

c mmunitas



INSPIRED
by **PASSION**

PAFA NEWS

SCIS has parent organizations called the Parents and Friends Association (PAFA) on each campus. PAFA serves as a way that parents can communicate ideas for the betterment of the school to the administration and Board. SCIS is proud of the high level of parent participation in their schools and value their partnership with the parent community. PAFA conducts various activities, from community events to charity fundraisers to volunteer support for teachers and students. Each campus has a PAFA board who works closely with each campus' administrations to plan events that help to make SCIS Campuses a unique experience for families, faculty, and students alike. We are always welcoming new members!

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communitas

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Do you have a story to tell, a project to share, or art to be displayed? Let Communitas be a platform for your voice.

Communitas is about community and we rely on contributions from the SCIS community.

Should you have any comments, observations, wish to submit articles, or inquire as to ways to collaborate, feel free to send all inquiries or correspondence to the Communitas editor via email at mmasson@scis-china.org.

Communitas is published three times per year for the SCIS community, our friends, and the larger Shanghai community.

We are social! Feel free to visit us on the web at www.scis-china.org and follow us!



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Inspired by
Passion

Every person has an innate gift or talent that has the potential to make an impact not only on themselves but also on others and on society. To harness these talents and turn them into something useful for the community, there needs to be the presence of one key attribute: **passion**.

Passion comes from identifying one's personal purpose. Once a personal purpose is identified, this allows a person to give his best self to the project and to others, and ultimately leading to innovation that would prove to be useful for society. Or at least, that is the hope.

At SCIS, we believe that identifying one's personal purpose comes primarily from curiosity. Curiosity about the nature of things and events, and how they can elevate this into something better.

As a school, our role is to foster a culture of curiosity that develops into a passion that will in turn inspire innovation. As educators, our role is to help nurture this culture of curiosity and cultivate it to the point of creativity.

Curiosity and creativity are aligned with the IB learner profile attributes such as inquirers, thinkers, and communicators. Both are held to the same level of significance as the process of learning but also are the main drivers for the holistic development of the students.

At SCIS, we strive to provide an environment using the 3 Cs:

- **Challenging** – through the questions we ask
- **Championing** – through the discussions we run in class
- **Cheering** – through the recognition we extend

We continue to challenge our students to probe deeper into their curiosity, champion their innovation, and cheer on their achievements. We ensure that our classrooms

keep our students inspired to learn, as learning is rooted in curiosity. Our teachers encourage questions in discussions that will further clarify concepts and ideas, conduct activities that demonstrate outcomes, and seek alternative solutions to the established ones.

"The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existence. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery each day." – Albert Einstein

We work hard at preserving an environment that not only produces ideas but, of equal importance, develops quality of character amongst our students – such as openness, flexibility, and fair-mindedness that are supported by inquisitive and creative thinking.

When you look back at the things that gave you the most meaningful experiences so far in your life, are you able to trace these back to moments where personal passion may have been involved?

Passion gives meaning to the things we choose to do in our lives. It makes us realize something about who we are deep down. Could you name at least one thing you are passionate about in your life that came about from your own experience of being curious and acting on this curiosity?



*By Daniel Eschtruth,
Director of Schools at SCIS*





Where in the World is **our Faculty** from?

Shanghai Community International School (SCIS) is a truly unique and inclusive community. We strive to be defined as a school of excellence by each of the constituents of our SCIS community and the Shanghai expatriate populations. Our diverse student population from around the world is growing into well-rounded community contributors with academic and personal skills to succeed in their future educational and professional careers. During their time with us, students develop the capacity to see the relevance and purpose in their learning. This is largely in part thanks to the dedication and endless efforts of our wonderful educators.

Teachers at SCIS are world-class faculty from across the globe. Helping to foster a culture of inclusivity and global mindedness at SCIS, they are a vital pillar to our rigorous educational community. Bringing varying worldviews to our international teaching environment allows students to grow their cultural perspectives and become global citizens. Appreciation for inclusive environments is built, better preparing our students for the workplace of the future.

Our outstanding teachers are passionate about bringing our mission to life by nurturing our students to be caring learners, ready to contribute to their communities. Each day when our students step onto campus, they are met by truly international professional educators.

Our teachers' diverse educational and cultural backgrounds allow for increased professional development opportunities among faculty and staff due to their extensive global experiences. Lastly, our teachers constantly engage and challenge one another professionally as they seek to make our school better each and every day.

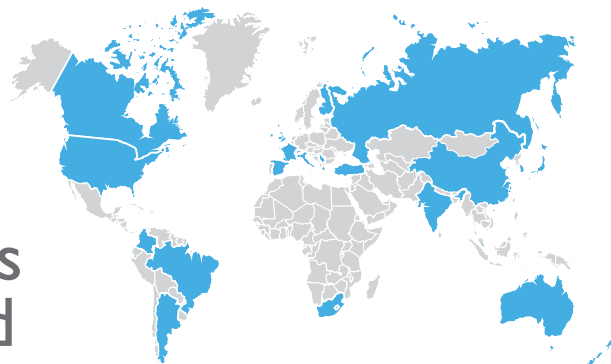


*By Kristen Bender,
Communications Assistant at SCIS*

MEET OUR EXCEPTIONAL FACULTY



24
Nationalities
represented



Total
Faculty

193

Longest Tenure
at SCIS

19

Average
Tenure

4

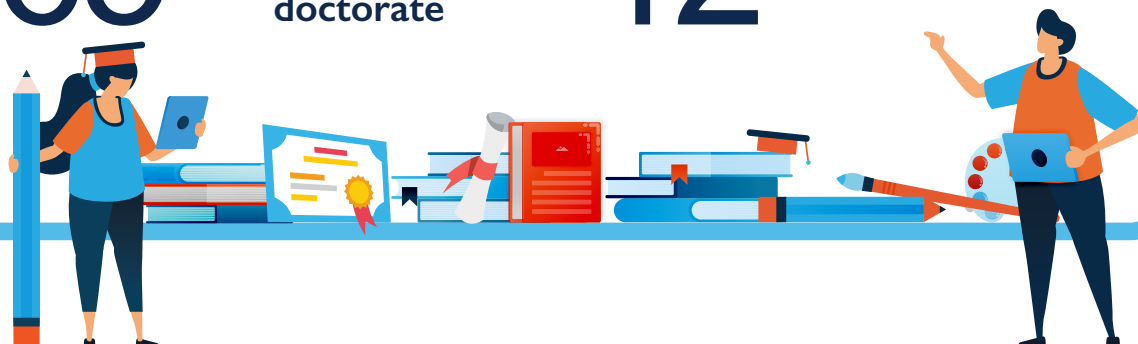


65%

faculty who hold
a **master's** or
doctorate

12

Average years of
teaching experience





The Real-life Applications of Theory of Knowledge

Picture the scene. Three millennia ago, a farmer, anywhere in the world, wakes one morning and sets out to tend to his fields. He tills the land in the same way his father did; he plants the same seeds in much the same way; he spreads manure to ensure the fertility of his land in a manner unchanged for generations. He is guided in everything that he does by the slow procession of the seasons, the lengthening and shortening of the days, the subtle movement of the earth in its orbit (although he doesn't know anything about this).

A millennium later, anywhere in the world, another farmer awakens to tend his fields in much the same manner, much the same way.

A millennium or more beyond this, say in 1900, barely a century ago, another farmer wakes, and sets out to tend to his fields. In much the same manner, in much the same way.

Now, picture the same scene, in 2020. A farmer wakes, and she doesn't set out to tend to her fields. Instead, she reaches for her laptop or tablet. She researches the efficacy of a certain type of fertiliser; she reads the latest literature on the benefits and challenges of organic farming; she checks, through a computer programme, the readings of sensors dotted around her fields. She factors the data gathered into a cost-benefit analysis of continuing with a particular type of crop. She considers the relative gains of using a genetically modified strain of corn against continuing with a strain that is less robust but whose seeds aren't patented and owned by a major conglomerate. She watches the news, scrolls through posts on social media, and considers what impact climate change might have on how or what she farms.

She hasn't yet set foot outdoors, she hasn't lifted a hoe or stepped into a tractor, yet she has made in a few hours more decisions, based on more information and

more analyses, than countless previous generations of farmers would have had to make in their lifetimes.

To be a farmer is one of the most ancient of professions. For millennia, the knowledge, understanding, and skills required to farm successfully remained much the same. And yet, this seemingly most conservative of practices has been utterly transformed in less than a century from an occupation very much focused on the manual to one increasingly characterised by the skills of analysis, interpretation, and evaluation- by critical thinking skills.

The story of farming is indicative of the extraordinary transformations wrought across the globe over the past century as the Industrial Revolution ushered in the Information Age. Never before in human history has such a vast array of knowledge and information been so readily available to so many. The results have



been remarkable; astonishing progress has been made in almost every sphere of human endeavour- we live longer and healthier; we can communicate to people in seconds that which previously might have taken days, months, even years; we are continuously expanding our knowledge and understanding of ourselves and the universe around us.

And yet, with such unfettered access to so much information comes great challenges. In previous eras, we had people who acted as the gatekeepers of knowledge, people who sifted and analysed unrefined information and presented it to us for consumption- newspaper editors, politicians, scientists, teachers. Now, though, we each have to do our own sifting, our own analysing; we are confronted every day with conflicting narratives and conflicting truths and we have to decide every day which to accept and which to discard, which to trust and which to distrust.

This task that confronts us is enormous, and, as ever more information is disseminated through 24-hour news channels or through Facebook, Instagram, and Google, it grows more formidable by the day, indeed by the hour. How can anyone person possibly hope to make sense of so many conflicting narratives, so many contradictory claims, so many divergent theories? How can

anyone person possibly hope to sift the information from the misinformation?

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) provides part of the solution. As an academic course, it is perhaps unique in that it doesn't seek to provide answers. Rather, it seeks to help students better ask their own questions. It sets out to develop, hone, and refine the critical thinking skills which are so necessary to making sense of the competing knowledge claims of the modern world. It challenges students to "explore and reflect on the nature of knowledge and the process of knowing" (TOK Guide, p. 5), and, by doing so, to engage in a more active, critical manner with the world, to craft and create their own knowledge and understandings from the massive amounts of information they encounter every day.

Through Theory of Knowledge, students come to appreciate that knowledge is not a static concept that exists in and of itself, but that it is constantly shaped and misshaped, created, manipulated, used, and misused. They come to understand that knowledge is not simply information, but something they forge themselves through critical interaction with and interpretation of the information. Through this process, they become more adept at and confident in not merely engaging critically with the claims to knowledge of others, but also, and crucially, interrogating their own assumptions and beliefs. In their classroom

activities, students seek not only to prove the validity of their claims but also to examine and explore that which might invalidate their claims and opinions. In the assessment components they work towards and produce, the TOK Exhibition and the TOK Essay, their aim is not solely to present a position in response to a question or a prompt, but to deconstruct and examine the reasoning and knowledge they used to come to that position.

Theory of Knowledge is more about how and why you know than what you know. It facilitates an active, critical interaction with the world and helps provide and refine the skills needed to do so. It positions students to engage with and evaluate the myriad theories, ideas, and claims to knowledge that they are presented with every day. Through all of this, Theory of Knowledge promotes and shapes the active, open engagement with ideas, information, and knowledge that is so critical not merely for the 21st-century worker but for the 21st-century citizen of the world.



*By Emmet Dunphy,
Upper School Head of
Language & Literature
and Individuals & Societies
at SCIS Pudong*

International Mindedness: *Head, Heart, Hands*

As you may be aware, the aim of the International Baccalaureate (IB) programme is “to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world”

As it turns out, International Mindedness (IM), although fundamental to the three IB programmes, is not always clearly defined in the curricular framework by the IBO for schools.

What is certain is that there are three main pillars that make up IM including multilingualism (head), intercultural understanding (heart), and global engagement (hands).

Of course, like most good IB schools, we can assume that these three are being

represented simply by following the learner profile and engaging in studies like Individuals and Societies (intercultural understanding), participating in service as action/CAS (global engagement), and by taking Language and Literature and Language Acquisition classes (multilingualism).

But, as we learned from our most recent evaluation visit from the IB and WASC, there is a difference between “living” and “laminating” these key aspects, and when we start to look for evidence and take a more critical look we find there is more that could and should be done.

This year in the Upper School at SCIS Hongqiao, we are taking a deep dive into IM and have made it one of our schoolwide goals, by embedding it into the professional growth goals that teachers set.

By looking at 5 broad areas of teaching and learning more critically, we hope to move towards a more internationally-minded school and, most importantly, more internationally-minded students.

1. **Planning and Preparing for Learning (Resources)** – encouraging the design of lessons that use an effective mix of high-quality, multicultural learning materials and technology. Teachers are also encouraged to consider curriculum and resource biases that may not represent a diverse and balanced approach to issues and perspectives.
2. **Planning and Preparing for Learning (Conceptual Learning)** - focusing on powerful organizing ideas with relevance across all subject areas. Teachers are encouraged to consider critical IM concepts/big ideas like



equal opportunity, stereotypes, marginalization, race, gender, poverty, and power and to interrogate their own beliefs and values and reach beyond national and cultural boundaries.

3. **Classroom Management** (Social-Emotional) - implementing a program that successfully develops positive interactions and social-emotional skills. Teachers are encouraged to focus on key IM skills like active listening, compromise, and appreciating perspectives with students.
4. **Family and Community Relationships** (Respect) - showing sensitivity and respect for family and community, cultural values, and beliefs. Teachers and students are encouraged to address and interrogate their own personal, and perhaps western biases.
5. **International Mindedness** (Sensitivity) - proactively promoting understanding and appreciation between host and guest cultures. Teachers are encouraged to promote individual and collective responsibility to foster responsible and relevant action.

Of course, International Mindedness is flourishing in countless ways already in

the Upper School at SCIS. So much of our work in the Middle Years Programme (MYP) towards conceptual learning and global contexts brings relevant, culturally significant resources, issues, and materials into our students' learning in every subject. Our recent ARTS week was a showcase of IM concepts filtered and focused through the four arts disciplines for our grade nine students. And our amazing Theory of Knowledge department has, at its foundation, an encouragement for students to consider the diversity and richness of different perspectives and to avoid shallow and polarized thinking and quick judgements. This ensures our Diploma students know there are no simple answers, and the tension between conflicting points of view needs to be lived with, argued about, and quite often left unresolved.

This is no easy task in a world where the truth has become a seemingly arbitrary construct and we seem to be pushed into increasingly polarizing and inflexible notions of heroes and villains, the "woke" and the cancelled, and of right and wrong.

As former U.S. President Barack Obama reminds us – "how can we take all of these perspectives, blind spots, biases ... [and] ... reconcile them to approximate

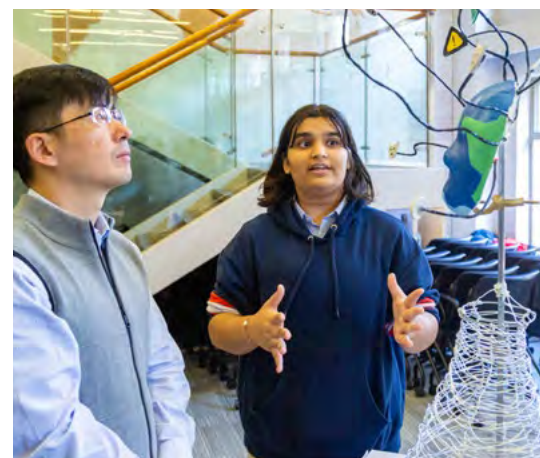


something true? None of us have a monopoly on truth".

If we can have students and teachers engage and grapple with international mindedness using their heads, hearts and hands we will be well on our way to making the world a better and more peaceful place.



*By Barclay Lelievre,
Upper School Principal
at SCIS Hongqiao*





Developing 21st Century Skills: How the MYP Personal Project Prepares Students for the Future



A quick internet search of “21st Century Skills” gives a good idea about the currency of this topic in both educational and professional communities. When digging a bit deeper one may feel overwhelmed at the amount of information present on the topic, in fact, with people of varying levels of qualification and experience providing lists of these skills and claims about which is most important. In the Middle Years Programme (MYP), these skills are called the Approaches to Learning, and they are a foundational piece to how students are prepared for future success.

The grade 10 MYP Personal Project is a core assessment for the Approaches to Learning. In year 5 of the MYP, students have the opportunity to complete a project based on their own passions and interests. What makes this project challenging and unique, though, is that it requires students to synthesize and apply skills that are not tied to one specific subject; they can't just find old class notes or textbook knowledge to complete the project. This is fundamentally different from the types of project experiences many of the adults in both the teaching and parent communities had while in school. This is not to discount the value of the subject knowledge; it plays an important role in how students decide on areas of research focus. Additionally, it often plays a significant part in the students' choice of project goals, as many will gravitate towards subjects that interest them most and topics that inspire that spirit of extended inquiry.

Over my last few years as project coordinator, I've grown to understand the project on a new level. Often, students can get bogged down by looking at a checklist of requirements and meeting those demands. What is both frustrating and freeing about the Personal Project is that the checklist is flexible. This is the opportunity for the students to decide on a passion, develop goals for learning and outcomes, and decide what approaches to take in order to achieve these goals. Most professionals will agree that there isn't a one-size-fits-all model for how to approach a problem or project at work. Instead, we make on-the-spot decisions about what tools to use to organize work, communicate with others, locate and access resources, collaborate with coworkers, and troubleshoot problems that may arise. The Personal Project gives students the opportunity to participate in their own project management, a key skill for success later. They define the goals, they set the parameters for success, and they document and report on the process.



It requires a lot of intrinsic motivation on the part of the students, and the teachers work to build scaffolds and collaboration points along the way to help students through the process.

The most exciting thing about the project and how it supports the diverse interests and styles of our students is most evident at the Project Fair each spring, where students showcase their accomplishments. The variety of project choices and approaches are inspiring to see. Students develop businesses and websites, code games, create works of art, construct instruments and models, compose music, start social media campaigns, build health and wellness plans, and so much more. What is even more inspiring is that the students are the driving force behind the project's success. They decide what to research. They decide how to measure success. They decide how to collaborate. In the end, the Personal Project is a powerful tool for not only assessing the ATLs but for empowering students to be self-directed in their inquiry processes.



*By Ashley Simmons ,
Upper School Librarian
and IB Projects Coordinator
at SCIS Hongqiao*



The Benefits of Speaking More Than One Language

Plurilingualism is the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. (Council of Europe, 2001: 168)

The study of language acquisition has always been a controversial field within Linguistics due to the difficulty in testing the different theories and proposals of scholars. This has led to the creation and consolidation of numerous myths in the acquisition of the second language and its impact on the mother tongue and on our cognitive development in general.

A myth in the field of linguistics, as pointed out by Grosjean (2010), is that to be considered bilingual, one needs a perfect knowledge of the second language (L2), comparable to the mother tongue (L1). Part of this myth is due to what Cenoz calls the Monolingual Bias, that is, the competence in languages is measured from the atomistic perspective of monolingualism,

without considering the associations and connections that are created in the multilingual brain.

Thanks to the advances made in neuroscience, today, we know a little better how our brain works, the areas activated according to what language we use, and when it was acquired. We understand that languages don't act separately, and we constantly shift and use them indistinctly as resources to communicate.

One of the significant concerns when we learn a new language is what is commonly called "accent", that is, the phonetic, rhythmic, and melodic features that help us determine the dialectal variation that we speak of a specific language. Today, it is accepted that the age of acquisition, or age at which we typically acquire a word, influences the repertoire of phonetic units that our brain is capable of recognizing and reproducing and that this window closes very early, at around one year of age, although there are other elements such as social interactions that help to extend this period. However,

the ability to achieve a degree of proficiency in a language is not limited by age, even if influenced by it. (Kuhl, 2003)

Various studies and experiments, in language acquisition, music, and also sports, have shown that people who have learned later can achieve a skill equal to those who learned it in earlier stages: the difference resides in the cerebral processes. Early learning in life involves more sensorimotor types of processing, whereas the second language learner who acquired later in life has to invoke other brain mechanisms beyond their native language brain to resolve the difference between sounds in the second language. Simplifying a lot, this means that words learned at an early age are associated with sounds, while later, they will be associated with previously learned words.

In short, it is never too late to learn a language; simply, the brain processes that occur when we do it vary according to the learner and their circumstances. It is the teacher's duty to know how to identify these peculiarities and adapt the learning techniques and expectations to the student's needs in order, ultimately, to promote and facilitate the acquisition of an additional language. The advantages of multilingualism are more evident today in this globalized world and are supported by the scientific literature:

- More linguistic resources than a monolingual (Block, 2007)
- Adaptive use of language (Cenoz, 2013)
- Ease of learning another additional language (Cenoz, 2009)

The vast majority of the members of our community at SCIS are multilingual, so don't hesitate to go out and develop your superpower, either to artistically explore new horizons like Samuel Beckett, who despite English being his native language wrote his great works in French because, according to him, it forced him to get rid of artifice and to focus on the message and the economy of language; or simply to enjoy the pleasure of being able to read a poem in Mandarin, sing a song in Spanish and chat with your friends in English. (Mitgang, 1981)

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By Rafael Risquez Navajas
MYP/DP Spanish teacher
at SCIS Hongqiao





Purposefully Incorporating Approaches to Learning into Advisory

At the beginning of every year, the pastoral team meets to discuss the past year and set new goals for the year ahead. One of the goals this year is to review and revise the counseling lessons that take place during Dragon Time and are otherwise known as Caring Counseling Thursdays.

One addition to this year's Thursdays is the involvement of grade level teachers and students in the selection of specific Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills students will be explicitly taught under the umbrella of the big themes selected by the counseling team.

What is Dragon Time?

In providing opportunities to pursue personal excellence in a nurturing environment, upper school students at SCIS participate in daily advisory time, otherwise known as Dragon time. These dedicated 30-minute sessions are designed to develop the relationship, attitudes, and skills of our students so they may contribute to a positive community.

What happens during Dragon Time?

Each day of the week focuses on various activities, from one-on-one review sessions with teachers to check individual progress, to collaborative group work and relationship-building. On Thursdays, Dragon Time focuses on guidance lessons where

students participate in pastoral lessons focusing on life skills, building character, and, new this year, approaches to learning.

What are Approaches to Learning?

Approaches to Learning (ATL) are skills designed by the International Baccalaureate (IB) to enable students to "learn how to learn". Wherever possible, these ATLs are incorporated into lessons and classroom activities or through other means.

This year, the grade 7 advisors at our Hongqiao campus have been devising ways to incorporate these ATLs in new and innovative ways, by implementing them into the pastoral lessons of Dragon Time.



To pilot this program, the advisory cohorts dedicated their efforts towards self-management ATL skills. Specifically, they looked at two sub-categories: organization and affective skills.

Before starting, five skills were pre-selected for Organization skills and then sent out as a survey to both our grade seven students and advisory teachers, prompting them to select which skills they thought were most important. Drawing comparisons from both sets of results saw that responses matched nicely, with both teachers and students giving equal importance to skills such as planning short-term assignments, using technology, and setting goals.

The same survey was then sent out regarding seven pre-selected Affective skills. Results highlighted similarities across skills such as practicing focus and concentration, and strategies to reduce stress and anxiety. Interestingly, a vast majority of students selected skills such as practicing being aware of body-mind connections and strategies to overcome impulsiveness and anger, pointing to a keen sense of self-awareness from our students at an early age.

Looking at the data, grade seven advisors then selected the following four skills to focus on during pastoral lessons:

1. Plan short and long-term assignments; meet deadlines
2. Select and use technology effectively
3. Practice focus and concentration
4. Demonstrate persistence and perseverance

A Counseling Carousel rotation was then created, with each advisor picking and

Students' Responses

1. Organization Skills: How can students demonstrate organization skills?

[More Details](#)

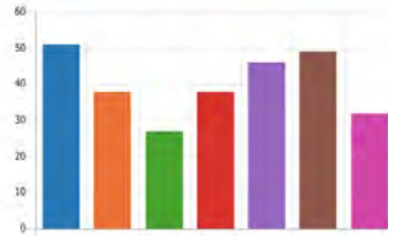
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- Set goals that are challenging ... 34
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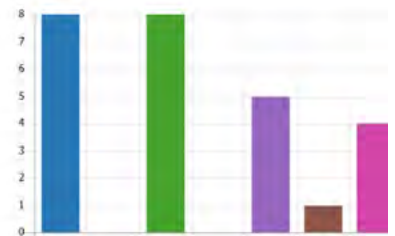
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- Set goals that are challenging ... 4
- Plan strategies and take actio... 4
- Use appropriate strategies for ... 3
- Select and use technology eff... 7



2. Affective skills: How can students manage their own state of mind?

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- Mindfulness awareness - Pract... 0
- Perseverance - Demonstrate p... 8
- Emotional Management - Pract... 0
- Emotional Management - Pract... 5
- Self-motivation - Practice posi... 1
- Resilience - Practice "bouncin... 4



designing a specific lesson around one of the four skills. This allowed each advisory cohort of students to go through all lessons within the span of one month.

Each advisory has an advisory journal that they decorate and is something that stays with them throughout the school year, allowing them a place to write down their thoughts, including everything they do in advisory classes. To aid students process the information learned, they were prompted to go through various Visible Thinking routines. One such activity, called "Write a Letter to Yourself," asked students to write a letter to their future selves as 8th graders. Students were challenged to give their future selves advice based on all the information they have learned during the counseling lessons.

Another visible thinking routine called "I Used to Think, and Now I think," focused on highlighting how students' understanding has shifted or changed.

After a successful first round of counseling lessons, our grade 7 advisors are now shifting gears towards a new rotation on different ATL skills. This time around the focus will be on conflict resolution, focusing on more collaborative and social skills.

While counseling guidance sessions at SCIS have always been grounded around a set scope and sequence of lessons, for example, "Friendship" in grade six or "Conflict-resolution" in grade seven, adding the explicit connection to ATL skills and involving students and teachers in the process adds a new dimension to the quality of the program.



By Tamara Afanasyeva, Grade 7 Grade Level Leader, MYP English Language Acquisition, Language & Literature Teacher at SCIS Hongqiao.

You are about to start 8th grade. I want to give you some advice.

Firstly, I want to talk about meeting deadline. I know you had hard time using time wisely in grade 7. To have less stress of doing assignment at night, I hope you can use your sparetime wisely and submit assignments in time. Also, start working on your summative earlier, so that you don't have much work later.

Second thing that I want to talk about is focus and concentration. I know you had hard time getting rid of tiredness, because you had so much work complete in 9th. I knew that to focus and concentrate, you should have a lot of sleep. I hope you can manage your time well, so that you can focus and concentrate in class.

Last thing is persistence and perseverance. In grade 8, you will get harder assignments, but I believe that through those experience you will gain new knowledge. Just do the same thing that you did in grade 7 and 6. It is definitely a challenge and a risk, but be a risk-taker and in grade 8, I hope you become a braver person and come out of your comfort zone.?

regards.

I used to think meditation was your legs crossed and praying. But now think that meditation is anything that calms you down.

Visible thinking routine



Empowering Parents to Support Language Learning



Our English as an Additional Language (EAL) Department once again hosted their EAL Workshop, Empowering Parents at Home. Working together with parents to provide tools so they may help their children succeed is of high importance to us.

This wonderful parent professional development session focused on language acquisition and the ways in which parents can support their children as language learners. To ensure that the information was as accessible as possible, translated materials and translators were provided so parents of all language levels could engage and talk through strategies with one another.

Specifically for parents with children in the EAL program, this workshop provided strategies for helping their children at home with schoolwork despite not identifying as fluent in English themselves. For example, it may be beneficial to encourage your child to study the language, learn the difference between social and academic language, and encourage your child to identify areas of confusion in texts that they read.

Group sessions also allowed participants to explore a variety of language myths and how to socially-emotionally support their child(ren). For example, “younger children are more effective at learning a language than older children.” This is a typical concept that arises out of the need for older and younger children to learn a language

in different ways. Parents explored different excerpts in educational literature and had opportunities to discuss their own experiences.

SCIS uses the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English test in order to assess all students. Giving our parents access to look over their child’s results enabled them to understand the varying needs across skill types, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

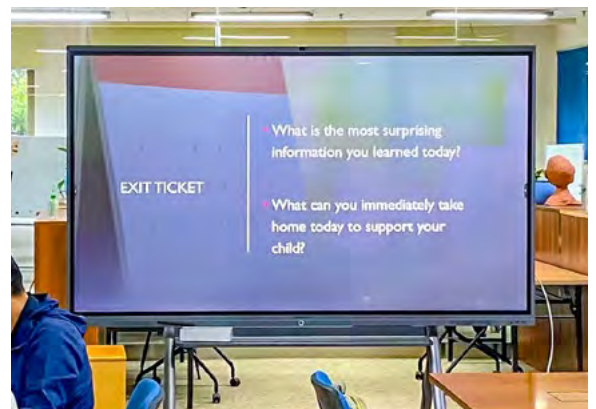


Throughout this workshop, parents were given practical tips and concepts from the EAL Coordinator of their children's division. From the brain science behind language development to strategies for vocabulary acquisition and how to use effective writing structures, our parents added a variety of tools to their belt. One such tool was through learning the practice of extensive reading. This is one of the easiest ways to improve language. Through this practice, students choose their reading material that is relatively easy for their level and read for at least 20 minutes which is equal to roughly 150-200 words. This is a way for children to read for pleasure and not schoolwork. It provides children with ways to begin engaging and taking ownership of their learning in a way they can enjoy. This is a simple practice that can be done daily to improve vocabulary, grammar, reading speed, and create learner autonomy. Parents were then given tangible materials and had the ability to discuss with other parents what they were learning and how to implement these ideas in their homes. Many conversations lasted after the workshop as they excitedly discussed the research and methods to be used to support their child.

We are happy to continue providing resources that ensure our parents and students have everything they need to confidently persevere with their English language education.



By Alison Roberts, Upper School English as an Additional Language Coordinator at SCIS Pudong





Creativity Takes Courage

“How we structure lessons to enable students to take creative risks”



When I meet a new person and they ask, “what do you do?”, I typically say “I teach art” because “I cultivate minds and talents through diverse mediums of materials in the pursuit of creativity and innovation” is a mouthful. Their response is usually: “that’s pretty cool”. Yes, in reality, drawing, painting, sculpture, design, etc. . . are all “pretty cool” skills to practice, but “creative behavior” goes so much deeper than art skills. In my opinion, the most useful and powerful tool known to all humankind and across all disciplines is CREATIVITY. And on a daily basis, I get to develop students’ creativity and watch their confidence, self-expression, and self-worth blossom.

Without creativity, ideas are mere thoughts, explorations become recitations, the spark of life snuffed out. Creativity is the courage to try some new way, knowing and expecting that it might fail, but in that, you may gain some new knowledge or idea. It is exactly for this reason that I find it necessary to teach creativity as the most important life skill.

With each lesson or project in the classroom, the students have one major problem to solve. Most lessons start with learning a technique or medium and then they must use that medium to create an original artwork. For instance, the current grade four art unit: “Making connections to the world around us can help inspire our own creations” is all about inspiration. The students are taught how to make something out of papier-mâché then they have to brainstorm, plan, and create a unique work of art using papier-mâché. It is a very time-consuming medium to work with and there is plenty of opportunity for failure along the way. But the type of failure I am referring to is the kind that makes the artist stronger, wiser, and more skillful.

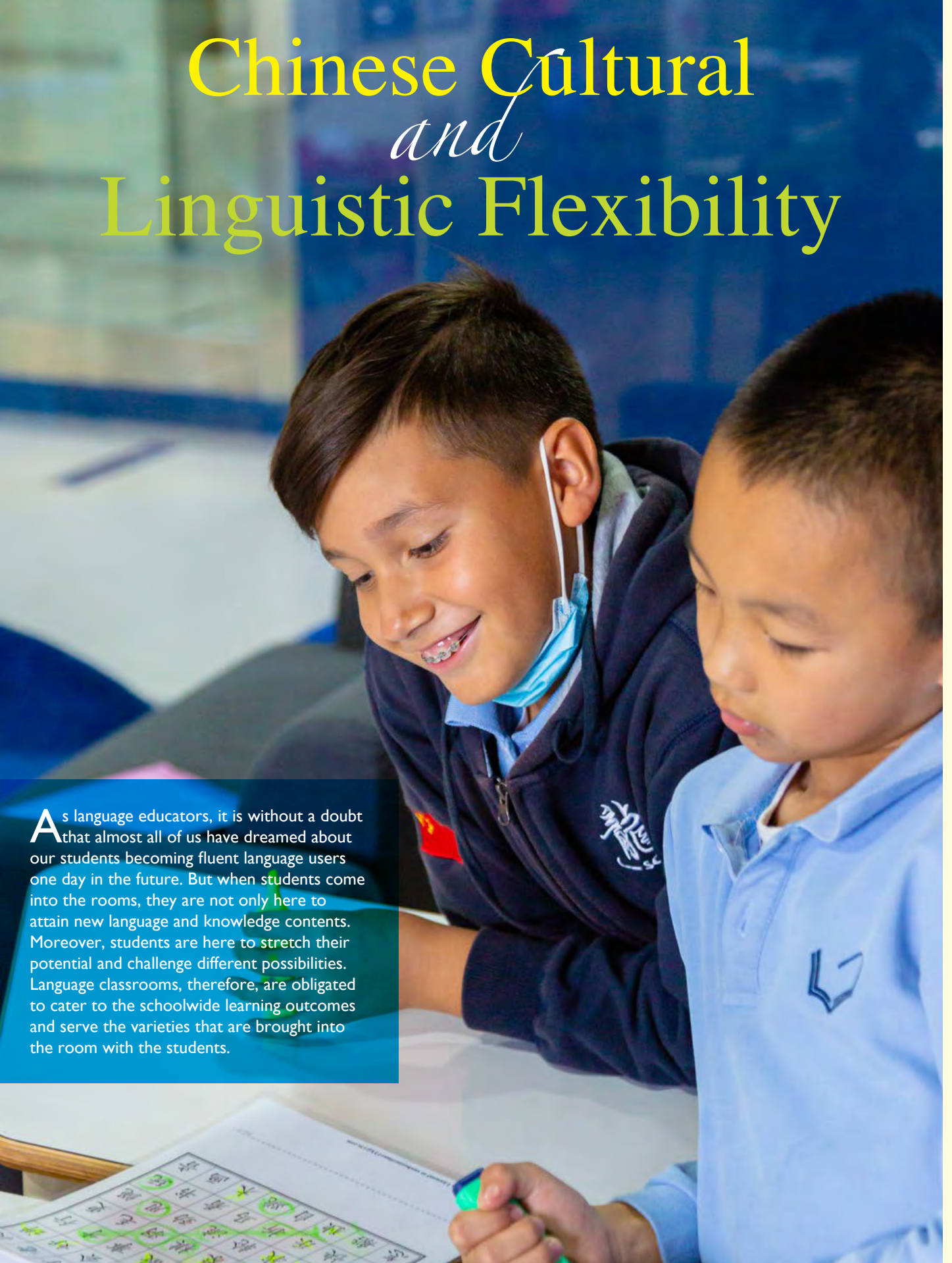
The first challenge is for the student to sketch their idea in three dimensions. Once the plan is completed, the student then begins to assemble an armature for their sculpture by using newspaper, masking tape, cardboard, and wire. During this stage, the students are also considering stability and durability. Once the armature is finished, the student applies newspaper dipped in a glue/water mixture and completely coats the armature. After this dries it is ready for paint. The base coat is done with acrylic paints. Finally, the student can use paint pens and various materials to create the final details. Only then does the sculpture take on a life of its own. Every student ends up with a unique work of art that represents themselves on some personal level. But even more importantly, they end up with a rich experience and a sharpened sense of how to navigate failure to succeed.

This type of lesson is rich in developing creativity and is hard to teach because the student must be a natural risk-taker, curious and confident in order to achieve their individual plan. It would be much easier to help every student create a papier-mâché balloon and then use paint to make a colorful design. But the result would be 100 very similar creations and lacking risk, the students would have missed the opportunity to practice creativity and innovation as a skill. Building multiple opportunities to fail or succeed within the lesson enables the student to take creative risks and that’s a universal skill that if learned early, will benefit them for the rest of their lives.



*By Brent Blalock,
Lower School Art Teacher
at SCIS Hongqiao*

Chinese Cultural *and* Linguistic Flexibility

A photograph of two young boys in a classroom. The boy on the left is wearing a dark blue hoodie with a Chinese flag patch and a light blue surgical mask hanging from his ear. He is smiling and looking down at a worksheet. The boy on the right is wearing a light blue polo shirt and is also looking at the worksheet. The worksheet has a grid of Chinese characters, some of which are highlighted in green. The background is a blurred classroom setting with bookshelves.

As language educators, it is without a doubt that almost all of us have dreamed about our students becoming fluent language users one day in the future. But when students come into the rooms, they are not only here to attain new language and knowledge contents. Moreover, students are here to stretch their potential and challenge different possibilities. Language classrooms, therefore, are obligated to cater to the schoolwide learning outcomes and serve the varieties that are brought into the room with the students.



Pathways that serve flexibilities

In the Lower School at SCIS Pudong, four tracks are provided for students that cater to different academic expectations in Mandarin acquisition. The literacy skill practices can be very demanding in Mandarin Native Course (MNC) where students follow the Chinese national curriculum standards in each grade level. In this course, students dive into various themes with the support of language in depth. Also supporting native and near-native speakers, Mandarin Advanced Course (MAC) guides students to explore the beauty of Mandarin through the lens of Primary Years Programme (PYP) transdisciplinary themes. Mandarin as Second Language (MSL) course guarantees non-native speakers to experience language acquisition in an immersion setting with a most authentic experience. At the same time, the Mandarin as Foreign Language (MFL) course allows students to inquire into content in a bilingual mode

and acquire knowledge with ease and confidence. Each course has a projected placement in the upper school Mandarin program so families receive advice and support from school to make a more informed decision.

An environment that supports equity

A trusted space boosts students' morale in multiple dimensions and more than often it's paid back. Various physical environment setups will help set the tone of the room immediately. A student-designed cool-down space indicates that everyone is entitled to have a "no-no" moment in language learning. Leveled reading in the classroom library is also a welcoming gesture for diversity. English version of Chinese cultural stories are hotcakes in the classroom and has again proved that an inquiring mind will carry learners further than any particular language skill.

On the other hand, a class mechanism such as Positive Discipline and Universal Design

for Learning (UDL) provides intangible but crucial support that students need to succeed in a language class.

Planning that celebrates diversity

In backward design, we plan for and get ready for all sorts of possibilities. A central idea needs to be empowered by Approaches To Learning (ATL) strategies in order to be fully meaningful. Objectives are only practical when we apply differentiation as well as accommodations to guarantee that everyone is approaching their goals. These necessary elements stem from a carefully designed lesson and will allow teachers to slow down and celebrate each students' progress along the way



By Yan Yan, Lower School Mandarin Coordinator at SCIS Pudong





A Toy Story



Starting in early September, students in Kindergarten from our Hongqiao Early Childhood Education (ECE) campus and Grade ten design students from the Hongqiao main campus have been forging a meaningful relationship. This partnership was born from a Middle Years Programme (MYP) provocation, to design and build a toy. Within the different phases of the project, there have been natural and mutually beneficial opportunities for the two groups of students to meet and play.

The MYP students naturally called upon SCIS' experts in play on the ECE campus to serve as a focus group and assist them in the research process. Small groups of teenagers entered the ECE armed with clipboards, notepads, cameras, and audio recorders ready to inquire and gain an understanding of what their potential clientele might value in a toy. Their Kindergarten counterparts curiously awaited their arrival, unsure of what to expect...or even do when they met. As the two groups met, there was a bit of an awkward standoff, initial probing questions were met with blank stares and confused looks from the Kindergarten audience. Luckily, a few toys were soon taken out, eyes lit up, and both groups used play as a vehicle to work towards their goals. One group soon became more comfortable with the tall middle school strangers in their space, allowing the other group to capture observations of likes, dislikes, and ideas from their younger and at times timid counterparts.

Play has a way of bringing people together. In this case, it helped the Kindergarten students to become comfortable, allowing them to engage in conversations about their toys, that initially seemed overwhelming. The play allowed Kindergarten students to express more details about the color, size, shape, and most importantly the functionality of their toys and types of play they enjoy engaging in. The MYP students observed and collected data using photos, videos, written notes, and even recorded audio files to capture the type of play they witnessed. Grade 10 students also realized the children were not the only people with knowledge regarding play and began interviewing the teachers in the room as well. Play allowed the MYP students a chance to build a relationship with their Kindergarten counterparts and create a dialogue to discover interests and preferences that went beyond initial failed conversations and observations, to a greater understanding of the desires of their potential clients. Similarly, the Kindergarten students' comfort level increased as they expressed their knowledge through the many tools, toys, and materials at their disposal in the classroom.

After the initial meetings in September, the upper school students have been working hard to organize the data collected to create a prototype. In mid-November, the ECE students were able to visit the Upper



School Design Lab to reconnect with their elder counterparts and see the design process in action. Additionally, the trip served as a source of inspiration for the Kindergarten students as they too will soon begin to design and create a game of their own as part of their 'How We Express Ourselves' unit. While the materials and design concepts used will vary dramatically from Grade 10 to Kindergarten, play will still very much be at the heart of both projects.

In early December, the Grade 10 Design students will put the finishing touches on their toys and rejoin the ECE students to do what they do best. It is fitting the final step of this semester-long project will result in a play session back at the ECE, where the process began. Play is the basis for learning within the early years, and play is what has driven this design process through the data collection, sketch, prototype, and completion stages.

"Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning." -Fred Rogers



By Andrew Bissonnette,
Early Childhood Education
Co-Coordinator at
SCIS Hongqiao





Discovering our True Passions

As a diverse community of learners and thinkers, SCIS students are encouraged to explore interests, ask questions, and think beyond their immediate surroundings about how they might contribute to their community and the world. Students might find their passions in many places, but our program and the strong relationships students build at SCIS help them further these passions. These three Upper School Students on the Hongqiao campus are examples of students who have learned, grown, and become immersed in an interest they continue to hone at SCIS.

Calvin Li, Grade 7 Passion: Swimming

Calvin Li has been at SCIS since pre-school. While he had some limited participation in the swim program, it was when he made the swim team in Grade 4 that he realized that he had a passion for the water and racing. Calvin remembers the earliest years on the team as an opportunity for learning and growth. "I didn't understand the swim language or

how the lanes were set up at meets. Once I got that, I almost immediately got very involved." As the development of greater knowledge about the sport continued, Calvin now serves as captain of the Boys 11-12 team.

He enjoys being a leader and especially enjoys working with the swim team, Big Fish, Little Fish program when he gets to teach the youngest swimmers. Being able to share his love of the sport with students just coming into the sport themselves encourages him to do his best and push himself to meet and reach goals in his 50 Back, 50 Fly, and 100 Free times. Calvin knows that there are other aspects of the swim program that have led to his love of the sport. The relationships that he has built with the coaches who have guided and supported him come from a passion that the coaches have for the sport and for their own swimming experience. The spirit within the team, through spirit gear and cheering squads, makes him feel part of a true community that will support him and will also help to build his confidence. Calvin knows that his passion will continue to build, especially now that the team has been able to return to face-to-face meets.



Suhani Chawla, Grade 10

Passion: Global Issues

While Suhani has always felt strongly about problems that face the world, it was her Grade 8 Individuals & Societies class that prompted her to think of the big picture and about how she can make a difference. That year, she created a game to promote sustainability through a vegan diet. She ultimately led the game at an assembly for the entire Upper School.

Suhani has spent the last two summers thinking about things she, and her classmates can do to have an impact locally in Shanghai and in China. She has been working with Heart-to-Heart, a non-profit agency, by selling teddy bears and visiting children in the playroom before and after their life-saving heart surgeries for congenital heart defects. While some of her visiting time has been curbed by Covid restrictions, she looks forward to going back when she can. Through her connection with these children and her interest in helping them, Suhani designed her Middle Years Programme Personal Project around knowing more about the ways Heart-to-Heart helps children. She is designing a three-part project to help the agency raise funds and awareness for the children. Suhani's documentary "spreads awareness about the 150,000 children in China who are impacted by congenital heart disease."

Suhani is also hosting a photo exhibition of her own work with the goal of raising enough at the exhibit for one surgery and, potentially, more through online sales. Her goal is to continue to share and advocate for causes that are smaller and local.



Having been a part of several gatherings that spread awareness about issues facing the world today, Suhani is looking forward to hosting a summit at SCIS for students in the Shanghai area who are interested in making a difference to gather and share ideas. She has a particular interest in reaching out to students who may have been underrepresented at previous similar events. While still in the early planning stages, Suhani's passion for serving her community and advocating for service is likely to have a reach well beyond the summit.

Lesaan Lotfi, Grade 11

Passion: Film

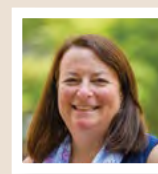
Lesaan's passion for film was ignited at his previous school in Nanjing. Once he arrived at SCIS in Grade 10, though, he felt a much greater connection to the art and skill of film production and wanted to be as involved as he could in the process. Lesaan was especially inspired by his Grade 10 Media class, a class he truly enjoyed. "The class provided me the opportunity to work on lots of short exercises—which required me to have a great deal of skill and to work quickly." Lesaan felt that the challenge of both knowing what to do and organizing his time to ensure the work gets done was what continues to draw him to film production.

About a year ago, Lesaan sent a message to a popular local musician and asked if he wanted to work together to create a music video. The video, which Lesaan and a friend from Nanjing created together, has sparked an intensive and ongoing entry into film production in China. When he began shooting that video, he realized that he "had

no idea what he was doing and shot for five hours, but only ended up with about five seconds of usable footage." Looking back at that project, Lesaan recognizes that it is the film he put more time and energy into than anything else to date.

Since that time, he has created several other music videos, one of which was played on a popular television show and has garnered even more attention and interest in his work. He has found that his passion has helped him work through the language barrier when creating films, as well. "Since we are all interested in the same thing and have the same vision, it doesn't even matter what language we are speaking." Lesaan has been pleased to be able to engage with his passion away from school and credits the support he has gotten from his teachers as a further motivator. He knows that he has a lot on his plate but is appreciative of the connections he has made while honing his interests and he is excited to "make something more."

So many of our SCIS students have passions in a variety of areas. Having the opportunity to explore these passions and to work with faculty who understand, appreciate, and support their passions continues to make SCIS the strong community that it is.



By Amy Valerio,
Upper School
Vice-Principal at
SCIS Hongqiao

Empowering our Passionate Students Outside of School

Shanghai Community International School (SCIS) Pudong students are taking advantage of having Nursery students through Upper School seniors all under one roof. As a requirement for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, our Upper School students take part in Creativity, Action, and Service (CAS) projects while Grade 10 students are responsible for their Middle Years Programme (MYP) Personal Project. Through these projects, students are able to showcase their creative pursuits in developing an active and healthy lifestyle while contributing positively to their communities. Our Upper School students have found a way to combine their knowledge, community need, and genuine interest to serve Lower School students at SCIS. With guidance from their teachers, advisors, and the Service as Action (SAA) and CAS coordinator, they have found



unique ways to improve the lives of students around them.

Upper School students have focused on sharing their passions with their younger counterparts through our After School Activities (ASA) program. Our ASA program provides new and unique ways for students to engage in learning, athletics, arts, and much more after school. Students take part in a variety of enriching opportunities that allow them to pursue their passions and discover new ones. A few students reached out to our Lower School students to educate and provide new and unique ways to expand their health and knowledge.

On Wednesday afternoons, you'll find Grade 3-5 students playing Bocce on the field led by Federico, a tenth grader at SCIS Pudong. This activity is part of the student's

Personal Project for Grade 10 to culminate his MYP. Federico told us that he chose to teach students bocce because he, "wanted to feel connected to his home culture and share it with others." It has allowed our Lower School students to learn a new game and skills while making connections to Upper School. On Tuesdays in our gym, you can find one of our Upper School seniors, Jihoon, leading Lower School students in jump rope. Jihoon recently discovered a passion for jumping rope and wanted to share this passion with Lower School students. It has been a fun way for students to take hold of their fitness and encourage one another in a group setting.

Our After School Activities have allowed students to teach and guide other students as they learn and grow together. Upper School students have taken on new and unique leadership opportunities as they

plan and coordinate their specific ASAs. These activities provide chances for students to build a community outside of the classroom, engage in activities that students might not get a chance to otherwise, and connect with students across divisions. Students at SCIS have unique opportunities to create and lead their own ASAs which provide them with the real-world experience of planning, coordinating, and teaching. Our students have taken ownership of their passions and in doing so are making impacts on their community.

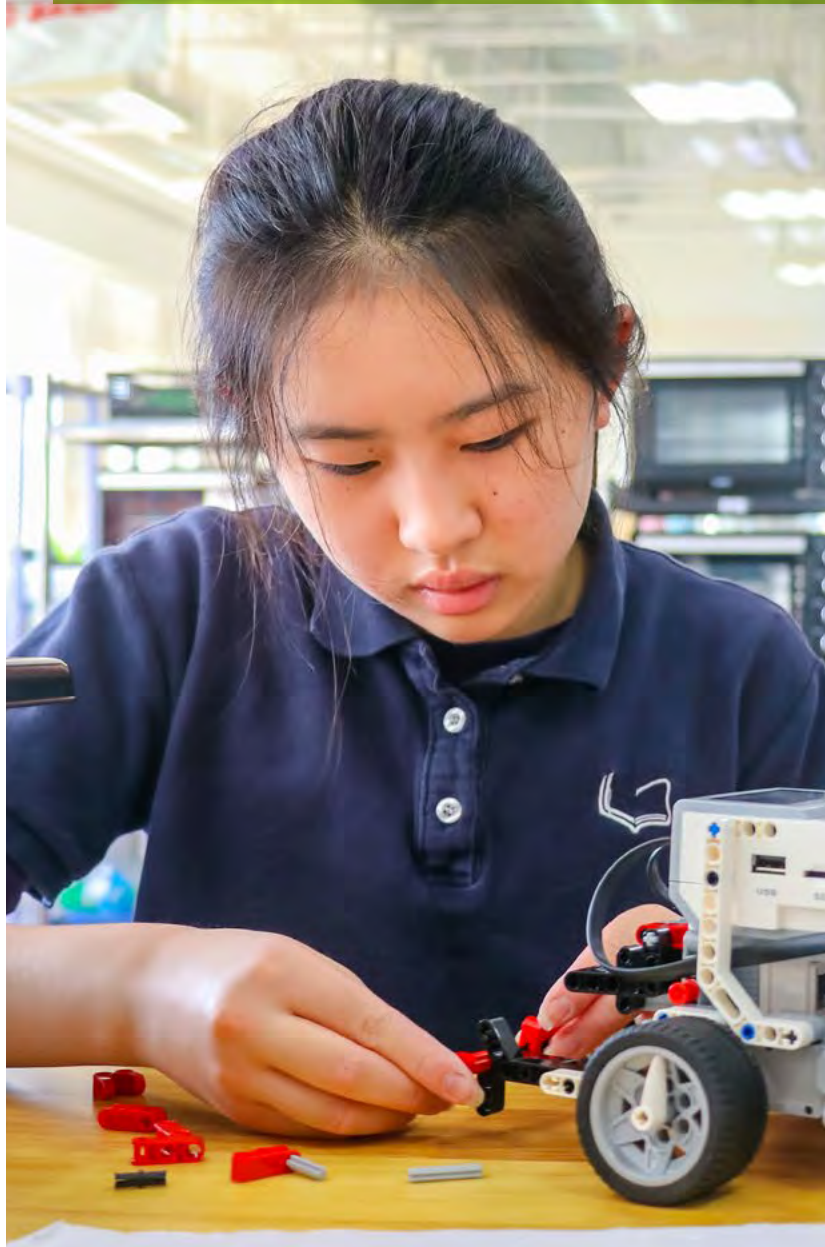


*By Larisa Mount,
Athletics/Activities Director
at SCIS Pudong*



Preparing Students for the Future –

NOW
NOW
NOW



Learning technologies are continuing to transform education by augmenting and redefining the roles of teacher and student in the classroom. This transformation is not unique to our school, the Shanghai Community International School (SCIS), or the wider world of education, but rather is a reflection of the world we live in. Skills such as student creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, analyzing, designing, remixing, and collaboration are very important now and it is our duty as a school and as educators to prepare our students for this reality. We are preparing our students to be successful for a future that looks very different from today, with jobs, technologies, and problems that don't even exist yet. We are preparing students for a future that we don't fully understand and one we can't predict. Therefore, we need to teach our students to be adaptable, flexible with the ability to learn, unlearn and relearn as lifelong learners. Technologies are ubiquitous in our teaching and learning environments and we need to understand how to use them effectively.

Here at SCIS, we use cloud technologies to allow us to focus on what matters the most to us - our learners. Our students are technologically advanced and we foster inquiry-based learning so that they develop the skills to understand how to ask their questions and learn how to search for the answers with a critical lens. Our students are prepared for in-class learning as well as remote learning in case we need to make that switch. We use cloud-based apps like Microsoft 365, ManageBac, Seesaw, Flipgrid, etc. so that teachers and students can communicate more efficiently and effectively.

We use multimedia and digital video as part of our didactic toolkit to enhance the teaching and learning

process. Research suggests that multimedia content increases student motivation, develops self-directed learning, increases achievement, and encourages lifelong learning. Many learners prefer multimedia over traditional lectures as it can streamline learning and provide more interactive learning experiences. There is also evidence that students learn more from images than printed words. Students become producers of new knowledge by creating digital essays, websites, blogs, and multimedia presentations through written words but also through images, voice-over narration, sound, interactivity, composition, rhythm, and pacing.

At SCIS, we also educate our community about the use of technology from both the positive and negative aspects. For example, while technology can increase engagement, we need to be aware that it can also be a distraction. While technology can increase teamwork through collaborating in the cloud or communicating on digital discussion boards we also need to be mindful that technology can also be isolating for some and so we develop lessons to prevent this. We also recognize that while technology can save teachers time so they can focus on assessment and feedback, we also need to be aware that technology can take time to learn and understand how to integrate it into the classroom. We work together as a learning community to navigate this rapidly changing educational paradigm to ensure that our students are prepared to be successful outside our school's digital learning landscape.



*By Greg Read,
Director of Technology and
Innovation at SCIS*



Meet our Latest Doctor of Education, **Nicholas Spring-Peers**



Nicholas Spring-Peers and his wife, Hanna, are going on five years since becoming a part of the SCIS family. As global educators, they have had many years of teaching experience around the world and have brought their experience to SCIS. Nicholas has finished his Doctor of Education and reflects on his experience as an educator, the impacts of Covid-19 on the industry, and the importance of self-development.

Tell us about yourself, where you are from, and your teaching experience.

I am originally from Toronto, Canada. My entire teaching career has been overseas with only a little experience being in Canada. I've lived in South Korea for three and a half years where I first started teaching internationally. That is where I



met my wife, Hanna, who also teaches here at SCIS. Together, we set off to teach in Kuwait and from there to Dubai which then led us to Shanghai. This is our fifth year here at SCIS. Shanghai feels like home, we love it. Being immersed in these different places has been such an eye-opening experience. It's one thing to travel somewhere but another thing to live somewhere and learn a language and be immersed in the culture.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I am a huge advocate for self-development and health, so I am usually working out, reading, and spending time with my wife. At nighttime, I'm always reading and trying to advance myself in some way. I'm also into finance and behavioral economics so I read investment reports and try to understand markets in my free time. I find it fascinating, especially the behavioral aspect and how this translates to markets.

Congrats on recently completing your Doctor of Education! Can you tell us about your experience?

It was a great experience and something that stuck with me was a quote from Jim Rohn, who is one of the influential people that I've learned from and followed. He was a great thinker and great person on self-development, and he talked about when you set a goal it's not so much reaching it it's what makes you achieve it. It's what's happening to you along the way. I thought about this while achieving my doctorate. It's not just getting my

diploma, it's what was made of me through the process. The determination and perseverance, especially during the pandemic. This thought from Jim Rohn made me think about what builds character and grit. The process was a good one for me. There were ups and downs with working full time, that was not easy. Though the more I take on the more I feel alive. I'd rather be busy than not because it gets my mind activated and I'm learning and growing.

What was your thesis?

My research was on teacher retention in international schools and how schools can retain teachers. There are a lot of adverse effects to having too much turnover in terms of student learning and community building. My main research component was staff induction and the impacts it has on retention. Can an effective, well thought out, caring, benevolent approach to staff induction have an impact on teacher retention? The traditional approach is to train and welcome teachers for a week, but it is a process and can last months through a year. Checking in, getting feedback, and language acquisition are important.

Did you always envision yourself working as an educator?

I love teaching grade eleven and twelve because they say, "I don't know what I am going to do," and I tell them that's okay because I didn't know what I wanted to do until I was 24. I tell them that I don't recommend that they wait until they are 24 to go to university but I did, and it led

to a more strategic approach to what I was doing. Instead of going straight into university and studying what I thought I liked I waited and travelled the world. Traveling made a great deal of impact on me and through that process, I was able to know what I wanted to do.

What do you find the most rewarding about teaching internationally?

The best part is when I look at my classroom and I have a Japanese, American, Canadian, Swedish, and Danish student, it's incredible. I look at the diversity in the room with their own interpretation, their own perspective, it's an amazing classroom to have. Kids here can develop such an interesting mindset about the world and when they leave here, I do feel like they are well equipped to go anywhere and adapt.

How has your teaching or personal education experience changed because of Covid?

My colleagues laugh at me and say, "Nick, not everything can be turned into a positive." I think maybe it can. Everything in life comes down to what you make of it. I love the Marcus Aurelius quote, "That all is as thinking makes it so." It's neither good nor bad it's what you perceive it to be. Luckily at the time, I was reading a book called *The Great Influenza*, which talks about how history doesn't repeat itself, but it rhymes, things are similar but not the same. Previously people that survived pandemics were able to hunker down and take precautions. I am safe, my family is safe, we are here in one of the safest places to be. It brought another level of gratitude to me.

Covid-19 made me think about what the students were going through. When we finally got on campus it changed my approach to teaching to be more about mental health. Less time on the computer and more time doing group work and talking with each other instead.

How was teaching online as a Physical Education Teacher?

We live in an incredible era. There are endless resources, different workouts geared for specific types of training. I could adapt so much of our lessons and use online tools to help students find workouts that could work for them wherever they were. They didn't need equipment or anything.

In your opinion, do you think Covid has changed the face of education? If so, how?

I would say confidently it has permanently altered the education landscape. It has shown that you can go online, the results are not perfect, but you can educate online. In my doctorate, I did most of my work online and I was able to take away so much from it. Ultimately people want to be in the company of others, but it has allowed us to explore avenues where if that isn't possible then we can still get a lot done.

How would you describe your time at SCIS?

Wonderful to be quite honest. I have worked in different schools and this has been, by far, my favorite place to work. The name on the building lives up to the name of the school, it is a community and I really do feel that. Especially during events where families come and we have barbecues, it feels connected. The students are incredible. I have never met students who are gentle and genuine with each other at this level until coming here. I have grown a lot as a teacher but also, I have seen what a community can really look like at an international school.

What has been one of your best teachable moment at SCIS?

A moment I had with a student who got accepted to the University of Chicago in economics. This was a student that when I nudged him about self-development, he

got it right away. He understood that to grow yourself is an advantage you have. I remember when I was telling him about Viktor Frakl, who survived the holocaust and came up with this idea that in between stimulus and response is your freedom to choose. That resonated with him and he took that and realized he had the freedom to choose if he would read during his break or play video games. He would always be reading. Now he has grown so much and is incredible and it made me feel like I had a part of that. When he left, he came here and told me that I got him switched on. That meant more to me than anything because now he is confident, and he got into the school he wanted to. That was my favorite moment in my whole career.

Are there any last words of wisdom you would like to share with us?

Education is such a great field, but we can get lost in the minutia of grades and content and it is so much more than that. The content is necessary, but we can slip in these things about growth and personal development. Spend more time working on yourself. We all have that ability but so few choose to do it. I think there is so much power in that and I hope students and education can broaden its view.



*Interview by
Kristen Bender,
Communications
Assistant at SCIS*





A globetrotting family at heart, the Vidal family is no stranger to moving to and living in foreign countries and continents. The avid travelers share their experiences living abroad, as well as the personal connection they have made with our caring community.

Can you tell us a little about the Vidal family?

The Vidal family is made up of Jérôme the Dad, Fabienne, the Mom, Timéo, 10 years old boy, and Nome, the Cat. The humans of this family were all born in France, around Saint-Etienne (Timéo and Dad) and Clermont Ferrand (Mom). The feline of our gang was born in Botswana. Timéo greeted him when he was a kitten, lost in the parking lot of his former school, hidden in the motor of our 4x4.

How did you end up living in Shanghai?

Fabienne and Jérôme: Before moving here, our family lived in Botswana. Botswana is a treasure of Nature, a rough diamond, preserved from mass tourism, the perfect place to discover wild natural life and for young children to grow up. After three years there, we started to miss the cultural hub of the big cities. Theater, museums... So when Jérôme asked me "what about Shanghai?" I quickly replied: "Yeah!".

Timéo: I was happy to discover another country with lots of toy shops, especially Lego stores!

Was Botswana your first international living abroad experience?

Fabienne and Jérôme: It seems that there is a kind of cycle which consists of our family changing country and continent every three and a half years since Timéo was born. When he was three and a half years old, we left France for Botswana. Three and a half years later, we arrived in Shanghai. Another three and a half years later, we are leaving again. We've always loved traveling.

Fabienne: When Jérôme and I met, I was coming back from having spent almost two years in Istanbul. I remember Jérôme flying back the next day for a three-month mission in Athens, Georgia. Now, we go where Jérôme's work and our desires take us. It's always good to lose your bearings and start over on a blank page. It stirs your brain and forces you to move on.

How was the transition to Shanghai for everyone?

Fabienne: The transition between Gaborone, Botswana, and Shanghai was not so easy. Timéo went from a large

international PYP school to a French school where he was not greeted particularly well. He had to adapt to a change of school system and language of schooling without the appropriate support and no recognition of his bilingualism. Apart from school, in Shanghai, the international community is large and diverse. So there were many new things to discover and learn. We adapted very quickly despite the fact that life was so drastically different from what we had in South Africa and Botswana.

What were the key deciding factors when choosing a school for your children?

Fabienne and Jérôme: Feeling safe was the first factor to choosing a new school and in this one, we've definitely succeeded. Since Timéo enrolled in SCIS, we've seen our son changing his way of learning and becoming responsible for his knowledge because his mind is freed from his former fears. After that, it was important to find a caring and supportive environment. Because with appropriate support and scaffolding Timéo is able to access the curriculum. Lastly, we wanted a school that was respectful of children's identity. It helps them to find out who they deeply are, pushing them to follow their own path instead of trying to fit in and conform.

Fabienne, being a regular at PAFA and school events, how important was it for you to be involved in the community?

Fabienne: Being on board with the fantastic PAFA team means so much to me. We have received so much from the community of this SCIS Pudong school, it seemed quite natural to me to get involved and to embark on this great adventure. I could have never imagined how much fun and flourishing working alongside parents from all over would be.



Now that is time for us to leave China, I realize how much I will miss them. I will try to keep this mindset in my future life and continue nourishing it. Being a part of this community was sincerely a huge pleasure... Silvia, Sana, Maria, Preeti, and Sheila I will miss you so much. Thank you for every moment we've shared.

How would you describe your time at SCIS?

Fabienne and Jérôme: First of all, we were worried that SCIS could not accommodate our son. The French system had wrongly presented him and our entire family as disturbing the class and the teacher. This situation on Christmas Eve made us think that we might not be able to find a school that would welcome Timéo with the appropriate support. However, we were convinced that he was able to do well in school. Timéo and SCIS have proven that he is indeed capable of this.

The SCIS Learning support team has deeply studied the various reports concerning Timéo. Before starting grade four, he did a half-day of testing to assess where he was. Then, he was admitted to Mr. Brown's Class, whom I thank from the bottom of my heart. He was able to find the words to restore Timéo's confidence. It took a while for us to be able to really trust a school again. We are now convinced that SCIS was THE school for our family. We just regret not having registered Timéo upon our arrival in Shanghai.

Looking back, what are some of your favorite moments at SCIS?

Fabienne and Jérôme: Students come from all over the world and each is encouraged to develop multiple languages while honoring and nurturing knowledge of their native tongue. We particularly enjoy this



kind of mindset. We had several fabulous moments thanks to SCIS despite the fact that we could not live them within the school because of the pandemic.

Fabienne: We were admirably received by David Mazer who has always patiently edited my mistakes for PAFA's flyers. Dawn Brews and her son Dylan greeted us well too. The most memorable day is probably when Timéo came home one afternoon saying to me: "Mum, do you know what Mr. Brown told me? ... He told me he was happy to have me in his classroom as a student and proud to have met me. You realize, mum, the teacher who is happy to have me, in his classroom." Mr. Brown, thank you, those few words have probably changed a lot of things for Timéo.

Another highlight was when Léo also joined Mr. Brown's class in 4B, a few days after Timéo's arrival. Léo is a french classmate from the previous french school. Seeing the happiness on Timéo's face each day after that has been priceless.

The patience and commitment of Mr. Berezowski towards Timéo, the encouragement, and kindness of his son Tomas, say a lot about these people. We are so grateful.

I could also talk about the tearful eyes of Molly Myers, Emily Johnson, and Erin Ramsey when we talked about leaving China for good. The adorable words, cards from Ms. Katja and Ms. Maria. The emotion of Miss Gale when she announced us her departure.

What will you miss the most?

Fabienne and Jérôme: Orientation day, the happiness of being in School for a while with new parents and children. Welcome back brunch, PAFA meetings at Sanna's place with her gorgeous homemade tart and chocolate-dried mangoes... To tell you the truth, I don't know what we will miss the most.

Fabienne: What I find absolutely fantastic about SCIS Pudong is that children's voice is heard. They have their word to say. They are involved in school life. The school allows them to take ownership and with kind guidance they are developing so many skills and talents for the future. The parents, as well, have the opportunity to voice their thoughts and get their questions answered. In short, this great listening quality and



effective communication make life so much easier and pleasant. My mind is at ease when Timéo is at SCIS.

What is next for you?

Fabienne and Jérôme: I hope we will be able to find this kind of mindset in our future country... Our next step will be Canada - Prince Edward's Island. We leave, as always, happy to meet new adventures. Timéo is happy to move to Canada because he wants to live again in a house. He looks forward to seeing snow and making a lot of snowmen. He feels sad to leave his friends and teachers but they are all welcome to visit us in Canada. However, we will go with a heavy heart to leave friends, teachers, and this school which will keep a very important and sweet place in our memories.

Thank you very much to the entire learning support team as well as the extraordinary teachers and substitute teachers. A special thanks to David Mazer, Mr. Berezowski, Ms. Maria, Mr. Brown, Ms. Johnson, Ms. Briton, Mrs. Mabel, Mrs. Rana, Mrs. Winnie, Ms. Katja, Dr. Myers, Ms. Knight, Ms. Gale, Dawn Brews, Ms. Ramsey... And all the classmates, especially Tomas and Graco who, through their care and support, made Timéo's first days so good.

Thank you for sharing your wonderful story, we wish you nothing but the best in your next adventure!



Interview by
Mikael Masson Perez,
Digital Communications
Manager at SCIS



Back on the Court



Hongqiao Varsity Girls Volleyball 2021:

Coach: Melissa Kirwin

After a full season with no competitions in 2020, the Lady Dragons were hungry for wins. Marina and Carola, captains and 4-year veterans of the D1 division, led the team in building valuable court awareness and skills, trust among one another, and passion for the game. The Lady Dragons were undefeated in their season, took 3rd after a tough loss in semi-finals at SISAC, but came back to take 1st place in the ACAMIS tournament to finish the season strong. The quiet power and positive energy of this team on and off the court is every coach's dream. Congratulations on an amazing season, Ladies!

Hongqiao Varsity Boys Volleyball 2021:

Coach: Justin Corvers

We had an amazing season of growth and learning. Our team was young and inexperienced compared to most of the teams we faced but we continued to play with resilience and a strong desire to improve. Our Captains – Henry and Luis led our team to a winning regular season where we had

4 wins and 2 losses. Being back on the court after a long break due to Covid was so refreshing. It was a tremendous season overall – seeing the passion and love of Volleyball grow at our school has been incredible.

Hongqiao Junior Varsity Boys Volleyball:

Coach: Leah Brownell

The JV Boys worked hard towards improving their overhand serve percentage, serving to receive consistency, being loud and positive in their on-court communication, and going for the aggressive third hit on offense. Due to the boy's dedication over 3 months of practice and games, the team tremendously improved their leadership, teamwork, and volleyball skills. At the SISAC Plate tournament, the JV Boys played their highest level volleyball coming 1st overall!

Hongqiao Junior Varsity Girls Volleyball 2021:

Coach: Jennifer Lively

There was a lot of hard work this year that resulted in an overall improvement in skill and sportsmanship. The JV girls used every practice and every game to assess and evaluate



their strengths to ensure progress and success. The season ended with an amazing SISAC Cup tournament hosted by SAS Pudong where the girls showed their teamwork and determination to compete in the final match and take 2nd place overall. We are all looking forward to our next season!

Pudong Varsity Boys Volleyball 2021: **Coach: Joshua Vanta**

The Pudong Varsity Boys opened the season hopeful to compete after a 20-21 year that was filled with optimism to compete but concluded unfulfilled and without league match play. After a year of training behind the scenes, we were excited and relieved to receive the news that we would be able to resume the SISAC competition for 21-22. Players and coaches alike continued to improve in all facets, producing results on the court that reflected the hard work and commitment exhibited in training sessions throughout the season. Dragon Cup proved to be a valuable and rewarding experience for our players, both returning and new, offering game experience and playing opportunities that had been missing since 2020. Our team continued to persevere, producing our best Volleyball in time for the end-of-season SISAC

tournament. Although the Win and Loss column did not reflect the amount of improvement and progress that occurred over the past 2 years, players and especially Seniors, were able to end this season satisfied and content with the experiences collected both as athletes and teammates. Our departing seniors (Lucas, Rupert, Ben & Anders) have been model ambassadors for our boy's Volleyball Program, leaving behind a legacy of hard work, improvement, and sportsmanship. Underclassmen are already looking forward to returning for the 22-23 season, ready to compete and build on the successes of this season. Go Dragons!

Pudong Varsity Girls Volleyball 2021: **Coach: Emily Johnson & Darcy Linton**

The Green Dragon varsity girls came into this season eager to be back on the court. The team was led by coaches Emily Johnson and Darcy Linton and 11th-grade captain, Sasha. Though a young team, the girls started the season off with a win, showing consistency with their serves and a powerful net game. As the season progressed, the team continued to settle into their roles on the court. Highlights included a win on Senior Night and a closely contested final for the DI Plate, resulting in a second-place finish.

Making Waves and Breaking Records



Our Swimming Department was thrilled to host 40 swimmers from The British International School Puxi in November. This competition marks our first swimming competition of the academic year and our first opportunity to invite other swimmers to our campus within the past two years.

The atmosphere on Saturday morning was crackling with positive electricity. For the swimmers who have grown up on our pool deck at first, it felt nostalgic. The swimmers set the pace of the meet early on by smashing long-standing school records in both individual & relays. This sentimental feeling quickly changed into a vision of what is possible. Swimmers were running towards one another with eyes wide open in awe of the achievements they were making.

Sport is one of the only things that can move us off of the sofa in a surge of emotion. The focus of our team is firmly on envisioning the future. Keeping in mind, we are only limited by what we perceive to be our limitations. The SCIS swimming team continues to use our sport of swimming

as a vehicle for building character, grit, and a stable belief in ourselves and our ability.

In all, members of our team broke 11 school records! Our coaching team is proud of the team and each individual. Our school records breakers will be awarded certificates of their achievements at a school assembly in front of their peers.

Thank you to our wonderful parent community, particularly those who volunteered within this meet! Thank you to our coaches for all the hard work through challenging times, keeping the team together, and amazingly our team did not lose one student-athlete to COVID-19 related demotivation. Last but not least, thank you to our swimmers for continuing to believe in our program.



*By Cheryl Philp, Aquatics Director
at SCIS Hongqiao*





Hyung Seok Jin

Hyung Seok Jin (SCIS Hongqiao Class of 2019), and his family, first arrived in Shanghai in the summer of 2010, in what was his first international living abroad experience. What started as a difficult first few months, quickly turned into a fantastic experience as he was warmly embraced by the SCIS community. Now pursuing a degree in Biochemistry at the University of Cambridge, Hyung recalls the spark that started it all inside the science classrooms of SCIS.

What are you currently up to?

I am currently studying Natural Sciences (Biological) at Downing College, the University of Cambridge. One interesting feature of my course is that my major is decided in the third year, so I had the opportunity to learn everything and choose what I wanted to study later on. Although my primary strength was Mathematics and Chemistry, I decided to study Biochemistry because many biological enigmas can be tackled through high-throughput technology.

Interesting, can you explain further what the field of Biochemistry entails?

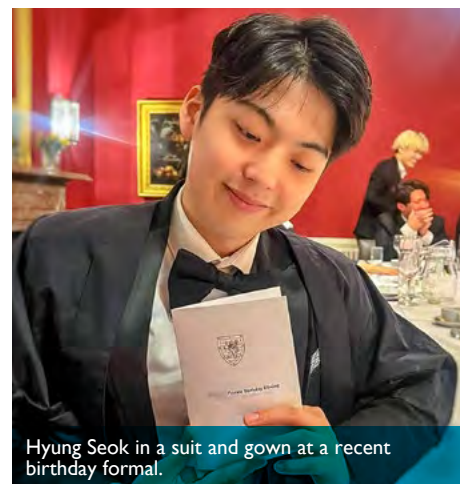
Biochemistry is a content-heavy field, and even the Biochemistry Department admits this:

"[Lecturers] and everybody else in the Department are aware that the literature of Biochemistry is so large that nobody can effectively cover the whole subject"

Thus, one often misunderstands that biochemistry is about memorising endless information. However, the goal of biochemistry is not to memorise but to investigate biological processes at the molecular level.

Completing our understanding of a biological process is like completing a set of puzzles. When you first start to match a puzzle, the process is more of trial-and-error, randomly matching some pieces on the edge. Puzzle matching gets more interesting at the later stage, where the glimpse of the image starts to be unravelled. At this point, you need to put some thoughts to envision the complete picture to put the pieces together. The end is meaningful – you are enthralled to finalise pieces together – but it is timid because it is more of tidying up and happily placing the last piece.

Now, biochemistry is at the intermediate stage of puzzle matching: exploring the unknown. For example, after US President Richard Nixon signed the "war on cancer," the survival rates have been improved significantly, and many general biological principles about cancer cells and normal cells have been revealed. As such, over the last century, biochemists had set the scene for the current biologist to explore. New revolutionising technology also enables this puzzle matching possible. First, high-throughput technology identifies what to investigate. Biochemists can now rely



Hyung Seok in a suit and gown at a recent birthday formal.

more on quantitative data and systematic procedures rather than on luck. Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin by accidentally contaminating the sample and won the Nobel prize in 1945, but were penicillin not discovered today, high-throughput technology would have identified penicillin as the putative antibiotics to test.

This does not mean overwhelmingly powerful technology has substituted the work of biochemists. A more correct interpretation would be that revolutionising technology now allows biochemists to investigate complex biological processes that could not be explored in the past. For example, analysing proteins structure by X-ray crystallography is a highly complicated and time-consuming process, and it was often a Ph.D. project (3-5 years). Now, highly revolutionary technology called cryo-EM allows scientists to investigate protein structure rapidly within weeks if not hours. This generated a large structural database, and many researchers now dare to use the dataset to explore and imagine the complete puzzle.



Hyung Seok being sprayed after the exam (it is the tradition to be sprayed by champagne, but eggs, flour, shaving creams, beer or anything else could be used!)



Downing College, The University of Cambridge

What inspired you to pursue an educational degree in Biochemistry?

To put it simply, I decided to study biochemistry because many biological questions that could not be even attempted in the past can be explored. The controversial statement by Ernst Rutherford - 'All the science is either physics or stamp collecting' – had been accepted, but it seems to fail to withstand the test of time.

So where did it all begin, how did you "find" your passion?

I believe one never knows what to do until one actually does it. My interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) subjects has been nurtured because I was exposed to an environment where I could explore and think more. I want to express my sincere gratitude to Ms. Punter (Chemistry), Ms. Rielly (Biology), and Dr. Valerio (Mathematics) because they guided me on what to explore further. Without them, I would have aimlessly wandered around and could not find my passion.

A problem I see for Grade ten students is that they are often unsure of which IB subjects to select for the last two years of upper school. My advice is to use your time in grade ten as an opportunity to explore your passion. Watch Youtube videos, read articles and books, or even take some courses from Coursera!

Looking back, what were some of your fondest memories of SCIS?

I still remember the "Egg drop challenge" when I was in 5th grade. This challenge aimed to safely land an egg dropped from

the music room (I vaguely remember this was the 5th floor?). My friends tried elegant designs such as parachutes, but they all failed. I initially tried parachutes, but I was not smart enough to design one that could be successful. I wrapped an egg around thick sponges, and it was successful. I learned that some simple realistic solutions can be more powerful than meticulously designed work. SCIS taught me something that I could not learn from textbooks.

Knowing what you now know, what advice would you give to your younger self?

I would try to learn how to argue. The skills that I lack are how to challenge others' ideas regardless of reputation or title and express an idea clearly. Before the matriculation to Cambridge, I expected a high degree of discipline and authority. However, I was surprised to see undergraduates calling professors by their first names. It is not uncommon to see undergraduate students challenging

and debating with renowned professors. I soon realised that what enables Cambridge researchers to get many Nobel prizes is not the long tradition, but the ambiance that encourages expressing one's view freely. When I was a student in SCIS, I was passive in terms of learning, absolutely trusting IB textbooks or class notes although they do not intuitively or logically make sense. I would more actively participate in group discussions and learn how not to accept a contrasting view.

Thank you for sharing your enthusiasm and passion for the sciences Hyung Seok, and we wish you the best for what the future will bring!



Interview by
Mikael Masson Perez,
Digital Communications
Manager at SCIS



Hyung Seok with former SCIS teacher,
Ms. Punter, in 2018



Celebrating Halloween in former SCIS teacher,
Mr. Shearer's room (Grade 9)

THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Alumni Mission:

The SCIS Alumni Association has been established in order to foster the continued cordial relations of the SCIS community. Its goal was, and continues to be, to link alumni with the School and with each other, and to support and maintain such forged relationships. It strives to provide ample avenues and opportunities to encourage alumni to participate actively in the SCIS community.

Alumni Contact:

Mikael Masson Perez
mmasson@scis-china.org

Alumni Requirements:

1. Graduated from a SCIS Campus

OR

2. Went to school here for at least one year AND be over 18

Social Media



Facebook site:
<https://www.facebook.com/alumniSCIS/>



LinkedIn site:
<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/4757677>



Boo at the Zoo!

On October 31, over 400 students, parents, and volunteer staff members gathered at the Shanghai Zoo for the Boo at the Zoo! The event was organized by the SCIS ECE PAFA Board with help from our Upper School CAS students. In these unprecedented times, our PAFA Board was not able to hold their traditional Halloween event on campus and looked for other venues. The Shanghai Zoo was the perfect space for a trick-or-treat scavenger hunt, four crafts, two games, face painting, tattoos, and a costume parade. The event ended with a family picnic for all attendees.

Our Upper School CAS students, with help from Mr. Gould, planned and executed a seven-stop scavenger hunt for six zoo animals and the Ferris Wheel. At each stop, our ECE students and families participated in a challenge for a treat. Once back at the

picnic area, other CAS students created Frankenstein necklaces and Halloween Cards and tossed pumpkins for prizes. Our PAFA volunteers and several ECE teachers also joined us to make lollipop ghosts, Mandarin orange pumpkins, and play Halloween Tic Tac Toe. Our ECE Students were also treated to Halloween tattoos and face paint.

Despite not being on campus, it was a gorgeous Shanghai morning and the air was filled with festivity and fun. Our ECE students and their families had an incredible time together, showing off their costumes and candies. PAFA is grateful to our CAS Volunteers, Mr. Gould, our ECE Leadership team, and our PAFA and ECE Volunteers. We are already planning our next event and we can't wait to see you there!

A Helping Hand

PAFA had worked with many upper school students in past years, although unofficially. They typically found us through their parents or country groups. This year, Mr. Gould asked if we would be willing to partner with CAS on our Halloween event. Since the regulations and conditions are ever-changing, and we're planning an event for toddlers and young children, we were a little apprehensive to share ownership with upper school students. However, when we gave them the encouragement, guidance, and structure that the CAS program provided, the students excelled.

They planned engaging and fun games and crafts. They interacted positively with our families and the students were quick to think on their feet and develop solutions to problems we didn't anticipate. The ECE PAFA Representatives are five moms - Fiona Tsai, Lucky Le, Harley Qin, Debbie Foster, and Emma Ball; and sometimes planning a huge event could seem overwhelming. However, this year, with the CAS students, we planned and executed a wonderful morning for our ECE families. It seems like pairing our biggest SCIS students with our smallest students is a recipe for success!

"This experience taught me that sometimes when you're dealing with toddlers, adapting to each of them might be necessary when it comes to doing something that's meant to entertain them. It also taught me to better my patience and planning skills. I like working with children and it was fun to be able to entertain and play with them throughout the activities." – Georgia, SCIS Hongqiao Class of 2022

"I enjoyed working with PAFA through CAS on Halloween because I get to actively help our SCIS community in a fun way. Also, I love working with kids because I always have such an exciting time. This experience taught me the joy of meeting different people. Through my role of helping people register for the event, I got to meet many families and have short conversations. Even if our conversations were only a few sentences long, I learned the joy of helping people and engaging in different exchanges." – Nicole, SCIS Hongqiao Class of 2023

"I enjoyed working with PAFA through CAS on Halloween because I could feel everyone's positive energy and festive spirit. I was very

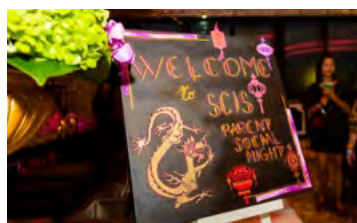
busy during the event, but it was nice to be along with a bustling group of people, especially because it's been such a long time since I've been involved in a big group event like this one. This experience taught me that preparation is key to everything because not everything goes as planned. Lastly, I want to say a big thank you to PAFA and all the students who participated in this event. It has given me an unforgettable experience!" – Rebecca, SCIS Hongqiao Class of 2022



"I enjoyed working with PAFA through CAS on Halloween because I was devoted to the process of planning for the Halloween Bash. Since I have attended this activity for the second time, I was eager to participate with passion. This experience taught me how to see society through a positive lens. Therefore I was able to improve my communication skills with many people." – Heesong, SCIS Hongqiao Class of 2023



By Emma Ball, PAFA Early Childhood Representative at SCIS Hongqiao



Celebrating Together

PAFA is building on its experiences last year of Covid restrictions and finding more ways for the community to gather. In October, PAFA held a very successful Parent Social Night at the Wanda Reign on the Bund. There are over eight parent-led clubs that bring parents with common interests together to socialize. We look forward to hosting more events throughout the year.

By Dylan Lotfi, PAFA Secretary at SCIS Hongqiao



The True
Meaning of
Community



Celeb

BINGO

WOOHOO!!

HOORAY!
BINGO

BINGO

THE ADVENTURE
BEGINS



SCIS
PUDONG



When Covid-19 closed the school's gate from us parents, we were left without our second home here in Shanghai. Missing it felt like physical pain. Then it struck me. I was suddenly without the community that I took so for granted. How did SCIS Pudong become so important to me and so many other parents and families? It started to mesmerize me. And once the gate was open again, even partially, it felt like magic! The first time I was able to, once again, see Julia's smile at reception, Stuart behind his desk, and all the admin staff working for our children it felt like a celebration. Where does that magic come from?

As ex-pats, we come here alone. We might know someone from previous but, we come alone to a new place, create a new home, start a new school. Those of us working will start at in a new office, with new colleagues. If you are lucky, you will find communities for you in those environments. With SCIS Pudong we found one. We were lucky. It was magic.

We all need to anchor ourselves and have a steady ground to step from. It is true not only for our children and with their learning but also for us grown-ups. To have this community and get its support has meant the world to me. We all need to feel needed and useful, so being able to provide back to our community gives us meaning. We all are having our amazing skills and our networks. When we launch these skills and contacts for the use of the greater good, they become even more important, they grow in their meaning.

A Dragon Fighting Spirit

We have not let this pandemic era put us down. Yes, there are limitations, challenges, and obstacles to tackle but we have delivered solutions with a fighting spirit and marvelous imagination to provide



our families memories for a lifetime. Last year our PAFA Executive Board produced the genial concept of cultural brunches. It was an ongoing success for the entire year. We gathered, learned from each other's cultures, and thus we created a new tradition. Amongst several diverse cultural celebrations, we moved our bodies to Bollywood dances, learned how to play bingo the Mexican way, and tasted all meat and non-meat balls at Ikea. We connected with each other and took our time to celebrate the uniqueness and diversity within the SCIS Pudong community. We even managed to create the most perfect Bingo Night!

There needs to be determination, passion, and curiosity to drive this kind of function these days. We must question old ways of doing and thinking and seek fresh solutions. As change is inevitable in this world so it is in the international school communities. We must find ways to function that are working in 2021, 2022, and even further. I am beyond proud of those solutions and ideas that last year's board members have

been able to put together. It has definitely not been an easy task.

We keep facing new challenges. As regulations are keeping us still outside of school locations, we need to be able to reach better for the new families, adapt our communication channels to get our message clear and inviting for all the members of our community. PAFA is us all, every member of the school community. Thus, we need to be there for everyone, to be able to get our word out and gather the people. We need to find ways to support grade-level gatherings and other different small group events that would fit in the approved regulations.

Gratitude

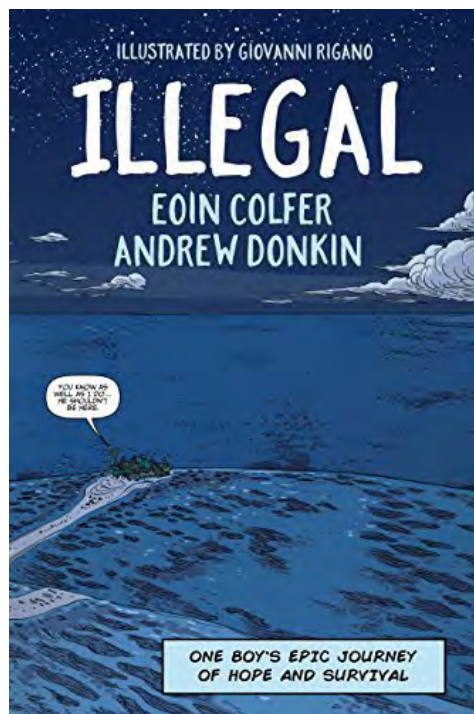
As no man or woman is an island neither is PAFA Pudong an isolated unit at school. We work together with all the other factors at school from top to bottom, from right to left. PAFA is here to support, to gather, to enrich. PAFA Pudong is the most thankful for the support SCIS Pudong and its staff has given us during all these years. We are also in deep gratitude to all those families engaging, participating, and giving their precious time. The power of giving and the immense joy when you see a child laughing, the precious time when you gather with families and there is so much gratitude in the air. And, this is where the magic is coming from - from the people, our community.

By Sanna Korsstrom, PAFA Communications at SCIS Pudong



Book Recommendations for All Ages

An important part of developing the skills of 21st-century learners involves giving students opportunities to develop empathy and understanding for the perspectives and experiences of others. Reading is a powerful tool for providing windows into other experiences and for spurring conversations and thinking about the systems of power that exist in a global society and our place within these systems. Find below book recommendations for all ages from our very own SCIS librarians:



Ashley Simmons, Upper School Librarian at SCIS Hongqiao

Illegal: A Graphic Novel Telling One Boy's Epic Journey to Europe

By Andrew Donkin and Eoin Colfer

Ages 10+

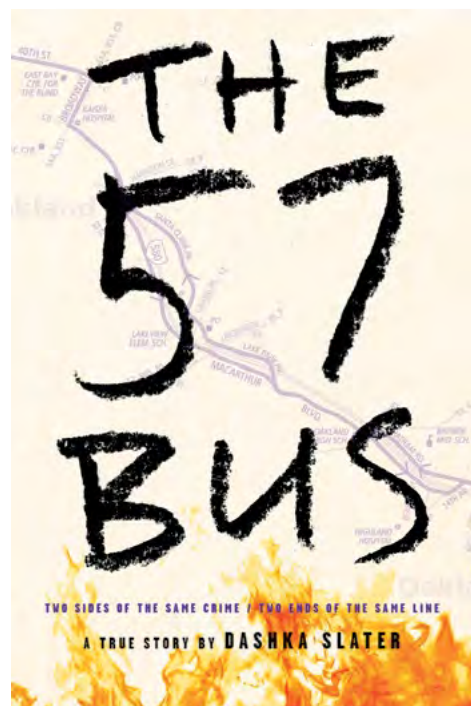
Illegal follows the story of twelve-year-old Ebo who leaves his small African village in order to hopefully reunite with his siblings in Europe, where they all hope to find the opportunity of a better life. The graphic novel format enhances the opportunity for readers to experience both the hardships of Ebo's journey and the wider experiences of the refugee community. This story is a heart-stoppingly powerful fictional work that is based on extensive research and interviews conducted by the authors. It is a great read for anyone looking to deepen their understanding of the experiences of refugees all over the world.

The 57 Bus: A True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime That Changed Their Lives

By Dashka Slater

Ages 13+

On November 14, 2013, eighteen-year-old Sasha Fleishman was riding the bus home from school when she was set on fire by another teen, Richard Thomas. In this book, award-winning journalist Dashka Slater covers the stories of both teens and the events that lead up to and resulted from that day. This book has an engaging format for a non-fiction book, making it approachable for students who may often prefer narrative fiction. More importantly, though, it deals with issues of race, class, gender, crime, and punishment, as readers are taken into the lives of both teens and their experiences in the outcome of these events; Sasha is severely burned, and Richard faces charges for two hate crimes and life in prison. What's possibly most striking about this book is the empathy readers begin to develop in connection with both teens, raising even more opportunities to consider the social context of the event and what that means for the outcome.

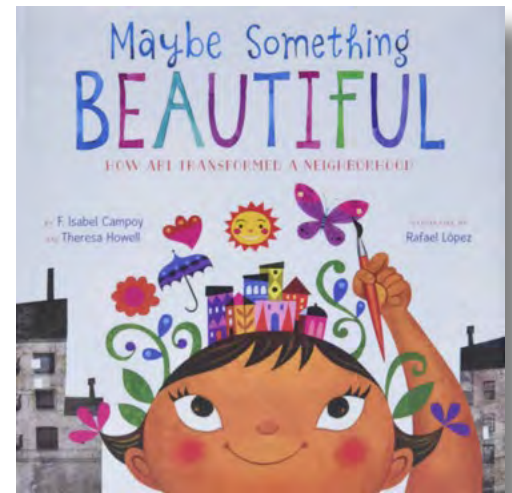


Boramy Sun, Early Childhood Librarian & Media Specialist at SCIS Hongqiao

Maybe Something Beautiful by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell
Illustrated by Rafael Lopez

Age 4-7

Based on true events, this book explores how the passion of one little girl for art can inspire her neighbors and expand to the whole city! The book follows a little girl, Mira, who loves to draw, doodle, color and paint. In an effort to share the color and drawings that she loves, she gives them to the local shopkeeper, the police officers, and the neighbors down the street. Finally, she gives one to a local artist – a muralist and Mira connects that she is also an artist. The two of them start painting the walls around the city and soon the whole neighborhood joins in! Mira realizes how she could bring color to the whole city through painting murals.



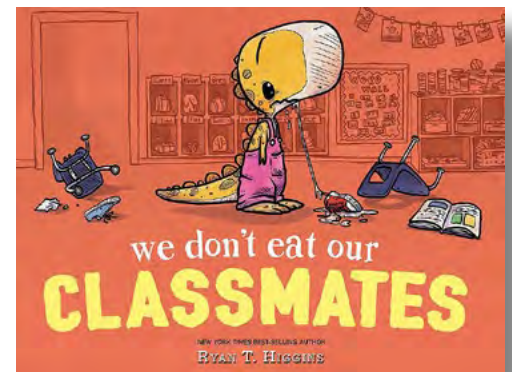
Dan Zimmerman, Lower School Librarian at SCIS Hongqiao

We Don't Eat our Classmates

By Ryan T. Higgins

Ages 3+

Penelope Rex. is excited and nervous about her first day at school. She desperately wants it to go well. But when she discovers that all of her classmates are children, she finds it challenging to form meaningful relationships. Because children are delicious. Penelope eventually learns about caring and empathy at the hands of Walther, the class goldfish. This charming story deals with the challenges all children face when transitioning to a new environment with copious humor.



Michael Kim, Upper School Librarian at SCIS Pudong

Stand up, Yumi Chung

By Jessica Kim

Ages 9+

A story of family, identity, and personal growth, this novel tells the tale of the Korean-American Yumi Chung as she deals with her hectic social and personal life. One lie spirals down to a complete double life in this story about an aspiring stand-up comedian. On the outside, she is a shy girl, dealing with less-than-friendly social situations. On the inside, Yumi is ready for her big stand-up special. All she needs is courage and the stage. A fun read not only for students, but also for the whole family, to foster the discussion of personal desires and family support.

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Innovative Thinkers

who are



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Across

- 1. Able to find ways to overcome difficulties; skilled at solving problems
- 3. Adaptable in different circumstances
- 5. Reasonable or capable of reasoning

Down

- 2. Innovative and imaginative
- 4. Careful in their consideration
- 6. Detail-oriented and critical-thinkers