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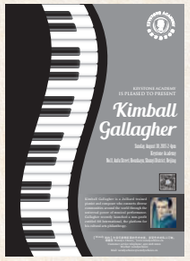

KEYSTONE ACADEMY 北京市鼎石学校

A new WORLD SCHOOL
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A new MODEL OF EDUCATION IN CHINA
全新的教育模式

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LEARNING THE KEYSTONE WAY

在我们鼎石，这样学习

An Anthology: 2014-2015

ONE WAY. MANY PATHS.

When you read this illuminating and inspiring book, and gaze at the stunning art, graphics, and photographs, you will notice that there is something in its title that becomes odd the further you adventure into the book. This oddity is simple. There is in fact no one way of learning at Keystone. Instead, there is a plurality of ways. The Keystone way is a road with multiple paths leading into and out of it. We create ways.

There are many reasons for this. One is that we deliberately bring together modes of learning and methods of teaching from our chosen three great traditions: the Chinese or Eastern, the American or Western, and the International. We should expect, therefore, to encourage techniques and styles from all three, past and present, even anticipating and generating the future.

Another is that our teachers come from these three different backgrounds, and sometimes from different strands within the same background. This adds to the richness and variety that is exemplified in this book.

But perhaps the most important reason is that we emphasize creativity and innovation at Keystone, in our students and teachers. This means that we shall always be restless to explore, and to invent new ways of schooling and being schooled. This is so very exciting. I feel this excitement every morning when I cross from my apartment to our academic buildings. I see it in the faces of our children when they come in the school gate. And it is here, yes right here, in these ways of learning.

Read them, revel in them, cherish them.

Malcolm McKenzie

Malcolm McKenzie
Head of School

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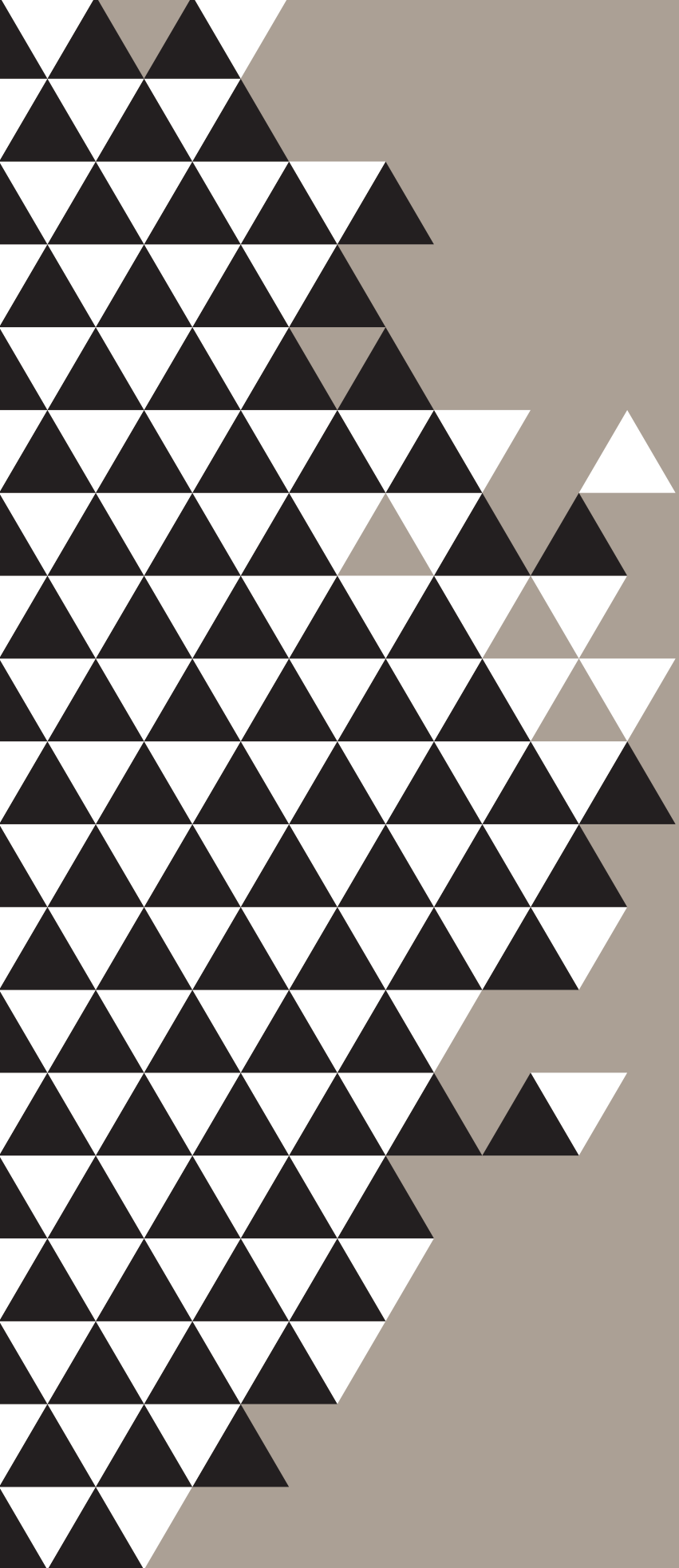


LEARNING IS FUN

WHAT WOULD CONFUCIUS DO?

LEARNING HISTORY IN A MODERN WORLD

If Confucius, Lao Tze, Mo Zi and Lady Justice were standing at a pedestrian crossing, waiting for the green light, do you think each of them would wait for the light or jay walk? This is one of the questions students from grade 7 tackled in one of their ancient history lessons on Chinese civilizations. And if history repeats itself, then it is perhaps only natural to look back to ancient civilizations, and their founding philosophies for solutions to modern day challenges. Jay walking may not be the biggest problem of our times, but it is a simple, if annoying, civic challenge to start with while studying along the continuum of the past, present and future.

LOOKING BACK TO THE FUTURE

The Chinese Thread, one of the school's three keystones, is not a symbolic commitment to "promoting Chinese culture and identity in a world context." It is an educational goal. There are many ways in which the seeds of this essential keystone are planted across the fabric of the school, one of which is a blossoming Chinese Thread curriculum called, China and the World. This signature Keystone curriculum – focused mainly in Humanities and Arts – is incorporated into middle and high school, and runs alongside the respective International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes and relevant subjects.

For instance, when grade 7 stu-

dents research Confucian and Taoist ways of ancient China in the hope of finding solutions to today's problems, their World Civilizations lesson focuses on ancient Greece. "Sometimes, I can draw historical comparisons when the lessons are aligned.," said grade 7 student, Makar Cherepanov. As an international student, Makar also feels that the Chinese Thread curriculum helps him get a deeper understanding of China's rich history and culture within a global perspective.

"We steer students towards critically thinking about historical connections, and help them draw links where possible," said middle and high school Humanities teacher, Vivek Bammi, adding, "For instance in grade 8, when they learn about the Silk Road, its history cannot be seen only from a Chinese perspective. The social and political impact of the Silk Road was felt far and wide, and vice versa."

THE KEYSTONE WAY

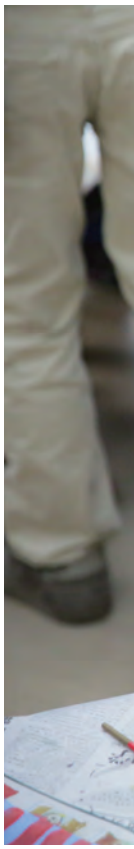
It is often difficult to distinguish between the vast numbers of non-Chinese schools in Beijing with international curriculums. Our students are nurtured and taught with the Keystone factor, which not only includes the widely-used international pedagogies of critical thinking, inquiry-based knowledge acquisition, and other related skills, but also an unparalleled understanding of China and the world.

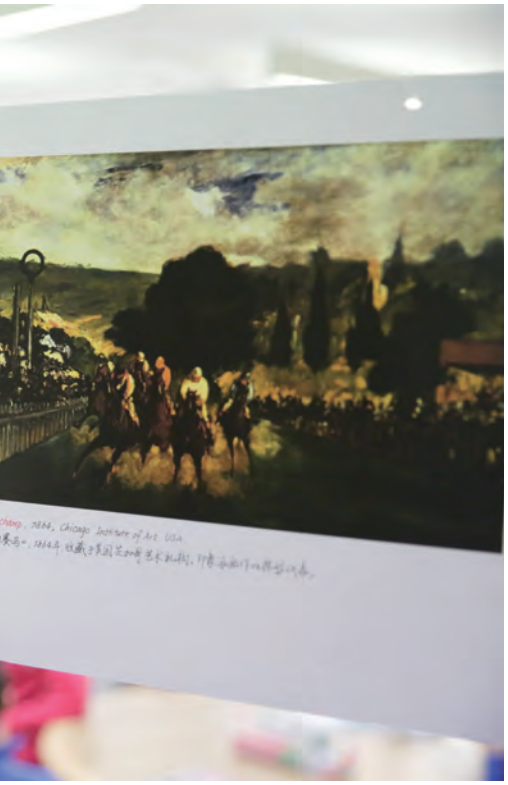
A Chinese student will benefit from this global education strongly rooted in the local history, tradition, and a robust sense of self. Meanwhile, for expatriate students, the school's emphasis on the best of global and Chinese learning methods means a solid academic foundation like no other with a professional competitive edge honed by thoroughly understanding the culture of one of the largest economies today – China.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO AN IPC UNIT

A lesson in a textbook read through and explained in one or as many class periods are required, followed by regurgitating exercises, is a standard teaching and learning model. And each class is different, unrelated, and each subject follows its own plan. In such an environment, students learn but perhaps miss out on opportunities to think and reflect; they memorize but may not understand; they can repeat but may struggle to apply.

The International Primary Curriculum (IPC) used in Keystone's primary school provides a teaching and learning framework that tackles these shortcomings of the standard approach in a holistic manner. The IPC curriculum is composed of units. Each unit, which lasts between six to eight weeks, is a thematic area of learning that is used by teachers to plan, create and teach classes until the end of the unit. Parents are apprehensive at times at the thought of a textbook-less teaching program, but unlike the standard approach, the IPC curriculum provides a set of goals for each unit. One of the most interesting aspects of the IPC is that the same unit is used by teachers across many subjects at a particular grade level. This means that students learn concepts, themes and content in a connected and comprehensive way from Math to Music.





THEY SEE THE WORLD THIS WAY

For instance, one of the units in grades 4 and 5 focuses on how people see the world not only through words – poetry and prose – but also through art and music. The unit is called 'They See The World This Way.' So while grade 4 teacher Simon Wight introduced students to Picasso and required them to understand his work through the artist's biography, grade 4 Chinese teacher Shi Mei exposed students to impressionism. "The goal of the unit is to guide students to see and learn how different artists see the world and express their own opinions of the world, then the children should reflect on their own ways of understanding the world and practice expressing their own opinions. They should understand that different people have different understandings of the world, and that they should be tolerant of all," said Ms. Shi.

The specific learning outcomes of this unit are remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Ms. Shi felt her students are close to the complete achievement of these outcomes. For instance she remarked, "One of my grade 5 students chose to read a poem by Indian author Rabindranath Tagore. At first he sat quietly with the poem, and then he slowly began reading it in a low soft voice. As soon as he began explaining the poem to me, I asked him to stop because from the way he was softly reading the poem I knew he had understood it well." Ms. Shi also recalled how

one of her grade 4 students analyzed one of 35 impressionist paintings hung in the classroom. She was amazed at how her student looked at Berthe Morisot's *Balcony*, and interpreted that it was a moment of joy as a busy mother finds time to spend with the child.

Similarly, Dance teacher Qi Yuetong was impressed with her grade 4 students when she asked them to create a short dance performance that demonstrated their understanding of dance itself as a way to express their understanding of the world through movement. "At noon one day, they came and showed me what they had prepared. I was pleasantly surprised by what they had done. It was beautiful," said Ms. Qi.

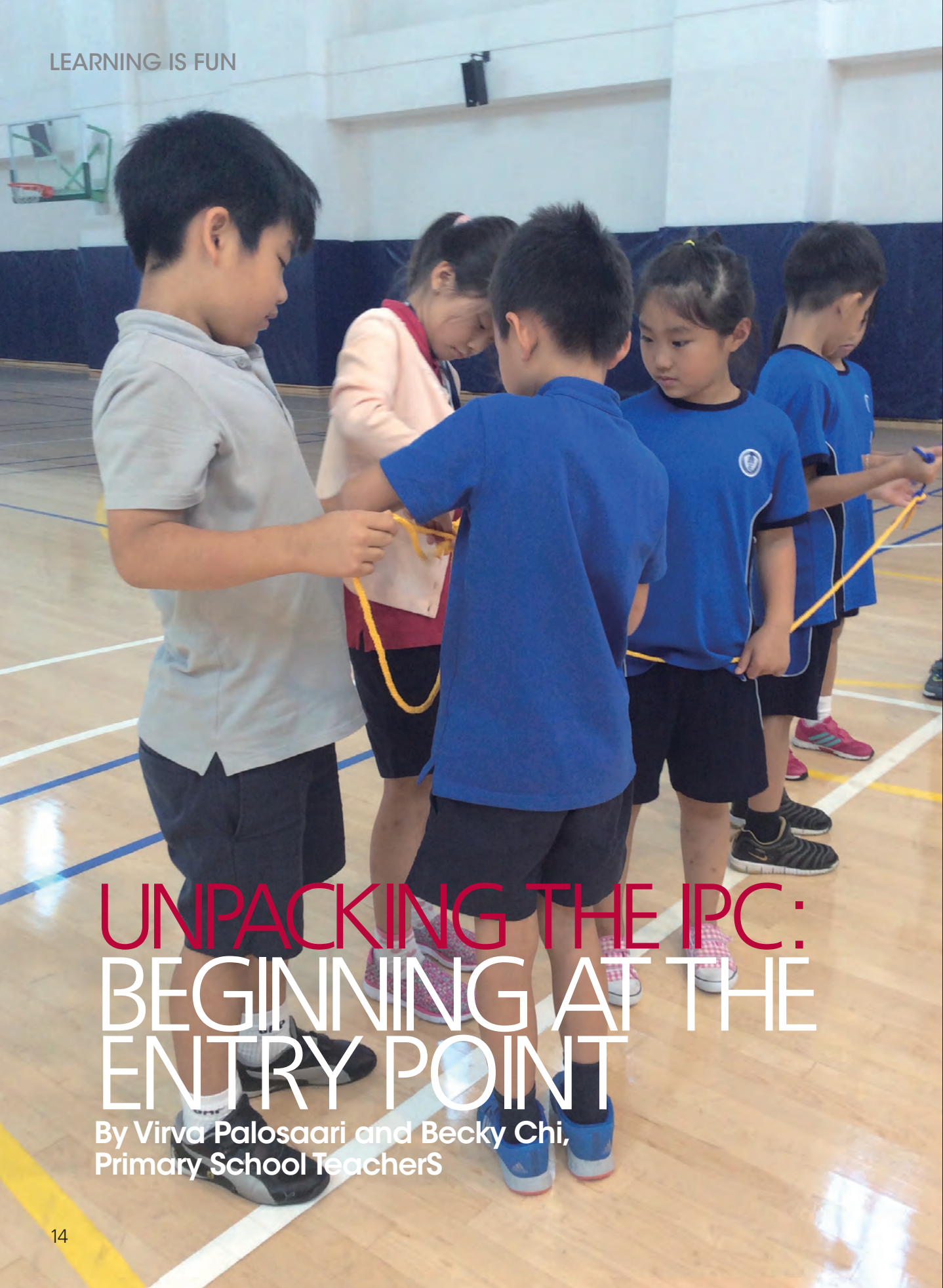
BENEFITS OF THE IPC

Both teachers and students benefit from the IPC. While choosing units, their relevance to the Chinese culture and instructional feasibility for a bilingual setting is considered. Once a unit is decided upon by the leadership faculty in primary school, the teachers plan as a team what aspects of the thematic unit they will teach. The team planning of a unit leads to better conceptual coordination across subjects, and a better teaching plan. Following the team planning, teachers individually create and plan exciting lessons and engaging activities to teach students a subject's content over the six to eight weeks. When teachers are themselves being creative, critical and reflective, there is not doubt that they expect the same, if not more, from their students.

As the same unit is used across subjects, students benefit from cross-disciplinary comprehension and application. And application is an important element of the IPC pedagogy, whether it is using Picasso's style of artistic expression in Art class to demonstrate their own impressions of the world, or learning photography to capture the world, or participating in a poetry recital competition to express how they understand the world. From learning, writing, and drawing to remembering, understanding, and analyzing, the IPC exposes students to opportunities that hone their multiple intelligences. Most of all, owing to Keystone's bilingual immersion environment, students learn concepts in Chinese and English, making them culturally equipped to understand the world better.

'TREE SCENE' BY
PAOPAO

Starry night



UNPACKING THE IPC: BEGINNING AT THE ENTRY POINT

By Virva Palosaari and Becky Chi,
Primary School TeacherS

The first stage of the IPC learning cycle is the Entry Point. Each and every unit of the IPC begins at this stage. If we were to use an analogy, the entry point in the IPC is where students jump into the deep-end of the swimming pool so that they learn to swim by themselves. It is a stage of conceptual, cognitive and thematic immersion. This is how the IPC describes stage 1:

"It is an activity or event to immerse the children into the theme. The goal of the Entry Point is to get every child excited and engaged in the theme. It also provides a common platform so that every child has an experience to draw from as they progress through the unit."

Teachers use the entry point to get students curious about a theme, get them excited about doing the activities, and unconsciously realize and absorb the conceptual elements of a unit. This may sound sophisticated for primary school students, but it is not. The self-awareness, and self-realization of students as young as 7 and 8 years old are amazing!

GETTING INTO THE NITTY-GRITTY

In the introductory article, we use the example of the grade 2 unit, *Living Together*. We continue with this unit, and tell you what we planned as our entry point activities, and what the students learned at the end of these. We planned two entry-point activities for the combined grades of 2K and 2L – the more, the merrier.

As teachers, we wanted our students to experience team building through the activities we planned, so we chose 'Bat Those Balloons,' and 'Knotted Ropes.'

'Bat The Balloons' is where groups of students make sure to keep ten balloons in the air at the same time. The balloons were introduced one at a time. Once all ten balloons were introduced, we recorded how long a group could keep all their balloons in the air. We allowed students to best their recorded time, so that they could learn from previous mistakes, and improve their team tactics. If you think this was a piece of cake, the next one is a bit more "knotty."

How does a group of students, each using only one hand, untie evenly spaced knots on an 8m long rope? Each group holds their own rope, which is why each student in the group has only one hand to lend to the exercise. And no one in a group can let go off the rope. Interesting? The students thought so too.

WORKING TOGETHER: THEY SAID IT!

In the classroom discussion that followed, we asked our students, "What worked, or did not work in your group activities?" "Could you have completed these activities on your own?" and so on and so forth. All the students agreed that they could not have worked on their own. Most of them said, "We needed to work together!" and some even said, "We needed to cooperate." Though the entry point of the IPC does not involve subject-specific knowledge or terminology, it is encouraging to hear the development of children's vocabulary. And, wherever possible, we provide students with vocabulary in order to help students express themselves better, and understand concepts better.

We were impressed by the students' observations about proper communication and cooperation. A few students even commented on proper behavior, such as listening to ideas, not fighting in groups, and apologizing after a fight. All this from just two entry-point activities, rather amazing! Don't you think?

By completing the challenges, the children drew out the importance of teamwork, trust and support, essential elements of *'Living Together.'* These concepts will underpin many of the tasks and lessons – conceptual and subject-specific – that the children continue to explore throughout this unit. The entry point is a great diving board because it brings out the students' voices. This means that at the very first stage of the IPC, students and teachers build the conceptual, contextual and cognitive foundations together.

UNPACKING THE IPC: IT'S HARVEST TIME!

By Judy Jiang and Andrew Thomas, Primary School Teachers

Our colleagues Virva Palosaari and Becky Chi wrote about the first stage of the IPC learning cycle – the Entry Point. Here, we tell you about the next two stages – Knowledge Harvest and Explaining the Theme – and we continue with the same IPC unit, *'Living Together.'*

After the exciting Entry Point activities, students' interest in this unit has been piqued. This excitement needs to be channeled towards achieving the learning goals set for the unit. The Knowledge Harvest stage is where we start the channeling process. In order to route their curiosity in the right direction, we must first know what our students already understand about living together and working in communities. Remember that they have experienced it in parts during the Entry Point activities.

HARVESTING THE OLD FOR THE NEW

As teachers, we harvest the students' knowledge through individual or team activities. In the case of this unit, the first activity involved individually drawing groups or communities a student belonged to. After this, students worked in teams to discuss the question: What is the key to working in a group successfully?

The two activities are stages in the harvest. While in the individual activity, students may provide a sense of what they know about communities, it is in the group work that their own understandings may shift,

or be challenged because of discussions with other students, leading to a collective understanding and compromise. Each group summarizes their discussions, and shares with the rest of the class.

Teachers can harvest what the IPC calls a mind-map at this stage. At times, teachers make a physical map of what was harvested. This helps teachers to add new knowledge on to the map of what they already know. It also helps students see how their learning has progressed, and how the new knowledge is connected to the old. This stage where students tell us what they know is quite exciting for the teachers too.

MAPPING THE BIG PICTURE

Now it's the teacher's turn to do some talking. In the 'Big Picture' stage, otherwise known as 'Explaining the Theme,' the teacher maps out the key elements, general concepts and overall objectives of the unit for the students. This prepares the students for the rest of the unit, and helps teachers stream their curiosity more systematically. Research has proven that students perform better when they are aware of the learning expectations.

It benefits kids to know the objectives in advance. As the unit progresses, students remember the learning goals, understand them, and internalize them. This is also where we introduce the subject-specific links conceptually, whether it is Society, Geography, History, Arts or international mindedness. Mapping the cross-disciplinary links is an addition to a student's preparation for the unit.

So, while the Entry Point lets students explore and experience the core of an IPC unit without prior knowledge of it, the Knowledge Harvest and Big Picture stages shift gears to situating their experience within the learning goals of the unit. Firstly this process allows students to take ownership of their learning, and secondly teachers can better design lessons and instruction based on the students' existing understandings. It may seem that the fun is over, but it is only beginning. Wait for the next installment of the IPC series to know more.

UNPACKING THE IPC: GETTING TO THE NITTY-GRITTY

By Moira Pinfold and Pei Jiang

The previous two articles took you through the initial development of an IPC learning cycle within the unit, *'Living Together.'* Now that we have harvested our students understanding of what it means to live together, it is time for students to delve deeper. However this time, they do so within specific subjects, and this case, they were: Society, History, Geography, Arts and International Mindedness. These are the stages of Subject Research Activities, and Subject Recording Activities.

STUDENTS ASK THE QUESTIONS

According to the IPC, "research activities are experiential, exploratory, collaborative activities applying group working skills. Others are designed to develop individual inquiry and resilience. All tasks are open-ended to encourage children to ask their own questions related to the theme."

One of our individual activities was to interview a parent about their job, and how the job contributed to the community, and to society as a whole. Another team exercise was when students went out into the local Houshayu community – the post office, bakery, convenience store, subway station and more – and asked people they met about their jobs, and their roles. While the first exercise fell within the subject area of Society, the second activity fell within Geography.

We guide the students with the questions, but allow them to explore and ask what they want. For instance, in a History research exercise involving the Keystone community, we

encouraged students to reflect on questions such as, what do you think about Keystone? Why was the school built in Houshayu? This enables them to be creative. Students have also been taught about some of the concepts, and have already been informed of the learning goals in the Big Picture stage. So they are ready to ask the questions. We then invited Dennis Guo, Keystone COO, as a guest speaker to tell us about the school's History and origins. Here, students are able to rethink their answers, and ask more questions.

FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

The immediate and the international are equally important components of learning through the IPC. Students are exposed to the global dimensions of every unit and theme, also known as international mindedness. In the unit of '*Living Together*,' students watched videos, PowerPoint presentations, and YouTube clips about celebrations around the world.

We researched Guy Fawkes Day (England), Day of the Dead (Mexico), Diwali (India) and Halloween (USA). Students were excited about finding similarities and differences between celebrations in China and other parts of the world.

IT'S TIME TO PROCESS

The recording stage is a chance for students to process and present their research through the full range of their multiple intelligences. However, it must be remembered that the Research and Recording stages are not mutually exclusive stages. Very often these stages overlap or occur in tandem, where, for instance, research in the local community was recorded as interviews with local residents took place, or when students recorded the interview with their parents as they spoke to them. Students are introduced to multiple ways of recording research, such as brainstorm charts, labels, posters, models, and written recounts of events.

As teachers, the research and recording helps us assess a student's progress against the learning goals set for each subject within a unit. In the case of *'Living Together,'* couple of the learning goals, for instance, in Society are: Know that different groups have different purposes, and know that people have different traditions, celebrations and ways of living. On the other hand for Geography, students should be able to: describe the main geographical features of the area immediately surrounding the school, make simple maps and plans of similar locations, and so on and so forth.

Knowledge and skills are assessed at the end of each component. The skills are observed and assessed whilst the children are doing them. The knowledge can be assessed in a variety of ways depending on the task either orally or in written form. Students can also evaluate their own learning by identifying what they did well, and how they could improve.

Allowing students to reflect on their own research and finding enables them to take learning to the next level – being

creative and innovative. In one art exercise, students modeled their vision of Keystone Academy. Another activity, in small groups, gave them the opportunity to plan and draw a new community using basic mapping skills. The children discussed what their community needed to have and what they thought a community could benefit from. Their ideas were inspiring and futuristic with a flying car school, police robots, and other exciting features. It is a true and deep learning when students can apply knowledge acquired and concepts studied to imagine beyond what they know, see and experience.

UNPACKING THE IPC: LEARNING IS A CELEBRATION!

By Becky Chi and Virva Palosaari

This is the last stage in the IPC learning cycle – Exit Point. We look at what the exit point means in the learning process, and how it is realized, in this case at the end of the grade 2 IPC unit – *Living Together*.

The exit point has two main objectives. Firstly, to help children pull together their learning and reflections on one unit spread over several weeks, and secondly to celebrate this learning that has taken place, and learning goals that have been achieved. As a special celebration of completing the unit 'Living Together,' we planned a special exit point activity for our students.

We wanted the students to share their learning with one of their communities. We chose the school community, and invited staff members from different departments of the school to partake in the celebration by being the audience. The students put in a lot of effort in preparing for their presentation. They practiced their reading fluency, which helps them pay attention to details, and to speak confidently in English before an audience. Presenting before an audience, and expressing themselves confidently, enables children to understand what they have learned in greater depth, and to remember their lessons with greater accuracy and longevity.

At the end, we organized a celebration, especially because our students had learned that all communities have celebrations. It was only fitting to end this unit with a celebration of our own. In true festive style, the students performed the song, 'You and Me,' that they had learned in Music class as part of this unit. We felt this was a great song for the students to perform together. And as the end of the unit coincided with Diwali, the Indian Festival of Lights, students performed the song holding candles they had made. We also had a little treat – what's a celebration without food! It was a wonderful celebration of our learning journey.

All of the work grade 2 students were involved in throughout this unit of work was specially designed and planned to help each child reach their learning goals. Children were involved in reading, researching, writing, illustrating, and working on their own and in groups. We guided and assessed them through the many learning activities, and by asking children to explain their work. This helped us determine their levels of understanding, and in turn refine future learning goals.

Learning through the IPC is a fun journey. It is especially fulfilling for teachers to see students working and learning with such great enthusiasm.

MAKING A MARK AT THE NEAMC

A FIRST MILESTONE FOR STUDENTS

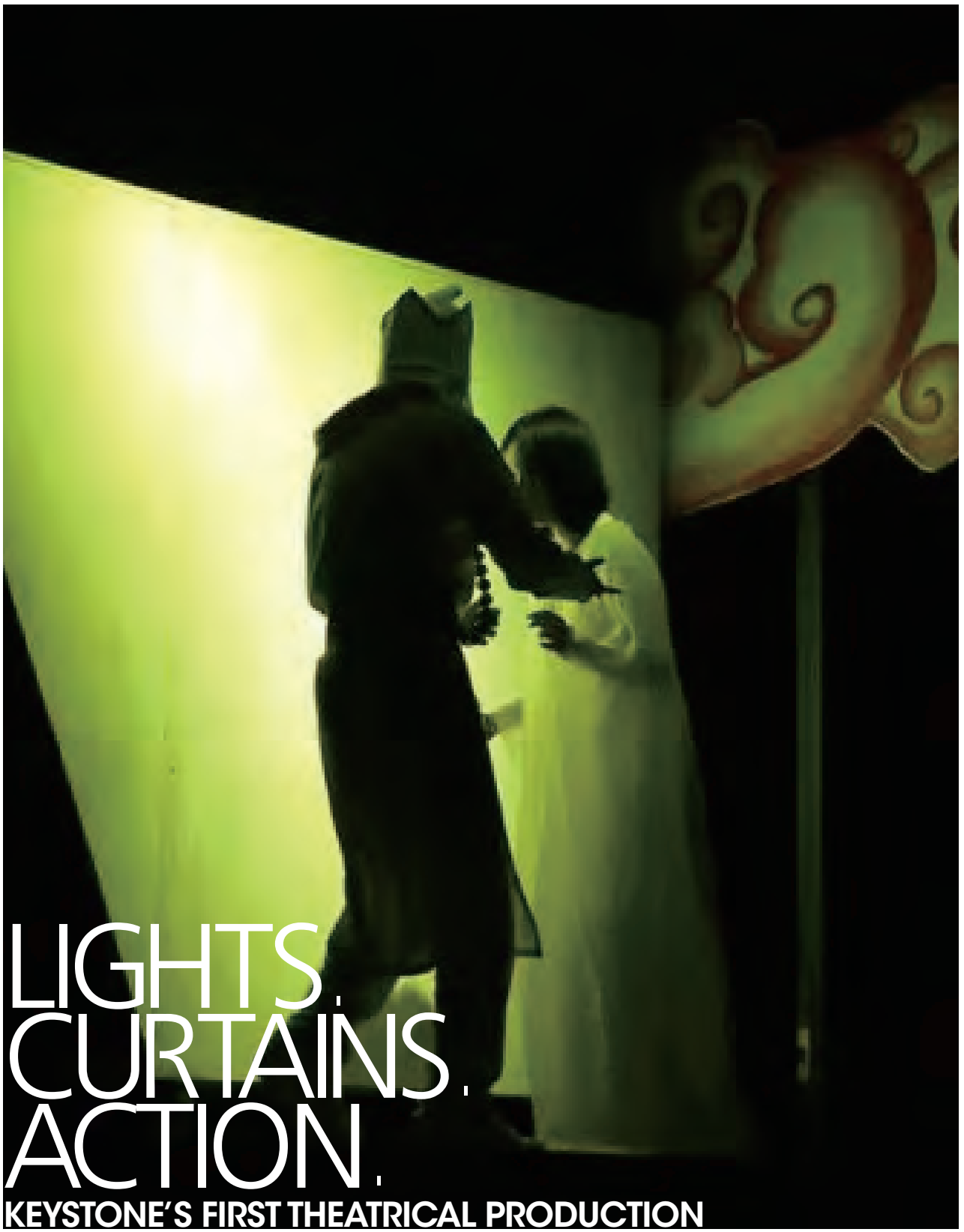
"Everybody at this year's math competition is going to remember Keystone," said middle school Math teacher Yang Zhaohui with excitement. And this Keystone teacher has reason to be excited and proud of his students. It was a milestone moment for Keystone Academy as six students from middle and high school made their mark at the 2015 North East Asia Math Competition (NEAMC). Beating 36 schools and over 100 students, Keystone students played hard and fast to win second place. Two teams of three students each participated in the NEAMC. The contestants were Winston Jiang, Jack Peng, Tony Wang, Paul Pu, David Zhang and Jason Wang. This was Keystone's first participation in such a regional competition.

TRAINED TO WIN

"I have participated in many math competitions but this was my first as a team," said Jack Peng. His teammate and classmate, Winston Jiang, added, "We focused on the participation, and we didn't go thinking we would win. But we trained a lot, and Mr. Yang helped us a lot in preparing for this competition. Our team strategy was to capitalize on each of our individual strengths. For instance, Jack is good with geometry, and Tony is good with coding and decoding. Our individual strengths help us work better as a team." It is Mr. Yang's teaching and training approach that the students were most thankful for. Grade 8 contestant, Paul Pu, who was part of the second team of two said, "It is not just that we practice math problems, but also the different kinds of math problems Mr. Yang gives us. In this way, we also practice problem-solving techniques. This is a better way to learn math; not how I was taught or trained before."

ADDING UP THE VICTORIES

The NEAMC is made up of several rounds of individual and group contests. The group contests include an energizer, team and passback rounds. Both Keystone teams rallied points in the passback round – a tough head-on contest between schools that tests both individual and team strengths at the same time. Jack Peng was overjoyed to remember how team one took first place in this round, "I couldn't believe that we won. And it was amazing when they announced that Keystone team two came second." Tony Ma of team one was quick to add that the passback round is especially difficult "because I cannot make a mistake. If I make a mistake then my teammates will also make a mistake. It was true teamwork." The students also demonstrated their math prowess in the individual round. Out of the more than 100 contestants, Keystone students ranked in the top 50. Mr. Yang hopes the stellar performance by the six students will inspire younger teams in Keystone to work hard and prepare for the future. This is just the beginning and a big boost for the morale of students and the team spirit of the school.



LIGHTS. CURTAINS. ACTION.

KEYSTONE'S FIRST THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

"Now when my friends and classmates think of the Monkey King, they will think of me," said a confident Victor Lu. With an energetic leap and restlessness that characterize the birth of one of China's most classical literary figures, this grade 9 student brought the fabled and beloved Monkey King or Sun Wukong to life in Keystone's very first theatrical production – *Journey To The West* – on 24 April 2015. Director and middle and high school Drama teacher, Chloe Keller, chose a translation by Chinese Literature scholar at the University of Chicago, Anthony Yu, adapted by playwright Mary Zimmerman. Ms. Keller felt this was the perfect choice for the school's first strides on stage because "the search for personal spiritual truth and identity is current and ongoing. Each generation searches for meaning, each person journeys through life to understand their destiny. This story and journey are reflective of each of our personal journeys, here and now."

THE JOURNEY

It has not only been a learning experience and journey of self-exploration for Ms. Keller with over 25 years of experience teaching drama, but especially for the 25 students in the play, most of whom were doing theatre for the first time. Victor Lu remembers how the students did not take the initial rehearsals seriously. "But with each passing day and every practice session, we understood the significance of this project. We also began bonding and growing as a team, as friends, and we realized that the play was our responsibility." The fruition of this journey was evident on stage as each actor and the whole production was performed outstandingly with a gravitas and graciousness that comes from having understood and having journeyed in spirit and soul, individually and collectively.

FINDING NEW IN THE OLD

The play itself has journeyed in many ways. It was no longer just a 16th century story of Tripitaka, a monk in search of Buddhist scriptures. It was adapted to modern times in language, costumes and scene setting. The play was in English, which in many ways brought together the East and the West, and the cross-cultural communication almost seemed effortless together with the set design and music. "Initially I was unsure of the changes and modern-day adaptations made to the classic Monkey King story. When one thinks of the Monkey King, a specific image comes to mind. But in our play he was different; he looked different. Also, the writer had changed some aspects. But when I understood the whole play, I was impressed. It is a very creative play, and I admire the writer and her creativity," explained grade 8 student John An, who played the role of Tripitaka. At the end of an engaging 2-hour play as Tripitaka walks away with Guanyin, what impressed the audience most was the creativity of the students, and their ability to marry their understanding of a Chinese classic and its performance with contemporary flare.

ERIC THE SHEEP HAS A MATH PROBLEM:

GRADE 6 OFFERS A FEW SOLUTIONS

Eric the sheep has no patience, and wants to jump the shearing queue of 50 sheep that are ahead of him. So, if Eric cut in front of two sheep every time the farmer shears one, how many sheep will the farmer have sheared before Eric gets to the front of the line? Think back, think hard, and try and recollect that formula you learned in middle school to help Eric. Don't remember? It wouldn't be a surprise if you don't. "Memorizing a formula is not the answer to Math problems," says middle and high school Math teacher Prisana Heaton, adding, "And learning Math is not only about learning formulas." Ms. Heaton's grade 6 students are well aware of this.

Comprehension, linguistic and cognitive, is an essential ingredient to doing well in Math. So without understanding the problem, a well-memorized formula can still fade away. Ms. Heaton gets her grade 6 students to investigate Eric's situation in two parts – firstly, by breaking down the problem to a smaller, manageable number, and secondly, by pretending to be sheep. As a queue of students enacted Eric's situation, gradually adding more students to the queue, they quickly recognized a pattern. Having extracted a pattern,

own. "I try to teach my students to think because when these students sit for the IB Diploma in high school, they need to think creatively. It is not about whether a student can solve the same problem every time, but if the student can apply the same skills to solve different problems. They will not get textbook Math problems in an IB exam."

Pretending to be sheep was fun for the students, yet a tangible approach to finding a solution, and understanding patterns, which is part of the larger unit called number systems in the grade 6 Math curriculum. This is only the first of five MYP Math units that will be taught this academic year. Ms. Heaton also introduced a handful of other problem solving techniques to her students, including simulation, modeling, computer programming and, not least of all, calculating using a formula. And just as they enacted the problem as a group, the students also worked on the other techniques in teams. This enables peer learning and team building, a good formula for any healthy learning environment.

Although Eric the sheep's problem was mathematical, students were learning to investigate and communicate not only the problem, but also the solutions and formula, and how they arrived at these. Such an in-depth grasp of Math puts students on a solid foundation for the IB Diploma and beyond.

IN DARKNESS, THERE IS LIGHT

GRADE ONE LEARNS ABOUT SOUND AND LIGHT

A mysterious room appeared at the end of hallway, on the fifth floor of the Primary School building. Students from grade 1 hovered eagerly hoping for a sneak peek.

As the clock struck 10am, primary school English teacher Virva Palosaari took the grade 1 students to the secret room. Resisting temptation to throw open the door, students waited as best they could for the next five minutes as their curiosity grew to animated levels. At 10:05am, as if by magic, the door to the mystery room opened ceremoniously. A chorus of "wow" echoed in the hallway, as the students saw the surprise that their teachers had prepared for them.

SECRETS REVEALED...

The grade 1 teachers had conceptualized a light and soundproof room, as a way to immerse students in the basics of sound and light, and to get them excited about the science behind it. The '*Look and Listen*' unit of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) is designed to enable students to understand the principles of light and sound. And the mystery room was the teachers' brainchild to make the unit even more exciting.

To pique their excitement, teachers kept the mystery room a secret to the very end. This also deepened the students' experience of discovery and inquiry as they explored the various aspects of sound and light in the secret room. "We wanted to let the students experience 'light and sound' for themselves!" That was the idea that prompted Jiang Junyu and Emma Folo, primary school teachers, to conceptualize the room of mystery. And both teachers remarked how the room was made possible with plenty of help from other teachers.

The results were equally remarkable: students explored the various objects and instruments in the room with unquenchable curiosity, and they tested them, listened to them, and played with them. "Here, science is very real. They can see it, touch it, or hear it," explained Ms. Jiang, adding, "The classroom itself does not produce any sound; the students created sounds with their hands, and discovered them with their ears."

The illusion of a night sky with brilliant pulsating starts created with an ordinary home lamp projector mesmerized students. Or, a sound was played to students, and they were then challenged to identify the instrument that produced it. They listened attentively and learned to see and hear in darkness and silence.

Home planetarium/xylophone and bells created big impressions in the darkroom

The science of sound was fun for students

Students forming a circle around their teacher, Mr. Ferlisi, to learn how to play the various "musical instruments"

There were several objects and instruments for students to explore

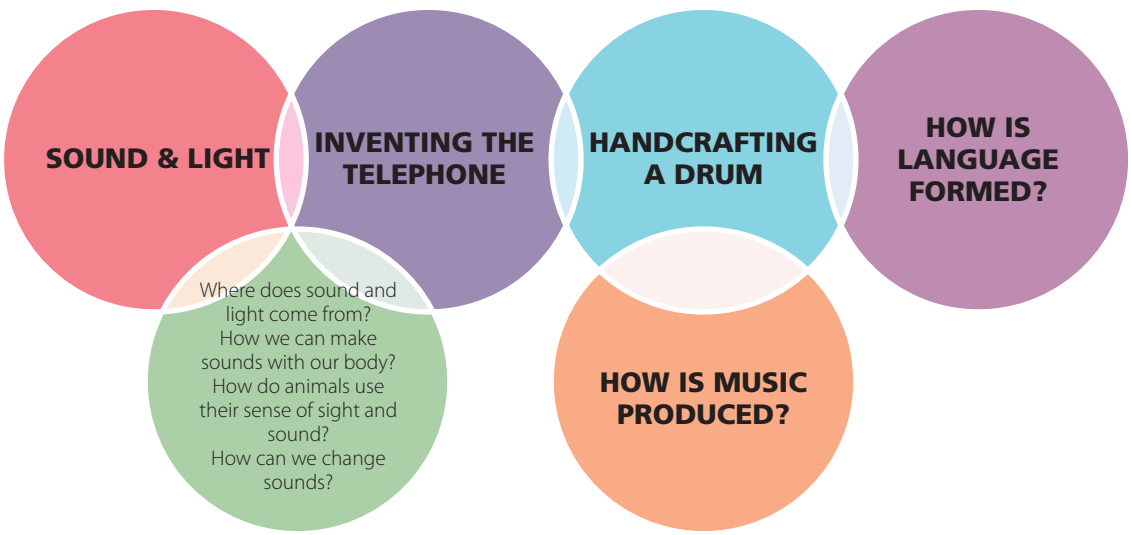
So that's where the twinkling stars are coming from

There were several objects and instruments for students to explore

Relaxing under a canopy of stars

IPC SCIENCE: WHY DO WE STUDY *"SOUND & LIGHT"*?

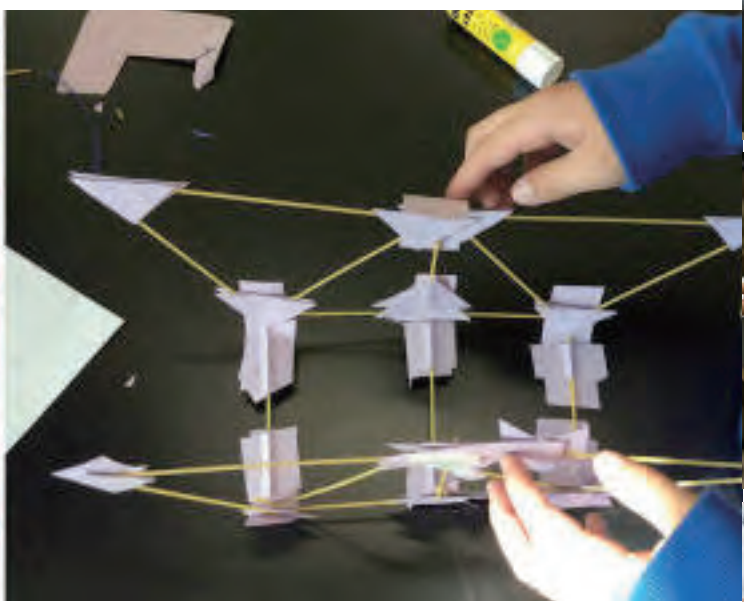
Have you ever wondered how you can hear and how you can see? You can hear a dog barking and you can see it wag its tail. You can hear me talking and you can see me smiling at you. What makes hearing and seeing possible? These are some of the questions that underpin the unit of *'Look and Listen'*



Experiencing light and sound is the first step – the entry point – to the IPC unit. Through the learning cycle, teachers use a variety of classroom activities to help students understand the underlying concepts, such as where do sound and light come from? How can we make sounds with our body? What sounds can we make with objects? What happens when sounds enter our ears? How does the sense of sight and sound differ between animals and humans?

After familiarizing themselves with the underlying principles, students moved onto learning how light and sound were used to invent new technologies. Topics included the invention of the telephone, and the transition from telephones to mobile phones. The close connection between light and sound was also explored. Students then reflected on their lessons, and presented their understanding through art or writing projects.

"Science is within our reach, it is not all that complicated," said Ms. Jiang, adding, "Science is fun. At this level, we want students to be interested in Science through some engaging activities, which we hope will plant the seeds for their future academic interest in the subject." Developing interest is crucial, especially in the lower grades through a series of carefully designed and accessible learning modules. Just as the darkroom provided an interactive space for the students from grade 1, learning at Keystone is about inquiry, and about returning to the real world. Here, the barriers between classroom, books, and the world we live in dissolve and overlap with each other. Isn't this how learning is supposed to be?



DON'T EAT THAT SPAGHETTI!

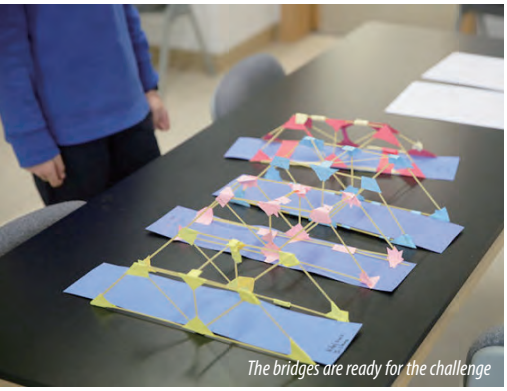
BUILDING GOLDEN BRIDGES

What can you do with a packet of spaghetti, other than making it into a meal? How about building a bridge that can withstand the weight of 1kg? Are you up for the challenge?

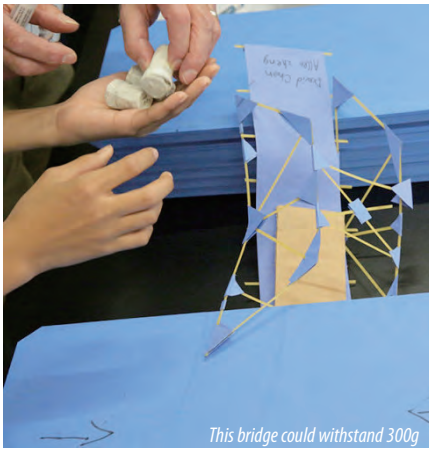
Middle and high school Design teacher, George Baxter, conceptualized this project for his grade 6 students to teach them all about 'forces.' Once they learned the mechanical concepts needed for the challenge, such as tension and pressure, familiarized themselves with the materials, understood the basics of engineering, the student teams were ready to make their bridges the most resilient.

With the four models lined up, it was the moment of truth! Mr. Baxter would carry out a stress test using weights from 100 grams up to 2,000 grams. The bridge that could withstand the heaviest load would win the challenge.

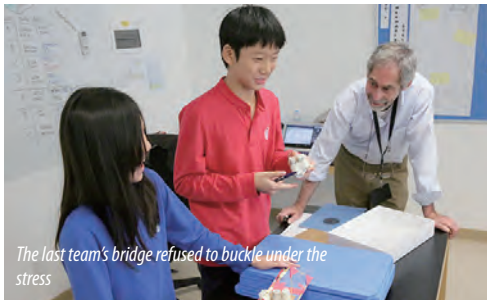
A team performs a final inspection of their bridge



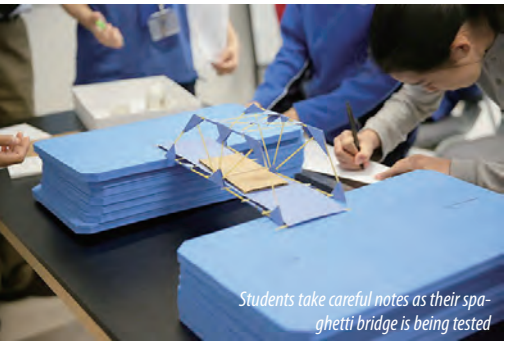
The bridges are ready for the challenge



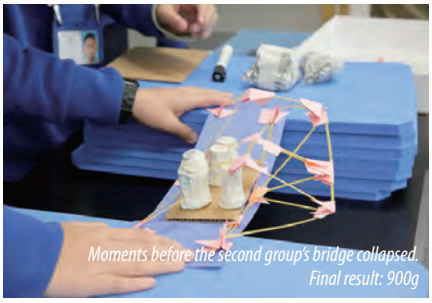
This bridge could withstand 300g



The last team's bridge refused to buckle under the stress



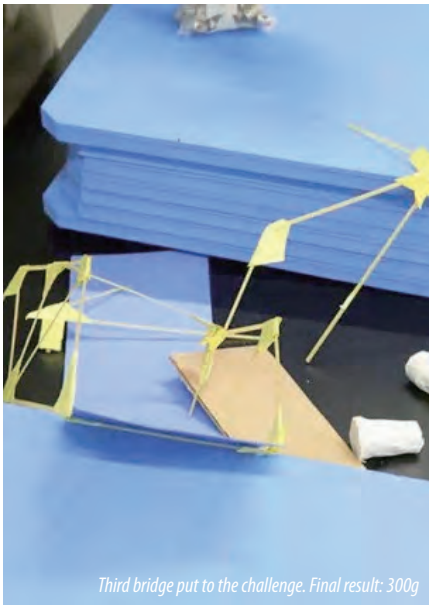
Students take careful notes as their spaghetti bridge is being tested



Moments before the second group's bridge collapsed. Final result: 900g

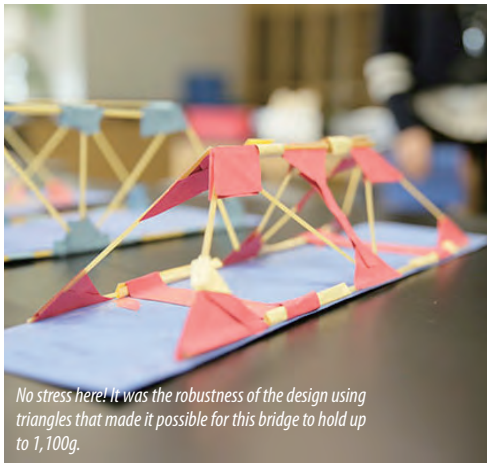
Classmates were equally excited about their peers' successful experiment

Students get familiar with the materials



Third bridge put to the challenge. Final result: 300g

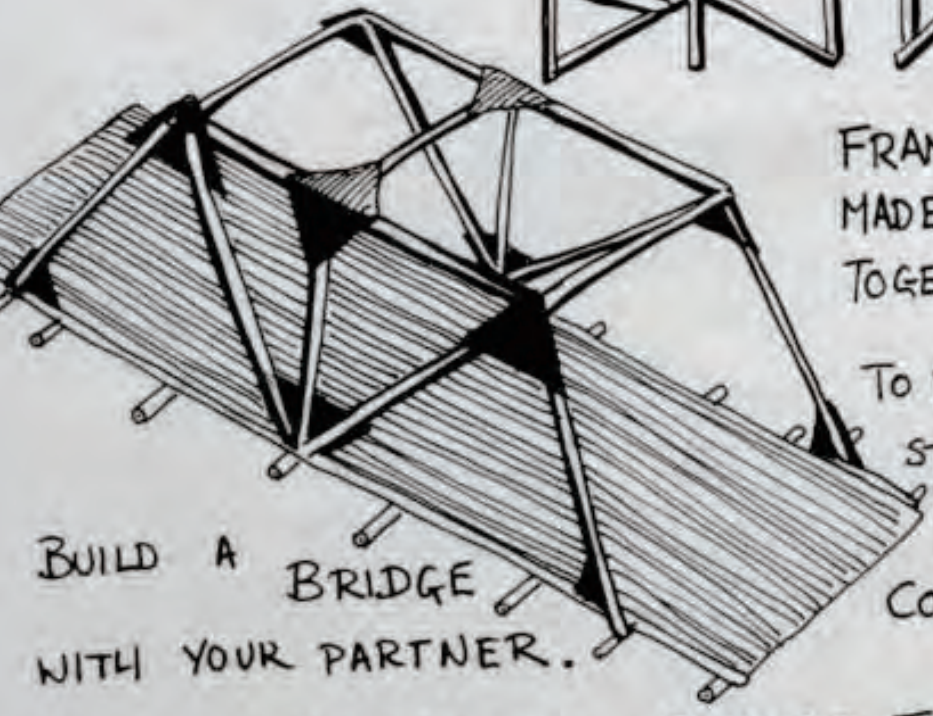
Students gather to learn from the winning design



No stress here! It was the robustness of the design using triangles that made it possible for this bridge to hold up to 1,100g.

Students learn through research, inquiry, observation and experimentation

SPAGHETTI BRIDGE



FRAME STRUCTURES ARE MADE BY JOINING COMPONENTS TOGETHER.

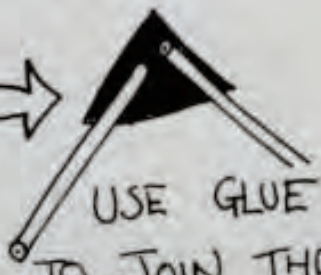
TO WORK WELL THE STRUCTURE MUST BALANCE THE FORCES OF COMPRESSION AND TENSION.

BUILD A BRIDGE WITH YOUR PARTNER.

THE BEST BRIDGE WILL SUPPORT THE MOST WEIGHT.

PROCESS

USE TEMPLATE TO MEASURE AND CUT COMPONENTS



USE GLUE TO JOIN THE SPAGHETTI COMPONENTS.

MAKE 2 SIDES AND JOIN THEM TO SUPPORT THE "TRAY" OR ROAD.

EQUIPMENT: SCISSORS
GLUE
CARD
TEMPLATE

WHEN EVERYONE IS FINISHED WE WILL TEST THE STRENGTH OF EACH BRIDGE.

Building the spaghetti bridge
Make your own spaghetti bridge at home!

UNDERSTANDING MATERIALS IS UNDERSTANDING DESIGN

Mr. Baxter has decades of teaching experience, including in China. Though his years, he realized "that my students would benefit more from knowing how to use the various materials. Kids must build things with their hands, learn how use tools to make and construct things. This is an essential skill, and core objective behind all my Design classes."

Through this hands-on learning experience, students will better appreciate their work, and how it links to the outside environment, as they also make use of the knowledge they have acquired from other classes. It is this combined mental and physical exercise that makes Design class important in the IB programme. "A successful Design project requires the clever combination of form and function," remarks Mr. Baxter. Children are imaginative by nature. But how a teacher can help them combine their creativity with the knowledge they've acquired from classes to create original and useful things, is a question that Mr. Baxter has been pondering ever since he became a Design teacher. "These kids have a long road ahead of them before they create real works, as we all did" says George, "but I see them make quick progress, so I have no doubt they will succeed."

TAKING THE SILK ROAD: AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO HISTORY

SILK ROAD EXPEDITION

"The Silk Road started from Chang'an (modern-day Xi'an). Over 2,100 years ago, the envoy Zhang Qian set off on this very road with banner in hand, seeking alliance with the Tocharians in the far west," narrates grade 6 student Zhu Yike with some background music, continuing, "From this moment, the first threads of the rich tapestry that was the Silk Road were woven, a legendary route stretching across mountains and deserts to bring the finest Chinese silk and other goods to Ancient Rome as well as other faraway lands. All of this continuous trade began from the splendid capital of the Han Dynasty – Chang'an."

Following Zhu Yike's narration, her classmates and project teammates, Wang Wenxi and Gan Yuhe pretended to be the merchants carrying their load through the desert. Imagining the sound of the camel bells, the audience is taken back in time to relive the rich history of this ancient passage.

If you think this is a drama class, think again. This is a grade 6 History lesson on the Silk Road planned by middle and high school Humanities teacher Cara Li.

STUDENTS GO ON A SILK ROAD EXPEDITION

This was Ms. Li's step-by-step plan for her students. Students were divided into three teams and given 10 days to prepare:

1. **Draw a map:** Learn about the geography and regions along the Silk Road
2. **Understand the rise and fall of the Silk Road:** Develop a chart to summarize the rise and fall of the Silk Road
3. **Interactions on the Silk Road:** Interactions between the east and the west on trade, culture and thoughts
4. **Exhibition of Silk Road Cultural Artifacts:** Display based on categories of route, transformation and commodities

Students also used poems of the time to recapture the history of the Silk Road. Vivial Wang cited the verses of Tang poet Wang Wei from *Poem of Departure*:

A morning-rain has settled the dust in Weicheng;
Willows are green again in the tavern dooryard.
Wait till we have one more cup;
West of Yang Gate there'll be no old friends.

She explained, "This poem clearly illustrates that west of Yang Gate will no longer be his homeland. The residence of the Protector-General of Western regions, as well as Yutian (Kingdom of Khotan) and Wusun were all located west of the Yang Gate. Filled with steep mountains and cliffs, this route used to be a death trap for travelers."

While students in one team take turns to narrate and act, triggering ripples of laughter from the audience, the second team presents a fact-filled historical display of the changes that occurred on this legendary route. Meanwhile the third and last team put history into a present context by demonstrating how some of the things we take for granted now were originally traded on the Silk Road.

The student audience are not merely spectators; they also had to take notes and assess their peer-teams based on teamwork, accuracy, expression, interaction with audience and presentational skills, and more.

Ms. Li noted, "The presentation is an assessment designed to encourage students to review the key points and facts learned in previous classes. In preparing for the presentation, they hone their skills in information processing, which will help lay the groundwork for students who are interested in humanities in the future."

Animated presentation of the history of the Silk Road

It is fun for students and teachers alike to relive history

One of the teams present historical facts of the Silk Road

The Silk Road drawn by students

BEHIND THE SILK ROAD EXPEDITION

In Keystone's Humanities classes, the study of history, geography, politics and literature is never isolated. As exemplified in the Silk Road project, students are encouraged to retell the history based on their own interpretation, and the historical facts they cite. Meanwhile, in drawing their own Silk Road map, the students have not only formed an in-depth understanding of the changing territory of China in the course of history, but also referenced classical texts to analyze the impact of the political situation on the Silk Road.

Ms. Li strives to use History to guide students in forming analytical skill, developing rational and well thought out viewpoints, and gradually honing critical thinking capability. Years from now, students may forget details of the historical events, but the way of thinking will be part of who they are.

WHAT WOULD YOUR DREAM LIBRARY LOOK LIKE?

DESIGN A LIBRARY WITH MATH

DISCOVERING THE FUN OF MATH

Euclid, the ancient Greek mathematician, was once teaching one of his students a theorem. "What will I get in return for learning this theorem," the student asked Euclid. A little miffed at the question, Euclid called a servant over, and asked him to give the student three obols (silver coins of that time) in return for learning.

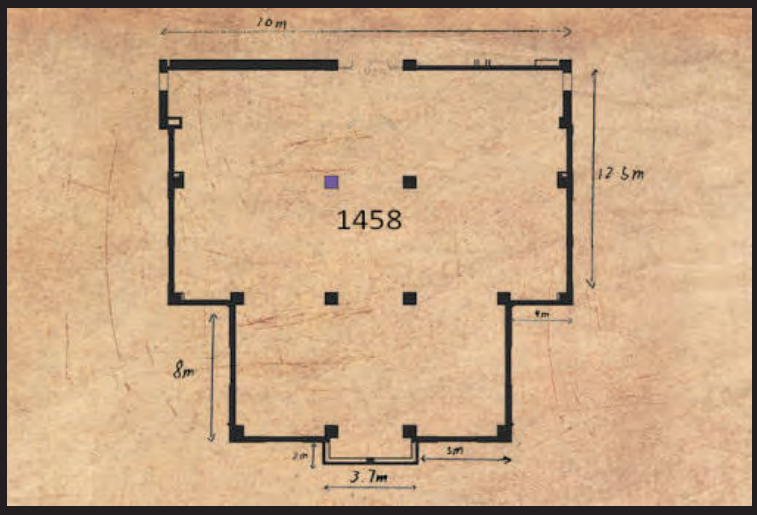
If Euclid's student were at Keystone, then perhaps he wouldn't have asked that question. He would have learned because learning Math is fun. In a joint class organized by the Math and Library teachers, students from grade 7 were given an interdisciplinary project in which they were required to design their own Keystone Middle School Library. Using math concepts, their knowledge of library science, and a lot of creativity, students designed their dream libraries in groups.

It was both exciting and useful for the students to see the Math they learned in class come alive in their designs. They used measuring techniques, scales, formulae for regular and irregular shapes, and more, thus making Math tangible.

A CHALLENGE IS FUN

Of course, fun is only one ingredient of the project. Designing a real library has its challenges too.

Students were faced with questions such as, how do we make



full use of the irregular shape of the library? How can we strike a balance between a comfortable reading environment and practical necessities in a limited space? We chose four teams at random to take a closer look at their designs and planning process.

Instead of the usual measuring tape, Team 1 opted for a mobile app named "Easy Measure." Despite some initial concerns, team members were relieved and excited to find that their measurements were identical to the data collected by another team using measuring tape. This proved their data was valid and accurate, thus laying a solid foundation for the feasibility of their design.

Team 2 consisted of Zheng Jinyu, Eric Zhang, and Wang Zikun. They asked three questions in deciding to use a Mediterranean-style design:

• Are there any famous Mediterranean style libraries in the word?

• What are the pros and cons in incorporating Mediterranean style into library design?

• How to choose furniture that matches the color palette?

After rounds of discussion, they decided unanimously on a blue-and-white color scheme, believing that it creates a comforting environment for people to read. They also preferred the simple designs of the Mediterranean-style furniture, which they believed would be ideal for libraries.

Meanwhile, the classical elements of Team 3, and fusion style of Team 4 both incorporated technology. Wang Zihao in Team 3 wanted to design a digital catalogue "resembling a dictionary" for the library, but also hoped that "students could focus on reading in the library rather than spending too much time on computers," whereas Team 4 set aside a multimedia section for students to browse online resources.

Team 4 got down to the nitty-gritty, as they attached a great deal of significance to functions and user-friendliness.

They also paid attention to the number and placement of power outlets, height of desks and chairs, etc. Kitty He, being both thoughtful and scientific ,interviewed a few of her peers to know if the existing library furniture was comfortable given teenage growth spurts. Her survey found that her peers were happy with the furniture, and so her team decided to keep them in their design.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MATHEMATICAL LITERACY

Students spend much time in the library, using its facilities and services, without giving much thought to its design. However, once they were asked to take a whole new perspective by actually designing one, they realized that there was much more than books to a library.

Teacher librarian, Kacy Song, worked with the grade 7 architects, not only by allowing them full freedom in their exploration and research, but also by reminding them to incorporate human elements into their mathematical considerations. For instance, what is the appropriate spacing between bookshelves to ensure wheelchair access? How high should the loan desk be for it to look welcoming? Students showed great enthusiasm in the project, not only by focusing on in-class learning, but also by devoting a lot of time observing and measuring the library after class, consulting reference materials, and discussing their ideas with teachers.

Middle and high school Math teacher Amanda Shen said, "Despite its abstract nature, Math is often very simple and direct. Learning Math is about training students to use simple and direct mathematical perspectives to solve complex problems. Therefore, to conclude a geometry unit, students were given a library design project based on the IB assessment method. In this project, students were encouraged to make practical use of all the geometry concepts and formulae they learned, and form a more tangible and hands-on understanding of Math."

In the Spirit, Thinking and Methodology of Mathematics, Japanese mathematician Kunizo Yoneyama pointed out that we tend to forget the Math concepts and formulae we have learned in schools within a couple of years of graduation, for we never had the chance to use them. However, "no matter what profession we pursue, the spirit, way of thinking, research methodology, deduction and perspectives of mathematics internalized during the process of learning in class will benefit us through life."

Team 1: Danny Wang, Jeff Han, and Jeff Qu discussed their design concept, and used a mobile app to measure the room

Team 3: Wang Zihao and Zhu Tianqin consulting reference materials in architecture and design

Jerry Zheng, Eric Zhang and Terry Wang from Team 2 try various measuring methods and consulting reference material.

Team 4's Kitty He and Li Zhaoyan measure the height of desks and chairs

KASANAUTS TO THE RESCUE OF EGGSTROIDS!

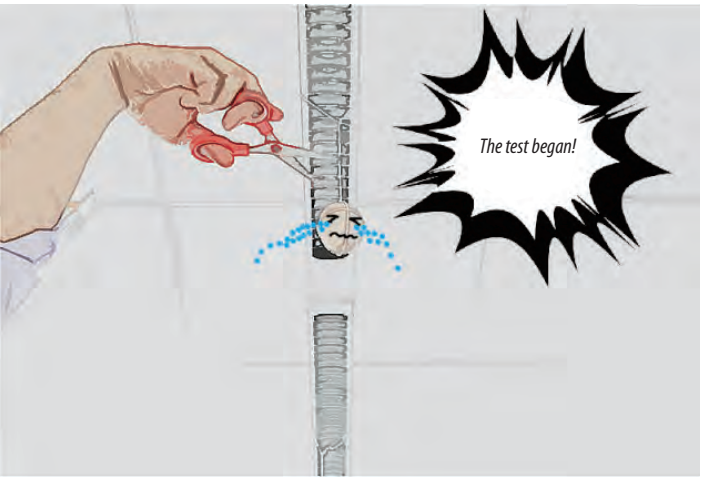
THE EGG DROP EXPERIMENT

After days of close monitoring, Keystone Aeronautics and Space Agency (KASA) was warned that five "eggstroids" were on a collision course with the Moon. Flying debris from the crash may also cause great harm to our planet. KASA immediately organized an emergency task force in Keystone's Science Lab, with middle and high school Science teacher Amanda Narkiewicz at the helm of the team of grade 7 Science Superkids on a mission to rescue the eggstroids.

Split into five teams, the brainstorming began on ways to divert the catastrophe. Mock eggstroids were hung from the lab's ceiling lamps 2 meters above ground, and each team was given 1 hour to build a buffer platform that minimized the damage to the colliding eggstroids. For this challenge, teamwork was as critical as knowledge of physics and engineering. Tools would be extremely limited with each team having nothing more than plastic trays, tapes, rope and some bubble wrap to work with. There would be only one winning team. The KASA teams were ready for the challenge.

All the eggstroids fell squarely into the buffered landing platforms the teams had carefully constructed. However, due to the kinetic energy of the initial impact, the eggstroids all bounced off the platforms and crashed some distance away. The impact was near fatal! A couple bounced and landed up to 7km away from the platform resulting in minor cracks. A couple more were completely destroyed. The winner was the eggstroid that landed closest to the platform after the secondary crash.

Although the teams had hoped for better results, their mission was to experiment, which they successfully accomplished. Throughout the challenge, the students demonstrated an explorative spirit, excellent command of scientific knowledge, and good teamwork, noted Ms. Narkiewicz. Our KASAnauts will continue their explorations and experiments. We eagerly look forward to their next and newest ideas.



Ms. Narkiewicz checks the status of the eggstroid

WHAT KIND OF MUSEUM TRIPS DO WE NEED?

EXPLORING CHINA THROUGH ART

Orhan Pamuk, 2006 Nobel Laureate for Literature, once said that, "real museums are places where time is transformed into space." It is through these corridors that past and present interact, collide and sometimes even something entirely new emerges. Keystone teachers, Dai Min, Cara Li and Kacy Song took a group of students into one such dynamic learning continuum – the Guanfu Museum in Beijing – on a weekend.

A trip to a museum is bound to be easy and relaxing, or so thought most students. However, they soon found out that they couldn't be more wrong. To ensure that students had an engaging museum trip, Min Dai, Chinese Curriculum Coordinator, Cara Li, the middle and high school Humanities teacher, and teacher librarian Kacy Song had planned this trip weeks in advance.

Before setting off, every student received a task card with 16 questions centered on the museum collection. Open-ended and inquiry-based, students would have to go beyond books and online searches to find answers to most of these questions. The questions encouraged students to discover and explore, to raise questions, and to think critically about the answers. This teaching approach urges students to formulate their own understanding of the subject, develop an appreciation of aesthetics, and enrich their life experience.

HERE IS A LOOK AT THE STUDENTS' TASK CARDS

1. Who is the founder of Guanfu Museum?
2. Which classical work did the name "Guanfu" come from? What is the significance of this name?

QUERIES FOR THE FURNITURE HALL

6. What is the difference between zhuo (table) and an (desk)? Find examples of zhuo and an in the museum collection.
7. Are you able to read some of the Chinese couplets hung in the Furniture Hall? Please write down the characters from one of them.
8. Mortise and tenon joint is among the most quintessential features of Chinese traditional furniture. This design is not only robust, durable, and environmentally friendly, but also serves a decorative function. There are many types of mortise and tenon joints, can you draw one of them?

QUERIES FOR THE CRAFTSMANSHIP HALL

12. If the Director of the museum allows you to take home one piece from the museum collection, which one would you take, and why?
13. Do you have any suggestions for the Director of the museum?
14. Based on your observations, how does Guanfu Museum operate? If you were the Director, how would you operate the museum?

QUERIES FOR THE CERAMICS HALL

3. What are the main differences between pottery and porcelain?
4. What were the five major kilns in China?
5. What were the differences between imperial kilns and private kilns?

QUERIES FOR THE DOORS AND WINDOWS HALL

9. In addition to their practical functions, doors and windows are also of significant artistic value. Among the various decorative techniques used in ancient China, one particular technique is based on story telling. How many stories can you find in the museum collection? What are these stories?
10. Doors and windows are recurring elements in poetry. Can you think of a classical poem containing doors and/or windows? Please write it down.
11. Small objects, even a simple box, can also be the embodiment of a person's spiritual and artistic pursuit. The museum collection contains a wide variety of boxes, many of which can no longer be found in our everyday lives. Can you spot the following 10 boxes in the collection? Please write down the full name of these boxes (including the materials or manufacturing process).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

15. What do you think is the significance of museums? Why should schools organize museum trips?
16. If you have a chance to build a museum, what would it be like? How would your museum serve the public?

A MUSEUM TREASURE RETURNS TO KEYSTONE

Evelyn Huang, from grade 9, came back inspired from the trip to the Guanfu Museum. She was inspired to write a 5000-word short story based on Wang Yunpeng's oil painting Girls from the Northeast: Full-Figured on exhibit at the museum. The story not only turned out to be the crown jewel of the trip, but also a piece of Keystone treasure as intricate, and full of nuance, as the pieces of history at the Guanfu Museum.

Evelyn, a gifted writer, has always had the support of her parents who encouraged her to read and write more. She said that they would take her on trips on a regular basis to give her new experiences and encouraged her to challenge herself. Some of her favorite personal tales include camping on the snowy mountains of Tibet, being chased by nomads in Inner Mongolia, and even encountering highwaymen during a road trip with her dad. Here is an excerpt for Evelyn's Guanfu Museum inspired piece.

EXCERPT FROM FULL-FIGURED

The Tong sisters have finally made it to the market.

Crowded with endless rows of vendors, the market had everything on offer from everyday food to toys. Lanqing and Lanhua looked around, basking in the gentle sunlight, and enjoying the crowds and the precious sense of serenity and prosperity. The shuttlecock on sale at the toy vendor lay quietly, its feathers dancing in the warm breeze. A young boy in a beige sweater squatted in front of a pool of toys, his long lashes flickering. He suddenly grabbed an iron frog for a close examination, and burst into an angelic smile as if the frog were a magic creature. The rich tapestry of the disorderly town market at this moment turned into an effortless painting.

Dressed up in bright colors, they dawdled in the crowd, attracting a few smiles and gossip as they passed. They smiled back, and walked faster.

"Sis! Look over there! What's happening? It must be great!" Lanhua suddenly shouted in excitement. Lanqing looked in the direction. A long queue in front of a shop with a sign that seems to read "J-e-a-n-s".

Jeans! Lanqing grabbed her little sister's hand, and ran to the crowd with an empty basket.

Maybe because jeans are the new fad in town, people seemed to reach for their wallets without any hesitation, so the queue moved quickly. Being the last in line, Lanqing asked others in front of her in a loud voice, "Is this the line for jeans?"

"Huh? Oh, yes, yes, JEANS!" a granny in the line shouted back in response. Licking her popsicle, Lanhua burst out laughing,"Ha ha, sis, what are jeans?" Lanqing rolled her eyes at her yet could no longer contain her excitement.

It was soon their turn. Lanhua stood aside, and started on her sister's popsicle. Just when Lanqing put down her basket, the curly-haired shop owner came out to greet her. Clad in an orange tank top, red mini-skirt and white high heels, she looked almost summery on this cool autumn day.

"Welcome welcome! I saw you in the line earlier, and found your size for you!" She said gently, holding two pairs of extra large jeans, her carefully-made up face looked like the flower in full bloom. "Try them on first!" Lanqing nodded, letting out a shy smile, and took the jeans inside.

Lanqing held the jeans in her hands. This was the first time she ever felt them. The color reminded her of the purest blue sky, and the texture could top the best duvet they had at home. She struggled out of the heavy winter pants and put them on. The fabric was stretched beyond its elasticity. Her legs, now wrapped up tight inside the jeans, seemed a bit thinner, yet no matter how hard she tried she couldn't button up.

She stepped out of the shop, shouting, "I can't button up these jeans!" the shop owner walked over with a smile, had a careful look at her, and gave her full-figured body a pat, "suck your gut in! Just a little bit more! Almost there…"

Click! "They are on! Lanhua eyed her sister from head to toe with no expression and turned back to her own thoughts. Lanqing looked down, and said with a satisfied smile, "I'll take these! I will wear them now."

Having paid for the jeans, the two sisters set off for home with their baskets. Despite the numbness in her legs, Lanqing wouldn't let any of this discomfort dampen her spirit. She asked, barely able to hold in that grin, "How do I look in them?"

"They look great on you, sis! Great!" Lanhua smiled, her round cheeks blush like an apple,"but they might be a bit small…"

"I don't mind that they're tight, I'm just a bit worried that I will rip them." Lanqing whispered, her untamed hair blown up by a sudden breeze.

When they finally got home, dad was busy making dinner. After putting the shopping down, Lanhua went directly to her bed. Lanqing tried to stay out of his way, only to see a full plate of buns on the stove, and her dad getting more out of the steamer.

"…Pops, what are you doing?" Lanqing asked in awe.

"You little pest, I am making buns of course!"

"These many?"

"What do you know? I will make some more so we can get the comb back!" he turned to her, "it's because you kids use expensive things to trade for snacks…what is it you are wearing?"

"So what? These are new jeans I just bought!" Lanqing glared at him.

"Qing, you are back…Aw! These pants!" Mom came back into the room, her face filled with surprise.

"What do you…" Lanqing stroked her jeans, and only managed to mutter a few words before being interrupted by dad, "You need to come with me tomorrow! A lot of work to do, you'll have to carry the cabbage we got a few days ago to make pickles! You better get out of those!"

Hearing this, Lanqing let out a grunt and rushed into the bedroom.

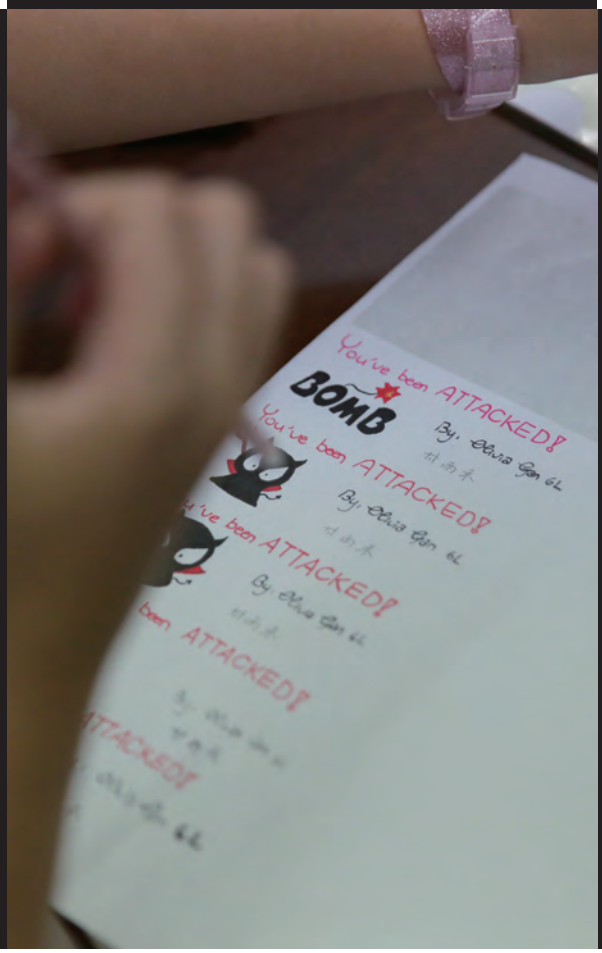
She changed back into the baggy winter pants the following day and carried heaps of cabbage around, even more than her dad could manage. Before going to bed, she once again stared at her new jeans and dreamed of the day she would wear them again. A few days after that, Lanqing followed her dad, and helped him with chores from dawn to dusk. She never got another chance to wear her new jeans for the entire winter.

IT'S A WAR OF WORDS

"The unit is called *Poetry and Song* and students learn about how poetry and song can be used to express one's personal, social and cultural experiences creatively. The aim of the unit is to allow students, at the end, to be able to experiment with language, and come up with different forms of expression. Throughout the year, they have been learning how to write with structure and a lot has been done on the conventions of English. This unit creates a playground for them to be risk-takers, and experiment with expression," explains Ms. Moh. Now, thanks to Ms. Moh and her students, there are beautiful verses of poetry on pillars, walls and windows like linguistic graffiti for everyone to enjoy.

As you walk down the corridors of the middle school building, out of nowhere appears an assailant. "You have been destroyed," he says, and his weapon of choice – an acrostic poem. Guerilla Poetry Week is the brainchild of middle and high school English Language Acquisition teacher, Audrey Moh, who has challenged her students to a whole new level. Poetry is perhaps one of the hardest forms of linguistic expression, and Ms. Moh has not only taught her students the various styles of poetic manifestations, but also dared them to a "war of words."

In an innovative and thrilling exercise she has told her students to accost other school members – students, teachers and staff – with self-written poems. The best part is that the battle scare is worth keeping as students not only read you the poem once you are ambushed, but also leave you a copy. They have also left pieces of poetry on walls, doors and banisters.



WILL THE GREATEST LEADER OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY PLEASE STAND UP?

GRADE 10 STUDENTS SHAKE-UP THEIR HISTORY LESSONS

"Kwame Nkrumah was a bright star that lit up a dark period in African history," said a confident and vociferous grade 10 student, as he stood up before his classmates campaigning for their votes to decide the greatest nationalist leader of the 20th century. Other historical figures in the running were Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh, and India's Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. Groups of students worked in teams to present their case for the leader of their choice. This project was the brainchild of middle and high school Humanities teacher, Vivek Bammi, in an effort to get students to learn, understand and reflect on 20th Century World History, particularly the period of nationalist movements.

History is more than just a blast from the past. We strongly believe so at Keystone, and thus History lessons are more than just lectures on events, dates and civilizations, and students do not just memorize what they are told. "IB students should be independent," noted Dr. Bammi, adding, "Giving them the information and knowledge is only one approach to learning." There is more to learning History; it involves research, critical thinking, and communications. And these are skills students acquire and hone all the way through grade 12, with guidance from their teachers. "This is a very interesting way to learn History. I not only learn history and historical concepts, but I also get the opportunity to express my views; it allows me to think. And I acquire skills, such as public speaking, how to express myself persuasively and fluently, and how to work well in teams," said grade 10 student, Andy Li.

Andy's peers agree. His classmate, Wesley Wu, said, "This kind of assignment challenges us, and that is what makes it interesting. Our team campaigned for Ho Chi Minh. We did a lot of research on the Vietnamese leader. What stood out for me is how different historians have different opinions about the same leader. This assignment made me think more critically about history." This reflective and critical approach was also clear in their presentations, campaign materials, and mock election speeches – all part of the unit project. And as one student from the Nkrumah group said, as she shared her reflections on a quote from the African leader, "To me great leaders are about action." And when history is filled with so much action, why shouldn't learning it be so too.

GETTING CREARTIVE

AN ART EXHIBITION BY STUDENTS

Students from grades 1 to 7 brought together their creARTivity in an exhibition of the same name. Primary school Art teacher, Lu Nan, proudly remarked that it was her students who came up with the name for the exhibition. Their art, creative projects and sculptures are expressions of how they see the world, and what caught their expressive attention. Some displayed their paintings or sketches, others their sculptures made from recyclable materials such as toilet paper rolls, medicine bottles and more. Here are a few snapshots from the exhibition.

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THINKING OUT OF THE BOX

CREATIVE LINGUISTIC DEVELOPMENT

What would a modern-day Pandora's Box look like? What manifestations of good and evil would such a box contain? Students from grade 7 gave it a go in Audrey Moh's English Language Acquisition unit on *Myths and Legends*, and they came up with some interesting contemporary models and innovative thinking on representations of good and evil. Creativity is an essential element in learning every subject at Keystone Academy, including language acquisition. It urges and enables students to think critically, engage with the subject deeply, and develop skills. "Part of learning language is to be able to engage with the text that they are reading. Students need to develop a skills base so that they can progress to advanced language learning. By asking them to think critically in English, they are not only using their skills and abilities, but also practicing in the target language," explains Ms. Moh. Chinese Language Acquisition teacher, Kalian Wang, also agrees that creativity, inquiry and innovation are vital to learning language.

So after reading about Pandora's Box from Greek mythology, students made their own versions in groups. "The box with the black top representing evil, and white bottom representing good, was the best design according to me," remarked one of the students, Hibiscus Chen, talking about one of the groups. Other students like Wendy Wu and Henry Fu liked another group's representation of good using a Spiderman toy. "Heroism is a very important quality people should have…in order to make the world a better place," reflected Henry Fu.

Innovative language acquisition also helps students better understand cultural nuances. Ms. Wang notes how one of her students, Jennifer Kim, worked on a project investigating the differences in food in China where the student is now, Philippines where she moved from, and Korea her home country. "Jennifer Kim researched the words she thought she would need for the project. She also made a presentation, and wrote a report, which demonstrated her critical thinking though Chinese is only her second language." Inquiry and creativity are essential, says Jennifer, who is in grade 9: "Without asking 'why' or 'how', the content never really sticks in my brain. Creativity is also important because it encourages me to think of different ways to express a message in a foreign language, and increases my engagement with my work."

To encourage her students further, Ms. Wang has installed the mythical symbol of the Chinese dragon in the middle school corridor. Her students' works are hung from lanterns that form the body of the dragon. She believes this displays the voice of her students in a creative way, and motivates them to keep pushing themselves further. Meanwhile, back in Ms. Moh's class, one of her students Linda Zhang gets her peers to think deeper about symbols of good and evil. She argued in her presentation that a RMB1 currency note and a book could be both good and evil. As Ms. Moh notes, "Now that is thinking out of the box!"

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS TRASH

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND ACTION

"I have told students in my class to use only pencils or fountain pens, and insist that they avoid all types of plastic pens. It is a small step towards environmental awareness, but it is about developing habits, and getting used to them. What they can do for the environment is right there in their hands. Hopefully it will generate an awareness and get them to rethink what is normal," said middle and high school English teacher Duncan Gray.

Environmental awareness and sustainable learning practices are important to Keystone Academy's educational outcomes, one of which is to ensure that our students become stewards of the environment. This requires not just awareness, but also action. Teachers in both primary and middle schools encourage and model sustainable ways of learning whether it is promoting the use of wooden pencils or fountain

pens or using cardboard boxes as storage trays in classrooms or making art and other student projects from recyclable and reusable materials and scraps.

LEARNING TO REUSE

Middle and high school Design teacher, Jenny Small, said, "We reuse all sorts of things – cardboard, bottles, bottle caps, straws, paper, newspaper, packaging material, foam. Sometimes, I don't even buy materials for design projects that I plan for my students. I ask students to find reusable materials. This gets them into the habit of saving things." Primary and middle school Science teacher Amanda Narkiewicz also noted that the Science Department Store Room is filled with reusable material that she and other teachers and students have been collecting over the year. This way, there is always a resource of reusable materials available for various school or student projects. Continuing this practice, Ms. Narkiewicz has requested all residential students, who are required to move out at the end of each academic year, to be environmentally responsible and sensible when packing up.

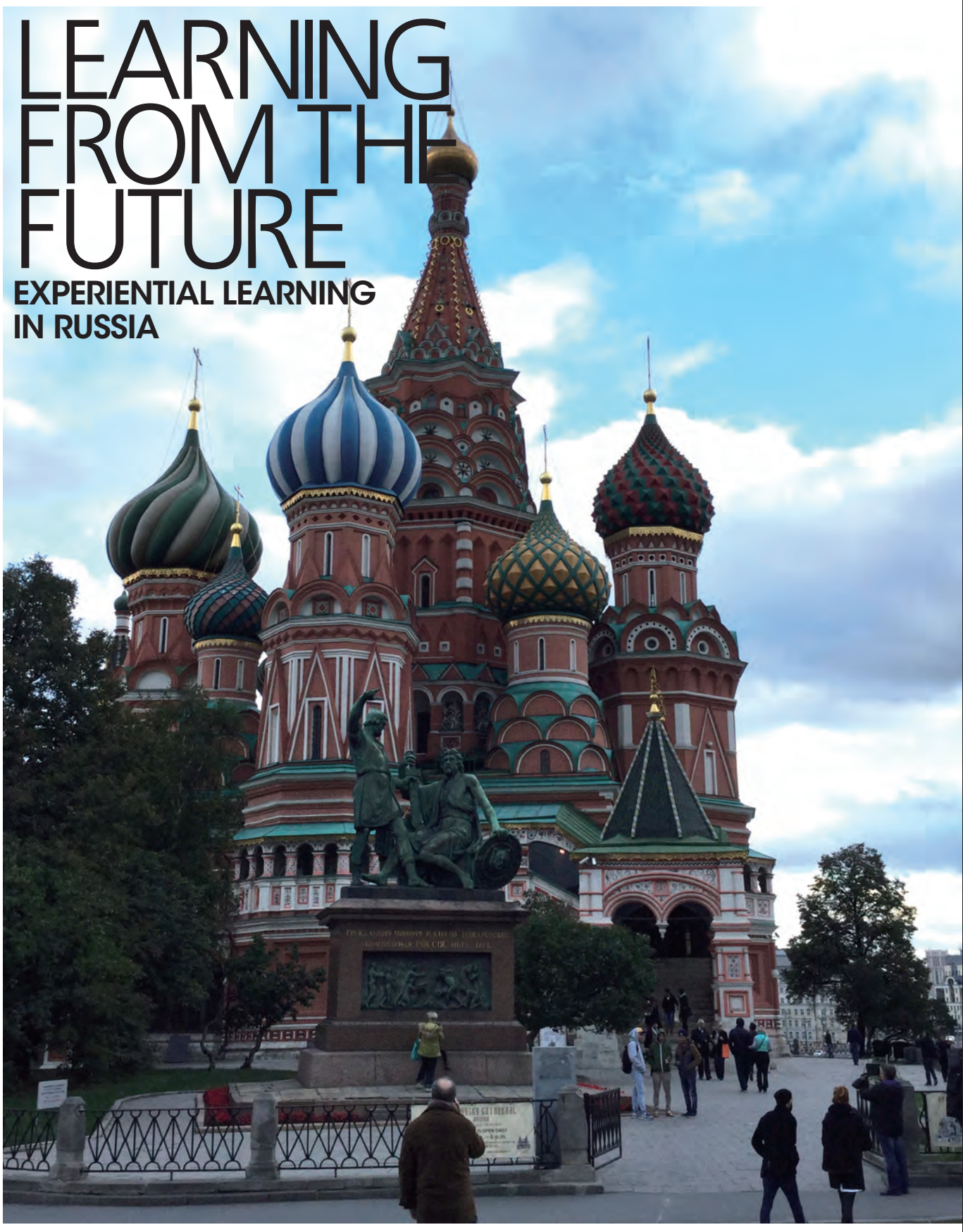
SUSTAINABILITY: THE NEW NORMAL

There have been plenty of class-level and school-wide initiatives that have sown the seeds of an environmentally friendly learning culture at Keystone, which will lead to deep-rooted sustainability policies in the future through the school's Environmental Awareness and Action Committee. "It is important to change mindsets, and make everyone think and accept that this is how things are done at Keystone," said middle and high school Design teacher George Baxter, adding, "We have to inculcate the 3Rs into our system – Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle. Recycling is actually the very last step. First, we must ask ourselves if we need something, if it is absolutely necessary, then we must see if we already have something we can reuse for our present needs before buying something new."

We live in an age of waste. Gone are the days of our parents and grandparents who always saved things, reminded Mr. Baxter. If they received a parcel, they would save the string with which it was wrapped, and the box the parcel came in. But now, in this age of waste, people just throw things away, and buy new stuff they need when they need it ,without a second thought. But not at Keystone. In the hope of steering clear of a culture of waste, Keystone Academy is instilling long-term measures for a sustainable learning environment, such as reducing paper usage where possible, reducing food wastage or redirecting food waste to local animal farms, promoting practices that will enable a plastic-free campus and student-managed roof gardens. This will be the new normal.

LEARNING FROM THE FUTURE

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN RUSSIA



Have you ever seen the sound of music? If you think this is an odd question, then it is time for a trip to Moscow. Seeing and understanding the science behind the making of music had Keystone students blown away during their 5-day Math and Science tour. "It was amazing to see and understand the making of music. We could see the computer measuring the vibrations made by the instruments we played. This was one of the highlights of the trip for me," exclaimed Leo Sheng from grade 10. Leo's classmate Vincent Liu added, "I enjoyed the music recording session too, especially knowing that it is a remote possibility that I would ever do something like this again. It was a unique opportunity."

Led by middle and high school Math teacher, Yang Zhaohui, this inimitable experience that combined Math, Science and Technology was exhilarating for the group of nine Keystone students who traveled to Moscow during the October national holidays. They visited and learned from the faculty at Moscow State University, Moscow State Pedagogical University, and Moscow Aviation Institute. These are some of the top academic institutions not only in Russia, but also in the world. "I wanted the students to understand the world of Science and Math that exists, and that is possible, beyond their classrooms," said Mr. Yang.

The most exciting session of the tour was when students visited a few top-secret labs, and learned from faculty about research that is years ahead of its time. It was a peek into the future. "For a science and computer aficionado like me, visiting the labs, touching a piece of the rocket that will travel to Mars in 2018, and the trip as a whole was simply amazing," remarked Michael Liu from grade 9.

Michael and his friends were definitely disappointed to return, but rest assured in the knowledge that at Keystone they can always expect to learn in new and fascinating ways – learning that not only happens in the classrooms, but also outside them. Keystone's experiential learning program realizes this vision of learning by doing, and learning by understanding. And that is pure music to anyone's ears.

MADE BY STUDENTS. TOLD BY STUDENTS.

A TIME FOR REFLECTION ON LEARNING

Confucius once said that there are three ways of learning: first by reflection, which is the noblest; second by imitation, which is the easiest; and third by experience, which is the most bitter. At the end of every academic year comes a time for intentional reflection. Students, teachers and parents have measured, weighed and reflected on their children's academic and co-curricular progress throughout the year, but in late April, students are given a special opportunity to share their reflections on their own progress with their parents in a student-led conference. Assistant Head of Middle School, Paulina Aguilera, remembers dreading parent-teacher meetings where the conversation often excluded input from the students. "This whole process was very surreptitious, and made me anxious every year of my school life," Ms. Aguilera remembered, adding, "Thankfully, some things have changed since then."

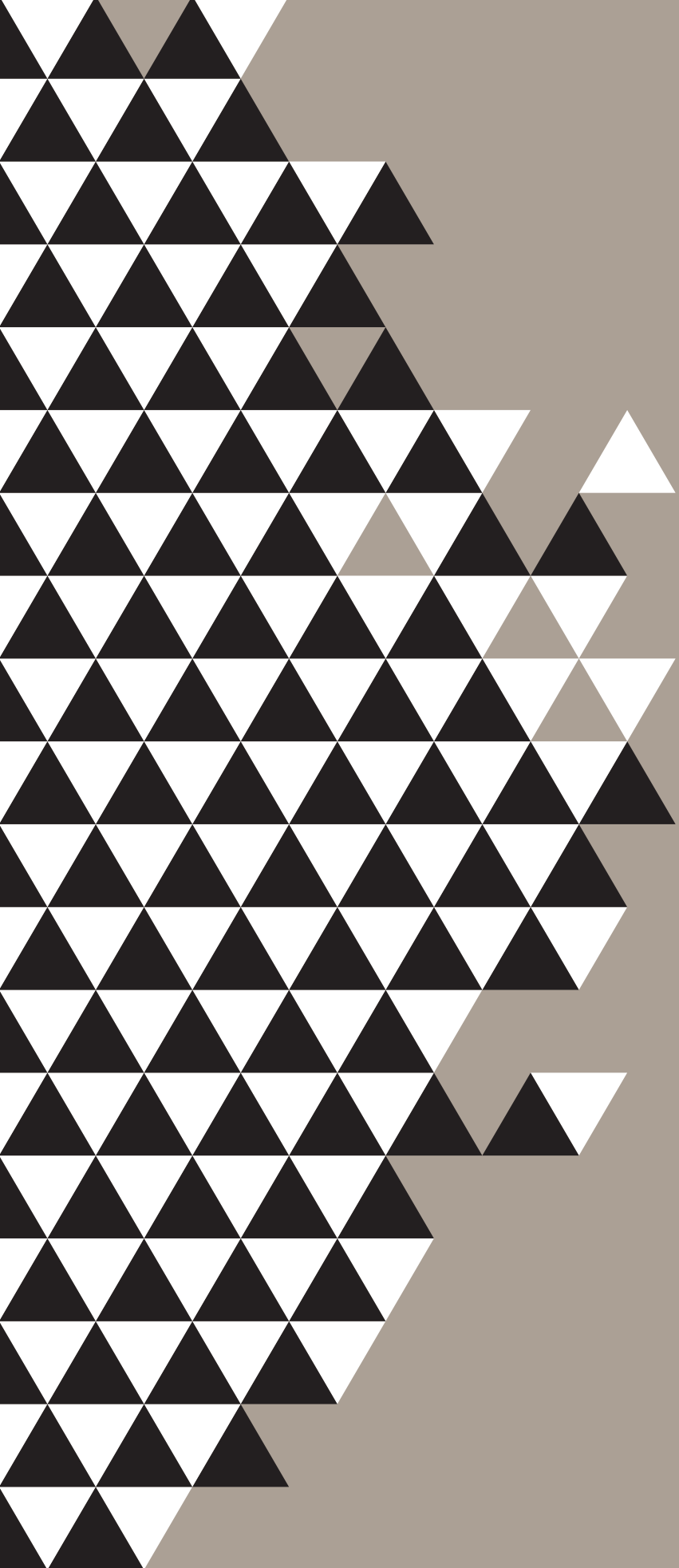
THE PREPARATION

During the student-led conferences, children talk to parents about their learning, not the teachers. This is not a time for parents to talk to teachers. "Students know themselves well, and can be very accurate about their performance," remarked Ms. Aguilera. Students have spent time and effort to prepare their portfolios, which is a compilation of up to two samples per subject including their subject-wise reflections on what they learnt, why they chose the work samples they did, and what future goals they envision. Teachers have guided them in the preparation, and advisors have reviewed their advisees' portfolios, and helped students practice for the meetings. Middle school parent, Wang Xiaojing, says, "I think this is a good opportunity for my daughter to reflect on her academic performance; students don't often get such opportunities."

In middle and high school, student-parent meetings last 30 minutes, while in primary school, there are two 20-minute sessions each. "In primary school there are two conferences and two portfolios – one in English and one in Chinese. Each conference and particularly each portfolio centers on the learning in that particular language. This allows students to switch from thinking about English language learning to Chinese and visa-versa. This also allows parents to take note of the particular challenges presented by language," explained Gary Bradshaw, Assistant Head of Primary School and IPC Coordinator.

THE BENEFITS

There are multiple merits to this process. It is a platform that enables growth, learning and reflection for everyone involved. It is an initiation for students to assume responsibility for their own learning, apart from also encouraging and appreciating reflective self-evaluation. A grade one student explains, "I practiced how to present with my classmates so that I could prepare for the conference with my parents." As students and parents build on their communication, the foundation to a teacher-student-parent conversation is also laid. The process is also future-oriented as students set goals and parents understand their role in supporting their children in achieving them. Middle and high school Humanities teacher, Arthur Klatt, noted that these meetings are meant to be positive and encouraging in an effort to share in the students' learning experiences.



BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

GIVING IS LEARNING

THE IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE LEARNING AT KEYSTONE

"After a few hours of volunteering at Roundabout, the students were really energized on their way back," said Director of Residential Life, Juli James, who was herself excited as she spoke about one of Keystone's first service-learning afternoons. Ms. James is responsible for Keystone's service learning program, and she sees it "infused into all areas of Keystone's pillars." It is reflected in the shared values of the school, underlies the norms of residential life and is fundamental to the culture and ethos of the community.

Service learning enables the development of empathy and compassion in our students. Ms. James added that she makes sure that at Keystone service learning involves physical service, not just raising funds. She wants students to work with their hands. This is the kind of empathy and compassion Ms. James hopes students will understand and commit to. The first couple of activities were indicative of this. On Friday, 19 September 2014 students volunteered at the Little Adoption Shop – an animal rescue shelter in Shunyi. Here students walked the dogs, played with them, washed and cleaned the facilities. The following day, another group of students volunteered at Roundabout, a local charity shop. Students helped sort used goods at the shop, which could then be sold; the proceeds from sales go towards various charitable donations and causes.

Working in local communities helps students understand real world issues, reflect on them, and encourages a sense of community and long-term commitment to service and learning for life. "What you do here is not just education for the brain, but also education for the heart and mind." This explanation by Head of School, Malcolm McKenzie, captures the essence of service learning at Keystone. This complete approach to education enables the development of responsible citizens.

TAKING COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY

The most interesting aspect of the Keystone Service Learning program is that it is student led. A student leadership board decides the service activities that they want to be involved in, brainstorms and plans the issues and projects with each other, and reflects on the issues and their involvement. "I only enable it," said Ms. James. She is confident that, in time, students will demonstrate a commitment to social justice and equity; embrace and respect diversity; develop concern for the environment and sustainable development; and cultivate a sense of empathy and compassion for all sentient beings. Service learning is also an integral part of the academic curriculum. At the end of the middle school, students – individually or as a group – engage in a community project. It explores their right and responsibility to implement service as action in the community. Service continues as a core component of the DP curriculum as well in the form of creativity, action and service (CAS). In Mr. McKenzie's words, "It is about doing something for someone; educating your heart. Giving is learning, and getting something back."

ALL FOR FRIENDS:

FOUNDATION YEAR STUDENTS ORGANIZE A CHARITY SALE

The youngest students at Keystone Academy brought students, parents, teachers and staff together in the name of friendship. The foundation year students were determined to help their friends at Nancai Shiyan Xuexiao, a local school for migrant children in Shunyi, by raising money for the supplies they needed. So, under the guidance of primary school Chinese teachers Che Qing and Zou Jing, and support from parents, the foundation year students organized a charity sale on 5 June 2015. And it was an irresistible range of stalls from trinkets to treats and secondhand toys. The sale that ran during four brief time slots on the day was sold out at every session, which was exciting for the foundation year students, who also manned the stalls, knowing that they would be able to help their friends after all.

"We ensured that our students did not experience this activity as "us" and "them." It was important to Ms. Jing and me that our children do not categorize people but only understand what they are doing as helping friends. This is not about a local migrant school, it is not about them being disadvantaged and we being better for being able to help," said Ms. Qing. The teachers and parents have helped students understand that the charity sale will help children just like them in a small way. "And because they knew this was for friends, I noticed how carefully the students prepared their arts and crafts items for sale, or how they prepared other things required for the sale, sometimes even more carefully than they would do their own assignments," remarked Ms. Qing pleasantly.

At Keystone Academy, we hope that students can transform what they learn into positive contributions towards the wider community by helping, supporting and tolerating each other. This emotional intelligence has to be nurtured from the lowest grades, and it is experiences such as the charity sale that will shape their future. Foundation year students were thrilled to visit their friends, and share their experiences. The more than RMB7000 raised was used to buy sports and other school supplies; these and the books and other supplies donated to the Nancai Shiyan Xuexiao is only a footnote to the story of this lasting friendship.

READ. EXPLORE. DREAM.

THE LOVE OF READING WEEK

An ancient Indian scholar once said that "a good book is like a good friend…a perpetual delight." It was a week of this delightful experience at Keystone with 'The Love of Reading Week' in early March 2015.

Students across all grades were encouraged to D.E.A.R – Drop Everything And Read! Some, just read between classes. From reading time for 10 minutes before class and in-between classes, special reading corners around campus buildings, to primary school teachers dressing up as their favorite book characters and poetry appreciation day, students were provided with plenty of opportunities to show their love for the written word.

Virva Palosaari, Primary School English teacher, dressed up as the lovable character from the book *Zen Ties*, the panda Stillwater. She said, "The book appealed to me especially because it is Spring Festival time and the book begins with the arrival of a new season for the panda and his nephew. And there is nothing more Chinese than Pandas, that are lovable characters in their own right. We are also focusing on the virtue of respect (Li) this month, and the book had elements of this as well. It was a perfect fit."

Students like Jacky Liang were thrilled to share their favorite poem with peers and anyone who would ask, "what's the poem in your pocket?" Jacky picked lines from *Ulysses* because he really likes it for Lord Tennyson's language and vigor. The beauty of the language is also why Chinese Language and Literature teacher, Li Haiyan, picked a poem by Bian Zhilin, "It is such a beautiful poem where someone is enjoying a beautiful view, but from the aspect of the author, the 'someone' is also part of the view. It seems everything in the universe and me are united together… The feeling is so wonderful."

There were plenty of events and activities in the week to promote and steer everyone towards a book in any form, including a book fair organized by Star Kids Beijing Bookstore and Shunyi Xinhua Bookstore. By the end of the week, the books were literally coming to life as students and teachers dressed up as their favorite characters.

Stella Folo, in grade 6, said she dressed as *Matilda* because it is one of her favorite books. Kunawa Vitoorapakorn from grade 9 brought his memories of reading from his school days in Australia with one of his favorite books, *Tomorrow, When the War Began*. Students in primary school were dressed as their favorite characters too.

As Director of Libraries, Kenneth Kozel, rightly remarked, "Books truly open doors to future opportunities by giving one a chance to dream, travel, and explore other worlds through the printed page…Seeds are planted through reading and dreams are fostered through libraries."

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Zen Tales

Harry Potter
PAGE TO SCREEN

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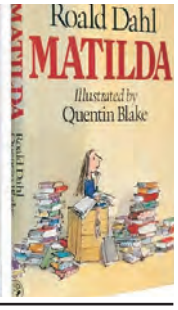
Roald Dahl
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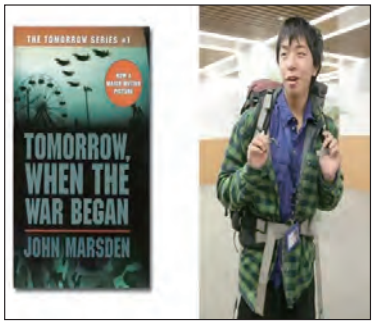

THE TOMORROW SERIES #1
TOMORROW, WHEN THE WAR BEGAN
JOHN MARSDEN

冰雪奇缘

EXPERIENCING CHINA

STUDENTS LEARN THROUGH EXPLORING AND DISCOVERING

Keystone's Experiential Learning Program (ELP) is an important component of Keystone's academic framework. It includes field trips, service to the community and other activities that constantly expand the boundaries of learning beyond the classroom. The school organized two ELP sessions in the academic year 2014-2015. The first one, organized in the first semester, took students from grades 4-9 camping. It was an experience of individual and collective growth as students and faculty learned about each other and nature, understood the need to work and play together, and finally grew closer as the first Keystone family. The second ELP trip that took place between 4th and 8th May 2015 was a journey to explore, experience and understand China. Each grade went to a different province, and observed and participated in many of the local customs and traditions. It was a hands-on learning experience and immersion into the diversity and richness of China – socially, culturally and historically. Here are some moments captured as the students traveled across China.

THR◆VL

BRINGING OUT THE LEADER IN YOU

STUDENTS DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

There is a leader in every student; it is a quality waiting to emerge when presented with the right opportunities. When we asked our students, each one either thought they were already a leader, or at least had the potential to become one. Keystone has consciously planned and laid the groundwork for leadership training in various learning avenues – academic and co-curricular. Students can be proctors, or house captains, or tour guides or representatives on various boards, comittees and teams. "But don't chase after titles," reminded Wendy Bradley, Dean of Students. Every person matters; a title does not determine the authority a person has, it is determined by the influence a person's action had, Ms. Bradley tells the students. The smallest act can lead to change. This is the foundation of Keystone's leadership program that aims at learning leadership strategies, taking direct programmatic responsibility, and becoming agents of change.

Students at Keystone are already taking small steps towards enabling change. Through the service learning initiative, students decide how they want to contribute towards a social cause, and lead the engagement in the local community.

Most importantly every initiative, especially the leadership program at Keystone, is based on the school's shared values – Compassion, Justice, Respect, Wisdom and Honesty. Founded on these principles, and trained to be leaders through learning and experience, Keystone students are leaders already.

"WE CAN DO IT!"

STUDENTS PUSH THEIR LIMITS IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

On 9 September 2015, students from grades 4 to 10 set out on their annual camping trips. Grades 4 and 5 camped for a couple of nights in Huairou district. Grades 6 and 7 were away for two nights at Baihe and Yanqing respectively. Grades 8 and 9 traveled to the bamboo forest in Lin'an, Hangzhou. Students from grade 10 camped at Xiaowutai Mountains. Camping is part of Keystone's experiential learning program that is based on our educational philosophy of "learning by doing and understanding." Camping is an ideal experiential learning activity not only because students are offered the opportunity to learn from nature, but also because they learn more about themselves – their strengths, weaknesses and, most importantly, potential and possibilities for growth.

"Fei Fan loved the experience, and has been excited since she got back from the camping trip," said a grade 5 parent, adding, "Even at home she continues to sleep in the sleeping bag because she enjoyed it so much. Camping is a great way to understand a child's skills, potential, and areas that need improvement. What I am most proud of is that she didn't complain at all, though we know it rained, and it was cold. This has been a positive experience for our child."

Yes, despite the rain, students enjoyed their camping trips. It was the grade 10 students who experienced the harshest turn of weather with an unexpected hailstorm and snow. Wesley Wu from grade 10 explained it best: "It was the first time that I climbed one of the highest mountains in north China. It was the first time that I hiked for over 12 hours completely wet. It was the first time that I felt extremely exhausted, and yet kept walking to our campsite. Now back on campus, I can barely feel the raging spirit of the rain-swollen streams. But these experiences are like a dream that I can always cherish, and carry with me."

The unexpected weather brought out the true strength of our student cohort and community. Middle and high school Design teacher Jenny Small remembered, "The high point of the trip for me was when I was being helped across a river by the grade 10 boys, whilst everyone shouted, "We can do it!" The students were really positive, and I am very grateful for their enthusiasm and spirit."

This is one of the aims of experiential learning trips, such as camping. It draws every individual's strength and spirit to make it a beautiful experience, despite rain or snow, and minus the phones, gadgets and devices that people are often buried in these days. "But it is nature that captures our memories, we do not need cameras," said Madeline Chen from grade 9. As Maureen McCoy, Head of Middle School, rightly noted, "Students have returned feeling proud of their endurance through the challenges. Experiential learning allows students to learn things about themselves that they might not learn in a classroom. Our Keystone campers learned a lot."

A MUSICAL CONVERSATION AROUND THE WORLD

PIANIST KIMBALL GALLAGHER WOWS STUDENTS

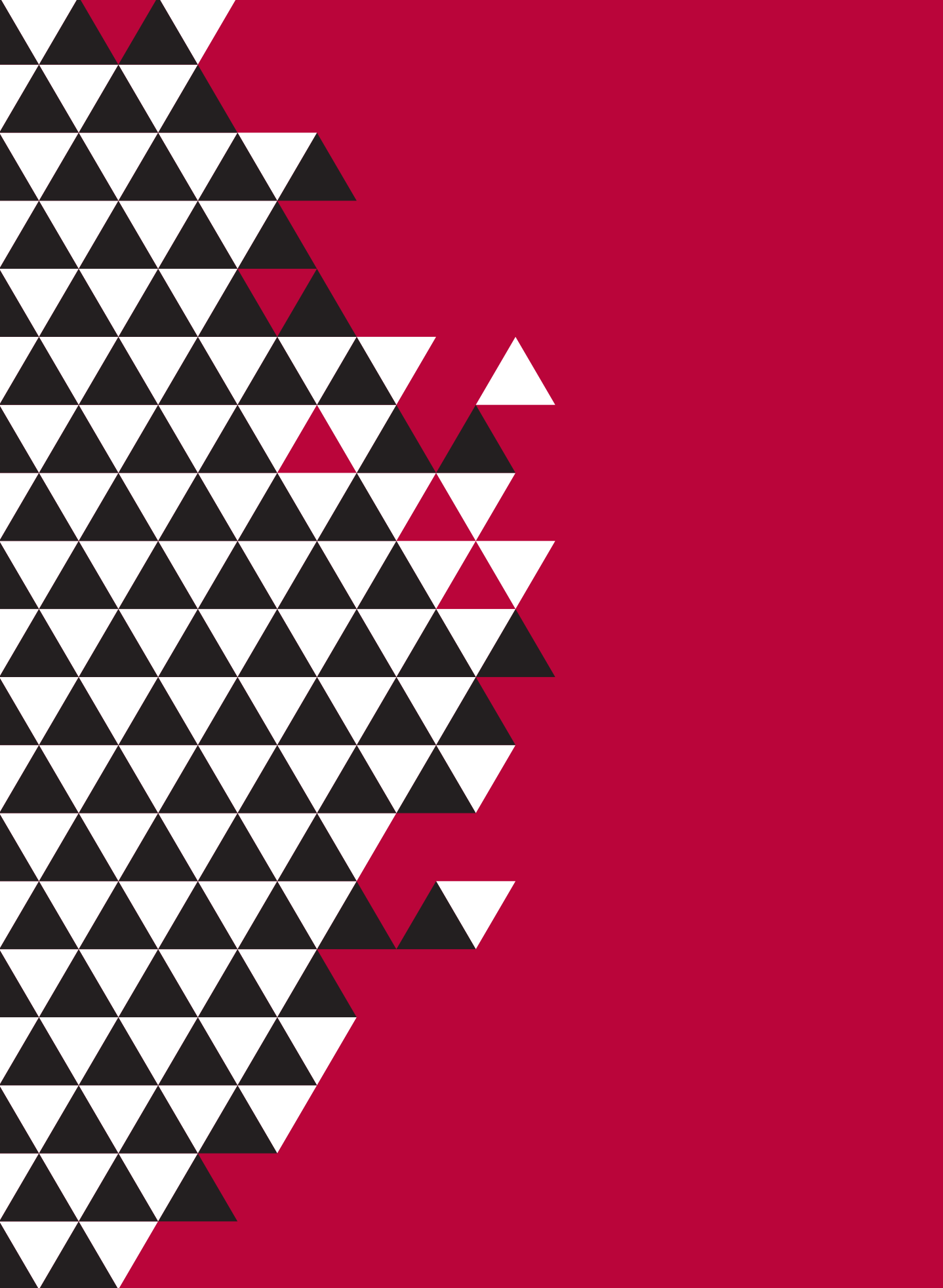
Students would have never imagined that a concert by a world-renowned pianist would begin with improvisations by the students themselves. So, when Kimball Gallagher, New York-based classical pianist and entrepreneur, asked students to come forward for a musical conversation, everyone's hands went up. They were eager to converse with Gallagher, and their own peers, as they took to the piano two at a time conversing in notes and tunes. Soon, the close to 100 students, parents and teachers forgot they were seated around a piano on the stage of the school's grand Performing Arts Center on 30 August 2015. It assumed a salon-like ambience, which is the signature Gallagher style.

Engaging and involving the students was not only a fun introduction to the pianist's performance style, but also a continuation of the Keystone-style experiential learning method, which includes learning by doing, and understanding inside and beyond the classroom. Even when students were just watching Gallagher play, they were assigned tasks. For instance, when he performed Polish composer Chopin's Black Keys, he asked students to watch out for the one white key that he would play with his right hand. Once again all hands went up at the end of the rendition, as they were eager to tell him which finger hit the white key.

Gallagher's musical conversation also took his audience through Poland, France, Russia, Afghanistan, and even Antarctica, as he introduced a piece of music from each country or continent. Students remained engrossed in the performance, as well as learning the history and meaning behind each of the musical extracts.

But the high note of the afternoon was when Gallagher displayed his creativity and innovation – also traits of any Keystone student – with a session on musical alphabets. He created short impromptu compositions by spelling out the names of students from amongst the audience. In fact, one of his favorite pieces is such a composition by a student – Elham – from the Afghanistan National Institute of Music (ANIM). Elham spent time with Gallagher during the pianist's visit there in 2008. He said, "I was so impressed and inspired that Elham composed something so beautiful in just one day, after I taught him about the alphabets of music." Gallagher adds that he was so impressed with Elham that he has played the student's piece at many of his international concerts.

Gallagher not only inspires as a musician, but also as an entrepreneur and philanthropist. The 88 Concert Tour, his brainchild, which began as a house tour within the U.S., soon transformed into a global campaign. This initiative has raised thousands in funds through musical engagement and education in over 30 countries in seven continents. The money has been donated towards many humanitarian causes. It is such inspiration and ambition from around the world that Keystone continues to offer its students. In the academic year 2014-2015 alone, students have had several opportunities through the Keystone Inspiration Series to meet the best in various fields, such as renowned cellist Feng Yao, Chinese educator and scholar Li Jiasheng, Physical Chemist and President of one of the top Liberal Arts colleges in the U.S., Pomona College's Dr. David Oxtoby, and others.



CHINESE THREAD

A KEYSTONE SIGNATURE

MAKING THE RIGHT MOVES FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Dance is an art form like no other. Its fundamental significance in education and learning cannot be emphasized enough. "Dancing is a right-brain oriented subject because of the creativity, imagination and innovation needed to know and understand dance. It not only improves a person's posture, but also builds a student's confidence in presentation and expression, improves coordination skills, develops memory and discipline. And any student with a dance background will definitely have an edge over other applicants to colleges and universities anywhere in the world," says middle and high school Dance teacher Shi Hang.

If learning dance is not advantage enough, Ms. Shi has developed a unique curriculum for her students, which focuses on Chinese folk

and classical dance. At the beginning of each semester, her students are asked to research a form of traditional dance so they can learn about its roots and transformations. This is especially beneficial because of Keystone's emphasis on Chinese history, culture and identity through elements drawn from the national curriculum. In essence, Ms. Shi's Dance class looks to the past through the history of dance, culture and tradition, and also to the future as she teaches her students to be more confident, smarter and better prepared to take on challenges of a highly competitive and complex world.

For grades 6 and 7, the emphasis is on learning basic traditional dance movements, completing the performance, and developing a healthy and positive appreciation for dance. For grades 8 and 9, Ms. Shi focuses on teaching more professional steps, movements and performances. But all her students will learn Chinese traditional and classical dance with grace, discipline and a critical reflection, making Dance class a sought-after subject choice even for those students for whom it is optional. "Drama was the first choice of one of my students from grade 8, and dance was her second choice. But she was assigned to my dance class. Soon she became more interested in dance, and even began coming for practice every day during lunch time," says Ms. Shi with a smile.

THIRTEEN METERS OF TRADITION AND CELEBRATION

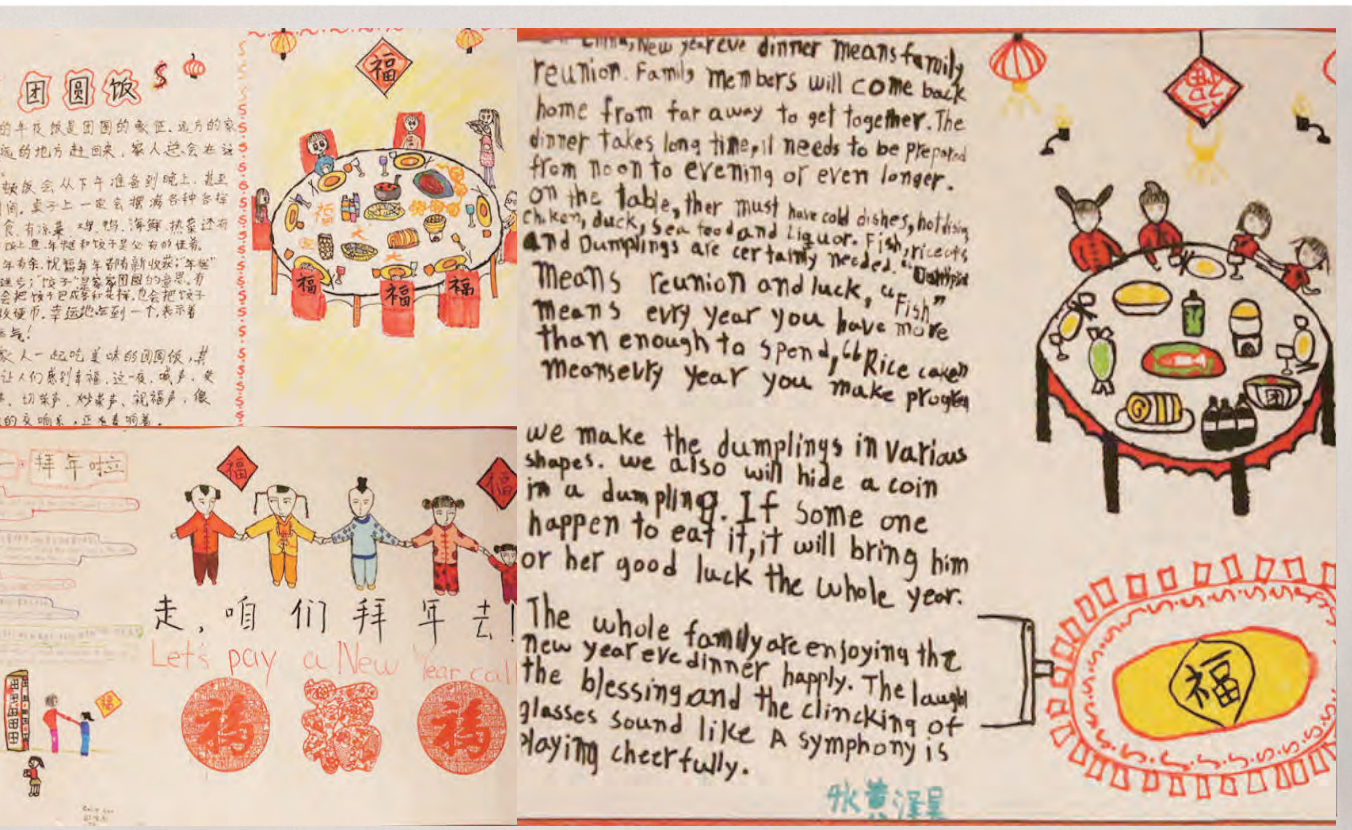
STUDENTS BRING THE SPIRIT OF SPRING FESTIVAL TO SCHOOL

A new year is a time of hope renewed, family reunions, and traditions revisited irrespective of the culture or country one picks. So it is with Chinese New Year or the Chinese Spring Festival, as it is also known. It is both a moment that looks to the future and the past as culture is celebrated and traditions carried on. And before students take off for the long family celebrations, small and big festivities have been celebrated with the Keystone family.

The beginning of the Chinese New Year is

marked with the Laba Festival (preparing congee in traditional Chinese style) which, thanks to the teachers and students of grades 4 and 5, the whole school tasted. These students also gave us food for thought with their 13-meter Scroll of Spring Cultural History. There is rich tradition and history bound into how Chinese New Year is celebrated, and its many customs and beginnings were presented in this scroll

ways that Keystone's signature Chinese Thread is woven into the learning philosophy of the school. Ms. Shi added, "in Chinese class we not only teach children the characters or reading, or only the ancient poems, or to write an article, but we also integrate Chinese culture into curriculum, into everyday class. It is not just bilingual immersion in content but also through culture."



through art, story illustrations, poems, and papercut art. "The students drew and wrote – in Chinese and English – to demonstrate and interpret the Chinese Spring Festival culture. Over three weeks, they learnt, discussed, and revised," said Shi Mei, grade 4 Chinese homeroom teacher. This is one of the many

Students also compared Chinese Spring Festival traditions to festivities of other cultures and countries by interviewing other Chinese and expatriate teachers. This increases their appetite not only for Chinese history and culture, but also for the many diverse world cultures. In Keystone, Chinese and Western cultures blossom together.

UNMASKING KUN QU:

A DIALOGUE WITH AN ANCIENT ART

It is a rare moment when culture comes alive. It is rarer when it is steeped in history, embedded in art and literature, and transcends spatial and temporal boundaries. It is rarer still when such moments of culture go beyond experience and become you. On 25 October 2015, the over 500 people who sat in rapt attention and awe, watching and understanding a piece of ancient China couldn't agree more. Keystone's first Cultural Salon on the ancient art of Kun Qu has redefined cultural experiences and cultural education for everyone present that day.

REVEALING BEYOND CULTURE

Led by Director Li Xiaoping, with actors Wei Chunrong and Wen Yuhang, the salon was a dynamic presentation of the history and meaning of Kun Qu. One of the oldest operatic forms in the world, Kun Qu is a sublime blending of art, poetry, music, singing, dance, marshal arts and more. It is unlike any other as our middle school Librarian, Kacy Song, explained: "Out of all the Chinese operas, Kun opera is the finest, and one of the most mature art forms. The words used in the performance and singing come from ancient Chinese literary texts, which makes it truly unique because it is an art that blends history, literature and culture. Traditional Chinese texts were not accessible to many back in the nascent days of Kun Qu, and today is no different. But because of Kun Qu, these texts and its culture survive, and people are getting more familiar with it."

However for Director Li, Kun Qu is more than the words you hear, and the performance you see. It is a dialogue because of its nature and form. "Apart from the actors, a Kun Qu performance does not involve much else," Director Li explained, adding, "The limited usage of props – the empty spaces – allows for imagination, and enables the audience to be part of the play." And the further he deconstructed Kun Qu and the more the actors demonstrated excerpts from *The Butterfly Lovers* with pious precision, the importance of the audience –

我覺得國光打破了

Spadafora. "I was enchanted by the combination of simplicity and subtlety. The singing was pure and deeply moving, as were the nuances of the narrative," remarked Head of School, Malcolm McKenzie.

A CULTURAL EDUCATION AND AN EDUCATION IN CULTURES

There is often a lot of talk about culture and cultural experiences, especially among expatriates, of not only preserving their own in a foreign country, but also experiencing the other's. And so, there is an over-excitement to be present at the many events and festivities – local and international – make the family trips to culturally popular or touristically significant destinations, and push children into workshops and after-school activities that focus on local or international traditions. And if these fleeting experiences only give you a momentary sense of something magical, followed by an empty feeling of staring into a cultural abyss, it is because culture is not just an experience. Culture is a part of you; it is you.

Culture must be studied, understood, and felt. A student who not only understands and experiences, but also embraces cultures – his or her own and others' – has received a real education. This is what Keystone gives its students – Chinese and international – not just an experience, but also an education that edifies them individually, and as a whole, connecting them locally and globally.

of oneself – became more apparent. It felt like a rediscovery of oneself, as one filled in the empty spaces in the performance revealing more than what one saw. "You not only have to understand the play, but you also have to feel it," he asserted. The audience was definitely in step with Director Li and actors Wei and Wen as they unmasked Kun Qu bit by bit. "Without the director, I would have failed to understand the richness of this tradition," said Assistant Head of High School, Rick

WELCOME TO YOUR HOUSE

FIVE HOUSE. ONE COMMUNITY.

"Says one time he went out in the wilderness to find his own soul, an' he foun' he didn' have no soul that was his'n. Says he foun' he jus' got a little piece of a great big soul. Says a wilderness ain't no good, 'cause his little piece of a soul wasn't no good 'less it was with the rest, an' was whole."

– Joseph Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath*

These sentences from a great English novel perhaps capture the deepest meaning and manifestation of the sense of belonging and community. Every single student at Keystone Academy is "a little piece" of the "great big soul" of this school. Keystone has also laid the foundation to a deeper sense of belonging through its house system. The tradition of school house systems comes from British boarding schools where residential students belonged to specific houses that they also lived in. This tradition has gradually evolved to eliminating physical houses and indicating a group of people. Inspired and drawn from traditional Chinese philosophy of the Five Elements, this is what the Keystone house system looks like:

House Names	House Color	House Trivia	Accompanying Shared Value
Fire (火 Huǒ)	Red	People in this house are magnetic and attractive personalities with happy and excited temperaments.	Compassion (Ren)
Earth (土 Tǔ)	Yellow	Loyal and idealistic, Earth people are also ambitious.	Respect (Li)
Metal (金 Jīn)	White	People in this house wish to lead orderly and principled lives. Quality is their creed.	Justice (Yi)
Water (水 Shuǐ)	Black	Water people are clever and scholarly. They are also good at keeping secrets.	Wisdom (Zhi)
Wood (木 Mù)	Green	Diligence and hard work are their mottos.	Honesty (Xin)

FIVE HOUSES: ONE FAMILY

The defining characteristic of the Keystone house system is its Chinese roots. Drawn from the Wu Xing – Five Elements – it espouses the underlying philosophy and virtues. This traditional Chinese philosophy has been used to explain and explore fields as diverse as music, medicine, military strategy and even martial arts – unpacking natural processes that are invisible to the naked eye. More broadly, the Five Elements are considered to be dynamic and interdependent aspects of the universe's ongoing existence and development. For Keystone, they embody the birth, existence, processes, history and development of the school.

Another interesting aspect is that every member of the Keystone community – teachers, staff and students – belongs to a house. This is a lifelong membership, creating the whole of one great soul.

WHY A HOUSE SYSTEM?

The house system has a threefold purpose: competition, cooperation and community. Competition is not limited to the sports field, but also includes the wide range of competitions that the school, divisions or grades organize – anything from drawing competitions, poetry recitals, debating, and much more.

And because one and all are included, a healthy cross section of adults and students can compete. Students are also encouraged to get to know others in their houses and cooperate with each other irrespective of grades and divisions. A house system also enables mentoring as a house community provides the opportunity for older students to buddy with and support their younger peers.

The beginnings of a sense of community and belonging were seen when students participated in their very first house competition in the first week of school in August 2014. The team race involving hoops had only three rules – all house members must cross the finish line together. This means no leaving any house member behind and, consequently, this means figuring out your own way not to leave any team member behind. Their very first house lesson was abundantly clear – winning is important but reflection, critical thinking and, most importantly, inclusion are the essential ingredients to being part of a whole. At the finish line, they were all winners!

Scan to watch video

LEARNING TO THE BEAT OF HIP POP

STUDENTS BRINGS CONFUCIUS AND HIP HOP TOGETHER

It is hard to imagine Confucius droning to the beat of hip-hop, but what if he did? What would it be about? Seven middle and high school students, under the supervision of three teachers, produced a hip-hop music video with Confucian lyrics.

Andy Li sang the fusion number, and his peers David Zhang, Steven Shi, Diego Qi, and Fred Sui were the on-screen artists. Winston Jiang and Leo Ma choreographed and produced the music video. Middle and high school teachers, Kacy Song, Pei Lu, and Christine Shi who guided the students remember how shy they were when they began production, but at the end, it had everyone moving to a Confucian Hip-Hop beat. Scan the QR Code above using your WeChat app to watch their creation, and move to a new beat.

LYRICS

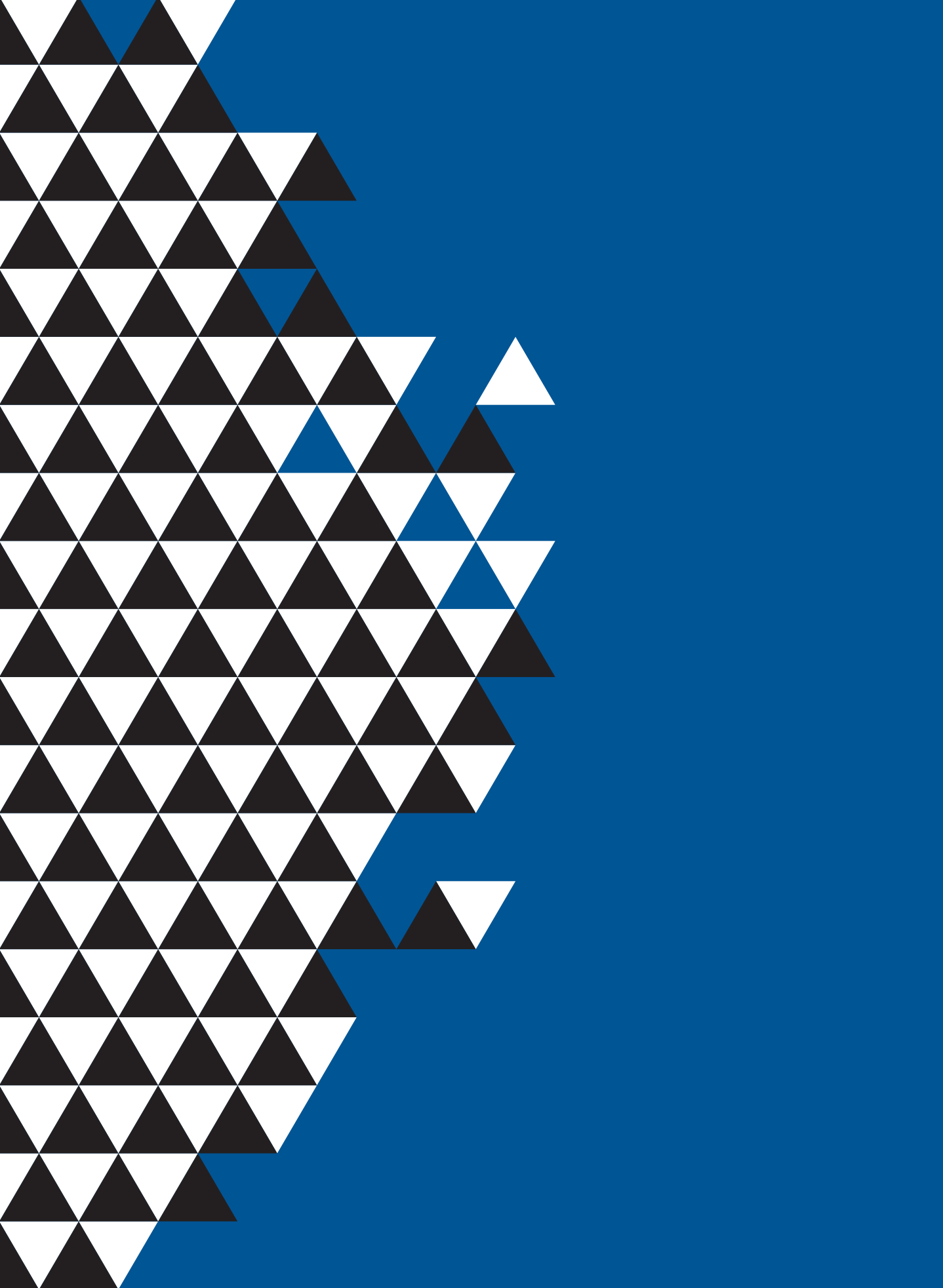
The most influential concept of Confucianism is Compassion (Ren)
Compassion is exemplified by:
If you wish to establish yourself, you seek also
to establish others.
If you wish to achieve your goals, you seek also to help others to achieve their goals.

Do not do to others what you would not like to be done to you.
Be dutiful and respectful to your parents, affectionate to your siblings.
A reliable friend, fight for your country…
A compassionate human being, who is patient to strangers.

And why?
The spirit of WHY is exemplified by:
If we don't understand, we should ask; if we do understand, we should share.
If nobody understands, we could possibly ask God.
The importance of asking why is:
You must doubt, question, reason, argue, deduct.
Your heart must be full of curiosity,
And you will pursue recklessly what you want.

The Keystone experience is so interesting,
A bit of math, and a bit of science, and brainstorming how to build bridges.
Poems in the Song and Tang dynasties,
Lu Xun, Mo Yan, Confucius and Mencius.
Learning English requires being able to learn from mistakes,
And jumping into different cultures.
More to learn in KAP activities, playing the Qin and making dumplings.

The residential program enriches our lives further,
Taking care of animals and other children.
The Dedication Ceremony – a big step along the path.
Can't forget the rainy day when we were inducted.
The Double-Ninth festival came with more poems.
What is really cool is we learn what we need to learn, serve communities, and share successes.
Mr. McKenzie clears his throat, "Good morning to all students!"



HOME AWAY FROM HOME

LEARNING. GROWING. BECOMING.

RESIDENTIAL LIFE IS ESSENTIAL TO A KEYSTONE EDUCATION

It may be right to state that the boarding school tradition in China dates back to Confucius' private school where disciples lived with him. Here he trained and tutored his disciples not only in the six skills of rites, music, archery, charioteering, writing and mathematics, but most importantly he taught them 'how to learn,' 'how to practice,' 'how to conduct themselves,' and 'how to live together.'

Keystone's U.S.-style Residential Program also draws on this Confucian boarding philosophy. As one of the keystones, the residential program is essential to becoming a complete Keystone student. The purpose of the Keystone boarding component is two-fold: 1. Building Character 2. Developing Community. These are what the curriculum calls Keystones. In fact the first two objectives enable and lay the groundwork for the third. Foundations provide the roadmap for achieving the objectives. Learning and growing through each of these will help boarding students acquire some basic skills, perhaps not charioteering and archery, but skills required in today's ever-changing world.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

The founding batch of 50 residential students have begun laying the foundations of their boarding lives. Director of Residential Life, Juli James, orgnanizes hall meetings when a major curricular objective is introduced. Here is a quick overview of the residential curriculum:

FOUNDATIONS		
	Character	**Community**
Essential Questions	• How and where do I fit in Keystone? • What personal contributions can I make to the school? • What personal qualities do I exhibit that make me a contributing, positive member of the dorm?	• What type of community do we strive for at Keystone? • How are individual differences and diversity appreciated at Keystone? • How does the community manifest the shared values in daily life and community living?
Skills (examples)	• Fire and Safety • Homesickness strategies • Effective study habits • Living with a roommate • Goal-setting and planning • Personal wellness • Time Management	• Respecting difference • Monthly dorm events centered on shared values • Conflict mediation • Community service projects • Developing ideal Keystone Community

Middle and high school students go through different pillars of the curriculum. The curriculum is sequential in nature, and designed to be developmentally appropriate as students transition from middle to high school. Students journey through the two foundations via pillars. Middle school boarding students are guided through the first pillar of the curriculum titled "Learning for Life". And when they transition to high school, the residential curriculum continues in the second pillar of "Leadership and Legacy". The founding boarding students have the unique opportunity to mold not just the ideal characteristics of a Keystone student but also the community and its nature. "They have to shape the Keystone Residential Program, they will be leaders and shape the entire future of Keystone boarding," said Ms. James.

BENEFITS OF BOARDING

Boarding is not allowed up to grade 6, optional for grades 7 and 8 and mandatory for grades 9 to 12. The intentional effort is to build the character of each student. Each student becomes not just a keystone student, but also awakens their inner potential. This is deeply intertwined with the creation of a community. Boarders not only learn to live with roommates, but also hall mates, other boarders – younger and older – faculty living in the residences, and understand the social norms of coexistence, but also, in turn, develop their character further. Lastly, and most importantly, the Keystone boarding environment deliberately prepares students for life after Keystone – at university, at work, and beyond.

LOOKING OUT FOR STUDENTS, AT ALL TIMES

KEYSTONE'S ADVISING PROGRAM

Keystone Academy's advising program aims to provide students with a deep educational experience. Each Keystone student has an advisor who is her/his mentor not just academically, but also socially and emotionally. Read more about how Keystone nurtures students holistically.

WHAT IS THE ADVISING PROGRAM?

It is a teacher-student formalized relationship where a teacher acts as a student's mentor and guide academically, socially and emotionally to make sure that life here at Keystone is moving along smoothly. Each advisor is responsible for a group of students called an advisory group. They are connected as a group and individually with the advisor. The advisory system is also a link between school and home so that parents have a direct contact with a single person who is invested in their child's holistic development. This relationship is formalized through weekly 30-minute Wednesday advisory group meetings, pre-arranged individual meetings between the advisor and student, individual student reports from the advisor that complement her/his report cards and academic performance. Students will meet their advisors far more often than at the 30-minute

Wednesday time slots. They will see them at meals; and they will see them during KAP, classrooms, in the dorms. There are plenty of opportunities for the advising system to be effective.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE IN THE ADVISOR PROGRAM FOR PRIMARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS?

For primary school students, their homeroom teachers also serve as a type of advisor. They look after a whole class group. However, the role, function and responsibilities are the same. Parents should feel comfortable to contact the homeroom teacher or advisor directly. This does not mean that parents cannot contact other teachers or staff. Everyone is available to address parents concerns.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS AND ADVANTAGES OF AN ADVISOR PROGRAM?

There is an inbuilt curriculum in the advisor program. It guides the meetings between advisors and students and it provides a topic for discussion. Advisors can also organize other activities with their advisees according to the interests of the student or advisory group. The topics of discussion include activities such as goal setting, academic integrity or time management. Meanwhile, students provide individual information about their interests, hobbies, chosen KAP activities and more. This information helps the advisor to understand each advisee thoroughly and this helps them take an active interest in their advisees. For instance, an advisor can observe a student during their KAP activity as a way to help build a trusting relationship with the student. Students have been eager to know who their advisors are going to be. They want to build that connection, and know that there is always someone looking out for them even at school. This applies to day and residential students.

DO STUDENTS STAY WITH THE SAME ADVISOR AS THEY PROGRESS THROUGH THE GRADES?

At the end of each academic year students can make a request for change in advisor. But such requests are rare. There are times when advisors change because teachers have moved on or there is a different advisor group in different levels. Advices, to both students and parents, would be to give the relationship time to develop and grow. One should not rush to request change. Connections take time to develop and we should allow that space and time.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE ADVISOR PROGRAM?

It creates a three-way harmonious connection – between the student and teacher, teacher and parent and student and parent. The advisor program encourages and enables open, direct and honest communication. This is the most important element of the relationship. Parents are encouraged to come forward and speak to the advisor about the expectations for their child. This helps the advisor to be in line with parents' expectations. Advisors share conversations they have with students with parents if required. These connections and communication channels benefit the students the most. We would also request parents to inform advisors about developments at home, of events that may affect their children. This will help advisors and teachers to support students better.

WHAT CAN PARENTS EXPECT FROM THE ADVISORS?

The advisors prepare reports regularly on each of their advisees. These are not a repeat of teacher comments but anecdotal reviews of the students' lives at Keystone. These may offer insights beyond academic performance, such as how the students feel, highs and lows of the year, challenges and successes, social and emotional growth and development, peer relations, emerging leadership capabilities and more. These reports would be meaningful not only for the student, but for the whole family. Being an advisor is a lifelong connection. I still keep in touch with some of my advisees. One of the oldest is now 32 years old; I have known her since she was 12. Advisors develop a sense of pride about their advisees; about what you do together and how the advisee has grown and progressed. It is a great feeling.

AFTER HOURS

STUDENTS ENJOY A WEEKEND ON CAMPUS

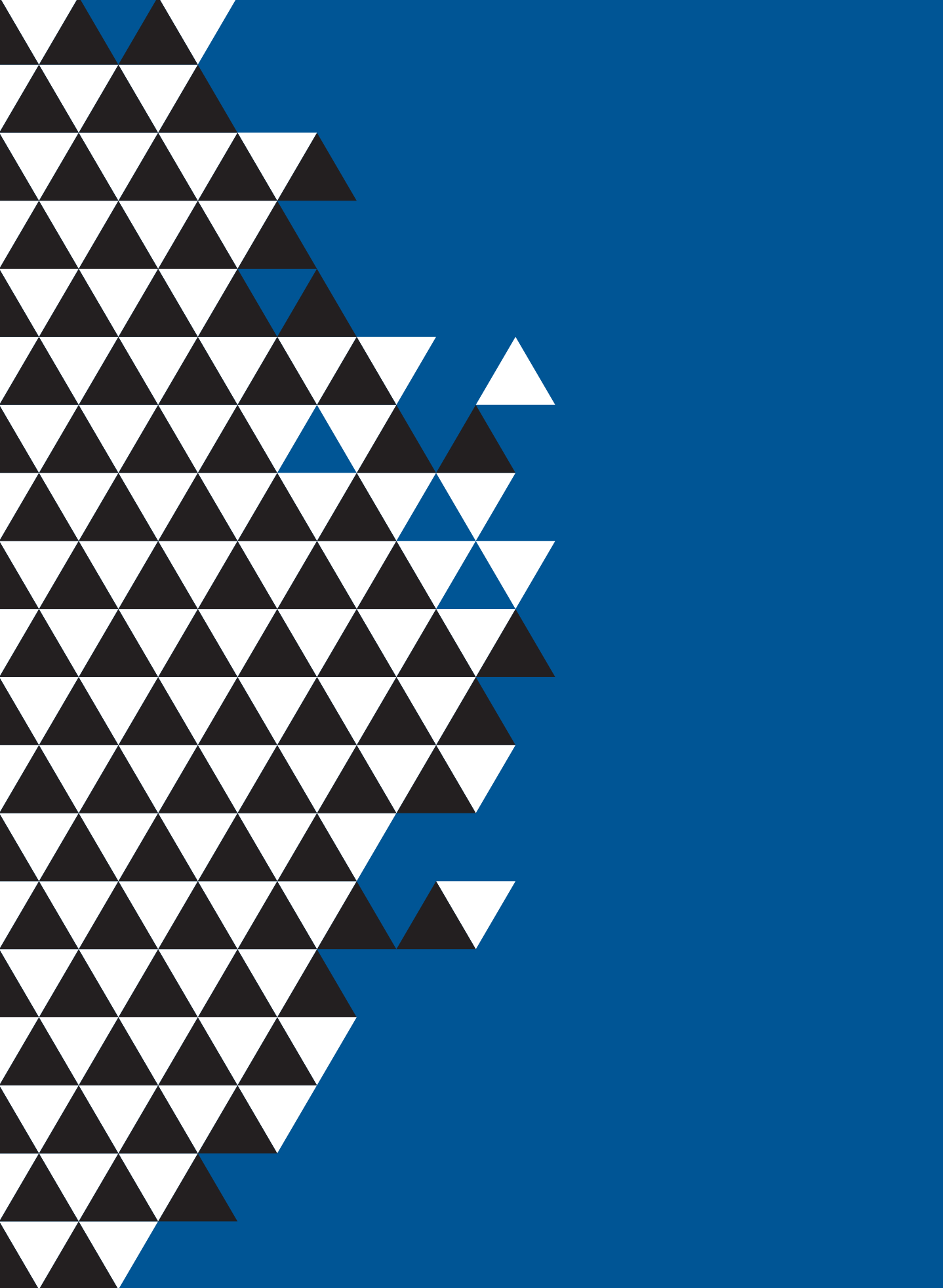
"The whole weekend was exciting. I really enjoyed the basketball match against the teachers. The teachers took the game by seven points, but it only made us realize that we needed to train more and try harder the next time," said An Zhaoning from grade 8, adding "We need more campus weekends. It is so much fun!"

Campus weekends are a middle and high school tradition at Keystone Academy. These special weekends, which come two or three times in an academic year, bring all middle and high school teachers and students together with a whole range of activities that involve fun, learning, teamwork, bonding and relaxing. It breaks from the routine of boarding life, and also presents middle school day students an opportunity to experience school life after hours. Day students get the opportunity to see school not only as a place to be between 8am and 4-4.30pm, but also a place where their friends live, and grow and work together, and learn from each other. They see that residential life offers plenty of opportunities for developing skills in leadership, teamwork, communication and much more. And for the residential community as a whole, campus weekends enhance communal living by encouraging participation and connection.

Grade 9 student, Huang Yiwen agrees, "Campus weekends are a great way for us to interact, learn together and think together. I really enjoy teamwork because sparks always fly – sparks of ideas – during activities such as making a House team car out of cardboard."

Apart from the basketball match and making cardboard cars there was a range of other activities all through Friday evening into Saturday and Sunday. Students enjoyed a movie after all the fun and games on Friday night. And on Saturday morning, the students led by a few teachers headed for a relaxing walk around the Luoma Lake in the morning followed by more teamwork activities in the afternoon. On Sunday, a few students volunteered at Xingzhi Experimental School, a school for migrant children in Haidian, and painted their classrooms.

Every weekend at Keystone Academy has planned activities and trips in the form of fun, exploration, learning, community service or just a relaxing walk. And, campus weekends are a celebration of this residential life, of growing and becoming a residential community.

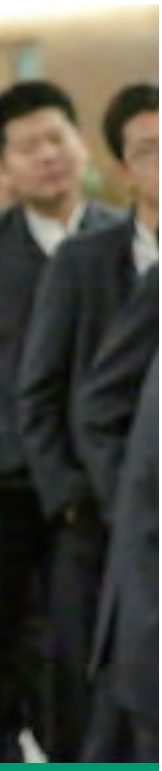


A GROWING COMMUNITY

THE RITE OF PASSAGE

KEYSTONE MATRICULATION CEREMONY

The echo of applause and a sense of pride filled the air as 100 middle school students walked out ceremoniously into the Grand Entrance to the music of Design teacher George Baxter's Scottish bagpipes. Parents and faculty were moved to tears as they watched students take their seats for the school's first-ever Matriculation Ceremony. This formal rite of passage was especially unique, firstly, because being the founding batch of the oldest students in a school carries its own merit, as they are the pioneers of school traditions, norms and culture. Secondly, as Malcolm McKenzie, Head of School noted theirs would be "the first names in books that will have students writing in them for years to come." Students came forward one at a time, signed their names in the Matriculation Book, and then faced the audience and introduced themselves. "The kids rose to the occasion with confident voices and sturdy hands as they declared themselves members of this school and carefully wrote their names in the pages of Keystone history," said Dean of Students, Wendy Bradley.



PURPOSE AND MEANING OF MATRICULATION

This ceremony represents the formal induction of middle school students into Keystone Academy. It allows students "to be led into this community with your minds and your hearts open. Open to wondrous intellectual adventures, to fulfilling emotional growth, and to outcomes beyond your dreams," said Mr. McKenzie, adding that it is the beginning of "a chance, in a formal way, to begin to find your voice in public, on the shared stage of our fellowship and community."

The formal welcome was complete when students walked through a human arch. Teachers stood in two

parallel lines and stretched out their hands to form this arch of belonging, care and community. Symbolic as it may have been, it was a sincere and earnest commitment from teachers not only officially welcoming their students, but also promising the care and compassion each one will need and want in their education, growth and development.

CELEBRATING FIRSTS

LOOKING BACK ON A SUCCESSFUL INAUGURAL YEAR

The last day of the school year was one of celebration. The celebration began with an advancement ceremony for foundation year, grade 5 and grade 9 students who officially graduated to their first year of school, middle and high schools respectively. Parents of the graduating students were also present, and were touched by the special occasion. Following this heartwarming ceremony, the community enjoyed several student performances. Marking this day of celebration, were several moments and instances of happiness, and smiles.

SPORTS DAY

WITH A TWIST

It was all fun with a side of sports at Keystone's first Sports Day. Students were divided into teams based on the House System. Music filled the grounds as teams supervised by parent-volunteers systematically danced their way between about 10 team games. Teams played a game for a few minutes, and then danced their way to the next game all the while vying for the Tabloid Championship Cup. It was a great way for students to learn to work in teams, while simultaneously playing to their individual strengths. Here are some exciting and fun moments from that day.

KEYSTONE ACADEMY
北京市鼎石学校

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