



TANGO

EXTRA

Dancing with Words

Senri & Osaka International Schools of Kwansei Gakuin

TANGO: TWO SCHOOLS TOGETHER

Volume 12 Number 1 December 2018

SOIS, The Champions of the World!

"The best year of WSC so far..."

by Minami Matsushima

I'm lost for words.

No, not really. But as I write this article nearly 2 weeks after the Tournament of Champions, I still find it almost impossible to come to terms with the fact that the 3 years I've participated in the World Scholar's Cup as a scholar has finally come to an end.

From November 16th to 21st, 15 SOIS students participated in the Tournament of Champions (ToC) hosted by the Yale International Relations Association at Yale University. We debated, wrote essays, took tests composed of 120 multiple choice questions, and participated in quiz bowls. That's essentially what the World Scholar's Cup is. Just a competition for learning. Yet it's so much more. It's a celebration of learning. However, let's first take a trip down memory lane to the Kansai Regionals in early May, where our journey this year had begun with a record-breaking 45 students participating as a part of the SOIS delegation.

This year's Kansai Round was testament to the growth our school had experienced over the past few years, from virtually being unknown, to one of the most recognisable schools that dominated the venues (*cough* and the award ceremonies *cough*). Out of the 200+ students participating from around 20 schools in our region, our school won the top 3 overall team awards in both the Senior and Junior divisions. ¹

Many of the students moved on to compete against over 5000 scholars from over 50 different countries in the Kuala Lumpur Global Round in June, where Tyus Sheriff (OIS 11) was in the debate showcase and won champion scholar in the entire competition. With many SOIS teams qualifying for the ToC, it was a bittersweet overall 2nd place for our team, as a team composed of friends we know and love took 1st place.



Photo by Steve Sheriff

And finally we arrive to two weeks ago, ToC at Yale. Tyus as well as Tanishka Murthy (SIS 8) were chosen out of 2500+ students to participate in the debate showcase in their respective rounds, and Tyus took home the champion scholar award for an unprecedented 4th consecutive time in a global-level round. ²



Tyus Sheriff, 2018 World Scholar Champion.

Brainy and patriotic.

All teams performed at their best, with 3 out of the 4 teams placing in top 100 in the Senior round, and our team coming 1st place overall in the whole tournament. ³ There was nothing more we could ask for; this was the best possible way to end our time as scholars in this programme.

I'll admit this will sound somewhat clichéd, but this year had felt different from the beginning. Perhaps it was the excitement over the growing international reputation our school was gaining in the programme. Or the fact that there was an official WSC club at our school, led by Mr. Sheriff. ⁴

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Happy Holidays to all Tango Readers!

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Or maybe it was going in knowing this would be my final year.

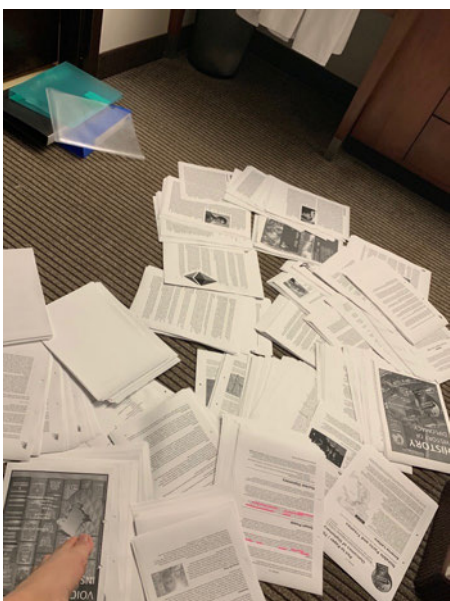
It's a strange and foreign feeling to realise that there is no next round to prepare for. Something that had dominated my life and sleep — or rather, lack thereof — for three years won't be there next year. Yet, I can confidently say that though I finish my time as a participant, the same cannot be said for the myriad treasures the programme has gifted me with.⁵ I will continue to cherish all the precious memories, relationships, and knowledge I've gained during my time in WSC.

I cannot stress enough how much WSC has taught me. Wondering if our imperfect world could ever become flawless through studying criminal justice, failed states, the art of cheating, and finding respite in the ephemeral sparks that light the darkness, heal flawed visions, and soothe broken sounds in 2016. Being in awe of the many unlikely accomplishments and legends of our world, travelling down the bridge between myth and reality to realise that perhaps, we live in an improbable universe where things are only almost impossible in 2017. Taking a moment this year to reflect over all of the special memories formed throughout our lives, the loving and entangling relationships crystallised from Japan to Havana (and everywhere else), because in the end, what are borders but just a mere manmade concept? I learnt to talk in front of people without feeling borderline suicidal.⁶ I learnt to argue things from unique perspectives both verbally and through using the power of the pen, and that you MUST 'refute all contentions and assumptions put forth by the opposition and corroborate your team's substantive and constructive case using unassailable evidence' to win debates.

Thank you to Mr. Sheriff and everyone that was a part of WSC SOIS this year. Formatting and creating questions for the practice challenge and bowl, giving feedback after judging debates and editing essays with my team, it all paid off as we saw our club's crias and even more experienced members achieve amazing results throughout the season.

Thank you to my parents for funding all my trips. I'm thankful for the experiences you've allowed me to go through, and I promise I'll make sure your money didn't go to waste.⁷

Finally, I am eternally grateful for my teammates who I had barely talked to before WSC, but are now brother-like figures to me. Thank you for crowning me fruit queen while I slept after overeating pepeloni pizza that was yummy in my tummy. And cheek poking me at random intervals throughout the day. And making fun of my incompetent flag-waving skills. Honestly, if I were to list all the stupid and dumb things y'all did, it would be a whole separate article, and you guys know more than anyone else that I tend to get overly wordy and emotional. So thank you. I love all of you so much.



From composing "El Junket Suicida" to stuffing a literally stuffed piña into my carry on. Finding out my 1000+ pages of "notes" weighed way too much, and scattering and sleeping on them on the hotel room floor. Getting stopped at customs multiple times for my 4 family sized Reese's and Swedish Fish bags that were also forced into my carry on. Dragging the SOIS delegation into doing the Sōran Bushi by asking the Japanese Delegation literally minutes before the performances started if we could join.



Reaffirming Mina Allen's assertion from ToC 2017 (yes humans can survive on 3 hours of sleep per day). Seeing the legendary decapitated Jerry head become one with our trophy in the library. Medals, trophies, fame, glory, and above all, being mentioned on the Wikipedia page for WSC. Really, I couldn't've asked for a better way to finish.

Thank you World Scholar's Cup, for the most magical experience of my life. How fortunate I was, to have been part of something so surreal and amazing. I went from being an admittedly reluctant participant to now encouraging people to join in an almost religious manner.⁸ If you're reading this right now, JOIN NEXT SEASON!

Until then, Pwaa!

1. No rainbow eyebrows for anyone.
2. Surprise! But really, congratulations, we're all like super proud moms here.
3. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you, hubris at its finest. Okay but come on, let this one slide.
4. Awarded "Coach-of-the-Year" by WSC in 2017. Where would our delegation be without you?
5. Including the importance of the word myriad.
6. Or at least I became better at acting. Fake it 'til you make it bois!
7. Other than the pineapples fermenting into alcohol(?) in hotel bathtubs...and karamucho-filled trophies...and —
8. Who said it wasn't the World Scholar's Cult? Ooh nah nah, OOH NAH NAH! *rips Havana backdrop and fights over pieces at candlelit vigil*

Photos supplied by Minami Matsushima

CEZARS KITCHEN: A New Caterer Brings a New Vision

by Tyus Sheriff

Ask any student at SOIS what their favorite time of the day is, and they will probably answer “lunch”. It’s the time of day when all students can indulge themselves in a curry, bento, or any daily meal offered at the school cafeteria. It’s also a time for socializing and decompressing after tiring morning classes. Thus, a change in the SOIS cafeteria is significant and is bound to change school life in one way or another.

Students returning to SOIS after the summer break were greeted by a new caterer in the school cafeteria: Cezars Kitchen. The company, which primarily caters to international schools and businesses across Japan, describes itself as a “leader in food service in Japan and the international community” on its official website. The menu options and food served by Cezars Kitchen differs from location to location as they “customize” their service based on individual needs and circumstances.

Nanami Hasegawa, OIS Grade 11, said that, since the arrival of Cezars Kitchen, she has noticed that the menu option is “much more diverse” with “food coming from various different cultures. I might have lasagna one day and Thai green curry the next.”

Diverse cuisine seems to be, indeed, one of the hallmarks of Cezars Kitchen. Speaking to OIS students on the first day of school since the summer vacation, representatives from the catering company urged students to try the menu option they have never heard of before, or, in their own words “can’t pronounce”. They hope this will allow students to explore new food cultures and develop a richer understanding of international cuisine. Dale Oliver, the head chef of Cezars Kitchen here at SOIS, hopes that the food served by the cafeteria will be “new” and possibly “life changing” for students.

Many students do seem to be enjoying the process of trying new foods through the cafeteria. Skye Inada, OIS Grade 11, stated that the diverse range of options offered “brings something new” to him “almost everyday” and always looks forward to seeing what is on the lunch menu. Students who prefer sticking to what they know are able to purchase the “Japanese Lunch” option everyday as well. Creatures of habit may also enjoy the daily selection of Japanese curries and donburis, as well as the newly-established Salad Bar, allowing healthy eating options for SOIS students.

In addition to being a new catering service in the cafeteria, Cezars Kitchen has also turned what used to be the “snack bar” at the school into “Cezars Café”, where students can enjoy warm beverages (or cold ones, their smoothie is a favorite) and snacks. On some days, the Café sells freshly-baked cookies, which are always popular among students. Although some mourn the loss of the ice-creams once offered by the school, the café provides a new source of comfort for students seeking to escape in the throes of academic stress. “It’s a really nice place to warm up, especially on cold days,” Karin Shimoo (SIS Grade 11) commented. “One day, for history class, we went down to the café and bought drinks together. We then sat around and had a class discussion.”

Food plays an integral role in student life. Mr. Oliver hopes that he, along with the rest of the staff working at Cezars Kitchen, has “brought a kind of food that gives students more to energy to study” and carry through with their daily lives. When asked about the school’s reaction to the new cafeteria, Mr. Oliver stated that he has received “lots of feedback, mostly positive” from SOIS. In places where feedback wasn’t so positive, cafeteria-goers simply wanted slight adjustments to the food, such as having larger serving sizes. But Mr. Oliver seems to embrace all feedback provided to him by students and faculty members as a chance to better understand the school community and its uniqueness: “In the beginning, I think it was just a learning experience for myself and the community because they didn’t



Photo from [oisinbrief](#)

know who I was or what my food was like. And I was slowly learning about the different palates, because every palate is different.”

Even when the food offered “misses the mark”, Mr. Oliver thinks of this as part of a larger process in which the cafeteria and the school collaborate with one another to “perfect” the menu.

“My vision for this school and this community is to eventually get to a point where we find a good balance between healthy and unhealthy,” Mr. Oliver stated. “It’s impossible to take fast food away, because that’s part of your childhood growing up... So, my ambition is to get the school and myself to experience a proper seasonal menu.” He further hopes to be able to engage SOIS students with the food they consume; he envisions a field trip for different grade levels, in which students are taken to various food suppliers. “I want students to be more food-aware and more understanding of healthy choices,” he commented, “that’s my vision.”



Photo by Dave Algje. Logo copyright Cezars Kitchen.

Maple Hall Concert: Bringing Down the House by Dave Algie

SOIS students put on another spectacular Holiday Concert at Maple Hall on Tuesday 4th December. Guided by the inspirational teachers of the SOIS music department, the Concert Choir, String Ensemble and Wind Ensemble performed a range of Western and Japanese influenced pieces in front of a large, appreciative audience.

The evening began with warm welcoming speeches from Ito sensei and Mr. Kralovec. This was followed by the music department teachers acknowledging 34 SIS Senior musicians who were appearing in their final Maple Hall concert.

Then the SOIS Concert Choir kicked off the evening's music with an energetic, entertaining set of songs that showcased their vocal talents and considerable stage presence. From jazz, to doo wop, to soulful R&B, the choir put on a festive feast for the ears. The atmosphere was buzzing, the harmonies were tight and the performers owned each song. Highlights ranged from OIS's Joshua Clifton stepping out to fire up the crowd with some exquisite dance moves and well-executed dabs, to SIS's Ray Shindo's soaring vocals on Beyoncé's "Listen". The accompaniment offered musical treats, too. Mr. Villapando's smooth, silky bass playing helped lay the foundation for the choir's opening number "Na na na". Ogura sensei chimed in on some songs with her accomplished piano playing. Finally Mr. Ligon took over the keys himself on the last number, bringing his gospel and soul-infused piano playing to the choir's rousing finale.



After a brief interlude for setting up, the string ensemble took the stage. The ensemble is comprised of many talented musicians, including Tango's very own Yu Takahashi and Tasuku Azuma. The ensemble performed stirring pieces from composers such as Benjamin Britten, Joseph Haydn and Yasushi Akutagawa. One thing that stood out was the ensemble's use of dynamics to take the audience on a musical journey. Soft, yet merry pizzicato gave way to surging fortissimos. Even to the untrained eye and ear, it was pretty obvious that Mr. Villapando's conducting was vital in keeping every aspect of the performance in balance for maximum effect. All the strings students can feel a proud sense of achievement for putting on what was a great show, but Mr. Villapando singled out concertmaster Nanaho Hisamatsu for her leadership in preparing the ensemble.

After the intermission, it was the Wind Ensemble's turn to wow the audience. And wow them they did. Playing a set of songs written by Japanese composers, but often showing international influences, the wind players were fired up and put on a show that was described by one audience member as "exuberant", "spell-binding", and "lit". Leading from the front was conductor Ms. Deklinski with a tour de force performance that brought out the best in her players. Ms. Deklinski said afterwards that putting so much energy into her conducting had led to some aches and pains the next day. She took care to praise all her players, and singled out clarinetist Tamami Komiyama for her leadership in bringing the ensemble's show together. Mr. Lira also deserves plenty of credit for helping prepare the wind ensemble.

Thanks to the performers, the teachers, and all who helped make the evening a great night.



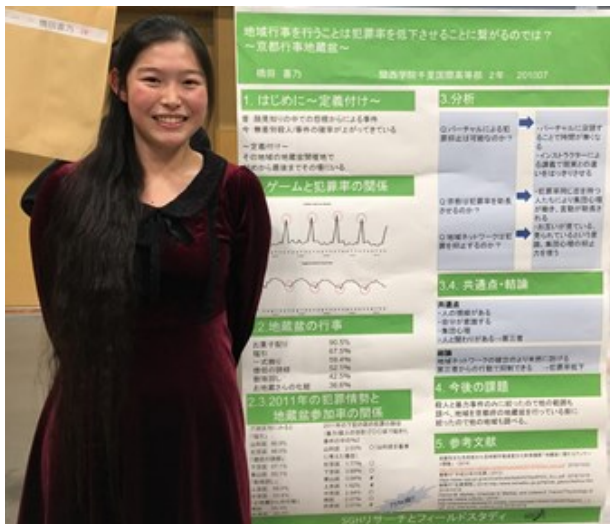
All photos by Ryo Fujii

Poster Presentation-A Celebration of Discovery

by Yu Takahashi

When autumn break is right around the corner, many juniors and seniors at SIS start to hustle getting ready for the poster presentation on the last day of fall trimester. This year, the SGH presentation was held on November 21st. More than 80 students shared their authentic discoveries. The special presentation session was held after school. The gym was packed with students, teachers and parents eager to catch all the details of each student's presentation. The voices of speakers echoed in the gym, creating space filled with sounds. The speakers delivered solutions to key issues, many of them related to Sustainable Development Goals. These solutions are based on their original researches, developed through the Super Global High school programme. I would like to share some of this amazing research.

"The Correlation Between Local Events and Crime Rates" was the topic studied by Kino Hashida. Interestingly, there is a clear correlation between number of local events and local crime rates. She proved that higher number of local events decreases the crime rates. This research question originates from the visit to Kumanokodou, which is a place group of students visited this summer. SGH stimulate individual's learning by taking students on investigations outside of school. With a charming smile, Kino said delicious food was the best part of the trip.



While interviewing other students, it became evident that some were reluctant about SGH. This programme is indeed demanding and stressful. One of the student said "I'm sacrificing part of my life for nothing." This was a clear indication that not everyone enjoys this programme, but there must be a reason why this school is enrolled as Super Global High school. The goal of SGH is "to foster globalized leaders who will be able to play active roles on the international stage". After all, this is one of the objectives of SOIS. Yet, from the interviews, it seems that the methods of guidance can be improved. It is true, that the students were half forced to research problems related to SDGs, but this programme creates a school full of individuals highly aware of global issues around the world.

Additionally, there are students who took it further than presenting in the small single booths. At the end of the session, there was a grand presentation by two seniors. Nanami Hariguchi was one of them. She presented "Hydrodynamic Effects of Hands on the Crawl Stroke by Using Computational Fluid Dynamics". Her impressive research explored the most effective shape of hand for the crawl in swimming. This research stemmed from her curiosity about her favourite sports. She has presented in several other places, including the Washington Science Conference. Although the content was very complex, her skill in explaining was astonishing.

Every grade in the past experienced the thrill of investigating the topic of their interest. Each year, there are more than 80 new research question inquired, leaving myriads of intriguing discoveries. Engaging in these session gives anxiety to many of them. At the same time, the tradition to appreciating the discoveries by students contribute to the solving of major global issues.



Photos supplied by Yu Takahashi

"Fun People, Great Shows": The Japanese Drama Club

by Tamao Iwasaki

I have been in Japanese Drama Club for four years. I am the leader of the club at the moment. I just love acting in a variety of plays, and the people around me in the club are really fun people.

We usually put on one production a year. Well, last year we performed twice, but usually we just put on one show a year, at the International Fair.

The last show we put on was called ヒーロー・オ・レ, "Hero Au Lait". We performed it in the theater. It was about a hero who is looking for other heroes to join his team. It's a comedy.

My favorite production was a couple of years ago called 『箱入りお姫様の非日常』, "Hakoiri Ohimesama no Hinichijo", or "A Boxed Princess's Extraordinary Day".

It was longer than other plays we have done. And the production-the clothing, the makeup and stuff like that was really effective. The quality was higher than in previous years, and it was a fantasy, so it was fun

We usually have about 25 members in the club. We meet every Friday after school in room 210.

Anyone can join our club. If you want to be in the cast, you'll need to be able to speak Japanese, but there are other roles, such as making posters, where you don't need to be confident in Japanese to help out.



Photo by Shinki

Spotlight on Service

by Ximing Pan



This is a section aimed towards the recognition of service activities that are taking place in school. We hope that this will foster the expansion of a culture of service in our school.

Before we start diving into specific service projects, let's quickly talk about SOIS's first ever Service Fair, which occurred on October 9th.

The service fair was an exhibition consisting of 24 booths that allowed student leaders to present service activities that they are a part of. It gave them a chance to get more members and pass on their project to younger generations. It also provided a platform that makes it easier for students to find service activities they could partake in. Thank you, students and teachers, for participating in this. We hope to see y'all next time.

Now, onto the service activities that our students are leading.

"Art is a service, not a product." -John Perry Barlow

Contributions to a community can be done through multiple mediums. Whether it is traditional forms of art like origami, or more modern takes on art like food and gardening, art is rarely every thought of as a form of service. Hopefully this will change your mind about that.

Origami with Chris

Origami is a traditional Japanese entertainment that literally means "folding paper." In this activity, participants reuse paper that Eco-club could not donate and create objects that are used to decorate our school. Members also collaborate with the baby-sitting club to teach origami to younger children while passing down a traditional Japanese culture to the younger generation. If you are interested in joining, meetings are held every Monday from 3:30 to 4:00 in Ms. Garces' room.

Chef Niki's Vegan Union

Every Tuesday morning at 7:50, members of this union gather in the HFL room to prepare and feast on a vegan breakfast while learning about the benefits of veganism. There is no better way to experience this less common way of life than with a zealous vegan. She's gifting our school community with a chance to become more informed about the consequences of our everyday dietary choices, so come by Tuesday mornings and start off your day knowing that you've taken one step towards living a healthier and more sustainable lifestyle!

Selina's Not-So-Secret Garden

Ever wonder why the science area seems a little less dreary and drab? Perhaps it's the new ground that we all have slipped on, or maybe it's the flowers growing in pots hanging from the railing. After all, it can't be a coincidence that the architect built the school railings with slots perfectly suited for plant pots. It only took one ambitious student to see the potential, and now it's your turn to help her expand this garden and provide a place for the dying bee population to roam. If you're ready to fulfill the school architect's wish, contact Selina Sun at 192062@soismail.jp.



Ximing played the lead role in organizing the Service Fair. She is also the president of Tango. She also wrote this article. She is pictured above, looking surprisingly stress-free. Photo by David Myers

Rainbow Club Promotes Tolerance at SOIS

By Kokoro Ishiuchi-Ray

Rainbow Week is held in May. It is a week set aside and dedicated to supporting members the LGBT community, along with other minorities, and making our acceptance of them known to the world.. Kwansei Gakuin is a strong supporter of Rainbow Week and as a member of the Kwansei Gakuin family, we are proud that our organization stands with the LGBT community. Last year's Rainbow Week was really positive. We were fortunate enough to have Ms. Grote come to SOIS and talk to us about how and why we can be accepting and supportive.

Ms Mecklem and I are involved with planning the SOIS Rainbow Week, and we got to thinking about making the Rainbow Week planning committee into a club: The Rainbow Club. We want to get more people involved. We want to have more time to plan events and activities. Beyond that just to raise awareness of issues the LGBT community faces, and figure out ways we can all support each other. We're looking for people's help even if it is in a small way.

It's an important cause because most schools don't teach awareness and how to be sensitive towards members of the LGBT community. A lot of people just don't know that much about it. For hundreds of years this community has faced discrimination. And it's 2018. It's about time we started changing that!

All are welcome to join this club, SIS, OIS students and teachers. We're meeting once a month. As Rainbow Week gets closer we might have more frequent meetings. You don't need to be a member of the LGBT community to come along. Simply being a friend and supporter of the community is really appreciated.



Ms. Grote speaks about acceptance in the theater last school year. Photo from [oisinbrief](http://oisinbrief.com).

SIS Students Take on the Challenges of IB by Tasuku Azuma

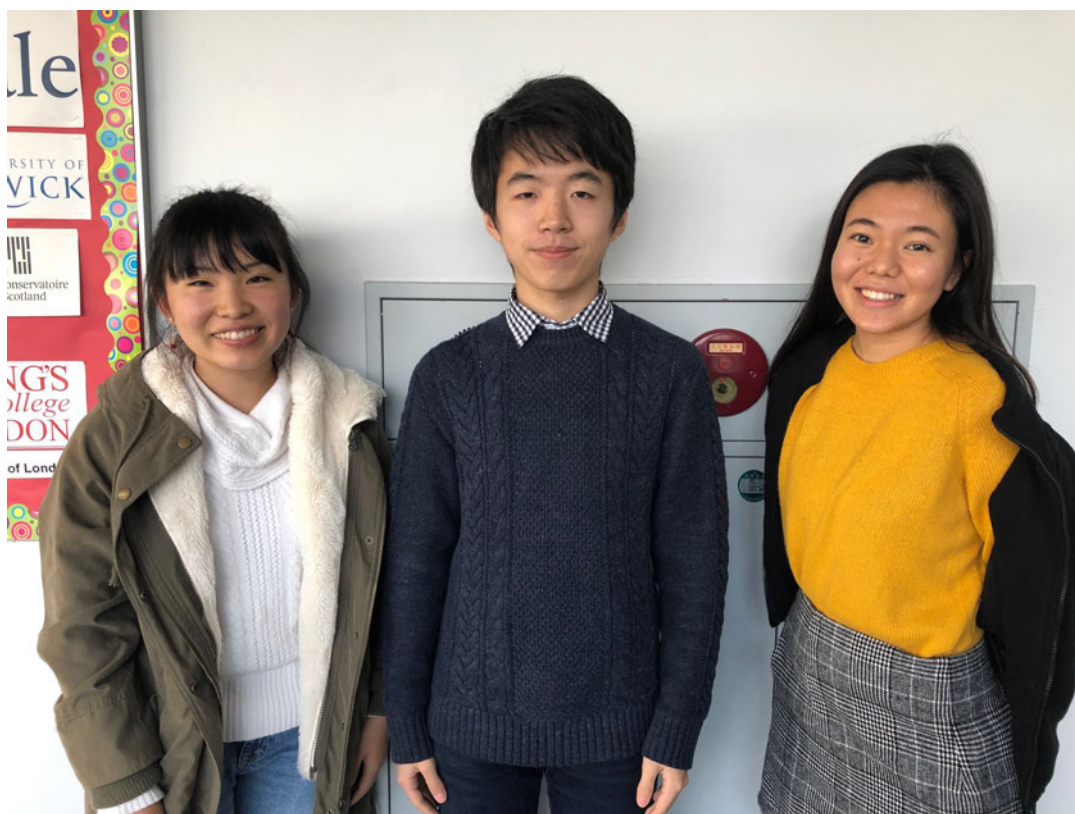
A trimester has passed since I started taking OIS classes as an IB DP student from SIS. It has been a fascinating experience, but at the same time I felt that the content always forced me to challenge myself. In this article, I would like to give you an insight into my experience of the first trimester, from the perspective of one IB DP student from SIS.

In general, SIS and IB DP classes are strikingly different, mainly in two aspects; approaches to learning, and the nature of the tests. I think I will repeat the first point several times throughout this article, as I believe it to be the largest factor that distinguishes the two. It is also the reason why I chose to study IB DP. The approaches to learning, as stated on the IBO webpage, are deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes that permeate the teaching and learning environment. Although some of Mr Munemasa's history courses, are similar in nature to IB DP classes, SIS classes often have completely different aims, and therefore the methods or approaches are different. Also, this difference results in different test styles. Whereas SIS classes tend to have one straight forward answer, IB DP classes have mark schemes that allow different forms of answers. For example, basic chemistry, or 化学基礎 in SIS, does not go as far as to explaining the mechanism or reasoning a particular chemical phenomenon. But, even at standard level of chemistry, students are required to do so in unit tests. This applies for biology as well. In fact, there are more questions that ask students to thoroughly explain a particular mechanism. These differences in the nature of tests and approaches to learning do require some time for SIS student like me to get used to, but soon becomes normal. What needs more time, is getting used to the jargonistic characteristics of subjects.

The higher level subjects I chose are; Japanese Language and Literature A, English Language and Literature A, and History, and standard level subjects are; Mathematics, Biology, and Chemistry. Out of all subjects, I find history to be the most challenging subject. This is probably because of a distinctly different approach to learning, and the subject-specific jargon. It requires students to clearly convey ideas that are carefully thought out. Also, teachers will not spoon-feed students with supplementary texts, but instead, expect students to conduct further research or do extra reading. The latter may have been implied by SIS teachers, and does apply for learning of all forms, as it enriches your contextual knowledge. If you are either used to learning history just by memorising facts or do not do well on in-class essay tests, and considering to take IB History, it may be helpful to read sample past paper answers and Internal Assessments, to get a general idea of what it is like, and possibly familiarise oneself with the language of history.

Another difficulty I faced is mathematics. Aside from the fact that I am not good at math, each class feels more intense and difficult than it had been in SIS classes, in my opinion. At standard level, it is supposed to be less difficult than Japanese Math in general, since it is said to cover less topics than Japanese 数学II (Mathematics 2) does. But, this only takes the number of topics into consideration, and is probably the reason to cause misconception that Math SL is easy, a misconception I had once before I took the course. Once the course started, I realised that it is actually quite demanding. This is particularly due to the number of classes. In Japan, the entire high school math is categorised into three units, which are then divided into three or two courses, at SIS. For example, 数学I (Mathematics 1) is broken into three parts; α , β , and γ , and in α , there would be six classes per week, same as 数学II α and β . Conversely, Mathematics SL has only three classes per week, and is a two-year course, or even less considering the time you need to revise before final exam. In addition, in this trimester, there were seven tests including two introductory tests, which means that there were about 1 test per every ten days. This busy schedule may be something you should take into consideration, if you are taking Math SL. Also, keep in mind that there are some concepts such as arithmetic and geometric sequences, which is not covered in basic SIS math but is studied in the very first part of math SL. But, in the end, the course would be fun, if you are good at math.

What I enjoy the most at higher level subjects, are Japanese and English language and literature. Although the topics covered in the two courses are almost mutually inclusive, I found the approaches to learning unique to IB DP course, very interesting. Before, I was used to SIS Japanese classes, which put large emphasis on students being taught one way of analysing one document, or memorising and becoming able to translate classic Japanese into modern Japanese. Although this analysis often did help me to understand



Pictured: Tasuku (center), Yu (left) and Karin (right) are Grade 11 SIS students taking the IB Diploma this year. Photo by Dave Algie

and paraphrase complex ideas, it may have had simultaneously narrowed my perspective into interpreting texts only in one way, and not realising the devices authors may have intentionally or unintentionally included. On the contrary, IB language and literature courses challenge students to analyse the texts instead, and in great depth. Now that I have gone through the first part of culture and language unit, I think I became more conscious of the intentions and able to be critical of a particular text. Also, the courses gave me several different perspectives that are useful to understand texts in depth, such as gender, culture, use of language, etc. I believe the language and literature course to be the best choice if you are not satisfied with SIS Japanese classes, or simply love texts.

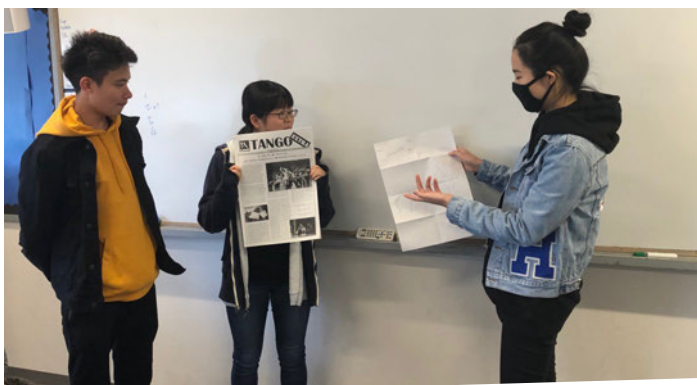
But, there are some struggles even outside of classes, and one of them is a smaller version of identity crisis. I have been questioning myself whether I belong to SIS, OIS, or both, ever since the first day of the school, and I had been brooding over this matter considerably during the summer break. The dilemma ranges from something insignificant as sitting with SIS or OIS friends, to important events like the grade trip. I believe this to be totally dependent on the personality and how one would like to position oneself within the spectrum of SOIS community. But to put it differently, it has been a valuable opportunity to realise the width of the gap between SIS and OIS.

Just to add extra information, Theory of Knowledge is one of my favourite classes as well, because the course and I both seem to like thinking and questioning at a deep level. Despite the undeniable fact that it does get too complicated to the extent that induces sleeping, it is a great opportunity to make one's brain more flexible. For example, recently, I have learnt about reproducibility crisis, where a number of cases of research have experiments that do not produce the same data as the paper states, when they are reproduced by other researchers. It made me realise the significance of reproducibility, and become aware of always remaining skeptical to a certain extent, when I read research papers in future. Also, the class allows other students' thoughts to be shared, which I think is quite valuable. As far as I know, SIS offers this kind of experience only in one class called 世界思想史 (World philosophy), by Mr Nojima, which is based on the idea of TOK. But apart from this, there are no other ways to experience such a fascinating tour of thoughts. I personally recommend taking World Philosophy class before actually starting IB DP.

In conclusion, IB DP course is quite challenging and rigorous for an SIS student like me. But, I believe that this experience is worth paying extra tuition and having to take 6 PE classes per week for a year, in order to fulfil requirements to graduate SIS. The experience has been exciting, as it explores subjects from totally different ways and lenses. This is not only useful during the course, but rather a valuable and lifelong knowledge. I am looking forward to the winter trimester, and further studies in IB DP.

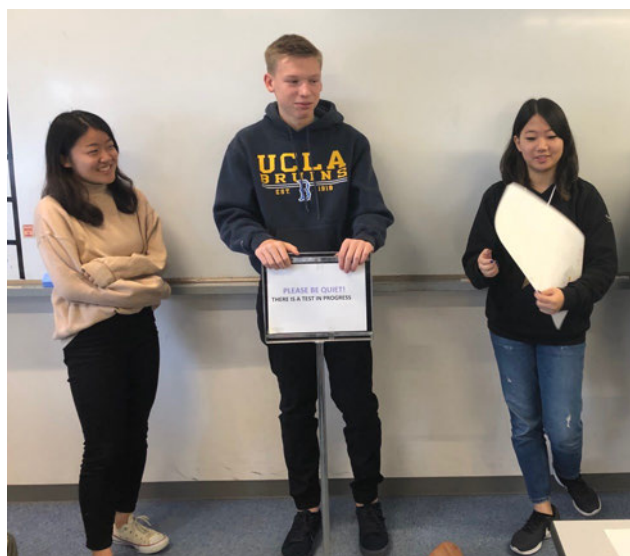
Grade 10 SOIS Students Pitch Advertising Ideas

The Grade 10 English Language and Literature class is a place where SIS and OIS students come together to think critically and creatively and practice their communication in written and spoken English. Mr. Algie's class has been studying advertising and looking at how ads use various verbal and visual techniques to brand a product and appeal to an audience. In early December, Mr. Algie assigned groups random objects to "pitch advertisements" for. A lot of creativity and laughter ensued. Leo, Misa and Ji Yun came up with a whole storyboard for an ad promoting Tango.



"It's a TANGO DAY!" Thanks, guys! We're looking forward to seeing it go viral on YouTube!

Other groups also came up with great advertising pitches for Mr. Algie's hat, coat and "Please be Quiet" signs. The results were a triumph. Careers in the lucrative field of advertising await.



Photos by Dave Algie

Behind the Scenes at Sports Day

(As Told by the Student Council Translator)

by Nanami Hasegawa

2018 Sports Day was mostly a success; the SOIS community enjoyed the nice weather and the healthy competition that came with the different events. This year's Sports Day was extra special since this was the first time we separated houses/grades into countries (not colors) and implemented new events such as Bouhiki and Mat Challenge. All of these different changes meant that this year's Student Council had to work extra hard to run this event smoothly.

Preparation for Sports Day began right after prom. The 2018 FIFA World Cup fever was taking over so we could not help but make that the theme. We immediately ran into challenges once we chose the theme. Traditionally, we split teams into different colors, so this time we had trouble separating teams by countries. Choosing which eight countries the houses/grades would represent took a longer time than expected. Also, we also had to create rules for the new activities. We had to consider the safety, efficiency and most importantly the enjoyability of the events when we constructed rules. After multiple test trials, we were finally able to solidify the rules and recorded it in the Sports Day handbook.

Fast forward to the school day before Sports Day. While the performances were applying their finishing touches, Student Council members were scurrying and hauling equipment around the school. The sticks used for Bouhiki were especially tricky to transport, as they were long and heavy objects that took two members to carry within the school's narrow spaces. We also risked our lives by climbing supposedly dangerous ledges to decorate the field with world flags. The highlight of the preparation was carrying the floaties (that were used for the obstacle race) from the third floor to the second floor. Needless to say, we looked ridiculous while we were going down the stairs.

On the day of the Sports Day, we arrived at school bright and early to set up for the event. Our new t-shirts gave us the much-needed motivation to tackle our tasks throughout the day. Once the opening ceremony for the Middle and High School ended, we immediately went to work. The members who were not part of the morning activities became scorekeepers for the dodgeball and frisbee games. All of the games were fast paced that it was hard to keep track!

Once everyone cleared the field for lunch, we started to prepare for the afternoon events. We first set up the barriers around the field to designate areas for the spectators to sit. Then, we hauled the equipment, such as the floaties, tug-of-war rope and sticks for Bouhiki, and placed them at their designated areas. When everything

was finally set up, we devoured our lunches in order to be on time for the performances.

The afternoon events were a blur. Recording the places for the races were chaotic, with many people running all over the place. Then it came time for the scores to be announced, so we assembled into a classroom and were told the score for each house/grade. We then carefully placed the numbers on the windows of individual classrooms, praying that it was in the right order. When it came time for each digit to be revealed, we felt the whole school staring at us as we removed the black paper. After what seemed like ages, cheers erupted from the field and the seniors started to run their victory lap.

No, the day did not end there; there were still multiple jobs to be done. While everyone was busy taking pictures, Student Council members were busy cleaning up. We hauled the equipment back to their original places and shoved the rest into the Student Council room to deal with it the next day. By this time everyone was tired and sore to the point where we had our debriefing meeting on the hallway floor.

Although we got sunburnt and were running on low energy the next day, Sports Day 2018 was overall a success. The changes that we implemented were not perfect, but it gave us takeaways that would be helpful for the following years' Sports Days. Hopefully, this article gave you an insight into the planning involved for a school event and shed the spotlight on moments behind the scenes. The hard work that was put in paid off significantly and I would like to express thanks to everyone for a smooth-running and memorable Sports Day.



SOIS Sports Day 2018



Treading Water

by Takayoshi Tokai

Hugh Manatee is drowning. Never the most considerate of salarymen, nor the most mindful, Hugh was never much more than cromulent. He was unremarkable, barely competent at his job, and worst of all, he had no sense of fashion whatsoever. "Was" being the operative word. Ever since he started drowning, Hugh Manatee hasn't even been passable.

It is a shame that we find ourselves at this scene, this horrid, ghastly scene. It is never a pretty sight when a person who clearly has no intention of entering a body of water has nonetheless fallen into said body of water. The sight is made even less pretty when the person in the water is cursed with horrible fashion sense.

At the start, Hugh wore a blank white dress shirt, a colorless pair of long pants, and a boring pair of boring shoes (Hugh was a great fan of drilling holes into his attic floor). What he is wearing now, we'll never know, because nobody can bear to witness the sight of this horrible man and his horrible clothes. What we do know for sure, however, is that he was missing, one could reasonably assume, a pair of glasses, for he was absolutely floundering in his attempt to swim. His butterfly resembled a moth set aflame. When he tried to do the crawl, one pitied the water. And when he tried to doggy paddle, lifeguards screamed in horror of his form. The man simply *could not swim*.

Some people are born with the gift of swimming. They take to ponds like ducks to water. And of course, they also take to pools like capybaras to water. The capybara, for your edification, is a primarily aquatic animal, and can be found in your average school swimming pool, its natural habitat. Although there is not yet any concrete evidence, sightings of capybaras have been reported in the wild, suggesting that these wild animals may perhaps be able to live in the wild. Imagining them living in the wild requires quite the leap of faith, of course. After all, if they lived in, say, a marsh or a pond or something, who would relieve them of their pelts? The natural life cycle of this rodent would be disrupted if they were not able to progress peacefully to their final stage of existence: the leather stage. But the point I really do need to make is that Hugh Manatee was and is horrible at being in water for prolonged periods of time. Perhaps there was no need to go so much in depth about capybaras, but they are quite interesting little creatures, aren't they? Certainly, they are more important than some non-aquatic creature working at a capsizing company with no lifeboats and a captain who prepared himself with nothing but a golden parachute.

He had been a fantastic yarnspinner as a boy. In his youth, he had competed in competitions, but in his lust for a trophy he particularly desired and his only passable work ethic, Hugh had not noticed when mediocrity crept up on him and the Fates rewarded his complacency by awarding his yarn-spinning skills with atrophy. Perhaps his exile from the world of yarn-spinning was the cause for the greasy rags he called clothes.

The problem was, Hugh had never really learned how to tread water after all that time spent spinning yarn. His first job had been given to him. He had been responsible for ringing up the people in retirement homes so that he could sell them insurance. Not the workers there, mind you. The elderly. Good, decent, honest folk. The salt of the earth. They were the best customers.

He had developed a routine. First, he would call them, all serious-like, offering to sell them insurance for one thing or another. Nobody ever took him up on the first try, but that was okay. All part of the plan.

Next, he would call them again, this time with a foreign accent, and threaten these old folks. He never really settled on a single accent; the fact that he sounded even vaguely foreign seemed to do the job.

After he finished making threats that always involved talk of *baklava and tapiceria*, he would call them again, this time in his normal voice and offer them with what seemed



to be an incredibly serendipitous discount on the insurance.

He had been so successful that he had been very nearly rich, but the authorities shut his operation down for no particular reason. Whatever chance he had at salvaging his job was also taken away, as his competitors unveiled automatons that could spout more than foreign-sounding gibberish. They were capable of foreign gibberish. *C'est la vie. Hugh didn't particularly like the French, so he assaulted a friend who said that particular phrase to him and lost even more money. That's life.*

He was forced to look for new jobs, but nobody was hiring. It mattered little to him then, because at that point in time, Miss Anne Djurie crossed his path. A bubbly woman, she had greeted him enthusiastically; it seemed like she was unbothered by his checkered past. She ate only vegetables, and soon, Hugh found himself swearing that he too would only eat vegetables for the rest of his life. Soon enough, he broke with Miss Anne Djurie, over a heated dispute about whether or not a tomato was a vegetable.

He became a hermit. After discovering a collection of video cassettes in an abandoned house, he discovered an undying passion for children's cartoon programming, and he decided to watch every cartoon in existence. Although he did not succeed, it was not for a lack of trying. He had been forced to vacate the premises from a rather churlish man who only seemed lord his ownership of the house over Hugh.

"Fine!" Hugh had shouted. "I don't want to live here anyway!"

Many assume that it must be a cathartic experience to drown, for one is able to finally *let go. Millions of people live their entire lives before they learn to let go. Until, of course, they do. And even after considering all the misfortune he had to go through, Hugh Manatee was one of the lucky few to experience what it felt like to let go in his youth, but like all youths, he was quite ungrateful, spewing profanities as he tried to tread water.*

A man with a badge came to the edge of the pier and told him to stop making so much noise. "You'll scare the kids away," he said. "The kids won't want to buy nothing if you scare them away."

A procession of toddlers, suited up in the finest Italian silk, strutted past the drowning man and the man with the badge, sniggering to each other as they watched Hugh Manatee flounder. "Dumb dumb!" chortled a bald toddler, pointing a chubby finger accusingly at Hugh.

The man with the badge sighed. "Get up,"

"I can't swim."

"Well, why can't you?"

"I never learned how."

"You're treading the water fine."

"Just barely. I need help."

"Do you really? You must be faking it."

"Look, I am about to drown. Please, sir."

Although they did not speak for nearly this long (after all, it was hard for Hugh to speak through mouthfuls of water), they did say words to this effect. An accurate report of this interaction has never been filed; all the bystanders were unable to hear the conversation through their music.

But back to the man with the badge. "What is your name?" he sighed,

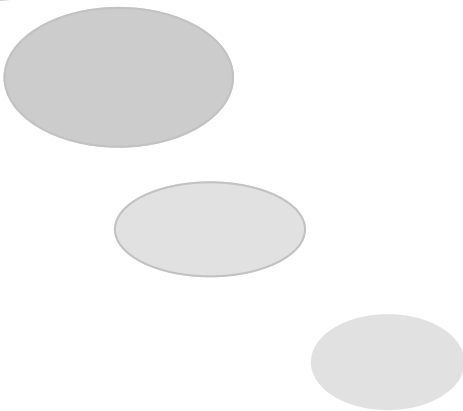
"Hugh Manatee"

"Your name is Manatee and you can't swim?"

Hugh sighed. "Just get me some help."

The uniformed man pulled out a form languidly and slowly began to fill it out. "I'm going to need to fill out a request form for some pool rings. You just hang tight. They'll come soon."

I don't know if they ever came.



All pictures from Microsoft Clip Art

East Coast America versus West Coast America

by Emily Yoo

Recently, I attended the World Scholar's Cup Tournament of Champions (for more information on this, read Matsushita's highly emotional article on the front page) which was held in New Haven, Connecticut. As a stereotypical valley girl, the east coast proved a jarring change of environment. Obviously, the biggest change was the temperature. In New Haven, the temperature dropped below zero at some points, and as I have never experienced any season other than summer in LA, I was completely unprepared. However, the change in temperature was an interesting experience, and I enjoyed seeing the snow on our first few days in New Haven.

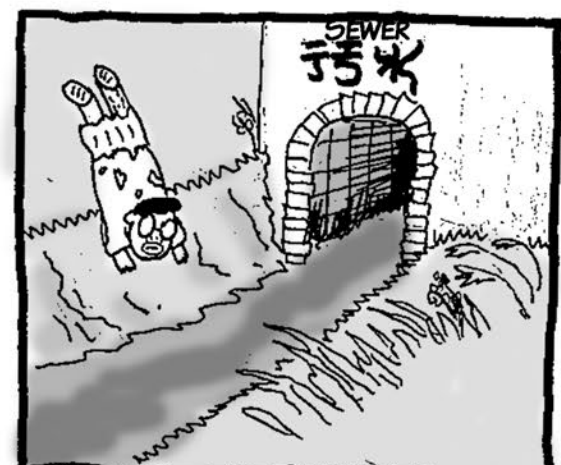
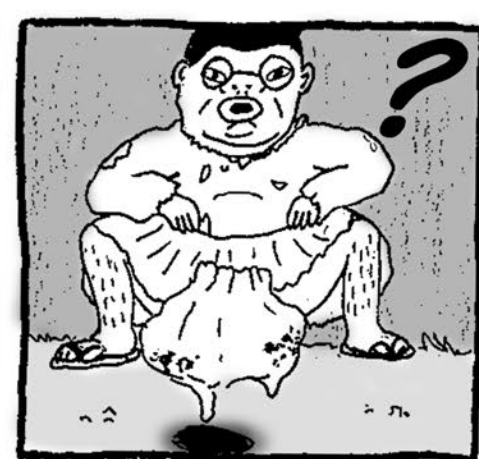
The second biggest difference was in the architecture. Especially around Yale, many buildings were European gothic, which was a huge change from the general geometric modern style that I was accustomed to from LA. These buildings managed to convince me to apply for colleges on the East Coast, despite the weather and general seediness. As LA is a tourist trap, it at least keeps its buildings in order and repair. Many buildings throughout New Haven had dysfunctional electric signs, straight out of a dystopia. But, even with the incredibly creepy buildings, New Haven was a welcome change of pace in architecture.

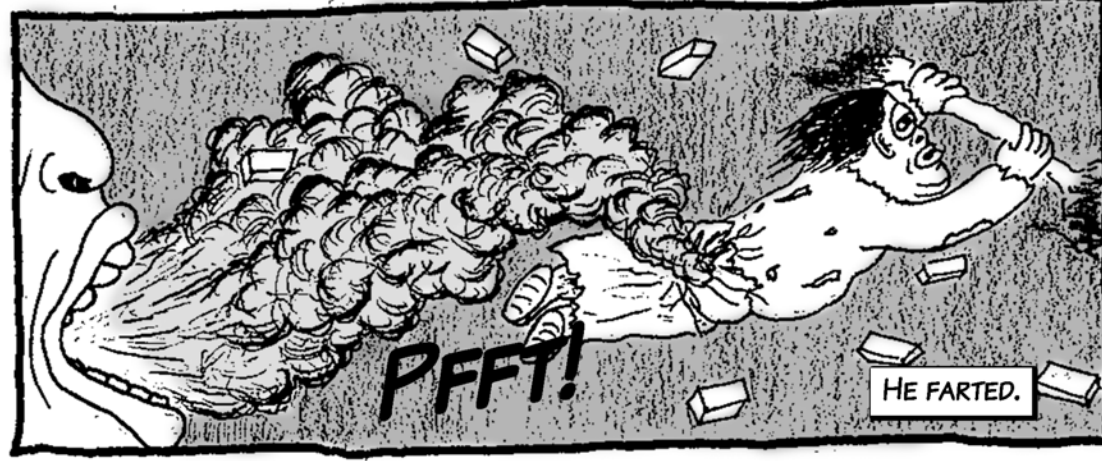
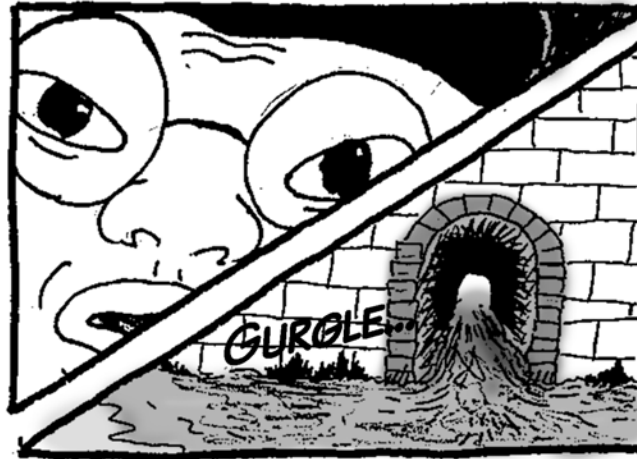
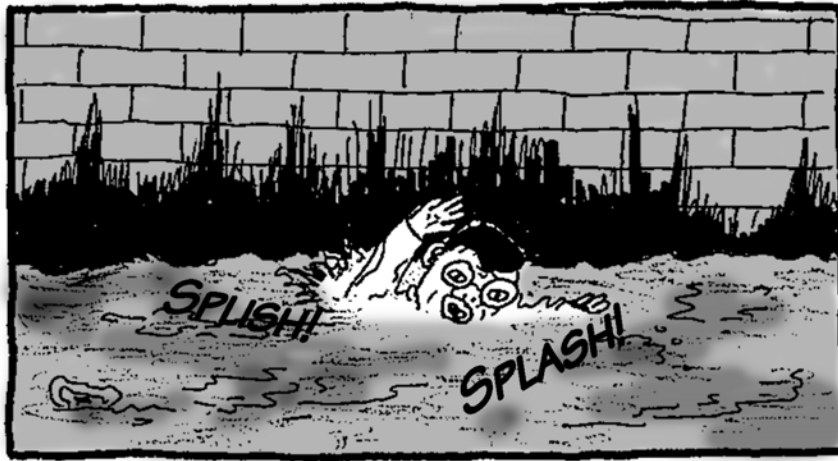
One thing that has not changed from across America was the random encounters with people who may or may not have been intoxicated in some shape or form. One man in particular approached us whilst we were embarrassing ourselves during the Scholar's Scavenge and ordered us to "put more *bananas* into it!" Of course, there were also street preachers who would attempt to sell you various merchandise and generally friendly(but still vaguely questionable) people who were not afraid to ask a group of teenagers carting giant stuffed alpacas around why they had giant stuffed alpacas. In this way, Japan is far preferable: I'd rather be silently judged than roped into an awkward conversation. At least I could speak the language.

Overall, America is still America in the most important ways. I ate primarily junk food, avoided eye contact with strangers, stood for almost 2 hours on a train that was far inferior to Japan's system, and generally had a great time. Experiencing the other side of the country was a valuable experience but I think I prefer my home, though the bias is obvious. I'd recommend checking out the east coast of America to everyone, but just know that the west coast is probably better.



EATER OF WORLDS GENESIS





CONTINUED IN PART 2...

My USA Trip by Owen Kralovec

Hello fellow global citizens! Today you will embark on a journey to a place few go, a place known for a yellow vegetable you all know and love, the one the only, the "Hawkeye State". If you haven't guessed the place already, I traveled to Iowa, USA over the summer with the Heimer family.

As many you have been wondering, and rightly so, what is the life of Saber elite family Heimer? As it goes without saying, the Heimer family has been a profound influence on the SOIS community with their children competing in all Sabers Sports contributing to the monopoly of middle school and high school sabers sports trophies and victories. They had graciously invited me to stay with them for a couple of weeks in their home state of Iowa. If you have never had the opportunity to go to Iowa, the best way I can describe it to you is to think about those little rice fields you see everywhere. Think that, but 100 times larger.

We walk down the arrival gates of Des Moines International Airport and are greeted by Mr. Heimer's father and Ren's grandfather Dick Heimer. They are wearing full Iowa Hawkeye, the mascot of

the University of Iowa, apparel. We then proceed to the exit of the airport and are immediately greeted with bright blue skies and vast suspiciously green grass fields. During last year, for English, we read the book, *The Bean Trees* by Barbara Kingsolver. In the book, the main



character Taylor at one time is traveling through Oklahoma and remarks that the flat land as an eyesore and that she misses trees. I do have to agree with her that at first, it felt jarring. Having so much open land, I felt that we weren't using all of it effectively as they do it here in Japan. After a while, though I began to enjoy all the space, it felt liberating and free. I could stretch again. During our drives through Iowa, I would almost be in a sort of trance, watching all the perfectly symmetrical rows of corn, line after line seemingly going on forever. This was in stark contrast to pretty much all of Japanese culture which is as you all know, based on small and compact buildings, cars, streets and so much more.

The small town of Sheffield where we stayed, was interchangeable with my dad's hometown of Caspian in Michigan. The experience of driving around the small town in which Mr. Heimer had grown up was almost déjà vu to times when my dad would drive me around his small town in which he grew up. We would drive through the mainstreet and around to different locations in this small town. Mr. Heimer would point out what things used to be. "That closed shop used to be the movie theater, or a mom n' pop shop which essentially is a small town grocery." This brings up an important issue facing the small towns of America and all over the world which should be addressed. For you well read teachers you probably already know about this and it possibly might be happening to your towns where you grew up in but to students except for Tyus, Minami and Skye its quite sad. During the 50s all the way to the 90s all the small towns across Americas had great economic growth, this was largely due to a resource that kept a lot of the towns people employed. In my dad's town it was Iron Ore. This economic boom leads to an explosion in both population and real estate. When my dad was growing up, he said that his town had 4 individual high schools, however in today's age, there is only one high school for the entire county. Small local shops close down, because citizens go shop at the nearest Walmart due to the fact that you can get a liter of coke for a dollar. People are also leaving small towns to bigger cities for work as well. Funnily enough the two places that always are open and never run out of business are bars, and dentists. I don't know if that says something about the people living there but it is funny. Going back to Sheffield reminded me about that.

During the first couple of days, I had to remember that we were in the land of big food portions. It feels as if every time that I go back to to the US that the only French word people know there is "buffet". Maybe it is because I don't speak Japanese or watch many television commercials but in America, every food advertisement is some sort of deal.

"Come on down to Denny's ma' friend and try our 10 inch buttermilk pancakes for only 4.99!"

Soon the deals are going to get so low that they simply have to give us free food to be competitive. In Japan however, the ads for tea or food are not about how much you can have of it but it is just describing about the quality of the product and why you should buy it. It is interesting the to see the mindset different cultures have on the same idea.

This one is about sports so if you don't care for sports you can stop reading and go to my conclusion. In Iowa, Ren and I went to a week long basketball camp at Wartburg College. The camp was a lot of fun and we learned a lot about drills and other basketball jargon, but it



brought a point about how different Western basketball was played compared to Eastern style of basketball. In America today, basketball is very "star-centric". What I mean by that is that it is all about the celebrities. In each team you have the superstars or the best players. During the middle of the season there is a All-Star game in which the best players from the divisions come together to play a game. Basketball, possibly in order to compete with other sports, has become almost like a blockbuster movie with highlight reels showing huge dunks and deep 3 pointers. The game also has way more emphasis on shooting, due in large part to players like Steph Curry. Kids are going to games and shooting ridiculous threes instead of traditional layups and the occasional threes. In Japan however, the game is still fast but what I notice in high school games is that coaches want players to be careful with the ball, pass the ball and if at all possible get a lay up. There is no flashy player or quick shots. It is about the team.

All in all, Iowa was a very interesting place to go to, it was almost like a microcosm of most of America. I again thank the Heimer family for letting me stay there and being such nice hosts. But most importantly Goooooooo Sabers.



Photos supplied by Owen Kralovec

“All you need is a push.”
“Off the cliff?”
“No, just ...
“Cause it really feels like it, you know.”
“You wouldn’t be where you’re at if I hadn’t pushed you. You’d be no better than..”
Door slams shut

Mother has always placed a strong emphasis on education. Not because she wants me to go to Harvard, but because she thinks that I will be able to build a career from my schooling.

During breaks, I would spend day after day cramming information into my head while snapchat continuously shoved pictures that my friends post in my face. I'd see them posing with bubble tea, trying on silly outfits, and devouring imported foods. For two years, I resented my mom for taking away all those experiences that I thought could have given me so many precious and happy memories.

As I grew older, I became more appreciative towards those hours I spent cooped up in my room. I realized those pushes made the biggest difference in the world. I look around and hear people complain about all-nighters they pull, and I notice I still have the luxury of sleeping at 11 (if I could just put aside those Christmas movies that go on for hours, that is). I began to understand that the sacrifices you made earlier on makes life easier now. Your own accomplishments that can make you a respectable person in the future means a lot more than the immediate gratification of doing something that might only be fun in the short term.

And that was exactly what a wise and pragmatic person told me three years ago on Christmas Day when I first moved to Japan.



Microsoft Clip Art

Team Tango’s Top 5 Surprising Study Tips

- 1) **Take a “nappuccino”**. Before you study, have a coffee, and then nap for **7 and a half minutes only**. Studies show you will awake refreshed and ready to power on with your study.
- 2) **Act it out**. Move around the room, acting out concepts like “supply and demand”, “polarity”, “the origins of World War I” or whatever it is you’re studying. The sillier your spontaneous little role-play, the better. Be absurd. It will help concepts stick in your mind.
- 3) **Beyoncify, Kendrick Lamarize or Post Malonitate your notes**. Turn difficult-to-remember facts, formulae or concepts into a rap or song. Again, the sillier the better.
- 4) **Be a nomad**. Move to a different part of your house to review. If you learn something in one part of the house, and then review it in another part of the house, you will remember it better later on than if you review it in the same place you first learn it. Of course you should have a designated “home base” study area where you do the bulk of your study, but mix things up, too.
- 5) **Even if you don’t know the topic 100%, teach it to someone else**. You might not have all the facts, concepts and skills at your command just yet, but teaching the content to someone else is a very effective method to consolidate it for yourself. You could teach a study buddy. But you could just as well teach a willing sibling, parent or pet. At a pinch, a pot plant will do.



Tango Team

President: Ximing Pan
Editor: Dave Algie
Layout Advisor: Paul Sommer

The Tango team:

Minami Matsushima	Tasuku Azuma
Nanami Hasegawa	Takayoshi Tokai
Khang Duc Le	Oka Maeda
Antonio Kogata	Tyus Sheriff
Skye Inada	Noah Izumi
Yu Takahashi	Owen Kralovec
Emily Yoo	Mina Allen
Kokoro Ishiuchi-Ray	Sarah Kitamura

“Middle School Samba” Lead Journalist: Rena Kawasaki

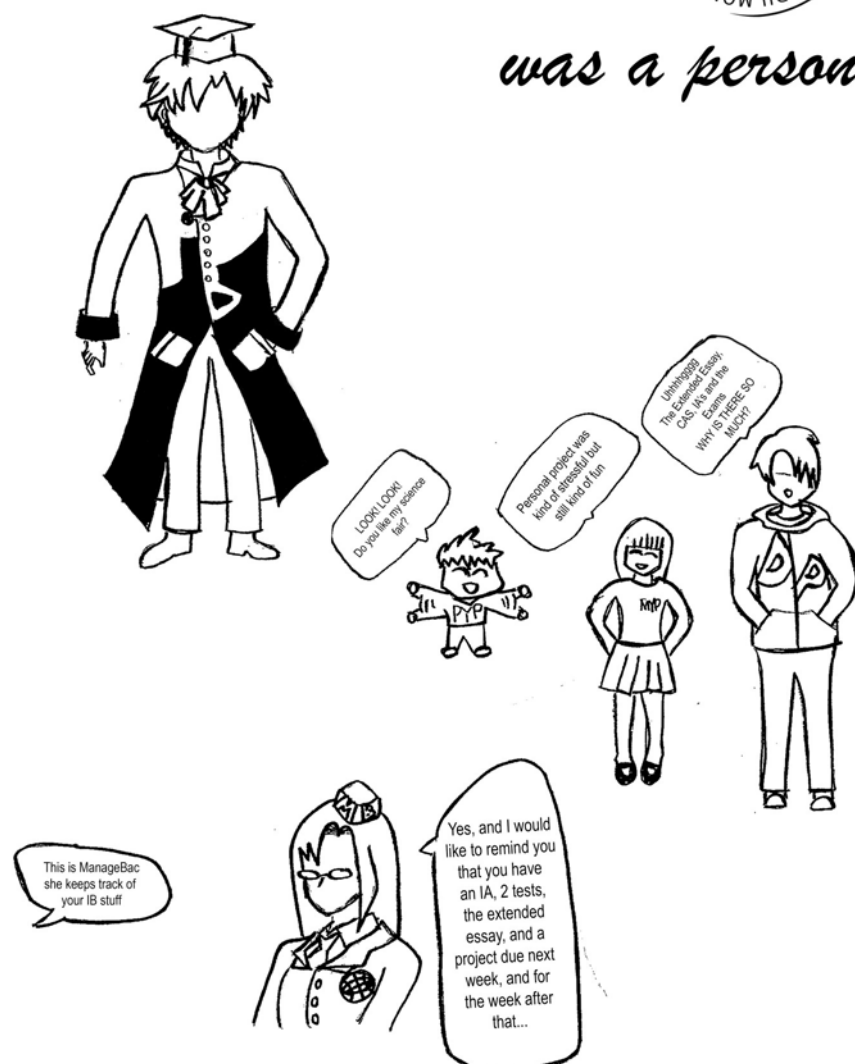
Special contributions were made to this edition by:

Steve Lewis	Bill Kralovec	Tamao Iwasaki
David Myers	Ryo Fujii	Shinki Maeda
Steve Sheriff		

Special thanks to:

Peter Heimer	Kurt Mecklem	Frances Namba
Cary Mecklem	Mike McGill	Derek Entwistle
Do Hee Kwon	Erin Jung	Achyuta Muthuvelan

If the was a person



by Khang Duc Le

MIDDLE SCHOOL SAMBA

with Rena Kawasaki



HALLOWEEN EDITION

HISTORY

Halloween started as the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain. At the border of the end of summer/harvest and the cold dark winter, which was closely associated with death, the Celts believed that at this time of the year, the worlds of the dead and living connect. This was also considered the time of year that the ghosts of the dead returned to Earth.

Costume Popularity Ranking

2017

1. Wonder Woman
2. Harley Quinn
3. Clown
4. Unicorn
5. Rabbit
6. Witch
7. Mouse
8. Pirate
9. Zombie
10. Dinosaur



Fun Fact

Illinois has banned teens from trick-or-treating

Halloween Quiz:

(Answers below)

Q.1 What is the most favored candy in New York?

a) M&M b) Sour Patch Kids c) Candy Corn

Q.2 Which Phobia do you suffer from if you are scared of Halloween?

a) Samhainophobia b) Halloweenophobia

c) Nyctophobia

Q.3 How much does the average American family spend on candy for Halloween?

a) 100 dollars b) 28 dollars c) 44 dollars

IT!

Pennywise is a murderous clown in Stephen King's horror novel "It" which has been made into a TV series and a film. "Coulrophobia", or deep irrational fear of clowns, is a genuine condition that people suffer from in real life



Answers: 1. b 2. a 3. c



THANKSGIVING EDITION

Thanksgiving Quiz (Answers below)

Q.1 Which President started the tradition of pardoning a living turkey in Thanksgiving?

a) John F Kennedy b) Franklin D Roosevelt
c) George H.W. Bush

Q.2 How many people came in the Mayflower?

a) 22 b) 102 c) 55



Adopt-a-Turkey Project

This project operates with the motto of celebrate turkeys as friends, not food.

This projects puts the spotlight on turkeys dying brutal death and offers the solution of rescuing them by sponsorship by donations. The turkey will get sent to a Farm Sanctuary to live the rest of their lives without further destructions. This puts a minimal stop to the culture of the turkey on the table every thanks giving.



Website: <https://www.farmsanctuary.org/adopt-a-turkey/>

Fun Fact

Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin's first meal in space after walking on the moon was foil packets with roasted turkey



Why the turkey? Theories

The turkey was originally not included in the first Thanksgiving meal.

According to the letters saved by American settlers, one letter mentioned a turkey hunting trip

Wild turkey is a native bird of North America. Benjamin Franklin claimed that it was a better national bird than the bald eagle, not everyone agreed, but the turkey earned a place on the menu.

HISTORY

The Mayflower brought one of America's first colonists from Europe. Through the first year of disease and struggles, the colonists gained support from the Indians, the natives that were in the land from the start. Thanksgiving marks the day that the Plymouth colonists and Wampanoag Indians shared an autumn harvest feast together.



Answers: 1. c 2. b

Film Watch

with Oka Maeda



Code Blue: The Movie

3 years ago, I had never properly watched a movie (except on airplanes), and had never visited the cinema. But now, one of the things that I do often during my free time is to go watch a movie at a movie theater. Over the summer holiday, I came across a very interesting Japanese movie, called "Code Blue: The Movie" directed by Masaki Nishiura featuring Tomohisa Yamashita as the main character.



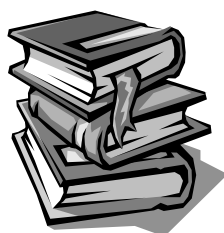
This movie is the sequel to a famous TV drama in Japan, that has been on air since 2008. It is about the five flight doctors and their colleagues working at rescuing people, both the sick and the injured. It also describes their relationship and conflicts with one another, such as friendship, love and family.

One of the aspects that I liked about this movie was how every scene is all very dramatic, yet realistic. The main incident / accident the flight doctors have to face and rescue is a ferry crash which took place in Tokyo Bay *Umibotaru*, an actual sightseeing spot, where hundreds of people were injured. To shoot this scene, the producer and director had to rent the whole place for a day just for shooting the scene, not letting any visitors inside. This is how much effort the cast and the crew put in order to create this breathtaking piece.

This however, ultimately leads to one of the factors that I did not like. Since the movie was quite long, and yet every scene was so dramatic and significant, the audience got tired of watching it towards the end. Therefore, I consider that it would have been more sensible to leave out a few scenes to make the story shorter, and perhaps make a sequel to it including the scenes which could not fit inside the first one. This would not only have an economical benefit for the company, but the audience would also be waiting eagerly for the next episode to be released.

Nevertheless, it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that "Code Blue: The Movie" is one the most fascinating movies that I have watched in my life, as it is not only interesting or amusing to see, but since some people actually work as flight doctors today in Japan, the audience can take an insight into what they do everyday.

I strongly suggest you go to the cinema during the long vacation as this movie still showing at Osaka Station City Cinema and other movie theaters. Although it is unfortunate that there are no English subtitles, the non-Japanese speakers will still understand most of what is happening in the scene, because of the actors' great performances and the powerful images on the screen.



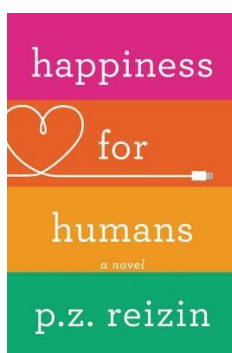
Book Reviews

by Mina Allen

It's starting to feel like Christmas already with decorations in the library and the sparkling Christmas tree in the Genkan! Before you get ready for the festive holiday and lengthy break ahead of us, why not pick up a book to read over the winter break? Here are some recommendations for some thought-provoking reads to thaw your brain from freezing over the freezing winter holidays.

Happiness for Humans by P.Z. Reizin - 4/5

Questioning the concept of internet communication, this book will make you want to start sending letters to all of your loved ones rather than to send an email or a text. The book follows an oddly ironic, and very futuristic plot where two humans fall in love after two artificial intelligence "computers" Aiden and Aislen run wild in the vast layer of the internet. While the two computer programs work hard, with the addition of another malevolent program named Sinai, they start to develop human emotions and learn what having a relationship means.

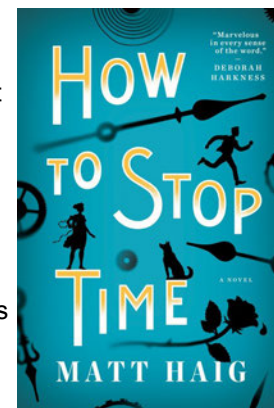


The novel uses dialogue to create a delicate mood of poignancy; the real punch coming from the fact that these IA programs seem to possess more emotions than actual humans. The IA's conscious thought portrays an innocent and pure mindset reminding us of how lucky it is to be human.

This book will leave you fuzzy and warm, maybe even a bit melancholic, to satisfy your cold winter nights. It's highly recommended to sit in your comfiest chair and make yourself a large mug of hot chocolate to sip on while you read this book.

How to Stop Time by Matt Haig - 3.8/5

This romance novel with an odd twist follows the eternal life of "Alba" Tom Hazard, the charming 400-year-old protagonist and narrator of the story. We experience the rapid change in society through the eyes of Hazard; from comedic depictions of Hazard trying to set his birth year on Facebook to scientists wanting to get their hands on Hazard's stem cells. However, the true power of the book comes from our protagonist's bittersweet rules all, pointing to the danger of falling in love. On more than one occasion you'll find your heartstrings tightened as we catch glimpses of Hazard's painful memories of the past.

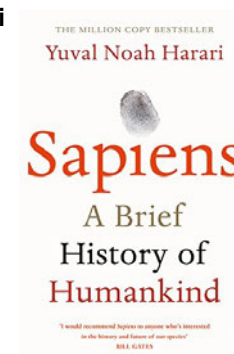


The novel is a roller coaster of emotions leaving you thinking about the concept of time; how do we pursue happiness in a life that seems to have no time constraints? What does it mean to be able to simultaneously lose and find yourself in time? Perhaps we can find our true happiness if we all took the time to look for it.

Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari 4.5/5

The last book on this list of reviews is based on the science of humans. Society is moving at a speed so fast that we can barely adapt before technology leaves us in the dust. The message of the book is incredibly clear with the retelling of history from the personal perspective of Harari.

Provocative and fresh, Harari provides a new view to events in history and the science of humans that make us question everything that has led up to now. This is the kind of book you want to read on a crisp and chilly afternoon, perhaps with a nice cup of coffee and relax. You never know, this book may open you to different opinions of society you've never known you had hidden in your mind.



Talking TOK

with Dave Algie



I believe debating is overrated.

Other teachers assume that, as a TOK teacher, I use debating as a common teaching technique in TOK class.

No. I don't.

At least, not debating in that formal sense: *"This house supports the proposition that..."*, *"We affirm the moot..."* (It's called a "moot" in New Zealand for some reason), *"We the negative team blah, blah, blah..."*

I am obviously cynical about formal debating. I am to debates what the Grinch is to Christmas. Maybe my brain is two sizes too small. But I believe there is good reason to be skeptical about seeing "debating" as being a foundation for good critical thinking skills.

Sure, I like a heated argument as much as anyone. I debate with my family members about New Zealand politics. I debate with Mr. Routh about whether the US will ever be a rugby powerhouse. I debate with Mr. Bertman about who the coolest member of Bon Jovi is.



It's Jon.

Yes, arguing can feel so invigorating.

I also, grudgingly, concede that there is some- *some*- benefit in practicing formal debating. At my previous school, Katoh Gakuen Gyoshu, our Principal, Dr. Mike Bostwick firmly believed that debating was a great way to get Japanese students who were not used to speaking out forcefully in support of a viewpoint to do exactly that. He also maintained that debating was an excellent opportunity for second language learners to build their confidence and fluency. I have to concede he was largely right about this. In fact, he asked me to organize an annual debate festival at the school. Which I did.

For. Ten. Years.

You can imagine how I felt, being asked to organize a formal debate competition. I'm against any kind of formal debate and I'm against any kind of organizing as well. So that was a real trial for me.

What's my problem with formal debating, then? Have I suffered some humiliating loss in a long-ago formal debate, that has turned me bitterly against this format?

No!

Yes... SO SMUG! Bonnie Collins, Te Aroha Morehu, Charlie Walsby, you caught me and my team on a bad day that day in 1989 in the Grade 10 debate, *"That the minimum age for gaining a Drivers License in New Zealand should be raised to 18"*. Those winners certificates and three-dollar book vouchers rightfully belonged to us.

It was a stupid moot!

But that's not all of it, really. **I don't believe that formal debating models the kind of skills and attitudes we need in our modern world.** In a formal debate, you take a position and you just argue it relentlessly, never conceding a point. You systematically set out to demolish the opposition's argument. Never giving ground.

We need to practice a different model, because that approach isn't what our world needs right now. Our world needs students to practice arguing a point, with conviction, but being prepared to modify views, alter them as new nuances come out of the debate. Instead of practicing lines like, "The opposition's argument is irrelevant because..." we need students practicing saying things like, "Actually, I can see you have made a relevant point here, and I might need to reconsider my stance on that..."

Real critical thinking involves scrutiny of your own ideas just as much as the ideas of the person you disagree with. You need to turn the spotlight, the microscope, and the blowtorch on your own argument.

Another good technique to employ if you wish to become a true critical thinker is called the Steel Man argument. Have you heard of the Steel Man?



No, Not him.



No, Not him either.

The steelman argument is when you take a point you disagree with and you try to see it in its strongest possible light. You genuinely try to see the best, strongest possible interpretation of the opposing viewpoint (The term "steel man" is an allusion to the "straw man argument" where people attribute a weak or even irrelevant argument to their opponent and attack that).

This approach helps lead to real critical thinking. We live in a world that seems more and more polarized, and where people need to use critical thinking to come to useful conclusions and compromises. We don't need to see people "owning" another person in a debate on You Tube. Or anywhere.

And so I think formal debating is the wrong blueprint for practicing critical thinking.

I ran this idea past world scholar of the year, Tyus Sheriff, who knows a thing or two about debating.

Tyus says that formal debating can still encourage critical thinking skills and open mindedness because by allocating positions on a topic arbitrarily to debaters, it forces them to take a stance they might not agree with and thus see a different point of view from its most powerful position.

Wow. He might have a point about that. I will need to refine my view on debates as a critical thinking tool. I'm not conceding the whole argument yet but I might need to re-think a couple of things and get back to you.

Until then, Happy Holidays!



Sabers Sports



Sabers “Sports Shorts”

Coach Heimer, AD

December 7, 2018
sabers.senri.ed.jp

Shout Outs

Thank you again and again, super SSC members: simply the best. *Who are we?!*

Sabers TV superstars: Great shows so far. More fun in 2019. Yoro-shiku...おねがいします!

Newbies Coach Morioka, Coach Nikolic, Coach Sala: too late now – once a Saber, always a Saber.

Oldie but a goodie: It’s not “every” day we get an Avery coach. The badminton team will be strong this year, a little birdie tells me.

Dear SIS Short Stories fans: winter break reading assignment, “It isn’t fair, it isn’t right!”

Sabers “in the bleachers”

Question of the week: What Sabers Christmas present do you want from Santa?

Coach Sagara: “A repeat AISA basketball championship, this time on our home court.”

Sabers soccer players: “A year-long Sabers soccer season (and a full-size pitch to boot).”

Achyuta, Eojin, Harry: “A smooth one-motion jump shot with 48-degree arc, lots of backspin, and nothing but net, just like Coach Heimer’s shot.”

Sabers badminton players: “We got 2 coaches; now we just need 6 courts.”

Fitness Floor users: PRs in the squat, bench, cleans, and deads (and maybe some bigger biceps and a tighter booty).

Mr. Heimer: “15 homestay families...please!”

Green Bay Packers: “A new coach.”

Tough Questions for Sabers Basketball Rookies

A new season of basketball sees exciting new talent and fresh new faces appearing in Varsity and JV teams. TANGO caught up with three new players who have bright futures in Sabers basketball. We asked them some hard-hitting questions.

Do Hee Kwon is a Grade 9 player for the Sabers Girls JV Basketball Team.



Q: What is the biggest difference between middle school basketball and high school basketball?

Do Hee: Well, there’s three practices a week, so it’s tougher. We do a lot of running.

Q: What’s the best thing about high school basketball?

Do Hee: Well, like I said, it’s harder, and that’s good. It’s more challenging, so I think it’s better.

Q: Who is another Sabers high school player you respect?

Do Hee: I admire **Yulia Ikumi!** She’s good at every sport! And she’s the captain! She’s good at bringing the members together.

Q: What do you personally feel you need to work on as a basketball player?

Do Hee: I need to work on seeing the people around me. Peripheral vision and reading the game.

Erin Jung is also a Grade 9 player for the Sabers Girls JV Basketball Team.



Q:What is the hardest thing about high school Sabers basketball?

Erin: The training is so tough. There is so much running! It’s important though.

Q: Have you made new friends through your participation in the team?

Erin: Oh yes. By laughing together, working together as a team. Stuff like that.

Q:Who is a Sabers player you really respect?

Erin: **Yulia Ikumi!** She’s the captain of the team. And she’s so good at everything in every sport.

Achyuta Muthuvelan is a Grade 9 player for the Sabers Boys JV Basketball Team.



Q: What’s the best thing about Sabers basketball now that you are a high school player?

Achyuta: There’s more competition. That’s good because it’s challenging for me. It motivates me to practice more.

Q: What do you think you need to work on?

Achyuta: Around the rim. I want to make more of my shots.

Q: What kind of coach is **Morioka sensei**?

Achyuta: Well, he is pretty strict with us during the game. He tells us what we need to do pretty firmly. But he has a good knowledge of the game and he is easy to talk to.

Q: Who is another Sabers player you admire?

Achyuta: I think **Keita Sasaki** is really good..He’s a strong player with a good set of skills.





Sabers Sports



Cross Country Heroics

by Antonio Kogata

'Oh. My. Goodness. Why do I even do this sport...'

Those were the first words that came out of every cross country runner right after they finished the 5km race (well... everyone except Riki). Now you may think that 5k is not far at all but keep in mind that this is CROSS COUNTRY. Now some of you may ask what cross country even is. Cross country is a running sport in which athletes run a race on open air courses across fields or the countryside (hence, cross country). The cross country event was held in Kita Koen on the 12th and 13th of October. After much effort and perseverance, we were able to reach third place overall.

The meet started on the early morning of Friday. All the runners were enthusiastic and were excited to run. We started off by walking around and familiarizing ourselves with the course. As we were walking around the course, we thought to ourselves,

'Wow . this seems like an easy course!'

How wrong we were...

It was one of the worst running courses of our lives. It was so difficult that one of the runners even collapsed right after he completed the run. The grass was so high that it scratched our legs, the course was winding with twist and turns which made us feel dizzy, and the hills were so steep that we were unable to feel our legs afterwards.

After the gruelling run, all schools headed to Expo City for dinner and for some fun. At Expo City, we rode on the ferris wheel, and shopped in the large malls.

The next day was the relay. It was a little easier than the day before just because we finally got used to the harshness of the court. We were paired up with our teammates and in total we were required to run 10 laps around the course. The relay ran along smoothly and our team finished on a high note.



Straight afterwards came the 'fun community run'. In this 5km run, people from the community were able to participate in running the course. In this run we were able to see teachers, school students, and coaches participate!

The event ended with a banquet provided by Cezar's Kitchen and the awards ceremony. Riki, an 11th grader, also new to SOIS, was awarded 1st place in the individual cross country run. Also, our team were all surprised to see that we didn't place last, even though our whole team was convinced that we didn't do too well.

Overall, this cross country meet was an extremely interesting and enjoyable experience. We made many memories together with our own team and teams from different countries.



Before I finish however, here are a few words from our coach, Ms. Cheney regarding this competition. We also hear from Nanami Hasegawa, one of our more enthusiastic runners who competed in the AISA cross country meet for the first time.

Wise words from our coach, Ms. Cheney

'What an amazing win by Riki Sampson (won by only half a millisecond). The days were beautiful and the races were enjoyable to watch. It was also nice to see the dogs on the track, especially Mr. Bertman's Bob (the beagle), and Mr. Lewis's Toby. (Here, Ms. Cheney goes off on a tangent) I would actually like to have a school dog, you know, to relieve the stress from the 12th graders, or maybe even a small PONY!'



Interview with club member Nanami Hasegawa

Why did you want to participate in AISA Cross Country?

Because I don't take PE anymore. I needed another form of exercise.

How did you feel when you completed the 5km run?

It was my first AISA meet at home and the support from the crowds helped me finish it

Which aspect was the most fun in your opinion?

Getting the Korean food from our guests from Korea.

What do you think the cross country team should improve on?

I'd like to see more commitment to the club and the club becoming popular amongst SOIS students.



Photos by Steve Lewis