.

Each time I thought I had overcome an obstacle, a new one popped out like a Jack-In-The-Box. But I soon realised that having obstacles were the most exciting and enriching part of my sport, pushing me to higher, further heights. The sea is boundless in its limits and thus, I can learn endlessly about it and also about myself, especially my own learning attitude. This was the moment when I discovered the magic of my sport and how much I love it."

~ Simone Chen (106), Sailing

"Wushu is my passion. When I perform my routine during competition, I can feel the adrenaline pulsating through my veins, my heart pounding in my ribcage, and my muscles roaring, urging me to do my best.

Two of the important values I have learned from wushu is perseverance and determination, and they have pulled me through my ups and downs. Missing the gold medal by 0.01 point, the fatigue from having to train every day and not being able to complete my homework, seeing my friends play games or going on holidays while I couldn't, going for the national team selection test one day before PSLE, the dilemma of whether to go for trainings or school activities - I never gave up and did my best to overcome each and every one of them.

Apart from keeping me fit and healthy, Wushu has given me a wide circle of friends. As a member of the National Wushu Youth Squad, I and my team-mates train, sweat, bleed and bruise together. But Wushu training also helps me to relax and takes my mind off everything else. Except, perhaps, for my dream of becoming an SEA Games athlete one day and winning for my country.

~ Crystal Chia (112), Wushu

"On the 29th of April, I ran the 100m finals. Running in front of a big crowd for the first time is certainly not an easy job. I was nervous but I managed to embrace the crowd and let their support carry me forward until I went on to clinch the gold medal. I am thrilled about my results as I clocked my personal best of 12.86s; this is my first time running under 13 seconds. The support from my school, the principal, family and friends was certainly a great confidence booster. I cannot thank all my coaches enough for their guidance, which helped me break the national record. I also won a gold medal in the 80m hurdles, an event that once terrified me as the hurdles seemed higher than the primary school ones. I will continue to stay humble and grow as an athlete, one of many in the Nanyang Track and Field team. Together, we will make our school proud, and perhaps one day, I can bring glory to our nation as well!"

~ Elizabeth-Ann Tan (108), Track and Field



Writing for

The International New York Times

Last year, the International New York Times Writing Competition provided students with the opportunity to be published in the Asia-Pacific Edition, which has a readership of around 200,000 people in Asia. The INYT Writing Competition began in 2009 in Hong Kong as part of the InEducation programme, which encourages students to engage with current affairs and become globally-minded by reading the daily newspaper.

The topic last year was “Global Education”, and Tan Shi Ying, class of 2015, sent in an essay about education reform. It was selected for publication and we are thrilled to have her share her thoughts on writing and education.

Extract From Shi Ying's Essay -

Schools continue to define our learning by drawing boundaries for us. We are given a neat and compact view of the world. As such, learning is seldom done on free will and initiative, but often by rule of order instead.

It is also pivotal to realise the paradoxical nature of education as one carried out to “meet the demands of the 21st Century”. Creative and critical thinking, innovation and reflection are indubitably skills important in a child's growth and development today. It helps students, children and youths alike, to comprehend the world and society in deeper depth, and issues with bigger lenses. However, therein lies the conflict. Are we as countries valuing education because it empowers and enables individuals to carve their own voice and build their own values about society and community, or because it is very much a useful and efficient tool in sieving out and producing the “best brains” of a country necessary to sustain her position on a competitive international playing field?

There is hence a pressing need for world leaders and educators to rethink education today: to promote empathy, democracy and human needs, or to serve the needs of businesses and the global economy?”

How did you approach the given topic?

The topic given was ‘global education’, which was very open to personal interpretation. I lean towards the idea of achieving a more balanced, experiential-based learning in schools because I feel the emphasis today is still largely results-driven. Students are pressured to study, to yield the quickest outcome within the limited time they have and to demonstrate their understanding of things learned. Although grading systems and tests to assess students' understanding are needed at times, it disturbs me to observe its damaging psychological impact on students, especially in terms of their confidence, or loss of it when grades seem to determine their worth.

I believe more still needs to be done to bring students beyond their books and grades, thrust them into the realm of experience, let them observe, seek and question. Only then can students better understand both the surrounding environment and people, question assumptions or judgements previously made, and learn.

What are your thoughts on writing?

I feel that a lot of students tend to compare their writing. Many tend to say, “No, I can't write” or “I'm bad at writing” or “My writing's awful”. I'm guilty of it too. I had numerous fears in lower secondary about writing—fear that the points I wanted to bring across would end up distorted on paper, fear that the logic in my writing would disappear, fear of rambling. I think such fear and doubt—that perhaps our writing will be judged because of our inability to “write well”—is something we all subconsciously harbour. But I think this occasional feeling of doubt is actually okay. I'm not saying we shouldn't bother to write properly; we should, and we should try to improve our writing. We should try to make it coherent for readers to better understand and respond to what we share with them through writing. However, what is more important is perhaps to hold on closely to what we believe, what we want to bring across, and be sincere in our writing. Because at the end of the day, I feel that writing is about the exchange of ideas, perceptions, and thoughts. Anyone can write, anyone can share their own stories, and impact someone else. It is this impact which I feel is most valuable to writing.

I'd like to share a quote by Marcel Proust, which I found in Ruth Ozeki's *A Tale for the Time Being*:

“In reality, every reader, while he is reading, is the reader of his own self. The writer's work is merely a kind of optical instrument, which he offers to the reader to permit him to discern what, without the book, he would perhaps never have seen in himself. The reader's recognition in his own self of what the book says is the proof of its truth.”

We can all impact one another with our words. And we need to embrace that!

ETSUKO LIM: SCHOLAR EXTRAORDINAIRE

Etsuko became a President's Scholar in 2015 but was already an outstanding student when she was at NYGH. Currently a Law student at St John's College, Cambridge, she continues to strive for success and pursues her interests with ardour. She is keen on academic research and actively involved in the Cambridge Union, the oldest debating society in the world, as well as the largest student society in Cambridge. She recently returned from the World Universities Debating Championships in Thessaloniki, Greece, and took the time to write to us.



With the Cambridge delegation at the World Universities Debating Championships 2016 in Thessaloniki, Greece



Matriculation



Debating in the final of the Inner Temple Inter-Varsity

At the Winfield Society Dinner with fellow St John's lawyers



Debating in the final of the UCL President's Cup



Matriculation with fellow St John's lawyers

What hopes or goals do you have?

I'd like to make full use of the dizzying array of opportunities that Cambridge has to offer; there is so much learning that can go on outside of tutorials (which have been thoroughly delightful!). In my first term, I took part in eight debate tournaments, worked on a policy paper for a student think-tank, and attended talks by personalities like Julian Assange (via webcam). I'm looking to explore more of the arts and sports this term, and to go beyond my comfort zone.

In the long term, I hope to be someone discerning and disciplined: someone who always remains grateful for all she has been blessed with, and who keeps her loved ones close.

What's the one thing you had to learn the hard way?

Debating used to be a source of feelings of inadequacy, as I compared myself to other debaters and felt inferior. I learned to manage those sentiments by working doubly hard, as well as not being unduly harsh on myself. The university debate circuit is a whole new different ball-game; week after week I debate against a former international champion or another. The playing field here is unbelievably competitive, but that doesn't demoralise me. The challenge of having something to work towards is thrilling, and introduces some semblance of purpose in what could otherwise seem to be a very unstructured university life.

What did you love about Nanyang when you were a student there?

To borrow an idea from Dan Simmons, the essence of my Nanyang experience lay in the subconscious flow of little things: recess with my classmates, laughter-filled debate training sessions, being constantly chided by our teachers for living in a state of filth, rushing to buy fried food on Fridays. Each tiny event was imminently forgettable, but the sum of those hours has created something eternal.

I particularly loved History and Literature lessons. Miss Ong Lee Hua, my History teacher, taught me to never be content with easy answers and to read widely. In between completing a 10,000-word portfolio on the Just War Theory, watching historical films, and holding a mock trial for Stalin, I came to love the sheer rigour and intensity of History lessons.

Literature lessons with Mrs Westvik were similarly enjoyable; we would sit together in a circle and have organic, insightful discussions. Mrs Westvik always encouraged us to be dynamic, so we carried out presentations on Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in the form of poetry, dance, music, and even tarot card readings. I was fortunate to have like-minded, motivated classmates—we collaboratively spearheaded Lit Talks at the Heritage Corner, and often exchanged poetry amongst ourselves for leisure.

Do you have any advice for your juniors?

This is important (more important than working hard)—treasure and be kind to those around you. My classmates were the best part of my Nanyang life. We had heaps of fun together, and everyone shared notes or helped one another selflessly. To this day, they remain some of my best friends.