

SHANGHAI COMMUNITY INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

FALL 2022

c  **mmunitas**



***Excelling
Together***

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!

For more information about PAFA, please contact us at:

HONGQIAO MAIN & ECE CAMPUSES

President

Cindy Huang
pafa-hq-pres@scis-china.org

Vice President /

Upper School Rep (11-12)

Nina Han
pafa-hq-pres@scis-china.org

Upper School Rep (9-10)

Daniel Beh
pafa-hq-us@scis-parent.org

Upper School Rep (6-8)

Candide Trindade
pafa-hq-us@scis-parent.org

Lower School Reps

Debbie Foster
Fiona Tsai
pafa-hq-ls@scis-parent.org

Treasurer

Ka Man Leung
pafa-hq-tres@scis-china.org

Secretary

Dylan Lotfi
pafa-hq-sec@scis-china.org

ECE Reps

May Botha
Lucky Le
Harley Qin
pafa-hq-ece@scis-parent.org

Events Team

David Aguilar
Jean Chae
Neha Jaswal Krishna
Willow Ryu
Eileen Song
pafa-hq-events@scis-parent.org

PUDONG CAMPUS

President

Silvia Gatti
silviagatti@scis-parent.org

Vice President

Preeti Shah
preetishah@scis-parent.org

Treasurer

Sheila So
sheila.so@scis-parent.org

Communications Coordinator

Sanna Korsstrom
sannakorsstrom@scis-parent.org

Events Coordinator

Fabienne Vidal
fabiennevidal@scis-parent.org

Secretary

Maria Shin
mariashin@scis-parent.org

communitas

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Editor: Elena Tan

Art Director: Mun Yee Choo

Designer: Alles Zheng

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 etan@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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Excelling Together



“Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

~Aristotle

At Shanghai Community International School (SCIS), we strongly believe that in order to participate in and contribute to the community's success, one must first excel on their own. Eloquence in self-awareness is crucial to harnessing one's self-belief and capabilities. Achieving our own excellence leads to excelling together.

We place significant focus on training and nurturing the traits that will help our students first achieve individual excellence, followed by group excellence. Through our curriculum, we aim for our students to develop and attain qualitative traits such as being inquisitive, open-minded, and courageous.

Student-led inquiry in our International Baccalaureate (IB) classrooms has proven to be one of the best tools in empowering a students' individual voice and agency on a daily basis. In our classes, our teachers ensure that these agencies are



exercised by designing effective learning encounters for the children. In our Primary Years Programme (PYP), teachers make sure that these encounters cater to a range of learning styles for students to possess differences in their learning abilities. Teachers engage in the students' participation by encouraging them to think critically and creatively, a daily occurrence in the classrooms to help form the habits of curiosity, exploring, and acting.

As we all know, a learner's enthusiasm for different topics and their ability to learn are varied. SCIS recognizes this and we place a significant focus on offering individual attention to the student's learning and experience in class. The learning centers in our Lower School classrooms are designed to tap into the inquisitive side of each student's approach sense-making and conceptual understanding across disciplines – reaching the transdisciplinary heart of the PYP. By serving the students' learning through this approach, it allows for self-employment of their voice and choice in making decisions in the class. Overtime, students will carry these learning experiences and interpersonal skills to the next level and apply it to situations outside of their classroom walls.

Student groupings are also one of the most well-known IB strategies employed in classes. The variations of groupings in the class are decided upon by the teacher, the one who is most familiar with the students and factoring in what is manageable within the specifics of the classroom and the students. Groupings in our IB curriculum help our teachers to monitor learning in a detailed and individualised manner by helping to identify a student's strengths and where they need improvements.

The core of the IB is about transforming our students as they learn through its



dynamic curriculum, applying themselves, and challenging what they know with their own capabilities. This is how they are molded to excel on their own and together, which is the very purpose of everything we implement in our classrooms.

At SCIS, we advocate for developing the students and helping them succeed, as we recognize that every child's growth and development are influenced by the interconnectedness of their different environments – home, school, and the general community – and the opportunities and experiences they present. We aim to evolve the student to think critically, creatively, and collaboratively. Knowing that in doing so, our students will be empowered to navigate these different environments with the required skills by understanding themselves first as well as how they fit in each dimension.



**By Daniel Eschtruth,
Director of Schools
at SCIS**



How a Rigorous IB Education Comes to Life at SCIS

I often hear teachers and parents use the word rigor. We say we want students to experience more rigorous work or that a particular text or assignment or course isn't rigorous enough. Yet, the word rigor means very different things to different people. That's a complex question for a school community to resolve – especially SCIS – where we value the partnership between parents and classroom.

The better we can share an understanding of rigor, the better we partner to help students succeed.

There are people in education who value rigor as the “pursuit of something difficult” because we link this pursuit with a character-building experience. However, from a school perspective, we strive for something more. There are many academic tasks that are difficult but fall short of being focused on learning and growth. For example, writing an essay with your other hand is a challenging task. However, it does not build in the student the confidence to write better. Instead, if the student is taught to continue writing with their dominant hand (strength) and taught techniques on how to improve speed and focus, then the student has grown. So, let's spend our students' time on something better.

In his essay “A New Definition of Rigor”, Brian Sztabnik defined it well:

Rigor is the result of work that challenges students' thinking in new and interesting way.

It occurs when they are encouraged toward a sophisticated understanding of fundamental ideas and are driven by curiosity to discover what they don't know.”

How does this relate to us – as an SCIS Community – in our understanding of rigor? And more specifically, how does the IB philosophy shape our understanding of rigor and the work that students encounter?

First and foremost, it's good to start with this reality. If you ask an IB student if their classes are difficult, you should settle down in your chair for a 20-minute lecture of “Oh my gosh... and here's how...” As a father of three children who graduated from three different IB schools, I can attest to being on the receiving end of this conversation often. The IB is certainly difficult – but let's not celebrate that at face value. Being difficult does not make it rigorous.

What is rigorous (and difficult!) is the IB's focus on inquiry in helping students construct their own learning. Memorizing tons of facts or writing a huge essay to summarize a book are both difficult pursuits – but there's no student ownership there. The IB focuses on students developing and sharing their own understanding of the material through a very different (and difficult!) skill of shared inquiry and reflection.

Constructing one's own knowledge is a skill that many students struggle with when they first enter the IB. Teachers often will hear things like "Just tell me what you want me to write" because a student's current understanding of school is to get the question "right". Put in another way, writing a 500-word essay might be difficult for some, but writing 250 words concisely while expressing a point of view backed up for evidence is far more rigorous.

That is a big reason the IB is leading the globe in international education. With its powerful continuum of student-centric learning, the IB programme develops well-rounded individuals who are better prepared for higher education and life beyond.

Globally recognized, with a presence in over 150 countries and over 5,000 IB World Schools, the IB is here to stay. Top universities across the world recognize the true "rigor" of the IB.

The programme provides an international education to enable young people to better understand and manage the complexities of our world, while simultaneously providing them with the skills and attitudes to take action to improve it.

Such an education was grounded in the belief that the world could be made better through an education that focused on concepts, ideas, and issues that crossed disciplinary, cultural, national, and geographical boundaries.

In order to achieve this, it requires us to rethink our concept of rigor.



By Derek Luebke, Head of School at SCIS Pudong





How the IB Prepares Students for Success after SCIS

Each year in February and March, we work with Grade 10 students to select their courses for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) for Grades 11 and 12. During this time, they really begin to reflect on where they might go after SCIS and what they might do. It has been a pleasure to witness students move through the rigorous and meaningful IB Diploma Programme and develop the skills that allow them to be successful after graduation.

Earlier this month, we reached out to several of our 2022 SCIS Hongqiao alumni and asked them how they were doing since they graduated and how the IBDP prepared them for life after SCIS. While these students are now based all over the globe, their answers were surprisingly similar. Areas that were mentioned frequently included feeling confident in their academic preparation, skillfully navigating being independent learners, valuing international mindedness, and the ability to balance between personal and school.

Academically Prepared

The students who responded to the survey and are currently undertaking university classes indicated that they felt extremely prepared for university. One student said, "my classes have been very helpful during my university lectures as so far everything I am



being taught is content I already learned at SCIS.” When transitioning to university, it undoubtedly helps students have a seamless adjustment. In addition, several students mentioned their ability to earn credits from their DP classes allowed them to take more advanced classes in university. A student explained, “my advisor told me that one of the classes I was planning to take would be too easy given my IBDP background in that course and encouraged me to take a higher-level class in the Political Science Department.”

Independent Learners

Several students mentioned that their schedule and the use of their study time at SCIS has given them an advantage in university. “While our IBDP program isn’t strictly independent, there is a lot of independent studying or independent work to be done outside of class, which in a way simulates university. I have one lecture and one seminar for five different subjects once every two weeks, meaning apart from those contact hours, the rest is independent study. The IBDP really helped with the transition to uni.”

International Mindedness

Students of all grade levels at SCIS frequently express the importance of diversity and international mindedness.

When students wonder about life after SCIS, they often consider places that will also value diversity. One recent graduate explained, “going to a school as culturally diverse as SCIS definitely helped me in making friends at university. My university is a diverse place (not just in terms of nationality, but diverse in all sorts of things) so being used to being surrounded by people from different cultures/backgrounds made things easier when trying to make friends, etc.” Another alum discussed the differences and the similarities of thought, while others in his class were a bit more reticent.

Time Management/Organization

Of course, time management is a key to success in school and beyond and many of our recent alumni commented on how the IBDP at SCIS has helped them to stay organized and manage their time since leaving SCIS. “Going to uni means not only focusing on your course but you also assume more responsibilities outside of your studies like laundry and groceries to name some. Having to juggle TOK, EE, CAS on top of core subjects, and having to do IAs for each, helped make transitioning into uni life smoother.” A 2022 graduate has taken her skill in time management to engage in additional activities on campus, “Leveraging the freedom you have in college can make life very fulfilling by doing things you are

passionate about. One example is that I went through three interviews to become an officer at the Taiwanese Overseas Student Association. This position is helping me to gain a lot of experience and skills I have never had before.”

Other areas mentioned by the recent graduates included: communications skills, flexibility (of course, the Class of 2022 had to navigate the challenges throughout the last three years of Covid-19), confidence, and openness. While we often share the benefits of the rigorous and comprehensive IBDP at SCIS, it is certainly more meaningful to hear about the impact directly from our most recent graduates. We look forward to hearing from more of our graduates soon.

Thank you to the Class of 2022: Mington, Farrah, Eva, Ryo, Mikey, and Valentina.



By Amy Valerio, Upper School Principal at SCIS Hongqiao

Student Agency is Ownership

What is student agency? Voice, self-determination, choice, interest, purpose, and motivation are all related to student agency. Research has highlighted that strong community and personal ties are associated with students' stronger levels of resilience and self-motivation. At Shanghai Community International School (SCIS), we focus on building connections

and community. We do this by developing the skills and the attitudes that contribute to a positive community, but most importantly, we build relationships. As educators, we know that building strong relationships with students are important for growth and change, personal development, and most importantly, to foster agency.

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) world school, we must cultivate student agency by fostering in our students the ability to become lifelong learners. We know in order to empower students to be successful in a world that has become interconnected, diverse, and dynamic, we need to put student needs at the center of each programme. We also need to



provide students with the knowledge, skills, and the attitude that allow them to fully participate in today's world. One of the foundations of the IB programme is developing the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills:

"The five categories of interrelated skills are designed to empower IB students of all ages to become self-regulated learners who know how to ask good questions, set effective goals, pursue their aspirations, and have the determination to achieve them. These skills also help to support students' sense of agency, encouraging them to see their learning as an active and dynamic process" (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2017).

These skills help students in "learning how to learn" while also fostering the growth of critical thinking and emotional competencies. Engaging in goal setting is another important component of student agency. Setting goals, initiating action towards those goals, and reflecting on

them can promote students' awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and can develop an understanding what they would like to achieve next. This process requires skills like autonomy, motivation, and self-direction. Teachers and other adults can play an important role in the goal setting process. Teachers can communicate task expectations and requirements through task-specific clarification in different formats. When students know what they are expected to achieve, and by when, they are provided with a sense of control over their learning. Providing feedback that shows students that a teacher has high expectations, but also offers clear guidance and coaching techniques, can be extremely beneficial for the students.

In the Upper School at SCIS, student agency and willingness to become lifelong learners are developed throughout the Middle Years Programme (MYP), but they are most visible during student-led conferences and the MYP Personal Project. During student-led conferences, students

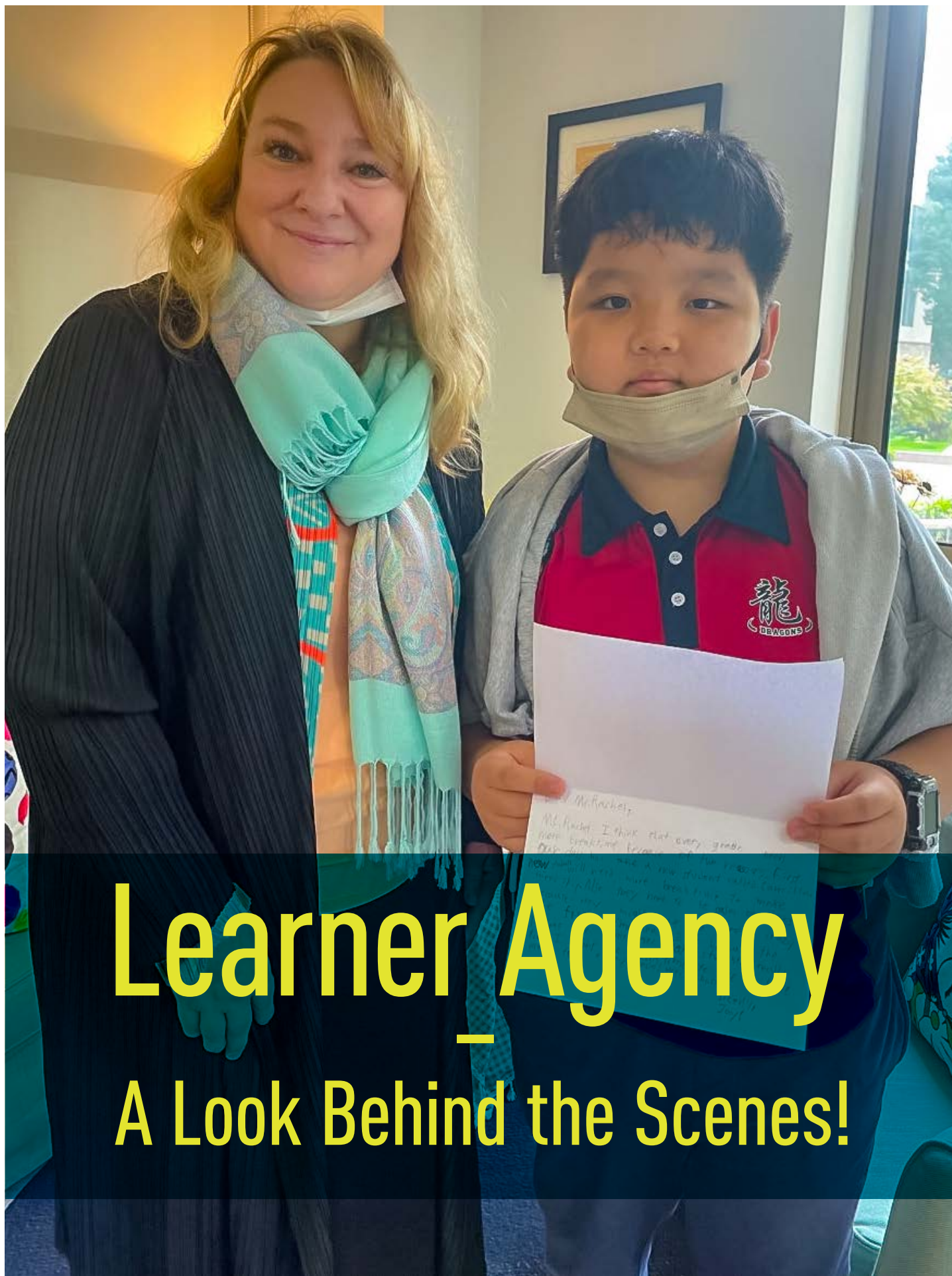
share their learning with parents, reflect on their progress, set goals, and display their capacity for reflection and control of their education. The MYP Personal Project is an important, independent, long-term project in which Grade 10 students can demonstrate ownership and explore any topic that is personally meaningful. Throughout their Personal Project, students apply the skills that they have developed during the MYP years to display agency and how their learning has become an active and dynamic process.

By developing student agency and in line with the SCIS mission statement, our students are contributing positively to our community.



**By Valeria Massarotto,
MYP Individual &
Societies Teacher
at SCIS Hongqiao**





Learner_Agency

A Look Behind the Scenes!

Jay from Grade 4 knocked at my office door. I ushered him to come in.

"Please read this Mrs. Rachel", said Jay proudly. He then turned quickly and left for class.

Jay wrote me a letter that requested a longer recess. His letter highlighted research about the importance of break times, and he expressed frustration about not being able to finish games within the time frame for recess.

Jay had some valid points, and we will consider his viewpoint. The reason I am sharing his story and letter is that it perfectly embodies what we mean by student agency and student's voice.

Student Agency in the Primary Years Programme (PYP) is an umbrella term that is used to describe the relationship that is interplayed between teacher and learner. It supports the notion that agency is when a learner perceives a sense of empowerment and the capability to express ideas, concerns or take action (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018 The Learner p:2).

"PYP students with agency use their own initiative and will take responsibility and ownership of their learning. They direct their learning with a strong sense of identity and self-belief, and in conjunction with others, thereby building a sense of community and awareness of the opinions, values and needs of others". (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2018 The Learner p:1)

Jay clearly demonstrated agency and expressed his voice. I look forward to



continuing to meet with him to work out a way to support his request.

Whether or not Jay ends up getting his extra recess isn't quite the point, though I am sure Jay would disagree! He has learned a very valuable lesson, which is that his voice matters and he has the ability and the power to advocate for himself and his classmates. We believe in creating many moments like this, so that our learners feel empowered and capable to voice their ideas and opinions and contribute to change.

What other examples of student agency through choice, autonomy, and ownership can we see if we look behind the scenes and examine our practices?

Our Zen Dens and the introduction of our Zones of Regulation are an example of how we are developing our learner's ability to be autonomous learners with a growing self-awareness.

The Zones of Regulation are colors that are linked to emotions. We have been helping our learners to recognize which emotions they feel, why they feel it, and when they feel it, but most importantly, what they can do to return to the zone that supports their focus and learning. Transitions, times of conflict, and events (often excitable) can be peak times where learners shift to zones of excitement, anger, or frustration. Our Zen Dens support our learners in applying strategies such as breathing, drawing, fiddling, or blocking out sound, to regain the zone they need to be in to be a self-regulated, autonomous learner.

Our Lower School teachers and specialist teachers alike, use the principles



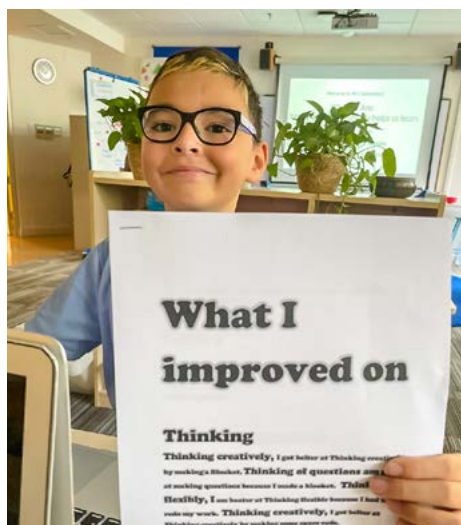
and practices of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to sustain effort, enhance persistence, and drive motivation. Using choices and a variety of demands and resources, learners can self-direct their own goals and levels of challenge. For instance, in PE classes, students are offered the fast-paced, higher-skilled section for soccer drills, workshop practice with the teacher, or even something slower in terms of speed and rate of passing to the other end of the field.

Our students are constantly challenged to reflect and set goals. Through this process, our students are empowered to set the pace, challenge, and next steps in their own learning. One of our Grade 5 classes has been piloting a color-coded system to help students reflect on pre and post math assessment tasks. As students complete their post task, they review the key objectives and "I can..." statements, and identify areas where they have grown, stagnated or mastered, and use this to devise goals for themselves.

Ultimately, we view our learners as thinkers, inquirers and capable of making decisions, opinions, and different forms of expression. Through a careful learning design, principles that support learner agency, and intentional scaffolds and supports, our learners are being placed at the heart of their own learning, armed with the belief, skills, and support to be autonomous agentic learners.



By Rachel McLeod, Lower School Principal at SCIS Hongqiao





The Benefits of Reading in Your Home Language

I have fond memories of a little picture book I used to read with my dad when I was growing up in South Africa. It told the story of a little goat who got into all kinds of trouble in a quaint village. The story was written in Afrikaans and my dad was adamant that at least some of my picture books would be in Afrikaans.

My family left South Africa when I was young and, while I continued to speak Afrikaans at home, my dominant language quickly became English. I found myself in an environment, not unlike many of our students, in which English was my primary means of communicating with friends and teachers.

To this day, I still have a strong emotional connection to Afrikaans despite no longer speaking it fluently. My passion for language came much later in life at which point, French, Portuguese, and now Mandarin took over my language focus.

Now, as a language teacher, I recognize the importance of nurturing home language from a young age and how reading plays a key role in this development. I feel fortunate to belong to a diverse school such as SCIS wherein our educators and learners bring their multilingual assets to the classroom and the community

as a whole. However, as a school that uses English as the language of instruction, it's important that we continue to recognize and support a student's development of home language as well.

So, what do we gain from promoting reading in our home language?

Reading is Important. Period.

Reading in any language is beneficial and the skill of reading is separate from that of speaking. Thus, we can't rely on speaking a language at home to maintain reading skills. Reading promotes critical thinking, empathy, communicative skills, and enhances academic performance. While speaking with our Upper School Librarian, Ashley Simmons, about this, she added that *"students often tie the language of home to comfort and acceptance."* In other words, we can leverage home language to support the development of literacy skills amongst our learners and simultaneously show them that reading is a source of joy.

Social Emotional Wellness and Identity

Language and culture go hand in hand. Research shows that cultural empathy promotes language acquisition. That is, we are



more likely to learn a language that we can relate to culturally and contextually. At SCIS, Language Acquisition teachers are mindful of this and use texts and tasks that aim to inspire interest and connection with the languages students are learning. In my English class, students read about important English speaking role models such as Emily Watson. Meanwhile, Mr. Guillaume, our French Language Acquisition teacher, uses French texts that celebrate cultural events such as *La Fête des Rois*.

This relationship goes both ways and maintaining a home language through reading reinforces our learners' rich cultural identities. This, in turn, strengthens their sense of belonging and makes them more resilient individuals.

Promotion of Additional Language Learning

Leading research indicates that multilingualism is a strong predictor for language acquisition. Simply put, the more languages a learner is comfortable with, the more successful they will be with learning additional languages.

Multilingualism also promotes metacognitive skills, providing opportunities for students to reflect on how they learn best.

These skills transfer beyond language learning. It has been demonstrated that multilingualism alters the neural pathways of the brain and leads to novel thought processes and critical thinking.

Reading at home opens the door for new joy, connections, and possibilities. There's something special about sharing stories with your family and loved ones. The fact that I still remember reading in Afrikaans with my dad says a lot. I hope that when our students reach my age, they have fond memories of not just the picture books they've read in different languages but also of novels, biographies, and anything else that captures their imagination. In the future, these multilingual journeys will take our learners to all kinds of places and for the present, it's what makes being a part of SCIS so meaningful.



By Richard Benade, MYP English Language Acquisition Teacher and Upper School EAL Coordinator at SCIS Hongqiao

25 Ways to Ask Your Kids

*So How Was
School Today?"*





When it comes to learning more about their children's school life, many parents struggle to find out how their days really went, what friends they made, what classes they enjoyed, etc. Often, the repetitive and generic question of "how was school today" may not always be the most effective and inviting way to start a conversation about a child's day at school. Here are a few do's and don'ts to help parents better connect with them:

Do's

- Ask open-ended questions. (Ex: What made you the happiest in PE today?)
- Use positive phrasing in your questions. (Ex: What made you smile today?)
- Share something about yourself to start the conversation. (Ex: I used to play dodgeball during recess when I was a student, how do you usually spend recess?)

Don'ts

- Avoid yes or no questions (Ex: Did you have fun in PE today?)
- Avoid negative questions (Ex: Who was mean to you today?)

Questions:

1. If you were the teacher, what would you change about your class tomorrow?
2. If you could give someone a compliment today, who would it be and what would you say to them?
3. What was the best part about your recess today?
4. Can you share one act of kindness someone did for you?

5. Can you share one act of kindness you did for someone else?
6. Tell me something that made you smile today?
7. What do you look forward to the most tomorrow.
8. What do you look forward the most this week?
9. How were you a good friend to someone else today?
10. What would be a compliment you would like to receive from others?
11. Can you teach me one thing you learned today?
12. What is your favorite place in the school and why?
13. Who is your best friend in school and what makes that person your best friend?
14. How do you usually like to spend your lunch period?
15. What are two things you feel grateful today?
16. Who are two people you want to thank today?
17. What is something interesting you learned today that you didn't know before?
18. How are the rules at school and at home different?
19. What do you want to learn more about?

20. What is the hardest rule to follow in school? Why do you think that is the hardest?
21. What is something that makes you feel proud?
22. What is something that you made progress in since the beginning of the year?
23. What did you do to improve?
24. How did someone help you today?
25. How did you help someone else today?

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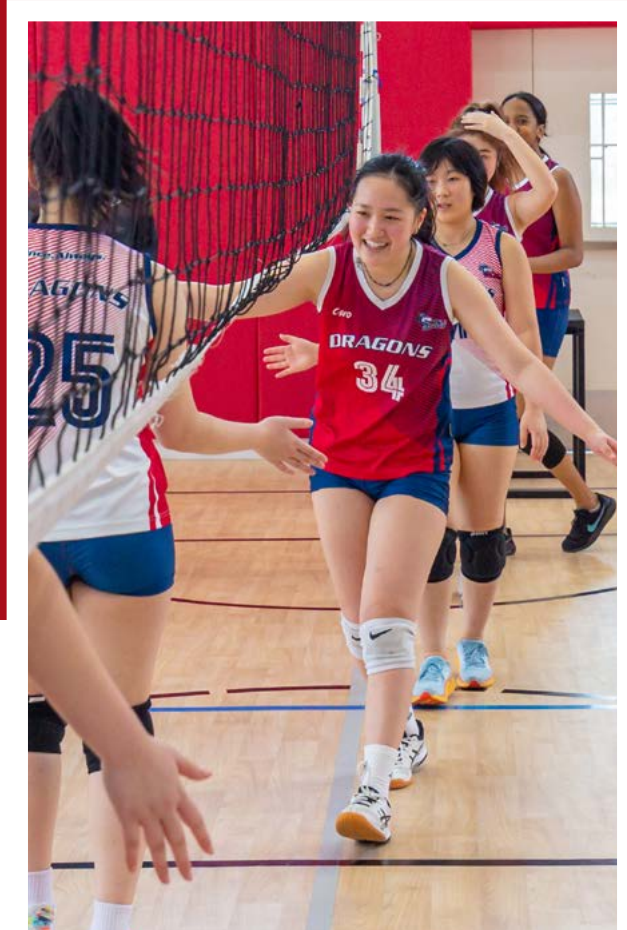
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By JJ Wu, Lower School Counselor at SCIS Pudong



Getting Ready for College and a Career Begins with a Well-Rounded Education



Getting ready for college starts in Kindergarten. Not in the sense that we should know who we are or what we want to do with the rest of our lives, but in the sense that we are learning to be learners. Each school year builds upon these established foundations in a wide range of subjects and interests. International Baccalaureate (IB) students learn to be risktakers, problem solvers and communicators during the Primary Years Programme (PYP). They imagine being future authors, artists, lawyers, and teachers. We all have different strengths, interests and passions, and a well-rounded education allows everyone to pursue the pathway that is right for them.

During the Middle Years Programme (MYP) years, students continue to build on a variety of academic subjects, while strengthening their research and self-management skills through coursework and the MYP core transdisciplinary project. For their Personal Projects, students deep dive into one of their passions and independently research a topic of their choice such as social awareness, entrepreneurship, film making, marketing, artistic creation, and more. It is also during these early adolescent years that increased self-awareness allows students to be more confident and comfortable with who they are. Leadership skills emerge in a variety of ways, such as initiating and leading clubs, supporting peers in class with challenging coursework, performing on stage during assemblies, and being the captain of a sports team.

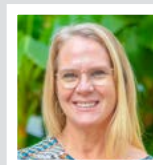
In the culminating years of high school, students narrow their focus by choosing their six Diploma Programme (DP) subjects. This is the time where they will make some decisions as to what they want to pursue after graduating, so purposeful thought and research into university requirements starts here. Double Science? Double Arts? Double Social Sciences? Or take one of each to keep their options open because their interests are so diverse. Regardless of the courses chosen, the rigor of the IB and depth of knowledge learned in each subject, prepares students to tackle their first year of university-level courses with relative ease. Furthermore, they



become more proficient with time management and refine their higher-level thinking, research, and problem-solving skills.

What else supports a well-rounded education? Teachers. SCIS teachers come from multiple countries and extensive years of expertise. They are a wonderful resource to students who want to pursue specific fields of study related to concepts covered in class. Hedy Li said, *"The teachers helped open my eyes to possible future careers that I wasn't aware of."* Another student mentioned that because of the high number of students taking both biology and psychology, the IB Biology teacher noticed and adapted the optional unit of study to meet student interests. A well-rounded education is more than academic preparation for higher education. The Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) component of the IB encourages students to extend their learning outside of the classroom by creating opportunities to lead, collaborate, and serve in their areas of interest. Creating the De-stress Mental Health Club, Stock Club, and Allies Club are just a few examples that demonstrate students' interests, values, and passions.

Throughout the journey we call education, we learn to fail and be resilient. We learn that if we do our best, it IS enough. We learn that success is subjective. What is a well-rounded education? Walking into the library seeing a group of friends from five different nationalities sitting around one table playing a spirited game of Scrabble; that's the culmination of collaboration, competition, perspective, inclusion, and all the other social, emotional, and academic lessons that began in Kindergarten.



By Lynn Brown, College Counselor and Student Support Counselor at SCIS Hongqiao



The Importance of Art in **Childhood** **Development**



Children are naturally curious beings. As soon as they gain control of their bodies enough to walk or even crawl, children are taking every opportunity to explore how the world around them works. Artmaking naturally supports exploration for children. It allows for material manipulation, problem solving, play, and self-expression. According to ibaboston.org, *“When children are exposed to any artistic activity the brain is stimulated from sounds, movements, colors and sizes; neural connections increase, and the brain is exercised and strengthened.”* (IBA Boston, 2022)

Developmental Benefits of Art

Fine Motor Skills: Many of the motions involved in making art, such as grasping a pencil, paintbrush or piece of chalk, are essential to the growth of fine motor muscles in young children. Developing these skills will help your child with writing, buttoning a coat, tying their shoes, holding chopsticks, and other tasks that require controlled movements. Scissor use in young children is particularly essential to fine motor muscle development. Many pre-school programs emphasize the use of scissors because it develops the dexterity children will need for writing.

Language Development: For very young children, making art—or simply just talking about it—provides opportunities to learn words for colors, shapes and actions. Furthermore, children as young as elementary can also use descriptive words

when talking about moods and feelings that arise as they look at artwork.

Decision Making: Art pieces themselves are born from the act of problem solving. How do I turn this clay into a sculpture? How do I convey a feeling in my painting using color? How can I mix that color using the primary colors? Without even realizing it, children are solving dozens of problems with each piece of art they create. Art is a powerful avenue for decision making. It allows children to imagine possible solutions and test them out within a safe environment. The act of making decisions and choices, the experience of witnessing positive outcomes, and the confidence gained by doing so carries over into their lives outside of the art room.

Inventiveness: When kids are encouraged to express themselves and take risks in creating art, they develop a sense of innovation. Solutions to major problems and breakthroughs of all kinds are linked to inventiveness and creativity. According to the International Child Art Foundation, *“Research indicates that a child who is exposed to the arts acquires a special ability to think creatively, be original, discover, innovate, and create intellectual property—key attributes for individual success and social prosperity in the twenty-first century.”* (The Artful Parent, 2022)

Cultural Awareness: Art is the physical representation of a culture's views, beliefs and practices. It reflects the essence of the

people through their drawing, painting, carving, body adornment and folklore. As we live in an increasingly diverse and global society, exposure to art across many cultures and time periods helps children develop a sense of wonder, curiosity and empathy for others, while learning about the artists' cultures more deeply. Children can also make historical connections across cultures based on the art that was produced at any given time. They can also learn more about modern societies through contemporary art movements.

Improved Academic Performance and Focus: Many studies have shown the correlation between the arts and improved academic performance as well as focus. The 2006 Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum study on art education showed a link between arts education and improved literacy skills (NYT, 2006). The study was the result of a pilot program through the Guggenheim called Learning Through Art, which sent working artists into schools to teach them about art and have them create their own work. Students who participated in the program performed better on six different categories of literacy and critical thinking than those who did not.



By Genevieve Pratt, Lower School Art Teacher at SCIS Pudong





*Cross-Cultural
Communication in China:*
Differences in
What & How We Say



How people communicate with one another varies wildly from culture to culture. In our fully globalized times, it is more important than ever to understand these differences and where they come from.

To gain a better knowledge of cross-cultural communication, we had the opportunity to talk to Andre Sun, an English Language Acquisition teacher at SCIS Hongqiao. As a third-culture kid himself, Andre Sun recognizes how communication serves culturally determined, fundamentally different purposes in the East and in the West.

Introduce yourself.

My name is Andre Cheng-Ho Sun. I grew up in both the western and eastern worlds. I was born in Taipei but moved to Chicago when I was one. By the age of 10, we moved to Malaysia where I attended the International School of Kuala Lumpur (ISKL), an international school like SCIS. For university, I went to Ohio University which were the best years of my life so far. Afterwards, I moved to China to figure out what I wanted to do, which was to teach.

How would you define communication in your culture?

I communicate differently with my parents, who are culturally Chinese, and with my Western friends. With my parents, I communicate in ways that I always try to be respectful. I try to anticipate what they might think after I speak to hope for a good response. As with my friends, I am quite direct, but at the same time, I like to keep everything as diplomatic as possible, meaning, I try not to hurt anyone's feelings, while trying to share my opinion.

What does high-context and low-context communication mean?

High-context communication means that with whatever you say, there are layers in your meaning behind that. Whereas in low-context communication, what you're saying is what you mean. In Chinese culture, it is a high-context culture because often, there are hidden meanings within the message and as you grow up, you will figure out what that really means. For example, it's modest not to brag about yourself. However, you can say good things about your family because it shows an underneath tone that you also have these attributes from your family. Instead of directly bragging about yourself, you approach from a different angle to get your point across.

What are the communication differences between the West and the East?

There are different ways of greetings. In the West, it is a bit more physical where you give hugs and say, "how are you doing?". In the East, especially in China, you commonly ask "have you eaten already?". You care about if they have eaten, a necessity in life. In the East, you try not to disagree in front of the person. In the West, you can show disagreement in a direct way such as, "I disagree with you". In the East, instead of saying "I disagree", you'd say "I hear your point, but I also think...". By bluntly disagreeing with someone, it can be a sign of disrespect. In the East, you'd want to say in a more 'yuan hua' (圆滑) - a smooth-edge way. You want to cover up all the edgy parts, so the message comes across as smooth, easier to hear, not hurtful, yet your message is understood.

We often hear the word 'guanxi' in China. What is the importance and understanding of 'guanxi' in order to communicate in China?

'Guanxi' means relationship, or the way I see it, the level of how deep of a relationship you have with the other person. It is important because it separates friends, best friends, and strangers. Specifically in China, if you know how to have good 'guanxi', it means you know how to develop a strong bond with different people. There are times when it will become an advantage for you. When you need help, you will have more options to help you and you'll have more help than you needed depending on the amount and depth of your 'guanxi'. Having good 'guanxi' means you have a high EQ (emotional intelligence). You understand what people are thinking and you know what to say to make them feel comfortable and that is the art of eastern conversation.

What are contrasting Chinese and Western communication practices?

In the West, they appreciate blunt honesty over anything. They'd rather have you "give it to me straight". Don't try to hide who you are. In Chinese cultural practices, there is the concept of 'saving face'. For example, if you are aware that your words might hurt someone in public, there is an indirect way that is less aggressive and more subtle with notes of caring and kindness. The concept of 'saving face' is respecting the name in the community, and in Chinese culture, it is a serious practice in comparison to the West. In the West, the truth is more important than anything.

What are some strategies for effective cross-cultural communication?

I find being diplomatic and picking up what other people want to hear is quite effective. My public speaking is closer to the eastern culture where I'm not as comfortable in speaking as exactly what I think to the other person because I'd rather not hurt their feelings. It doesn't mean I'm not honest. It means I'm not trying to provoke or instill other emotions. I want to give them facts and news, but in a coddle manner.



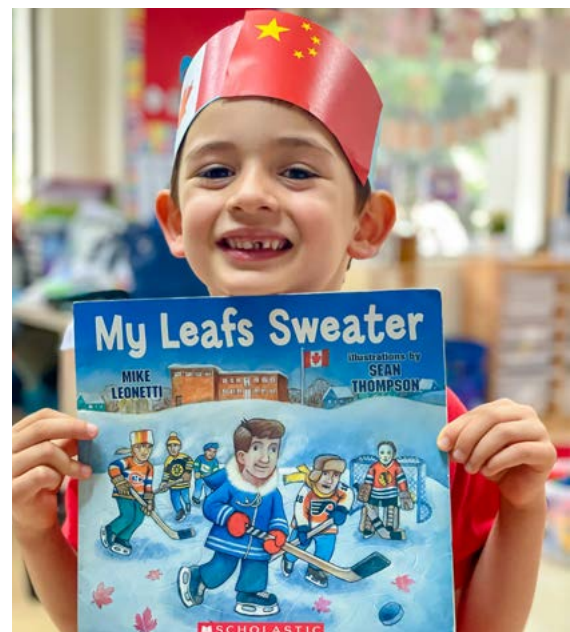
By Andre Sun, MYP English Language Acquisition Teacher at SCIS Hongqiao



The Importance of Celebrating United Nations Day of Peace at the ECE

Every year the Early Childhood Education (ECE) acknowledges the United Nations International Day of Peace (UNIDOP). This important day prompts discussions and observations about our identities associated with ourselves and each other. We hope the children begin to become sensitized to the significance that we are one world made by many people. Through the celebration of UNIDOP, children shared special cultural moments from home through videos of a special recipe, a dance, national sports, traditional clothing, or classic books. Many of the children

made flags or a hat to represent the countries that they most identify with. Some children studied the world map and talked about the countries they feel most connected to. This led to sharing about the places that are special to the children and that have helped them to form a concept of self, explore their place in the world, explore their connections with both where they are and where they come from. The week culminated in a celebration of the diversity of the school community by coming together and marking the United Nations International Day of Peace.





At the ECE, UNIDOP is not only one day. It is important for international-mindedness and cultural understanding to be embedded into every school day. At the start of every school year, the children enter their new classroom, encountering new faces of children and teachers. As facilitators, the teachers become aware of the process and journey of the child's identity that will need to be celebrated and shared, for the group identity or class community to emerge, develop, and grow. The individual child needs to be given many opportunities to discover his or her own identity to enable him or her to feel comfortable sharing with the group. Teachers are determined to continue this path of identity because they know that the young child's thoughts are continually evolving. The teachers want to pursue the notion of what it is to be somebody. A sense of self must develop gradually. Being yourself is about knowing who you are.

Many of the daily encounters children have at the ECE have helped them to understand more about themselves and each other. Special events such as United Nations Day help the children to think about their own stories and family lives which shape them. Throughout the year, teachers and children have many discussions about what is important to them. This adds

to our knowledge of how children come to understand and love themselves in order to understand and love each other. Throughout the time together, children are discovering, acknowledging, and celebrating the important facets of themselves as individuals and as a member of the class community, the school community, and the global community.

All these actions, thought-provoking discussions, daily inquiries and special days help to form and define the children's concept of self. The children show much pride in talking about their cultural identities and often find surprising similarities with others. The more all the children can understand each other, the greater the likelihood of making our school mission a reality... **to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring learners who contribute positively to their communities.**



By Clair Wain, Early Childhood Education Coordinator at SCIS Hongqiao



Helping Children and Teenagers with Anxiety



Just like adults, children and teenagers can feel anxious or worried about different things at different periods in their lives. We often see children become worried about big life changes, such as moving to another country or performing well at school or clubs. This is a normal part of their emotional development. When these feelings significantly impact their everyday life, it becomes a problem. They may want to avoid going to school or participating in an activity they used to enjoy. While our aim is not to eliminate anxiety, there are ways to help your child learn how to manage anxiety effectively.

Teach and practice flexible thinking. This skill can help your child overcome many situations. Students at SCIS learn about having a 'fixed mindset' versus a 'growth mindset' when they attempt new or difficult tasks. A fixed mindset is the belief that abilities or talents do not change, while a growth mindset is the belief that they improve with practice and effort. Growth mindset can be extended to help children cope with anxious feelings. If you know your child is feeling worried, help them come up with as many solutions as possible. This teaches them how to look at their problems from different perspectives.

Practice how to respond to situations that cause anxiety with your child. For younger children, you can role play while older children may just want to have a discussion. Ask them, "What could happen?", "What would you do?", and "What if your first plan doesn't work?". As your child gets used to this exercise, they will be able to do it independently and feel



more confident when going into new or anxiety-inducing situations.

Model ways to cope with anxiety. This can include practicing positive self-talk, using flexible thinking, and relaxation techniques. During a stressful situation, maintain a calm demeanor and talk about what strategy you will use. ("I'm feeling a bit nervous. I'm going to take some deep breaths.") The more your child sees you use these skills, the easier it will be for them to use themselves.

Encourage your child to tolerate their anxiety. While it can be tempting to let your child avoid the situations that cause them to worry, in the long run they are missing out on opportunities for new experiences and growth. For example, you can acknowledge your child's feelings, show support, and express positive (but realistic) expectations about their situation. "I know that you are scared and that's ok. I am here

and will help you get through this." Over time, as your child interacts with the source of anxiety, those feelings will decrease.

While these tips will help many of our students to manage their worries, some will continue to experience levels of anxiety that interferes with their daily life. For those students experiencing frequent and consistent high levels of anxiety, additional support may be needed. For parents looking for more resources, your child's school counselor is an important point of contact. They can help to facilitate support at school and referrals to external counseling services.



By Tommy Surma,
*Educational Psychologist
at SCIS*





The Importance of *Academic Rigor*

Over thirty years ago, when I was in my first year at an Ivy League university in the United States, my classmates and I worked very hard in a program as rigorous as any I had ever known. I felt prepared—I had a strong foundation from my secondary education in a California public school—but I had never read as much, written as much, experimented as much, or created as much as I did that first semester. It was a LOT, and almost all my cohorts were experiencing the same feeling of being overwhelmed. Trying to manage our time, to integrate our social, academic, and personal interests, to move forward toward our ambitious goals. The only person I knew who wasn't struggling was my roommate, Nicole. She said that college was hard, yes, but it was nothing compared to her last two years of high school. Nicole had just graduated from an international school in Switzerland, where she had earned an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma.



I have to say, I did not really believe what she was saying until 15 years later when I started working at my first IB school, and saw first-hand what an IB Diploma is, and what it takes to achieve one: Two-year classes with a prescribed level of content knowledge and skills consistent with university expectations. Student-led independent research or creative projects in every class, and outside of class. Engagement with community life and critical thinking that can inform and define our vision for the future. This is academic rigor, IB-style.

The IB Diploma is a truly international secondary education credential, recognized by institutions of higher education in virtually every country in the world for what it represents: intellectual rigor, breadth and depth of academic content, international-mindedness and a service orientation. As graduates of a three-part

programme IB World School, SCIS alumni benefit from carrying a Diploma that will open doors and pave the way for opportunities in whatever country and field of study they choose to pursue. Just as important, they will take on the opportunities to secure the knowledge that they can do hard things, take on new challenges, and achieve worthy goals.

At SCIS, we know that a rigorous program facilitates teachers to provide guidance and support to students to experience the satisfaction of solving hard problems, supporting complex arguments, and contributing to academic discourse, will look different for each student. Analyzing author's intent in an English literature class will be highly demanding for a student who has only been reading in English for a few years, where the same student may not find the challenge in a standard Math class and need Extended

Math to find the challenge they need to thrive. SCIS teachers know that a rigorous program moves students from one stage of academic development to the next and encourages them to recognize and reflect on their own personal accomplishments. There is little pride to be derived from easy work. It is when students achieve accomplishments, moving along the path from beginners to practitioners to masters. From pathway to pathway, they experience the sweetness of success, and learn what they are capable of.



*By Naomi Shanks,
Upper School Principal
and IB DP Coordinator
at SCIS Pudong*

Digital Citizenship

How to Balance the Use of Technology in School and in Life

We live in a hyperconnected world – a world that gives us instant access, via the Internet, to media in virtually any language we want, and to communication and collaboration tools in the form of video calls, email, texting, instant messaging, and social media. As powerful and amazing as these tools are, we all need to remember to use them in a way that provides balance with other aspects of our lives (e.g., family, friends, sports, hobbies, etc.) to support our physical and mental health and well-being.

At SCIS, Digital Citizenship and the balanced use of technology go together. Embedded as part of our Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in our Programmes of Inquiry in the PYP, the Advisory Program in the MYP, and Pastoral Time in the DP, students learn about responsible and appropriate use of technology. Some examples of this include the Grade 5 Computer License developed by teachers at the Hongqiao Campus that helps students start the year successfully as principled users of technology and the use of DQ World (dqworld.net) to support students transitioning from the PYP to the MYP, providing them with 8 Digital Life Skills – Digital Citizen Identity, Screen Time Management, Cyber Bullying Management, Cyber Security Management, Privacy Management, Critical Thinking, Digital Footprints, and Digital Empathy.

For families looking for advice and ideas, Common Sense Media (www.commonsensemedia.org) is a great resource for articles, activities, and conversation starters to develop a healthy balance when using technology.



Grade 6 students being introduced to DQ World as they begin learning more about the key digital life skills that will support them as learners throughout the MYP and beyond.

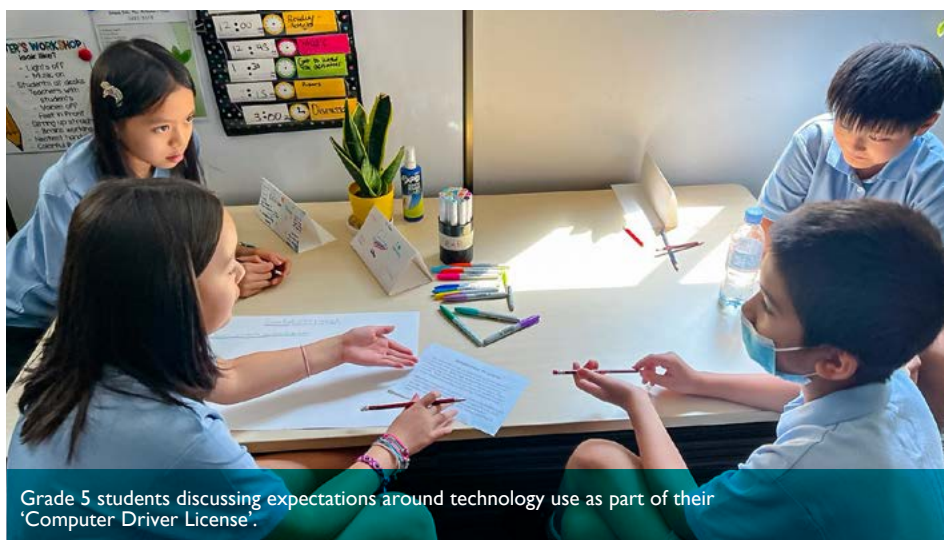
Here are some tips taken from Common Sense Media to keep in mind, depending on the age of your children:

Nursery – Grade 2	Kindergarten – Grade 5	Grade 6 - 12
Balance screen-time use with other activities. Set clear rules or limits to ensure time with family and friends, active play, and plenty of sleep.	Create screen-free times and zones. Set aside times and/or locations without device, such as dinner time or right before bed.	Create screen-free times and zones. Set aside times and/or locations without device, such as dinner time or right before bed. Set aside regular family time without screens or when they are enjoyed together.
Choose shows, videos, or apps that match your child's age and interests. Videos and games that require active thinking, imagination or role-playing are best.	Try parental controls. Review and set content filtering, privacy settings, and time limits on the devices or apps used by your family. Apps like Apple Screen Time or Microsoft Family Safety provide many options.	Explore built-in digital well-being tools. With your children, learn together about the features on their devices and apps that help with using technology more intentionally. Look at Apple Screen Time, Microsoft Family Safety, or Google Digital Wellbeing.
Make screen time social. Watch and/or play along with your child. Talk to them and try to make connections to real word experiences.	Establish clear family rules. Have a family conversation and develop a plan about the types of media and technology that are OK to use, and when they can be used.	Model the behavior you want to see. The expectations you set for your children should be in line with how you use your devices and consume media.
Think about your own habits. Reduce distractions by turning off the TV when no one is watching, setting your own phone to silent and modeling balanced habits.	Watch and play together. Choose quality, age-appropriate games, and videos that the whole family can enjoy.	Help kids identify healthy behaviors. Talk with your children about how they feel, both physically and emotionally, during screen and no-screen times. Do their media and device interactions impact their mood or self-esteem?
	Help kids identify healthy behaviors. Talk with your children about how they feel, both physically and emotionally, during screen and non-screen activities.	Understand how tech companies make money. How do “free” apps or social media platforms get paid? Are they selling ads or even selling kids’ data? What are these companies doing to keep users engaged?

Ensuring a balance between our digital and non-digital lives can help us all lead healthier, happier lives.



By Paul Pavao,
Technology and
Integration Coordinator
at SCIS



Grade 5 students discussing expectations around technology use as part of their 'Computer Driver License'.





The Building Blocks of the ECE: Social-Emotional Development

At Shanghai Community International School (SCIS), our Early Childhood program immerses children in an atmosphere of wonder and growth. We focus on the development of the whole child by providing opportunities for children to learn and practice newly acquired skills.

In one of the four areas taught in Early Childhood Education (ECE), social-emotional development is where children learn the values and behaviors accepted by society, while also becoming competent and confident to succeed in school and life. In our latest Community Voices, we invited Julie Nicol, Kindergarten Teacher at SCIS Hongqiao ECE, to educate us more about the importance and value of social-emotional development at the ECE.

Tell us about yourself.

My name is Julie Nicol. I'm from Virginia, U.S. And this is my seventh year teaching at SCIS. I was first teaching Pre-Kindergarten for four years, and for the past three years, I've been teaching Kindergarten. My background is in Early Childhood Education, that's what I got my master's degree in, and my teaching license is focused in this area. Outside of work, I love to read, swim, spend time with my cat, hang with my friends, and play piano.

Why did you choose to study Early Childhood Education?

Children are just amazing humans. I really believe in the capacity of young children to do amazing things. I see that every day. I see creativity. I see the curiosity that children have. At this young age, we're setting them up for success for the rest of their lives. To see them being inspired to learn, and motivated to care for other people, are things that I'm so happy to see daily. Often people may look at the ECE as a place where they just play, but they are capable people who are able to learn so much, express so much, and question so much. That's what excites me every day.

What is social-emotional in child development?

Social-emotional in child development is a huge part of early childhood learning and development. Developing social skills and emotional skills is the cornerstone of what we're doing at the ECE campus. This sets up our students with skills that they will be able to use for the rest of their lives.

When we look at the Primary Years Programme (PYP) and the Approaches to Learning (ATL), there are three main things that address social-emotional learning: social skills, communication skills, and self-management skills. I like to look at those

three as the development of children. When we look at social skills, it's how we interact with people, how to share and take turns, how to identify the emotions we're feeling, and how to identify the emotions of other people, and these are taught skills we teach children to learn and to strengthen.

What social-emotional skills do the children learn throughout the ECE?

One of the curriculums we use at the ECE is called Teaching Strategies Gold, and that's what we use to monitor progress in Nursery, Pre-School, and Pre-Kindergarten.



In terms of social-emotional development, it includes regulating emotions and behaviors, establishing and sustaining positive relationships, and participating cooperatively and constructively in groups. Because it is a spectrum of development, students work on deepening each of those skills in different ways as they age. For example, Nursery students may respond to others' expressions of wants, while in Pre-School they may begin taking turns. Once in Pre-Kindergarten, they might begin initiating sharing of materials, and in Kindergarten, they move into cooperative group play.

How do teachers help children who struggle in developing these social-emotional skills?

One thing that ECE teachers love here is 'Play Plans' - simply, plans for play. This is helpful for children who struggle with forming long friendships over time. A Play Plan can be beneficial in this situation by giving more structure in the day such as selecting one classmate to play with for 10 minutes and switching to another classmate. It's a visual plan to help give the child guidance and focus on improving that specific skill.

We also use a program called 'Second Step', which is a great Tier 1 resource that we use for everybody but can also be applied to students that might need a little support in identifying emotions and problem-solving. If there is a conflict of any kind, they can use the skills learned in the Second Step by using small groups to work together on a certain skill such as sharing or taking turns.



How do students at the ECE carry on their skills into the PYP and onwards?

We're still looking at the same skills that would be taught at the Lower School. Social skills, communication skills, and self-management skills all build on each other. If we can help students build and practice their communication skills, such as sharing their opinions and verbally expressing themselves, these are skills students need to use throughout their life. Even as adults, we all work on being active listeners and communicating our ideas clearly.

My favorite example that touches on both social skills and self-management is about how all people get angry. I get angry too. If I'm angry, I can't just hit the person next to me. There are rules that we all need to follow. I use the same skills that I'm teaching to my students: to take a deep breath, ignore a person, walk away, and manage my anger. We all need to find appropriate ways to regulate those emotions and express them appropriately.

How can parents help their child's social-emotional development outside of school?

One thing we often talk about during Parent-Teacher Conferences is the chance for their child to socialize with other children outside of school. It can be going to the compound playground, hanging out with other children of different ages, or setting up playdates with other children. These social settings will give children the opportunity to practice these social-emotional skills more. Anytime we see a child struggling to interact with other students, not sure how to join games, or having some social-regulation struggles, we often ask parents "how often are they with other children outside of school?". If they



are mostly spending their time with adults, they aren't getting as much of a chance to practice these skills and put them into place.

Another great way is that teachers often share their strategies and things they're using in the classroom on Seesaw. For example, in my weekly update, I might talk about 'The Zones of Regulations' which is something we use for our feelings and how we can regulate our emotions. It would be beneficial if parents could print 'The Zones of Regulations' at home to help their child in need, this way they are mirroring the language the child is taught at school. Creating a consistent environment and routine at home can really help nurture these social-emotional skills. In addition, reaching out to your teacher for more information can really strengthen the home-school relationship.



*Interview by Elena Tan,
Digital Communications
Officer at SCIS*



Swimming Together, Staying Together

The SCIS Hongqiao Swimming Team started our season in September, and the Aquatics Coaching Team has been delighted with each team's achievements each week.

John Leonard, USA Swimming Chairperson, explains the process of being on a team as a privilege and honor. For a team to succeed, each individual should recognize their part in the team and positively contribute. A team can lift individual performance from good to great, and no individual can create an environment for excellence single-handedly. It takes a team.

Swimming on the surface level may appear to be an individual sport. However, every swimmer knows they need their teammates cheering for them for the extra motivation to push themselves in a race or to keep going during a challenging set at practice.

One of the goals of our entire team is to build independence by helping to create accountability for the goals set by each individual. As accountability to their goals becomes an unconscious habit, student-athletes excel not only in the pool but also in academics and other SCIS sports and continue to make good decisions.

Here we would like to introduce our 2022-2023 swimming teams, who are working exceptionally well together.



*By Cheryl Philp, Aquatics Director
at SCIS Hongqiao*



Rainbow Team led by Coach Seven Qi.



Orange Team led by Coach Carson Shen.



Pink Team led by Coach Seven Qi and Carsen Shen.



Blue Team led by Coach Ryan Wang.



Red Team led by Coach Ryan Wang.



White DII Team led by Coach Cheryl Philp.



White DI Team led by Coach Cheryl Philp.



Hongqiao Varsity Girls Volleyball 2022

Coach: Melissa Kirwin

Varsity Girls Volleyball started off with a full calendar of scheduled games. Many ladies returning from last year and promising new athletes who joined the team made the season even more exciting. Dragon Cup was a fun-filled day where we learned to work together as a new team. An enjoyable game with VISS and a competitive game with SAS helped determine the areas of strengths and improvement. Practices focusing on directional hitting, position-specific serving, quality receiving, and team building helped to strengthen and gel the ladies as one effective and powerful team. Due to unforeseen circumstances, canceled games and lockdowns for team members left the future of the season bleak. The light at the end of the tunnel was ACAMIS. After two weeks of continued hard work, dedication, and some luck, the final tournament was finally happening! The ladies battled it out on Day 1 in pool play, finishing undefeated! Day 2 started with a tough game against Dulwich, but ended in a win, finalizing in the gold bracket. Battling from behind SSIS in both games, strong serves, well-played defense, and strategic offensive ball placement allowed the girls to rise above and finish in 1st place. Congratulations on a well-deserved championship!



Hongqiao Varsity Boys Volleyball 2022 Coach: Derek Janssen

The dedicated team of sixteen players grew together throughout the season, focusing on teamwork, communication, and a defense-first mentality. There were plenty of learning opportunities along the journey with tight, away matches and a difficult split squad experience at the Dragon Cup. Through all the highs and lows of the season, the varsity boys put it all together for the ACAMIS championship weathering the difficult four-match Saturday to secure two-set wins in the semis and finals to claim the championship! Congratulations on all your accomplishments this season!



Hongqiao Junior Varsity Girls Volleyball 2022 Coach: Justin Corvers

The Junior Varsity Girls Volleyball team this year had a great mix of experienced Volleyball players and those who were new to the sport. It was amazing to see some student-athletes step up and show leadership both on and off the court as we grew as a team. Early in the season, we participated in the Dragon Cup which was a great opportunity to play some games and get some court time for all our athletes. As the season progressed, our focus was on becoming stronger as a team by improving our individual skills and learning to work together and communicate effectively on the court. It is exciting to see the strong future of SCIS Hongqiao Volleyball and work with the student-athletes who will continue to step on the court as Dragons for years to come.



Hongqiao Junior Varsity Boys Volleyball 2022 Coach: Kirk Thomas

The Junior Varsity Boys Volleyball Team came into the season with very little experience due to our Grade 8 volleyball season not coming to fruition last academic year. The boys worked diligently on their skills throughout our practice sessions and became a much more technical team, focusing on hard work, communication, and supporting each other at every point. The hard work paid off in our Dragon Cup matches where the boys acquitted themselves well against much more experienced, senior teams. They gained the respect of everyone in attendance. Unfortunately, we were unable to participate in the season ending SISAC tournament where the boys would have undoubtedly taken home some hardware. Congratulations to every member of the team!



The Importance and Values of an IB Education



At SCIS, our students go through a process of discovery and transformational thinking, helping students see the world differently by making connections to personally meaningful issues. Through the rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) programme, our learners grasp how to achieve milestones and overcome obstacles to embrace their personal potential.

In our latest #CommunityVoices series, our Grade 12 student, Daisy Yeh, sheds light on the challenges and successes of a world-class curriculum and how it has equipped her with the right skills for the 21st century. Through her 11 years at SCIS, Daisy has grown to think critically, seek curiosity, and embrace challenges to discover her passion pathway beyond the walls of SCIS.

Tell us about yourself.

I'm Daisy Yeh. I've lived in Shanghai my whole life and I've been at SCIS since Grade Two and I'm currently in Grade 12. My dad is Taiwanese, and my mom is Cantonese.

What makes the IB Diploma Programme (DP) unique?

The programme is designed to help students to think. Twenty percent of each class is based on written assessments. It's easy to learn and retain knowledge. If you read every day, you'll know a lot. But it's your ability to apply and articulate that's difficult. Being able to write is a very important skill because it requires you to think critically to express your ideas for people to understand.

As a pre-university programme, it fosters well-rounded individuals. The DP also has its "core", which composes CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service), EE (Extended Essay) and TOK (Theory of Knowledge). For example, TOK teaches you how to form valid arguments, and that's an essential skill for any academic endeavor. The DP prepares you for your academic journey beyond high school and that's what makes it unique.

What are some of the challenges in the IB and how did you overcome them?

Mainly the mental. Especially during the lockdown. I am a very extroverted person and I thrive on social interactions. So, being locked up in my house for weeks and months on end was the main challenge I faced in the IB. IB is a rigorous programme, it requires work, and the lockdown didn't help. To overcome this challenge, it was mainly from support from other people. As a social person, I like talking things out when there is an issue. I like having people around me, to support me. If I lack social interaction, it's like a battery is missing.

How did the Middle Years Programme (MYP) help you prepare for the Diploma Programme (DP)?

The MYP is quite different from the DP. The main thing I learned from the MYP is my work ethic. My mindset in the MYP was mainly "I need to get this done" and get a few decent grades. Every year in the MYP, I was trying to get better at managing my time and pushing myself. And transitioning into the DP, really put myself in an environment that I needed to change. In the back of my head, work ethic was fostered by the MYP. I didn't have the motivation I do in the DP. In DP, everything is on the line. Two years



of condensed courses where you do your best, do your applications and hope for the best. MYP puts the idea of work ethic in your head. DP you learn how to execute based on stress and your own motivation to succeed.

What are the best educational experiences you've had at SCIS?

Educators form the backbone of how you learn and your educational experience. For example, my former math teacher really helped me conceptualize a subject I did not like and that was difficult for me. The best experience a teacher can give to a student is to foster passion and curiosity beyond, and I think that it is very important even later when you're trying to find what major suits you. It's easy to dismiss things. But having a teacher that helps you understand "why you should also choose math" can help you consider more options, and

perhaps find another interest you weren't aware of.

In short, the immediate educators who come to mind and the experiences I've had are teachers who are passionate. A course structure is important, but how it is taught is even more important. Another example would be my biology teacher – she's fantastic. You can hear her passion. She explains things in a way where you understand why she loves biology, and that kind of intrinsic motivation goes beyond the course.

What intrinsic skills have you gained from the IB?

As such a rigorous programme, it does foster some competition and I mean that in a good way. You're in constant competition with everyone around you. Because of the competition and rigor

of the programme, it has helped me to foster better academic skills. The DP is completely different from the MYP in terms of academic habits.

What is your advice for current and future DP Dragons?

Choose your courses correctly and try to be practical. If you're not going into medicine, maybe don't choose HL Biology and Chemistry. But also have an idea of what you want to do so you don't end up closing doors for yourself. For example, there were many majors I wanted to do, but they all required Chemistry. I didn't consider that when I chose my courses, so there were many fantastic courses I couldn't apply to.

You've just finished applying for universities. Can you share with us your journey?

Initially, I had no clue what I wanted to do. I like Biology, but I don't see myself in a lab, doing research, or writing a report. Becoming a doctor would take too long and I don't think I'm conscientious enough to go down that route. I like talking and helping people. I like Biology. So, what is a career that combines the natural sciences but also practical applications? So, I decided on healthcare. I want to improve healthcare. I've applied to four universities in the UK, and I will apply to Hong Kong later.



*Interview by Elena Tan,
Digital Communications
Officer at SCIS*





Welcome to the Journey Around the World in 180 Days

Passport Club has been a thriving extracurricular activity sponsored by the Parents and Friends Association (PAFA) and run by parent volunteers for many years. It is a geography enrichment program that builds global literacy, inspires curiosity about the world, and makes the current curriculum global: a perfect fit for SCIS's internationally minded students.

Aimed at our Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Lower School students, the Passport Club is a monthly-organized event. The fun starts with the student's own passport book which every month shows the locations they need to learn from Level 1-5. Students will then celebrate their learnings on Passport Check Day and earn a stamp for each level completed with the icing on the cake of choosing a vintage postage stamp to decorate and fill their own passport.

In addition, every month a country is celebrated with a fun facts sheet and colorful decorations displayed in the lobby to further inspire global curiosity. Students are encouraged to learn about this country and show their knowledge through an activity sheet (ECE students) or a small quiz (Lower School students).

The Passport Club would not function without the support of the Passport Club coordinators and parent volunteers: a big thank you to all of you who have supported the Passport Club throughout all these years!

By Cecilia Bruinsma-Kuhwael, Passport Club Coordinator at SCIS Hongqiao



I am Jen Kim and I returned to my home country, South Korea, in 2021. My daughter, Na Hyeon, attended SCIS from Kindergarten to Grade 4.

The Passport Club 'checker' was my first on-campus volunteer. I was one of the Passport Club coordinators for the 2019-2020 academic year. We were a team of four who had different backgrounds and nationalities. We were a great mix of people who were able to be more creative when organizing the monthly meetings.

Before Covid-19 occurred, our last big meeting was the Christmas meeting filled with snacks and gifts in addition to the usual Passport Club Check Day. These special events were not only a great way to gather our students together but also to promote good deeds and create a positive impact on the community. As a result, most of the parents regarded the Passport Club volunteering as part of their routine and never missed a meeting. Even though the Passport Club members did not speak the same

language, we chipped what we could and made the Passport Club happen. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we couldn't wrap up our year properly.

SCIS is such a unique community that even caters to parents. I think the Passport Club volunteering was a great start to my Shanghai expat life of five years. I was able to meet and experience a lot more of what SCIS has to offer. If anyone is looking for a little hook to engage themselves, I'll say "try becoming a Passport Club volunteer". There are many roles: a checker, photographer, study station teacher, or glue station organizer. It is a great chance to see your kids' life closer and enjoy your own social life as I did.

With special thanks to Lily Pasaribu, Lidiya Golysheva, and Debbie Foster.

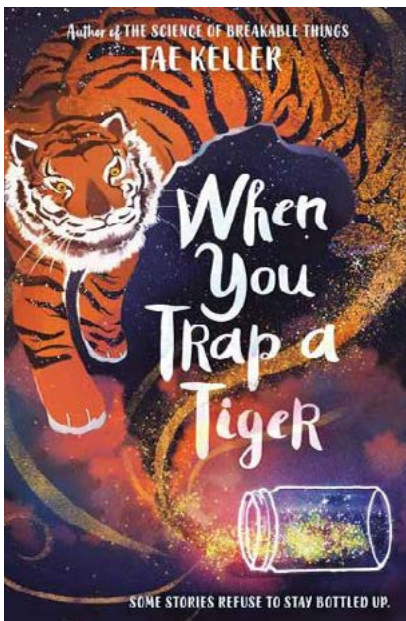
By Jen Kim, Former SCIS Hongqiao Parent and Passport Club Coordinator



Book Recommendations for All Ages

Books are a handy resource packed with information, insights into a happy life, life lessons, love, fear, and lots of advantageous instruction. Books open doors to a world of ingenuity, creativity, and resourcefulness. And stories are an integral part of our lives. They talk about history, mythology, our beliefs, our inspirations, and possibilities of our future, the list is endless. Read below the book recommendations for all ages from our very own SCIS librarians:

Ashley Simmons, Upper School Librarian at SCIS Hongqiao



When You Trap a Tiger

By Tae Keller

Ages 9+

When You Trap a Tiger is a realistic fantasy book that focuses on the power of stories to heal and unite. In this Newbery Award winning title, readers meet the main character Lily, who has just moved with her mother and sister to live with her sick grandmother, Halmoni. She discovers that years ago, Halmoni stole something valuable from the tigers of Korean myths, and Lily makes a deal with one such tiger in order to save her Halmoni's life. While this book does have elements of fantasy related to Korean myths and stories, it is primarily grounded in the realism of complicated family relationships and the role these relationships play in the lives of the characters. Lily's own struggle to find her voice and courage while also feeling the need to protect the family she loves is a moving and relatable story that, combined with the fantastic elements of Halmoni's tales and Lily's encounters with the tiger, makes for an enjoyable read.

I Hope You Get This Message

By Farah Naz Rishi

Ages 13+

Imagine waking up to the news that all human life on Earth has been an experiment by an alien species and that this species thinks this experiment is a failure. How can the whole world prove that they are worthy of survival in only seven days? This is exactly the problem Jesse, Cate, and Hadeem are facing in *I Hope You Get This Message*. Jesse is struggling to understand what really matters in a world that has beaten him down at every turn. Cate is struggling to cope with her mother's mental illness and desperate to find and get to know her father. Adeem wants to connect with his estranged sister and is hoping to find it in himself to forgive her. The three teens cross paths as they try to put together the last bits of their lives before the world completely falls apart. Fans of both realistic and science fiction will enjoy this story that explores global issues and the more intimate, personal stories of the characters.



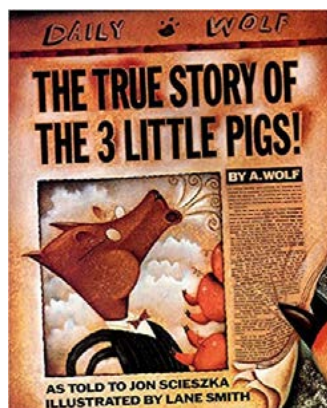
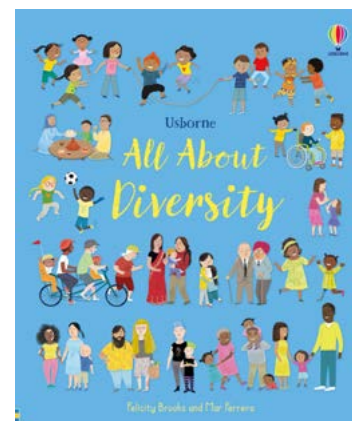
Emily Hastings, Speech-Language Pathologist at SCIS ECE & Hongqiao

All About Diversity

By Felicity Brooks

Age 4-6

What does it mean to be different? This book explores how to respond in a kind and equal way to everyone, regardless of shape, size, age, ability, gender, ethnicity, beliefs, language, culture, background, and so on. From different clothes to food, homes, festivals, families, and neurodiversity- there is plenty for children to talk about as they find out about what makes people different and what makes them unique.



The True Story of the Three Little Pigs!

By Jon Scieszka

Age 4-8

You may think you know the story of the Three Little Pigs and the Big Bad Wolf - but only one person knows the real story. And that person is A. Wolf. His tale starts with a birthday cake for his dear old granny, a bad head cold, and a bad reputation. The rest (as they say) is history. A hilarious retelling of the story of the Three Little Pigs from a different perspective.

Malika Meidinger, Lower School PYP Coordinator at SCIS Pudong

The Most Magnificent Thing

By Ashley Spires

Ages 4+

In this story, a little girl and her assistant (her dog!) are trying to create the most magnificent thing. She works so hard, but her end product keeps not being what she has in mind. She gets very frustrated and gives up. Her assistant suggests taking a walk to calm down. As she cools off, she realizes what she needs. In the end, the little girl learns a big lesson: perspective!

Ashley Spires is the author and illustrator of *The Most Magnificent Thing*. This story explores perseverance and creativity in a familiar context for kids using rich, inspiring vocabulary!



The Magical Yet

By Angela DiTerlizzi

Ages 4+

Sometimes things can seem too hard, and you want to give up. However, with the power of your Magical Yet, you learn to realize that we all face difficult moments. But if we keep leaping, dreaming, wishing, waiting, learning, trying, missing... we'll do all the things we can't do today. This story is great for all ages to turn negatives into positives during inevitable tough learning moments. If you can't do something now, it just means you can't do it YET.

The Magical Yet is a beautifully illustrated, inclusive picture book written by Angela DiTerlizzi. She wrote more than ten drafts to get this book just right! The pictures are by Colombian illustrator and artist Lorena Alvarez who loves to experiment with color and diverse techniques.

DECEMBER

Re-Defining Health



#SCISDragonfit



Suggested Activities*:

- **Respond in your native language:** Share 3 words that you view as important in the topic of health & well-being
- **Share:** Identify a health-related goal using the SMART goal format
- **Draw or create a photo collage:** Are “health” and “well-being” the same? How might you show the similarities / differences?
- **Record a video:** How have our views on health & well-being changed over time?
- **Record a conversation:** How are views about health & well-being shaped by an increasingly interconnected / global world?

* **Remember:** You can directly respond to one of the above OR simply reflect in any way you wish on the overall theme of “Re-Defining Health”



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22/23
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