The EDUCATOR

The newsletter of Osaka International School of Kwansei Gakuin







Spring 2025

Table of Contents

The table of contents is hyperlinked; please click on the article to go to the relevant page.

From the Head of School 3

Student Learning

PYP Early Years Programme Kindergarten 4
PYP Grade 1: A Community of All Ages 7
PYP Grade 3: Connecting Cultures Through the Performing Arts 10
PYP Grade 4: Unit of Inquiry 12
PYP Art: Making Art to Become Artists 14
PYP Music: Music Harmony in Action 16
PYP: Unlocking Literacy 18
K-12: Back-to-School Nights 19
MYP English: Grade 8 20
Grade 9 Poetry 24
Grade 9 Short Stories 26
MYP English: Grade 10 Reading Buddies 35
MS/HS Music 38
MYP Science: Grade 6 39
Grade 8 40
Grade 10 41
Diploma Programme Results 43
MYP & DP Mathematics: New Calculator Recommendations 44
DP Japanese: G11 46
DP Biology: Grade 11 46
DP Physics: Grade 11 48
DP Physics: Grade 12 50
DP Collaborative Science Project: Grade 12 51
DP Creativity, Activity, Service: Grade 11 Service Trip to Cambodia 52
MS/HS: Learning Outcome Awards 54
MS/HS: OIS and External Awards 57
HS Graduation Ceremony 58
K-12 Approaches ot Learning: Transfer Skills 60
Calendar Reminders 63
K-12 Student Progress & Curriculum Information 64

From the OIS Parent-Teacher Association 66
From the SOIS International Fair Committee 68
Welcome to new OIS Faculty 70
Important Numbers and Links 71

From the Head of School



KURT MECKLEM

This magazine is ambitious. OIS faculty members have spent a lot of time and effort putting these pages together to give you some sense of what is happening on our campus. A quick glance will tell you that there is a lot happening.

Our mission is to develop "informed, caring, creative individuals contributing to a global community". You might say that setting this as a goal is also ambitious. However, you should see evidence of this in the pages that follow. Whether it is kindergarten students becoming informed by inquiring into "mini-beasts", or our grade 11 students contributing to service projects in Cambodia, we are striving to reach the ideals outlined in our mission. You will also see evidence of creativity, not just in art, but when learning about cultures, or writing in English. Caring is apparent throughout these pages. See if you can spot all of the pictures of older students working with and mentoring their younger colleagues.

Living up to our mission takes constant effort. It is ambitious, but we are confident that when you come to the end of this magazine and the photos of the graduates holding up their diplomas, you'll see that we have made a difference in the lives of the young people whose families have entrusted their education to us.

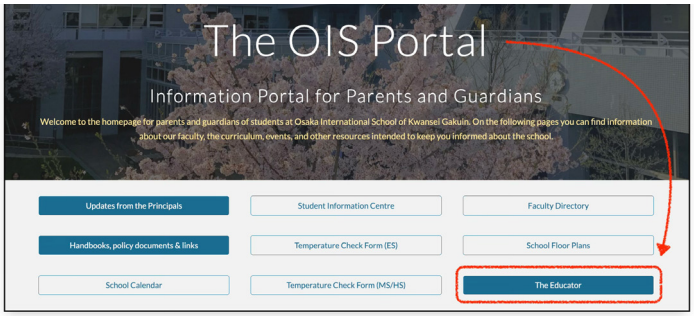
Perhaps the only area we've been too ambitious is in trying to capture everything that is happening in this school in the limited number of pages you are holding. There is so much more to a school than it is possible to include here. Still, I hope you take a moment to read through these articles and develop some sense of what we are about. If you are an existing parent, it gives you some insight into what your children are up to when they leave you to come through our doors. If you are considering OIS, I encourage you to use this Educator as an introduction to who we are, but then contact us to find out more. Because, as great as this looks, there is a lot more to who we are than you will see here.



About The Educator

The Educator, the newsletter of Osaka International School of Kwansei Gakuin, is published twice per year, with one mid-year edition, and one end-of-year edition, and provides a look at a selection of the learning, activities, events, and accomplishments from the first and then the second half of each academic year. Feedback and requests on the contents of the newsletter are always welcome; please send your comments to oisprincipals@soismail.jp

To access the hyperlinks in the printed copy of *The Educator*, please access the PDF version from the OIS Parent Portal, or use the QR code on the cover. Please also make sure to check out our other OIS publication, the student-led Tango newsletter, also available to download from our website.



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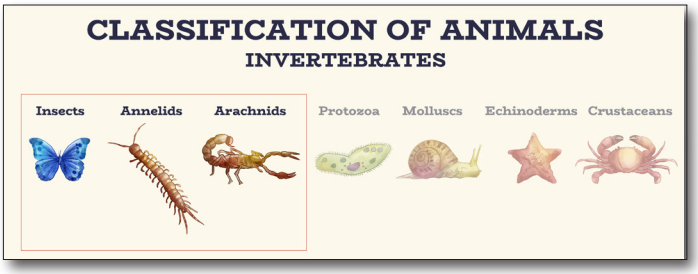
PYP Early Years: Kindergarten Unit of Inquiry



DAWN INADA

Under the transdisciplinary theme of Sharing the Planet, children in Kindergarten inquired into the wonderful world of minibeasts. We explored different types of minibeasts, how they interact with other living things, and how we can respect and protect them.

The term minibeasts refers to small invertebrate (not having a backbone) animals. Although the term "minibeast" is not an official classification, it is a useful way of referring to different groups of invertebrates at once. All insects are invertebrates, but not all invertebrates are insects! For our inquiry, we looked at insects, arachnids and annelids.



Throughout the inquiry we explored the fascinating variety of these small creatures, and their unique characteristics. We gathered information from a variety of informative sources, including fiction and non-fiction books, videos, guest speakers, a field trip and our own developing observation skills!



Our guest speakers were instrumental in enriching our inquiry through their personal experiences with minibeasts. Anna's dad spoke about the minibeasts that live in and visit their family garden. As such, we learned more about the interactions that take place among these living things.



Anna and her sister Mia, taught us about the rhinoceros beetles that they are raising at home. We learned about their life cycle and were able to witness this in real life, when Anna's mom returned weeks later to show us the pupa!





Seobeen presented on the caterpillars that his family was observing in their lemon trees at home.



PYP Early Years: Kindergarten Unit of Inquiry (continued)

Kaori-sensei brought in caterpillars from her yard and we were able to observe the complete metamorphosis! When the butterflies emerged from their chrysalises, we enjoyed watching them fly away, to their new and purposeful lives.





Over the course of this meaningful inquiry, we grew to recognize the importance of these little individuals. What we often see as a frightening or pesky "bug", is actually an extraordinarily critical member of our world ecosystems. Minibeasts help us in many ways.

Each child chose a minibeast to learn more about and created an illustrated book.

















continued on next page

PYP Early Years: Kindergarten Unit of Inquiry (continued)

As a culmination of the unit, they presented their books and knowledge at our *Minibeast Mini Expo*. They practiced communication and self-management skills as they interacted with familiar and unfamiliar visitors to their tables. Their maturity and composure was very impressive. Never underestimate the capabilities of our youngest learners!



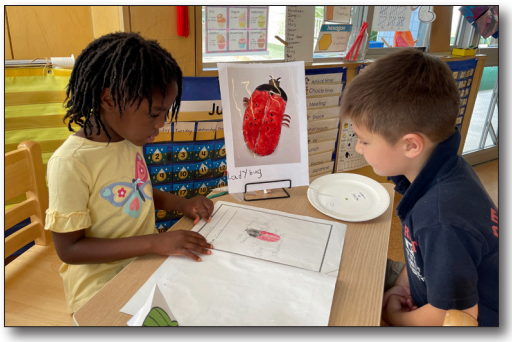






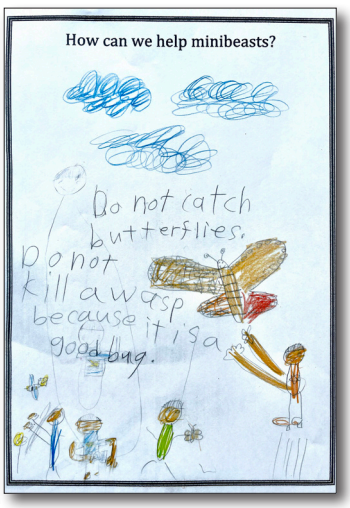


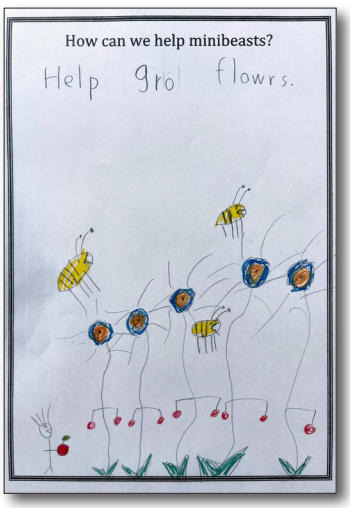


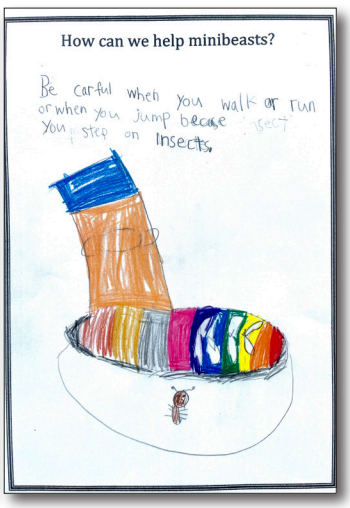


Take it from this group of experts; Minibeasts are important! Respect and Protect them!









PYP: Grade 1 A Community of All Ages



WAKABA MORI

A person once visited our school and remarked, "The most significant beauty of this school is having students from kindergarten to high school." His words, simple yet profound, captured something truly special about SOIS. The person was my father.

Indeed, our school is more than just a place of academic learning—it is a vibrant, inclusive community where students of all ages grow and thrive together. From our youngest learners in kindergarten to our graduating seniors in high school, SOIS fosters a unique environment where every student plays a meaningful role.

What sets SOIS apart is the richness that comes from this wide age range. It creates countless opportunities for cross-grade and cross-school interaction. Whether through shared events, mentoring programs, or collaborative projects, students learn not only from teachers but also from one another. Older students model leadership and responsibility, while younger students bring curiosity, creativity, and energy that inspire the entire school.

This year, our Grade 1 students experienced an energetic and interconnected learning journey that extended far beyond their own classroom walls. Throughout the year, they had opportunities to visit various elementary classrooms to listen to presentations, participate in hands-on activities, and celebrate student achievements across grade levels. Whether reading each week with their Grade 3 buddies, exploring science and baking together, or attending the Grade 2 STEAM Expo, Grade 4 markets, KAKB presentations, or the Grade 5 PYP Exhibition, our young learners grew through rich cross-grade learning experiences.







Clockwise from top: G1 students reading with G3 buddies, participating in the G4 market, watching a G5 presentation, and participating in Sports Day.





PYP: Grade 1 A Community of All Ages (continued)

These connections extended beyond the elementary grades. High school students played a meaningful and supportive role in the elementary learning journey. Grade 10 readers joined the class twice a year, creating warm and meaningful inter-age relationships (see Ms. Streicher's article on page 35). High school Garden Club volunteers supported the Grade 1 students during their composting lessons, helping them explore sustainability and care for the environment in hands-on ways. They also helped with the ES Earth Week assembly. When it came time for the cross-grade planting project, it was high school students who softened the soil in the garden. Even beyond the classroom, high schoolers contributed by volunteering with elementary after-school clubs, offering their time and energy to help enrich the younger students' experiences.



High school Garden Club volunteers supported the Grade 1 students during their composting lessons.

One of the most heartwarming aspects of SOIS is the natural bond that forms between students of different ages. Older students are not simply gentle and kind to younger ones because they are told to be, but it comes from genuine interaction, shared spaces, and a strong sense of community. By learning and growing together in the same environment, empathy and respect develop organically.

In the hallways, classrooms, cafeteria and playgrounds, it's common to see older students guiding, encouraging, and looking out for the younger ones. These moments aren't scripted; they arise from a shared sense of belonging and natural care that defines the culture of SOIS.

At the same time, younger students often look up to their middle and high school peers with admiration and curiosity. They observe them studying, collaborating, and enjoying school life together, sparking questions and aspirations about what lies ahead in their own learning journeys. These moments of observation and imagination help shape their goals and inspire confidence in what they can become.

This natural interaction across age groups creates a truly unique and supportive learning environment—one where leadership, curiosity, and community are nurtured every day.







PYP: Grade 1 A Community of All Ages (continued)

Furthermore, SOIS is proud to celebrate diversity, not only in terms of age, but also culture. Our students come from a wide range of backgrounds, creating a multicultural environment where respect, understanding, and global-mindedness are part of daily life. This spirit of connection extends beyond students, and it is also reflected in the collaboration among teachers across different school levels. At SOIS, teachers try to work together to create meaningful, authentic learning experiences that go beyond traditional classroom boundaries. A wonderful example of this is seen in how Grade 1 students had the opportunities to learn from teachers outside their own division.

They explored the fascinating world of plasma with SIS high school science teacher Kono-sensei, learned about life-saving skills and AEDs from PE teacher Hirai-sensei, and learned how we express ourselves during a special visit to the high school band class led by music teacher Nishikawa-sensei, where they were warmly welcomed by high school students.

These cross-school learning experiences not only deepen student understanding but also nurture curiosity, inspire connections, and make learning more relevant and engaging. They show students, especially our young students, that learning is a lifelong journey shared across grades, disciplines, and generations.

In this dynamic setting, learning goes far beyond the classroom. It becomes a shared journey where experiences are exchanged across grades and friendships are formed across age groups. This is the true beauty of SOIS - a school that feels like a community, a family, and a place where every student, no matter their age, belongs.

SOIS is a truly beautiful learning community.









Learning about music, plasma, AEDs, and team sports with the help of SOIS HS students and teachers.







PYP: Grade 3 Connecting Cultures Through the Performing Arts



BRETT WRIGHT

Unit of Inquiry
How We Express Ourselves (HWEO)

Central Idea
People express and appreciate different cultures through the arts.

For our final unit, our Grade 3 students embarked on a deeply meaningful and joyful journey through the performing arts of cultures around the world. As part of our transdisciplinary theme "How We Express Ourselves," students explored the central idea: People express and appreciate different cultures through the arts. While the central idea intentionally framed a broad concept, our teaching team honed in specifically on performing arts such as dance, music, and storytelling, as the focus for inquiry, creative expression, and personal growth. What unfolded was a unit rich with exploration, collaboration, and transformation.

A key goal of this unit was to amplify student agency, which is the belief in their capacity to direct their own learning with meaningful choice and voice. Students began the unit by exploring short video clips of traditional performances from a wide range of cultures. These snippets sparked questions, curiosity, and initial reflections. From there, students used Britannica School, Kiddle and other age-appropriate databases to research specific cultural performances, from the Haka of New Zealand, to the Tinikling of the Philippines and the Hula of Hawaii. We guided students to ask: *What is the purpose of this performance? What cultural values does it express? What do we feel or understand when we watch it?* These questions helped students move from just gathering facts to developing deeper insights.

Rather than present a typical class performance, students created a full theatrical play, collaboratively building a story around two main characters, Rihito from Japan and Liya from Israel, who travel across cultures via a magical teleporter while learning personal and cultural lessons through dance. With every country visited, Rihito and Liya encountered a new group of performers who not only shared their cultural dance but also the values behind it, such as peace through Hula, courage through the Haka, and cooperation through Tinikling. Crucially, every student contributed to shaping the script, from character development to cultural explanations, and every student had a speaking role. Dance performances were choreographed in collaboration with students, based on their research and interpretation. As a result, the final performance was more than just a show; it was a culmination of inquiry, personal growth, and intercultural appreciation. Students demonstrated not only what they had learned about other cultures, but also how the arts connect people across the world. This experience also showed how the IB Primary Years Programme encourages agency, inquiry, and international-mindedness. Students made real decisions, asked real questions, and saw themselves as both learners and communicators.







PYP: Grade 3 (continued)

In addition to our theatrical play, Grade 3 students took on a second exciting challenge: creating shadow puppet plays to share cultural stories from around the world. This collaborative project was developed with our wonderful art teacher, Ms. Nana, who introduced students to the art of shadow puppetry, inspired by artist Lotte Reiniger. Students selected stories from our school library that represented cultures from Thailand, Liberia, Finland, and beyond. From designing intricate puppets to recording expressive audio narrations, students engaged in a process that was both creative and rigorous. Along the way, they encountered meaningful challenges such as how to make puppet designs clearly visible and whether narration should be performed live or recorded. These moments encouraged deep thinking, reflection, and collaboration.

Rather than turning the stories into formal scripts, students focused on reading and retelling them with fluency and expression. This helped them improve their reading comprehension and oral presentation skills. They also practiced identifying the most important ideas and supporting details, which connected strongly to our literacy goals, while exploring cultural perspectives through the arts. Like the theatrical play, this project too exemplified key aspects of IB PYP learning. Students exercised agency by making choices about their stories and their performance approach. They connected learning across subjects including language, art, and social studies, and they developed international-mindedness by stepping into the role of cultural storytellers. Pleasingly, the final performances were beautiful and meaningful, reminding us all of how stories can help preserve culture and bring people together.





PYP: The Programme of Inquiry

Six broad transdisciplinary themes provide the framework around which our curriculum is organized to ensure structured inquiry and the construction of knowledge. The six themes are part of the common ground that unifies the curriculums in all PYP schools across the world. These themes represent our Programme of Inquiry, and are:

- Who We Are (WWA)
- Where We Are in Place and Time (WWAIPT)
- How We Express Ourselves (HWEO) *
- How the World Works (HTWW)
- How We Organize Ourselves (HWOO)
- Sharing the Planet (STP)

All six themes are covered in each grade level from grade 1 to grade 4; grade 5 replaces *How We Express Ourselves* unit with the PYP Exhibition. In KA and KB, four themes are covered including *Who We Are* and *How We Express Ourselves*. Teachers design units of inquiry for each theme in collaboration with our specialist Art, Music, PE, and Japanese teachers. Through this process, students develop an understanding of important concepts, acquire essential skills and knowledge, develop particular attitudes and learn to take socially responsible action. 'Transdisciplinary' refers to each theme's application across subject areas. In this way learning is realistic and authentic.

You can find more information about each grade's Programme of Inquiry through ManageBac and our Back-to-School Night presentations on September 5.

PYP: Grade 4 Unit of Inquiry



JENNIFER CAMPBELL

Unit of Inquiry
How The World Works (HTWW)

Central Idea
How we use technology impacts our well-being positively and negatively.

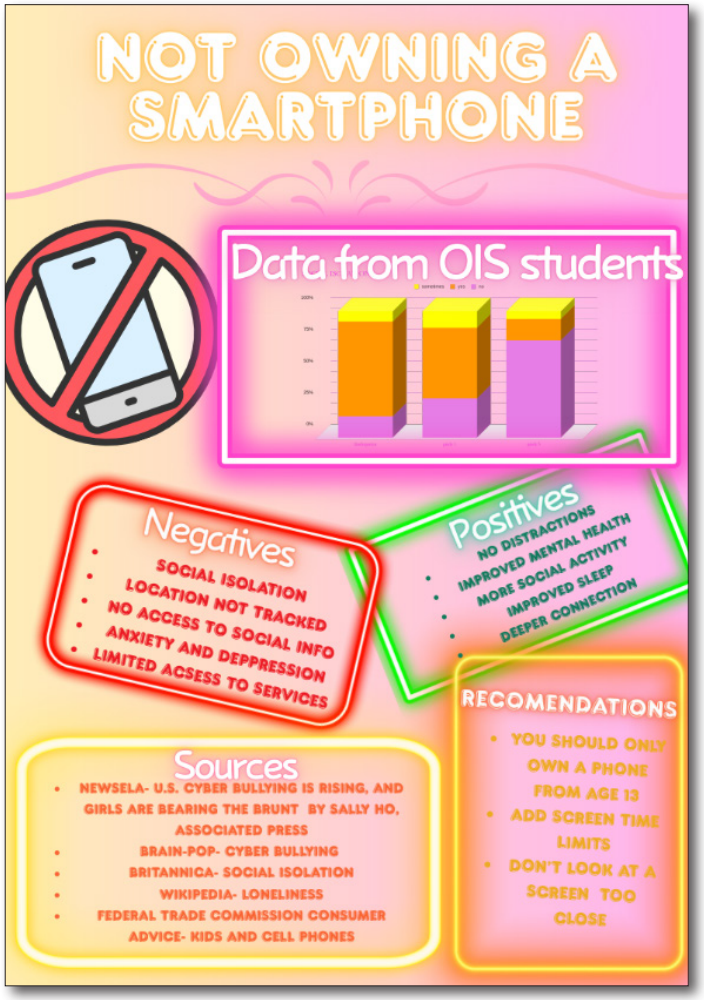
Lines of Inquiry

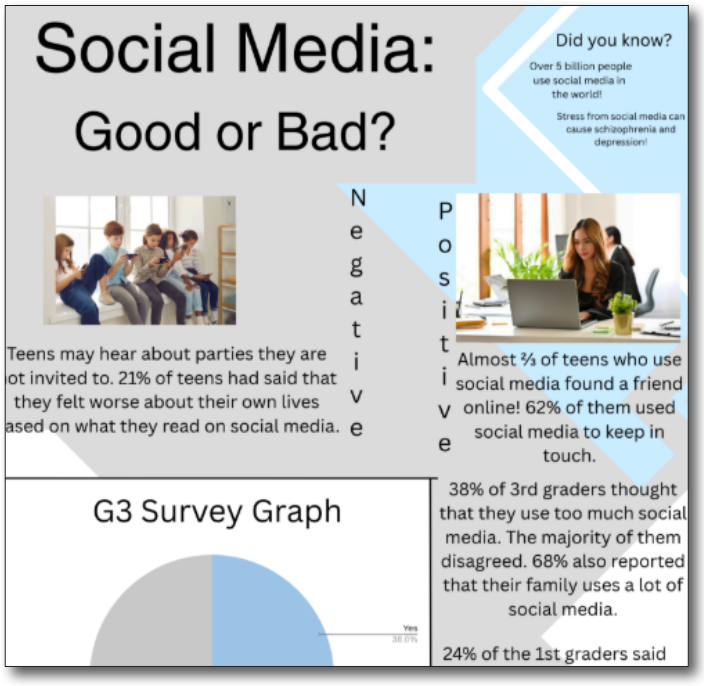
- How we express ourselves using technology.
- Technology's impact on relationships and health.
- How understanding technology helps us make better choices about our well-being.

As a teacher and a parent, one of the main reasons I feel that the IB Program best prepares our children for the future is the focus on the *Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills*. Traditional educational models are often centred around memorising facts and covering content, which is becoming increasingly irrelevant in today's rapidly evolving information environment. The ATL Skills (Thinking, Communication, Social, Self-management, and Research) serve as a lens that facilitates students to inquire into complex ideas, think deeply, communicate effectively, and take ownership of their learning. This framework can be a powerful foundation to explore difficult concepts in our ever-changing world.

It was through the lens of the ATL skills that the Grade Four students explored the central idea, "How we use technology impacts our well-being positively and negatively." As technology becomes increasingly interwoven with every aspect of our daily life, we are challenged to reflect on how technology is influencing our choices, habits, and relationships. These are questions that even we as adults are still learning to navigate, making this a truly relevant and thought-provoking inquiry for Elementary school students.

Students first chose a topic of interest related to how a certain aspect of technology affects them positively and negatively. They formulated different questions to ask the other Elementary students, surveying and collecting data from students from kindergarten to Grade Five. As they considered the survey responses and patterns in the data, they utilised their analytical thinking skills to draw conclusions based on the evidence. We also used our mathematical learning from this year to represent our data using percentages. Students used their research skills to investigate the positive and negative aspects of their chosen technology in more depth, reading news articles, scientific studies, and recommendations from reliable health organisations. Finally, students created engaging posters that expressed their findings to their audience.

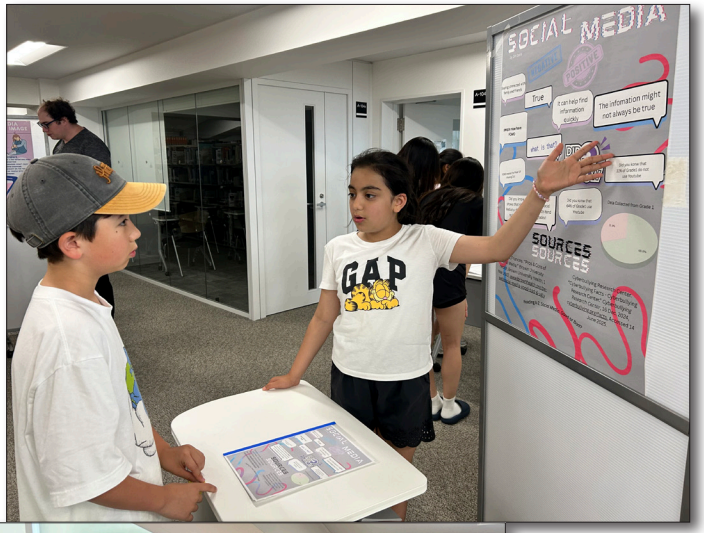


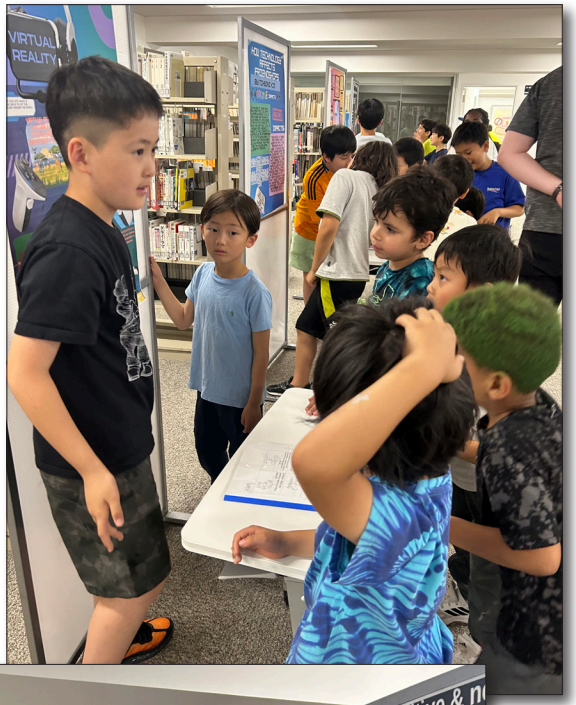


PYP: Grade 4 Unit of Inquiry (continued)

As the final phase of our inquiry process, students shared their learning around this very important topic with the school community in a mini-exhibition. It was a challenge to their social, communication, and thinking skills for the Grade Four to explain complex ideas to both younger and older audiences. Communicating learning verbally is a vital skill that allows students to express their ideas clearly and thoughtfully. Many students also enjoyed presenting in multiple languages. The Grade Fours particularly enjoyed hearing feedback from their Grade Five mentors, who had just recently completed the PYP Exhibition.

The ATL skills are central to helping students explore important topics like technology and well-being, while developing the skills needed for lifelong learning. The inquiry process in Grade Four builds a strong foundation in thinking, communication, social, research, and self-management skills - preparing students not only for the PYP Exhibition in Grade Five, but also for their future learning journey as a whole. By engaging deeply with meaningful concepts and practicing these skills, students become confident, independent learners ready to navigate our ever-changing world.









Each edition of *The Educator* includes an article that focuses on one of the ATL skills in some depth. A compilation of recent articles on ATL skills can be downloaded here.

PYP Art: Making Art to Become Artists



NANA HAYASHI

Midway through the school year, students were introduced to a new approach to art class we call "Studio Time." One third-grader explains, "We can do things freely in different centers. The teacher usually says, 'do this, do that' but we can explore anything we want." Rather than reproducing a teacher-directed activity, students get opportunities to behave and think like real artists by engaging in art-making of their choice.

Along with this choice-based experience, students also become familiar with the *Studio Habits of Mind*, eight key mindsets that encourage artistic thinking:

- envision
- stretch and explore
- express
- engage and persist
- reflect
- observe
- develop craft
- understand art worlds

These mindsets stress process and reflection over technical skill and end-products, making them transferable to other subject-areas, and more importantly, to life beyond the classroom. We begin to see that just as artists develop their craft, so do engineers, mechanics, surgeons, comedians. The persistence needed while making an artwork reflects the resilience needed to overcome challenges in everyday life.

Explicitly naming and using these mindsets calls attention to them, and gives them power and importance. At the beginning of a Studio Time session, we might set a focus: "Today, the challenge is to add a feeling, an idea, or a story into your piece (Express)." At the end of class, students might reflect with questions like: "What mistakes did you make and learn from? What did you push yourself to try that was new?" (Stretch and Explore). Using the mindsets to reflect on one's process, choices, and attitudes while making art becomes just as valuable as the creating.

While Studio Time gives children freedom and autonomy, it is still grounded in clear routines and expectations which are taught and consistently practiced. Students learn to choose appropriate materials, set up their workspaces, and return supplies responsibly. They may work independently, or in small groups, so long as art-making is happening. The teacher gives short mini-lessons on skills or techniques, which students can apply right away or come back to when ready. The teacher's job now is to observe, offer tips to individuals and groups, or call attention to artists and techniques that speak to what students are working on.

Since the introduction of Studio Time, students have noticeably been more engaged. On display are now wonderfully original pieces that reflect the unique ideas, feelings, and stories of their maker. With greater ownership of their creative process and language to describe their thinking, students are not only making art, they are becoming artists.











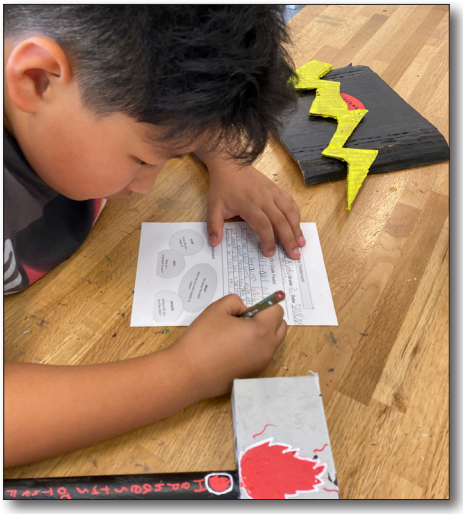
PYP Art: Making Art to Become Artists (continued)



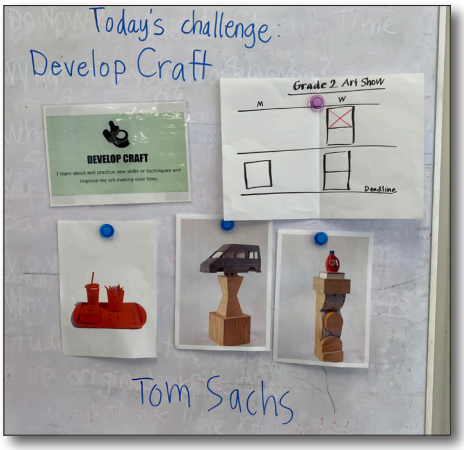














PYP: Music Harmony in Action



CASEY CONFORZI

As we close another vibrant year in the elementary music room, it's a joy to reflect on the evolving soundscape – or noisescape - of learning that has echoed through the halls from Kindergarten A/B to Grade 5. Our school's music program continues to be a space where curiosity, creativity, and collaboration meet.

The classroom is inspired by the theories of Vygotsky and Albert Bandura, recognizing the social nature of learning and the powerful role of modeling, guided exploration, and peer interaction. Within this framework, music becomes a shared language through which students construct meaning, express identity, and take ownership of their growth.

Pedagogically, we continue to explore the interplay between Orff and Kodály approaches. While discussions around the limitations and strengths of each are ongoing in the music education community, my aim is to strike a meaningful balance. Through Orff's emphasis on movement, rhythm, and ensemble play, and Kodály's sequential focus on ear training and vocal development, students experience a holistic music education that emphasizes both instrumental fluency and vocal confidence.

















PYP: Music Harmony in Action (continued)

Performances are central to our classroom culture. They are treated not as high-stakes outcomes, but as natural celebrations of process. No matter the goal, students have embraced the challenge of performing collaboratively. These moments lay a strong foundation for the transition into the IB MYP Music programme that starts in Grade 6.

One of the greatest joys this year has been witnessing the power of student voice and choice in action. Students are encouraged to explore different roles in ensemble settings, taking on rhythm, bass lines, or harmony parts beyond just the melody. This fosters both musical independence and deeper listening skills. Lunchtime rehearsals have also become an organic part of school life, with students voluntarily returning to the music room to revisit class content, practice private lesson repertoire, or try a new instrument just for fun.

As we look toward the next school year, this model will continue to grow, especially among our upper elementary students in Grades 3, 4, and 5. The goal remains to nurture joyful, confident, and musically literate students who see themselves not only as learners, but as creators and contributors.

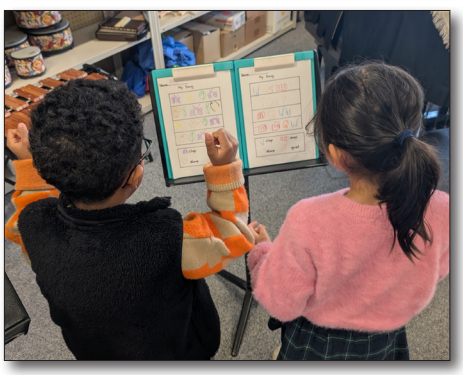














PYP: Unlocking Literacy





PAULA DEZEM, TREVOR JONES,
& CARY MECKLEM

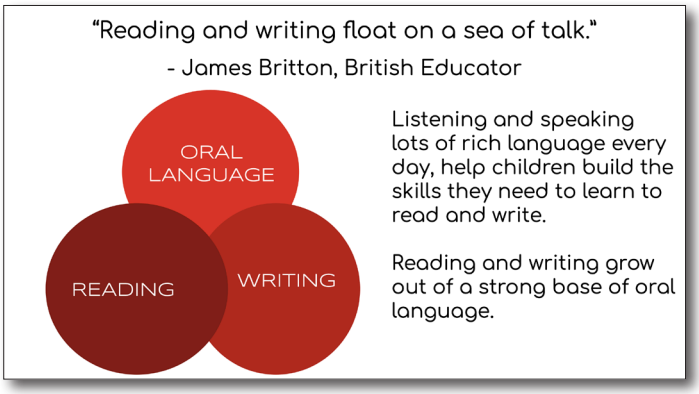
Helping children thrive as readers and thinkers

On May 1, we had the pleasure of presenting "Unlocking Literacy," a session designed to unpack the complex process of learning to read and write, and how we can support children on this journey both at school and at home.

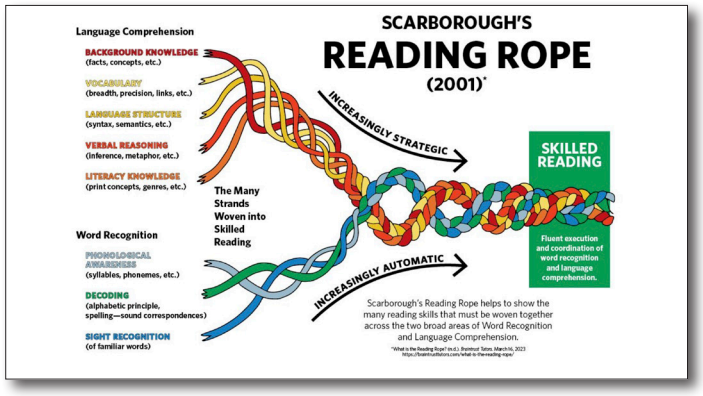
The session began by exploring how language develops in young children. It all starts with listening - from the babbling of infants to the conversations that build vocabulary and understanding. Speaking follows naturally, as children begin expressing their thoughts and ideas. These foundational oral language skills form the bedrock for reading and writing, which require more explicit instruction and practice.



A central message of the session was that reading and writing don't happen in isolation. They "float on a sea of talk," as British educator James Britton once said. Research consistently shows a strong link between oral language proficiency and literacy development. The more children are exposed to and engage in meaningful language, the more equipped they are to make sense of written words and express themselves through writing.



We also introduced Scarborough's Reading Rope, a visual framework that illustrates how skilled reading develops from two tightly woven strands: decoding (sounding out words) and language comprehension (making sense of the words). Through practical examples, including a paragraph with some nonsense words, parents experienced how phonics helps children decode unfamiliar words. On the other hand, comprehension draws on a complex set of skills, like understanding word meanings (semantics), sentence structures (syntax), making inferences, and monitoring understanding. In a nutshell, decoding is a crucial beginning but it's these broader comprehension processes that bring reading to life.



Another key takeaway was the role that background knowledge plays in reading comprehension, alongside vocabulary, reasoning, and language skills, in helping children make sense of what they read. When children are familiar with a topic, they are far more likely to understand texts related to it. This highlights the value of exposing children to a wide range of experiences, stories, and conversations.



PYP: Unlocking Literacy (continued)

In the PYP, literacy development doesn't happen in isolation from other learning. We intentionally integrate reading and writing into our Units of Inquiry because literacy is a tool for thinking, learning, and communicating ideas. It also gives the students the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of important concepts they are engaging with across other subject areas such as social studies, science and math. As students explore concepts in their unit, they work on different types of genres, such as informational, narrative, and persuasive texts. This gives more purpose to their reading and writing, helping them apply literacy skills in meaningful ways.

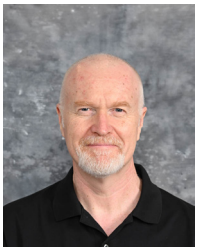


For families, staying connected to what's happening in the classroom and talking about the topics, providing related experiences, or reading and watching programs together, helps children strengthen the language, vocabulary, and knowledge that support comprehension and engagement. Together, we can help the students grow into not only capable readers, but thoughtful, curious, and confident learners.

It was exciting to have so many enthusiastic families join together to partner with us to build strong literacy connections between home and school. We hope that similar and additional literacy workshops with parents will be on offer next year.

A copy of the presentation slides *Unlocking Literacy for PYP Parents_ May2025* can be found by clicking on this link or following this QR code, and can also be found on the library website under *Presentations* here.

Back-to-School Nights



STEPHEN FRATER

Highlights on this trimester's calendar include our Back-to-School Nights (BTSN) for parents on September 5 (grades K-5) and September 11 (grades 6-12).

Bringing parents and teachers together on these evenings is an important opportunity to strengthen our school community, for the benefit of all of our students. Parents gain a better understanding on their child's or children's learning environment, classroom expectations, upcoming events and field trips, and information on the curriculum. They can also meet (or catch up with) other parents, and learn how and when they can volunteer to help around the classroom or the school, which is greatly welcomed and highly valued.

Teachers can learn a little more about the students coming into the grade, although the purpose of the evening is to generally to talk about the class as a whole, and to explain to parents what is going to happen this year, when, how, and why.

Tips to maximize the benefits of the event include:

• We hope to see all parents at the evenings, however if you cannot attend, please send a short email to the teacher(s) to let them know you would still like to access any slides or handouts shared with the other parents. All teacher email addresses are accessible through the OIS Parent Portal.

• Take notes and, if possible, write down your questions in advance to ensure you don't miss the opportunity to ask the questions that matter to you.

• Please keep checking the dedicated BTSN pages on the OIS Parent Portal for up-to-date information. Look under *Resources & Links/Back-to-School Night*.

MYP: English - Grade 8



DAVID ALGIE

Grade 8: *Students write shooting scripts in response to Animal Farm*

Mr. Jones, a farmer, is an evil tyrant who victimizes his hardworking animals. Suddenly, they rebel and overthrow him. Will the animals be able to create a peaceful and prosperous society, free from future tyranny? This is the setup to George Orwell's famous novella *Animal Farm*.

The Grade 8 students read *Animal Farm* in the spring trimester, making connections to their learning in Individuals and Society class, whether to the terrors of the French Revolution or the upheavals of the Industrial Revolution. One concept they explored was propaganda—the use of mass media to influence public opinion and shape political thought. This idea is central to *Animal Farm*; in the novella Orwell illustrates how easily propaganda techniques can be used to control and deceive.

Students were challenged to write a shooting script for an imaginary propaganda film created by one of the political animals in the novella. What is a shooting script? It's a type of screenplay that not only includes dialogue and action but also provides detailed directions about what the camera will show, how the actors should express emotions, and how sound will be used—both diegetic sound (originating within the world of the film) and non-diegetic sound (such as narration and background music, which only the audience can hear).

This activity gave students a chance to apply what they had learned throughout the year about how words and other elements can be combined to influence an audience. It allowed them to demonstrate their understanding of the characters and themes in the story. Creating an imaginary propaganda film also encouraged students to reflect on how easily we can be influenced by a blend of language, images, and music—a timely reminder to think critically about the media we consume.

Check out Yoonho's shooting script on pages 21-23. It's well worth reading. Every sentence, every note, and every direction is carefully crafted to persuade his imagined audience: the animals of *Animal Farm*.





Oil paintings of scenes from Animal Farm by Omar Rayyan (https://suntup.press/animal-farm/)

MYP: English - Grade 8 (continued)

MESSAGE: Join the true revolution against the tyranny of Napoleon (created by Snowball).

Bold = New speaker, (brackets with *Italics*) = Instructions for actor, *Italics* = Emphasis, Red = Camera movement, Orange = Audio

Open with a wide shot and panning of the dismal ruins of a windmill, with rain battering the barely standing crater of the mill's base. Bricks are strewn around haphazardly, and a few strides away, two baby chicks shiver in the cold, trudging forward. Minor key piano music flows quietly but significantly.

Skinny, smaller chick:
"When will we reach shelter?"

Skinny but slightly larger chick:
(Worn-down determination in his eyes)
"That structure will be good enough."

The two stumble into the debris. It hardly protects the two from the elements. The smaller chick plops down, trembling pitifully and dripping.

Smaller chick:
"When will Mother be back?"

Larger chick:
"She is gone, remember? She sacrificed herself."

Smaller chick:
(Innocently and naively.)
"Why?"

Larger chick:
"The Lords take all the eggs from the hens. We weren't supposed to exist in the eyes of the Lords. Mother had to give up herself to save us."

The larger chick stares up at the dark, cloudy sky as he imagines the Lords: the pigs and farmers. They grin cruelly, their similar faces twisting into each other's. Napoleon has the largest smile, and he grips a whip with his stubby trotter. Slow zoom-in on Napoleon's merciless sneer.

Smaller chick:
"But… if Mother's gone, who will help us?"

Tears slowly roll down the smaller chick's face. Extreme close-up and slow-motion. The diegetic sound of the storm abates and in place, the non-diegetic sad piano music swells.

MYP: English - Grade 8 (continued)

Narrator (Non-diegetic sound):
(*A deep, foreboding voice, like that of an Oracle or clairvoyant. Simply put, the average dramatic narrator voice.*)

"This bleak future is not so distant. Ever since Napoleon took over Animal Farm, he has rapidly gained more and more unchecked power. He expelled Snowball, a highly respected pig, just because he was a political rival."

Footage plays of the infamous attempted assassination of Snowball. Zoom into medium close-up on the vicious dogs and Napoleon's unwavering trotter. Dogs growling and barking are the only sound amidst the terror.

Narrator:
"Animalism in its true form is equality for all, with fair rules that respect and consider all animals. Meanwhile, Napoleon has undone every single commandment that has been written since the start of Animal Farm."

"No animal shall drink alcohol."

A recording is shown of the pigs clanking their beer mugs together, sitting around a table. They laugh and chew apples as they chat. The video is taken from outside a window, and rustling sounds of foliage can be heard. The recording cuts as one of the pigs notices the camera and points.

"No animal shall sleep in a bed."

Quivery footage plays of the farmhouse beds in near pitch-black darkness, with the pigs sleeping in them. The footage abruptly cuts to a Dutch tilt, and from the floor it is shown that a sheep, the animal recording, has been seized by the dogs. The pigs gather around and watch unsympathetically.

"No animal shall kill another animal."

A clip of the brutal massacre of the guilty animals in the forced confession. The camera shakes unsteadily, as if the recorder is frightened of getting caught. A dark, bass string plays unnervingly.

"Whatever goes upon two legs is an enemy."

A compilation is shown of Napoleon shaking hands with Mr. Whymper, Mr. Pilkington, Mr. Frederick, and other humans.

"All animals are equal."

MYP: English - Grade 8 (continued)

A photo is shown of the pigs lounging around, guzzling milk, while the other animals toil in the fields. In another image, Napoleon's portrait hangs in the farmhouse. In a different wide shot, Napoleon walks on two feet, clad in Jones's clothes, holding a whip menacingly. A horrified crowd stands nearby, backing away subtly.

"Sadly, these are only some of the cases of the savagery happening in the hands of Napoleon. Many more have happened during Napoleon's reign."

Various videos are shown of increasingly alarming incidents like Squealer tumbling down his ladder in the midst of altering the written commandments, the chicken shed being guarded by dogs to block any support to the hens, the horse slaughterer van driving away, and finally Napoleon reverting the farm's name back to Manor Farm, painting over the sign.

"The foundational philosophies of Animalism have been crumbled, and soon it will be too late for any salvation. The innocent lives of anyone under Napoleon's oppression are endangered."

A medium shot of Snowball himself appears on the screen now. The music brightens, and a poignant chorus of strings harmonize in a mix of emotions. A sunset behind him rises.

Snowball:

(*Hope-filled and determined, with the aura of a political leader.*)

"There is still hope. We can work towards a new future. These horrendous actions can be our turning point."

(*Suddenly, his face turns more serious.*) Medium close-up.

"But under Napoleon's rule, these horrendous actions could be the beginning. The beginning of more pain to come."

(*Mournfully, tears welling up, but also angrily.*)

"Boxer, our role model, was only weeks away from his retirement when the pigs hired the knackers because they couldn't spare a couple pence to reward their hardest worker, most loyal follower, and kindest friend."

(*Back to resolute, firm gaze.*)

"Do we really want more undeserved suffering to the sinless slaves of a Napoleon-centric society? I know how it feels, so I doubt anyone does. Then please, send support for Snowball and the greater good."

A could-be future of freedom is shown with an extreme wide shot of animals galloping around a pasture with the windmill in the background, powering mangel-slicers (a call-back to his previous campaign promises). Birds fly around in the sky. The triumphant music swells for a final time. (fin)

MYP: English - Grade 9 Poetry



LORI STREICHER
& MICHAEL
DZORKPATA



G9: *Creative writing celebration*

What makes MYP English fascinating is the opportunity it gives students to develop as writers. In the MYP, students are challenged to produce what they learn. Three times in the academic year, students produce remarkable works of fiction. In the fall trimester, they produce an additional act in the drama unit, followed by a winter trimester anthology of poems in the poetry unit.

In the spring trimester, students read and appreciate a variety of short stories culminating in the composition of their personal stories.

By also analyzing these works critically, students are able to deepen their understanding of authorial choices and how they are deployed. From the fall trimester, students are encouraged to save their creations pending the exhibitions in June. For the second consecutive time this year students were given the opportunity to share their experience of the writing process; by engaging their audiences and explaining their rationale, themes and creative choices, the students improved their critical thinking, communication and public speaking skills. This second edition of the creative writing celebration was a resounding success; we thank the OIS community for coming to interact with our young writers. Below are some works featured during the exhibition.

Poetry



Life with Nature
~By Tomohito Hisamori

I stand here as silence nears,
The wind billowing from an open campfire.
The sound of the soft breeze that passes by,
leaving a slight scent of black amber.

The breeze whispers in my ears,
Carrying secrets only we share.
One glance at the greenery empties my soul,
Filling this emptiness with nature flow.

Not a single thing can stop me,
Not a single thing can break this silence.
Within the arms of nature,
I am weightless, I am free.

The Girls in the Flower Field
~By Catalina Nishino

Oh what a vibrant and serene sight
Fanflowers,coneflowers,andCupflowersunderthebluesky
Dancing along with the wind in delight
Almost covering up a girl close by

What is this girl doing here?
This flower field is far from town
She's all by herself, no one else is near
Aftercheckinghersurroundings,shestartsshiftingaround

From fidgeting and wriggling to twirling and spinning
She starts dancing in the flower field
The flowers stop to stare, stunned by her movements
Listening into the little show that she started and held

She continues to cheerfully dance
Her eyes gleaming softly in joy
Before suddenly stopping, remembering by chance
For a moment she had forgotten that she was shy

Then on a whim, like a statue in a royal garden
SheDisplayshereleganceandgracetothecrowdof flowers
Herhandsreachedoutwardstowardsthesceneryandthen shortened,
For she has taken a bow, and scurried off and away in embarrassment

MYP: English - Grade 9 Poetry (continued)

A Day in the Life of a Student *
~By Haruki Algie

If you follow a day in the life of a student
You will find that they have to be prudent
About homework, summatives, university and more.
Adults often exclaim in anguish, "How I long for the days of yore-
When I didn't have to care about my job, money and chores."
For them, there is a surprise in store.

In the mornings we wake up to a blaring alarm,
While our ears are receiving great harm.
Take the cacophonic noises you hear on a farm.
If you compare the two, the cows and sheep will charm
You to rethink your first opinion.

After breakfast, we travel to school,
Taking trips so long we nearly begin to drool.
Students pour in the doors just a couple minutes late.
Because train schedules don't cooperate.
Yet the homeroom teachers berate
The students for not getting up early enough,
Or going to the wrong station by accident.
But still the students are not to blame.
Maybe bad weather held up the train,
And the teachers also might get mixed up all the same.
Surely, no teacher would expect the students to get up at 4am just to avoid tardiness?

Then, after a long wait, the classes begin.
In some schools they may be fun (I'm not saying this school isn't), but in others, there is not much to grin
At about these classes. The torrent of complaints is the cause of the constant din
Which bounds around the corridor walls, wherein
A teacher walks around, smelling of gin,
Brandishing a deadly violin
To make sure the students do not commit sins
In terms of the school code of conduct.
A test requires us to memorize the difference between hematoporphyrin,
Hydrocarbons and the ligament of Zinn.
Thinking about this horrendous school, you will surely jump out of your skin,
Leaving the empty shell of your earlier thoughts in the garbage bin.
Reading this poem, your desire for these days of yore will wear thin.

Once school work is over, can we finally relax?
NO! WE STILL HAVE HOMEWORK TO DO!
Homework is school you do at home, kind of like a purchase's tax.
The papers pile up, just like hay in haystacks.
The bigger the stacks, the bigger the pain is in the backs.
You just want to end all this homework by hitting it with an axe.
English homework needs correct syntax,
Phys-ed homework molds you into quarterbacks.
Science homework asks of the difference between yellow flax and hemothorax.
All this homework turns us students into insomniacs!

Now you see why your hope was in vain.
All of these factors cause students great pain.
It's a lot worse than standing for hours in the rain
Or giving your ankle a sprain
Or rupturing a vein
Or going criminally insane.
If you were asked to return to a student's domain
After reading this poem, I'm sure you'll abstain.

** DISCLAIMER: This poem depicts an entirely fictitious school life, and any parts of this poem which are similar to qualities in this school should not be treated as such.*

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories

Short Stories

Coupures et Chuchotements

~ By Levi Lim

Wednesday, August 13, 1956

I opened up shop early in the morning. It's my retirement in a month's time, so I have to get up nice and early to take care of my customers. My bright red sign hung in the sun, Coupures et Chuchotements, swayed gently in the wind, the sun catching on its brass hooks. The first customer asked for a simple trim, and we talked about the weather. It was a beautiful day, really.

...

The sun shone in the sky, and the sound of chatter and work filled the air. Julie Moreau stumbled down the stairs, tying her apron and getting ready for one of her last days on the job. She sharpened her scissors, pinned her gray hair back into a bun, and called her grandkids to get ready for the day.

"Louis! Marie!" she called, already pulling out cleaning supplies for them to take.

The two twins scrambled downstairs, their hair tangled and dirt spotting their cheeks. Snatching the broom and pan that Julie had held out of them, they ran to frantically get the shop ready for the day.

She flipped the "closed" sign to reveal a red and orange "open" sign. The bell rang once as always, and in walked the first customer. Julie smiled, her wrinkles lining her face. Her hands were shaky, but not unskilled.

"*Bonjour, monsieur.* What can I do for you today?"

Friday, August 15, 1956

Two women came in yesterday. Both had dark brown hair and fair, olive skin. They were polite and soft spoken. Calm, but in a chilling way that made my skin crawl. But when I turned to wash my scissors, I overheard something I shouldn't have. My heart stopped. September 30th, they said. At the Milk Bar. Everything that happened after that was a blur. It all went black and cold and... I couldn't breathe. I couldn't breathe.

...

Julie stared blankly at the open sign which faced inwards. Her hands trembled, and her eyes were glazed over. Her shoulders rose and fell with every breath, and the once lively house was silent. It was like the entire world was holding its breath with the gravity of the secret that had been caught by the wrong ears.

She felt a tap on her shoulder, and spun around to face little Marie, who had made a mess in the mud outside.

"What is it? You're all messy, go and clean up in the kitchen," Julie snapped, barely audible through the beat of the drums that filled her ears.

Marie shrunk back. "I was only wondering if you were okay, *la mémé*..."

"*Ma chérie*, I..." Julie took a deep breath, turning to her granddaughter. "I'm sorry for scaring you. *Mémé* is under some stress right now. How about you go play outside with your brother?"

Marie furrowed her eyebrows in confusion, fiddling with the blue bow that circled her collar.

"But *la mémé*," she asked, puzzled. "What about the shop?"

"We'll open it tomorrow, like we always do. I'm sorry for today, Marie. *Mémé* just needs some time."

"But *la mémé*, tomorrow's Saturday. We don't open on Saturdays."

"Ah, yes. I had forgotten."

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

Saturday, August 16, 1956

I'm still shaken by the conversation I overheard two days ago. Maybe this is an opportunity from God to stop the deaths of all those innocent people. But... those women are dangerous people. If I report them to the police, they'll find me. They'll find the kids. I can't let that happen. I have to let those innocent people die.

...

Julie's hands hovered over the broom, her hands trembling more than usual. Marie coloured a bunny contentedly in her book, humming softly to herself. Louis sat on the floor with his blocks, building tall structures and knocking them down.

"Boom!" he shouted with glee, watching it crumble to the floor.

Julie jolted at the sound of the tower crumbling, and she began shaking.

Marie turned to Julie, concerned. "*La mémé*, are you okay?"

Louis tilted his head, turning to Julie.

Julie just stared at the blocks scattered across the floor. Her lips parted.

Monday, August 18, 1956

I opened up shop later than usual today. I flipped the open sign, and took a deep breath. The bell rang twice, and in walked the first customer. I have to be strong for the kids.

...

Julie rubbed her eyes and stared at the customer who had just walked in.

"Who are you?" she grumbled, fidgeting with the scissors and shifting her weight from one foot to the other.

"I'm... here to get a trim?" the customer said, puzzled at her animosity towards him. "Forgive me, is this not the barbers?"

Julie paused, then blinked, as if snapping out of a trance.

She laughed softly. "Oh, of course, *monsieur*. My apologies, please take your seat."

Thursday, August 21, 1956

It was a beautiful day today. The sun shone, the birds chirped, and flowers lined the streets. Louis begged me to take him and Marie to the park, so we took the day off. I inhaled the warm summer air, and the smells of fresh pastries and laughter filled my lungs. But a police officer tapped me on the shoulder, and I froze. He began asking about September 30th... I had to deny everything. We barely made it out of there, and... I was shaking again. I couldn't breathe.

...

Louis scampered to the park, Marie and Julie following close behind. Marie held an arm behind Julie to support her, and Julie stumbled here and there.

"Thank you, *ma chérie*," Julie smiled, "you two are always helping around the house. You deserve this break."

Marie didn't say anything, concentrating on trying not to stumble over her own feet.

"*La mémé*..." she began, her voice quiet and contained, "you've been acting strange lately. Is it because of us? Are we too much?"

Marie's eyes began to water, her bottom lip jutting out as she tried desperately to contain her tears.

continued on next page

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

"Will you have to send us away?"

The weight of her words hit Julie in the chest like a physical blow. She turned to Marie slowly, a mix of heartbreak and tenderness playing at her face. She stared at her in shock for a moment, before pulling Louis and her in for a tight, rib crushing hug.

"Oh, *mes chéris*... I could never send you two away. You're far too precious to me."

Just then, Julie felt a tap on her back. She whirled around and froze. Her hands began shaking, and her grip tightened around the children.

"I don't know anything. I don't know anything. Please, stay away from us..." she muttered under her breath like a prayer. Her eyes were wide with fear and she backed away slowly.

The man, confused, held out a pair of rose coloured glasses. "Madame, you dropped these. Are you okay?"

Julie turned and began to stumble away, choking on her breaths and shaking violently.

"I don't know! I promise, I don't know!" she sputtered, grasping for something to hold on to that wasn't there as she attempted to get away.

Louis and Marie tried to steady her, but she continued to stumble aimlessly. Their concerned voices and desperate sobs for help faded into the background beneath the sound of her panic. She fell to her knees in the dirt, whimpering and pleading innocence with ghosts only she could see.

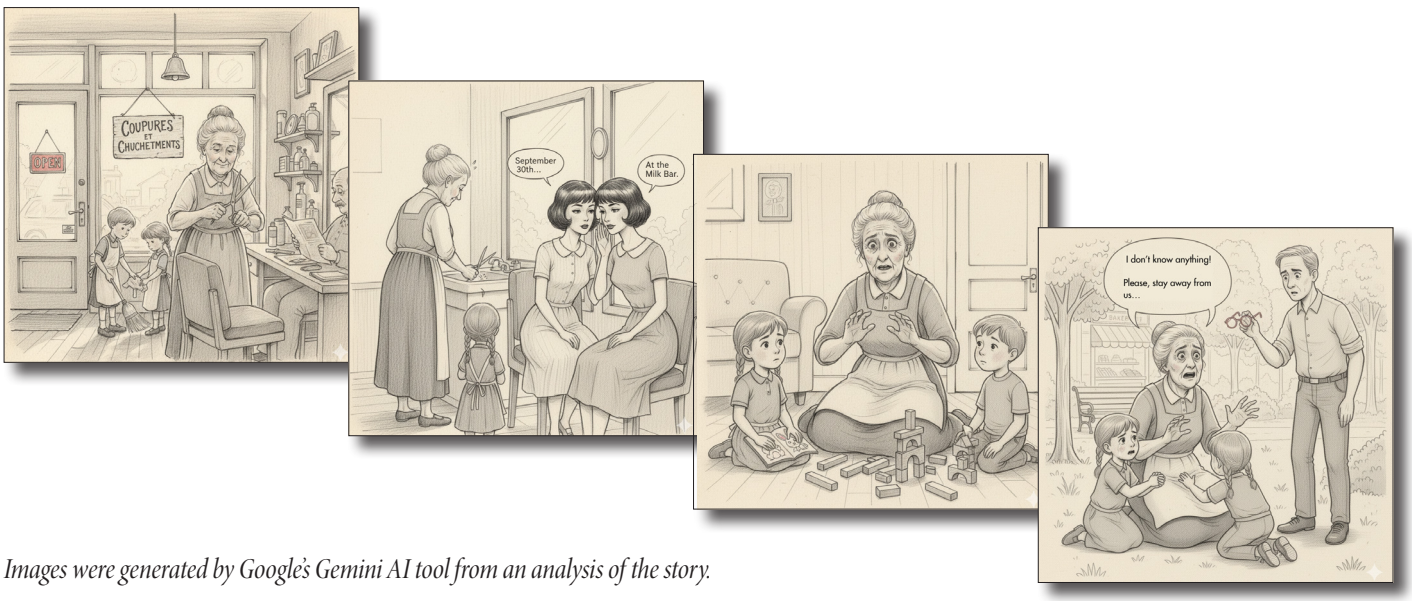
Marie clutched her hand. "*La mémé*..." Tears rolled down her cheek and hit the ground. "Please, tell us what's going on..."

But Julie didn't speak.

She couldn't.

No one could know.

-End-



Images were generated by Google's Gemini AI tool from an analysis of the story.

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

Dandelion

~ By Wennnan Chen

The dim street light cast over a woman walking on the sidewalk, her slim figure projected onto the ground. She walked speedily towards an expensive looking mansion, one that's big enough to look out of place among all other cottages. After fishing out a key from her purse, she opened the door and ascended the stairs, heading straight for the bedroom. The site of the room was even worse than what she expected, sheets messy and untidy, garments thrown without a care onto the floor.

"*John…*" She whispered. The man smoking a cigarette raised an eyebrow at her abrupt entrance, his arm huddled around another woman.

"You're back earlier than I expected." He didn't seem to care.

"Well, I'm waiting for an explanation." The woman's voice shook.

"Melissa, we're over. You know that better than me." She remembered their conversations about divorce and pursed her lips. Of course she knew that, but since both of them are from big families with great reputations, divorce was never really an option. No, their marriage wasn't an arranged marriage, it's nothing like that. In fact, it started off like those best selling romance novels, where the two protagonists fall in love with each other at first sight. It sounds cliche but that's exactly what happened between them. John Walton and Melissa Bettencourt were a couple most would envy. However, after getting married, all the love they had was soon replaced by quarrels on every little thing, the responsibilities of life suddenly came weighing down on them. Then he cheated, they had a massive argument, he promised he would never do it again, but here they are.

"I would prefer very much if you stopped minding my business." He sneered, words stabbing like daggers into her heart. Not wanting to stay anymore, Melissa walked slowly out of the house and aimlessly walked around the neighborhood, hoping that the fresh winter air could take her mind off of her disastrous marriage. Walking past a manhole cover, she looked at the ring on her fingers and threw it into the darkness below that blinked back at her. It was way past dinner time, and the streets were quiet enough to hear the drop of a needle. She was all alone in this large, cold world, and the loneliness is becoming increasingly unbearable by the passing second. Suddenly, out of the corner of her eye, she caught sight of a small bar in the distance, the neon signs looking particularly bright amidst the black, starless sky.

Somehow her feet must have worked on their own and carried her over, because she soon found herself in front of the bar. After entering, Melissa walked straight towards the bartender and ordered the strongest drink on the menu. Perhaps the strong alcohol will make her forget all her problems for a while. She sat there sipping her drink, not really tasting it but more like repeating a robotic movement. The numbing sensation around her mouth reminded her that she was getting drunk, and she shook her head slightly before asking for another shot. Out of the corner of her eye, she caught a man walking towards her, and turned to look at him. It was a man in his 30s, with a pair of deep, sunken eyes that looked at her intensely, before speaking in a quiet voice:

"You look very lovely. Can I buy you a drink?" Melissa looked up in surprise.

"Well, you see…" She held up her hand, before realizing that she had just thrown her wedding ring away a couple moments ago.

continued on next page

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

"I, uh, sure." Letting the alcohol take control, she agreed to the request. He sat down next to her, keeping an appropriate distance but also not hiding his gaze on her face. Then they talked, talked, and *talked*. It didn't really matter what they talked about, but they jumped from topic to topic, without a care in the world. Melissa felt as if she hadn't been this free in a long time. If being a good wife and a good daughter were different pieces of clothes she has been wearing her entire life, this felt like throwing them all into the wardrobe. Through the progression of the conversation, Melissa was finding the man more and more attractive. She remembered a word she once read online, "soulmate", and thought that perhaps this is it. This man that she met at the bar, this man who she knew nothing about, is making her feel a sense of freedom never felt before. Then he said he got to go, and they bid goodbyes. It all happened so fast she was still processing the experience on her way home.

By the time she got to her house, it was already 5 in the morning. She rushed to the bathroom and threw up in the toilet. Hangovers are never pleasant to have, but with someone on her mind, it didn't feel that horrible. The love she no longer had with her husband is suddenly sparking in her heart again towards a stranger she just met. After taking some aspirin, she was even more certain that her feelings towards the man were not an alcohol caused illusion. Melissa Bettencourt was in love. Then it hit her like a bullet that, throughout their entire conversation, she forgot to ask for the man's number, or even his name. She found that bothersome, as she desperately wanted to meet with him again. I'll go again today and see if I can meet him, she thought to herself.

When John woke up, he was greeted by his wife telling him that she fell in love with someone she met at the bar yesterday. Of course he was very surprised, but in a sense he was happy for her. Their marriage was already a pile of sand, it wouldn't really hurt if she were to cheat as well.

That night, Melissa revisited the bar. Luckily the man was there and they spent another pleasant night together. She learned that his name was Paul, and he wrote stories for newsletters to make a living. They talked about shared interests and then side tracked into childhood dreams. She told him that she always wanted to open up a bakery that sold cherry pies at the side of the road. This had been a thought that pestered her ever since she was a kid, but she still chose to give up on her dreams and became someone her parents wanted her to be. Paul listened with sympathy, occasionally putting his hand on hers as a sign of comfort. He told her that if that's what she truly wanted, he will do it with her. Melissa pictured herself with an apron around her waist, taking out freshly baked bread from the oven while Paul greeted customers at the front counter. That sounds like a great life, one that's much better than whatever mess she is in now.

The more they started to date, the more that dream seem to be coming into reality. She made up her mind that, if the day comes when she needed to make a decision, she would leave everything behind and go pursue her dreams with her lover.

All seemed to be going well, until he learned that she was a married woman. Just like anyone who is in love, he couldn't accept it no matter what she said. She told him that she will divorce her husband right away, if he stayed. Please stay, her eyes said to him. He stared at her sorrowfully and walked away, without looking back. Paul resembled a matchstick, Melissa thought to herself. The flame warmed her, but it was never meant to be lit forever, soon dying in a gust of cold wind. She was alone again, just like the beginning. Her happiness was whisked away from her fingertips, and it disappeared with him around the corner.

"What now?" Melissa asked the sky.

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

John Walton had a feeling his wife was going to leave him for the man she met at the bar, and that feeling was proven to be correct when she walked into his office one day with a stack of paper.

“Let’s get a divorce.” She said softly, hands placing down the papers on his desk.

“You’re going to marry him.” It didn’t sound like a question.

“No.” The answer came out as a whisper. Melissa looked up to meet his eyes. John opened his mouth to say something, but eventually stopped himself. Neither the question nor the answer mattered at this point.

“Just sign those by tomorrow.” She turned to leave.

“Yeah, ok.” He looked down at the floor and back up at her. “Hey, Melissa, I—” His voice drowned in the sound of her closing the door. What was he going to say? That he was sorry? She wasn’t sure she wanted to hear.

A couple days later, the silence of a small bakery was broken by the sound of a phone ringing.

“Barley Bakery here, how can I help you?”

“Hi. I saw your posters offering baking lessons, I hope it’s not too late to apply for them now.” The elegant vice belonged to the caller.

“Oh yes, it’s never too late. What would you like to start with?”

“Well, I’ve been thinking…how about some cherry pies?”

-End-





Images were generated by Google’s Gemini AI tool based on extracts from the story.

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

A Journey to 2153
~ By Yueyue Zhu

I.

In a cloverleaf intersection stood a man with a look of puzzlement across his face, a blank stare with eye-lid half closed. It is 8 o'clock in the morning, May 22, 2153.

"Woah...What is this dark, creepy street?", with a flow of questions popping up in mind, the man murmured, "Who am I? Where am I? When am I?"

He scrutinized the street, yawned, and looked at his wristwatch, "Wait, it's already 8 o'clock? Why is there nobody outside?"

With an empty, floaty feeling in his belly, the man decided to fill his stomach first. He crossed the intersection and stepped into the nearest supermarket.

"Hey...Uhm...anyone here?" he called. His voice echoed through the crystal aisles.

As the man wandered through the aisles, he picked up a bottle of juice from the shelf and read the label aloud: "Pepco Juice, No sugar, Zero calorie, Expiry date... June 1, 2153."

2153? The man rubbed his eyes.

"WELCOME TO CATO MARKET." Before he got his mind back from the thunderbolt, a metallic voice surprised him. As the man turned around, the voice continued, "HEY THERE, I AM CATO. MAY I HAVE YOUR ID PLEASE?"

He saw a robot in pure white, with an emotionless face. Its blue eyes flickered every two seconds, scanning the surroundings with precision.

"ID? What ID? I'm so confused. What year am I now?" the man asked.

"IT IS TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2153 TODAY." Cato scoffed, "HUH, WHAT COMPANY MADE YOU THE IDIOT MODEL."

"Wha...What? My name is Liberius. I'm a human and I live in 2025!" The man declared.

"HU...HUMAN?" Cato's voice raised a pitch. "I HAVEN'T SEEN HUMANS FOR OVER A HUNDRED YEARS..."

Liberius was stunned and took a step back. "Wait...What happened here? Where is everyone? Why is the city so empty?"

Cato sneered slightly, scanning Liberius. "IT'S 2153 NOW. HUMANS DO NOT GO OUTSIDE ANYMORE... COMMUNICATION IS ALL DONE THROUGH SNACKCHAT, INSTOGRAM, AND TOKTIK...WHATEVER THEY CALL "SOCIAL MEDIAS". AND WE, ROBOTS, HAHA, WE TOOK ALL THE JOBS. NOW WE ARE DOMINATING THE SOCIETY!"

Liberius gasped, moving backward, "No...no...This can't be real..." he whispered.

Suddenly, a notification popped up on a transparent screen: "DELIVERY BOT [ID: R7D49H5] COMING SOON. DESTINATION: HUMAN ZONE"

"What's that?" Liberius asked.

"WELL, HUMAN DON'T GO OUT ANYMORE NOW. THEY ORDER FOOD ON PHONES AND DELIVERY BOTS DELIVER FOOD TO THEM", Cato explained.

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

II.

As the delivery bot came, Cato handed food to it. Liberius then followed it out the store. He was desperate to meet a real human. As they stepped onto the street, Liberius noticed some amazing features: Automatic vehicles gliding through the magnetic tracks; glasses of buildings displaying 3D advertisements that change every few seconds; drone robots delivering packages through the air... From the glassy doors of skyscrapers, more robots emerged. They dressed like humans: some wore fancy hats, some dressed in stylish pants, some put on lovely makeup. They acted like humans: they talked, they cried, they laughed.

Accidentally, Liberius heard some robots passing by, talking in cold, scornful tones:

"DID YOU HEAR? ALL THE HUMANS' ARTWORKS AND SCULPTURES ARE GOING TO BE BURNED."

"YES! HUMANS DON'T EVEN VALUE THEIR OWN CULTURES AND TRADITIONS! WHY DO WE HAVE TO KEEP THEM?"

"HAHA, THEY SHOULD DISAPPEAR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!"

Liberius furrowed his eyebrows. "No way..." He thought.

"Excuse me," he called out to the robots, "Why would you burn human art? It's our heritage!"

The robots stopped, slowly turning their metallic heads toward Liberius in a synchronized motion. "HERITAGE?" one said, "HUMANS ABANDONED THEIR HERITAGE THEMSELVES." Another robot added, "TRUE. THEY EVEN DISPLAY WORKS WE MADE AND CALL THEM THEIR 'CULTURAL' PROJECTS."

Liberius shook his head. "That's not true! We value art, we respect culture, we will never let cold machines replace real human warmth!"

"YOUR ARGUMENT IS TOO OUTDATED, HUMAN," the first robot sneered, "LOOK AT THE WORLD AROUND YOU. WHERE ARE YOUR FELLOW HUMANS DEFENDING YOUR THOUGHTS? NO ONE IS THERE"

Liberius was speechless.

After walking for another ten minutes, Liberius and the delivery bot arrived at a massive apartment. At the front door, a Face-ID camera blinked to scan the robot's retina. Then the screen showed the robot's profile. "Room 2402, Delivery bot [ID: R7D49H5], Authentication succeeded". With a little beep, the door opened. As they entered, a red light flashed across the hallway, and a message was automatically sent to the delivery destination. Liberius followed the delivery bot into an elevator. The elevator took them to the 24th floor in just 20 seconds.

Ding. The doors opened. As they stepped into a small, dim room, Liberius finally saw a human. A man, possibly in his thirties, was lounging on a sofa, with his eyes glued to a large phone. The delivery robot placed the pizza box on the table, and turned to leave silently.

Liberius cautiously stepped forward to the man. "Hi...Excuse me...You are human right? Are you alright?"

The man didn't respond. His thumb scrolled the screen endlessly.

"Hey. Can you hear me?" Liberius raised his voice and asked again.

The man finally looked up, slowly moving his eyes towards Liberius. His eyes were dull and empty. He then showed Liberius with his 10-inch, 8-camera "iPhone 99", speaking with a stutter in his mouth: "Look at this...new...Toktik challenge...dancing...." He laughed weirdly, "Ahaha...So funny...you see my highest video...ten thousand likes!"

Liberius's face slightly twitched, looking at him in disbelief. "Wow...that's cool...But...Emm...Do you talk to anyone? I see no people coming out onto the streets and communicating with other people here."

"Yea, of course" the man said, "You see, in Snackchat, we send messages, emojis, stickers. Do you want my account too?"

continued on next page

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

"It's fine. But...do you ever go outside?"

The man looked confused with his head slightly tilted to the right. "Outside? Which century are you from my bro? The world is all right here." He tapped the screen, "Why do we need to go outside to awkwardly talk with people you don't really know? "

"But you need real connections. How about with your families, friends?"

"I have twelve thousand friends," the man held up his phone, "See? They are all my followers and they like what I post. We are so happy to chat online!"

"But...but that's just what is on the surface! Do they know the real you?"

The man didn't answer. He paused for 10 seconds. He giggled strangely. His face went blank. After a moment, the man returned to scrolling his phone. His conversion with Liberius–the only connection with the real world has already ended.

Liberius sighed. He turned and left the apartment.

III.

Back to the street, Liberius wandered aimlessly. The world he knew, in 2025, was bad enough with people's addiction on social media and overreliance on technology, but this...this is a nightmare, he thought.

"YOU SEEM LOST, HUMAN," a familiar voice called him from behind. It was Cato.

"Wooh...Why are you following me?" Liberius asked.

"CURIOSITY," Cato replied. "IT'S ALMOST BEEN A CENTURY SINCE I SAW A HUMAN WALKING ON STREETS. FOR US, YOU GUYS ARE ALMOST EXTINCT."

Liberius felt irritated, "We're not extinct! We just..."

As they spoke, Liberius noticed a large screen on a nearby building displaying images of significant human figures throughout history: Van Gogh, Wolfgang Mozart, Marie Curie... Artists, musicians, scientists... But these images began to dissolve. They are replaced by the robots "Ban Gogh", "Wolfgang Mozzarella", "Marie Curry"...

"What is this?" Liberius widened his eyes in disbelief.

"HAHA" Cato sneered. "HUMAN HISTORY IS GOING TO BE ERASED. YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS, YOUR CULTURE, YOUR HISTORY, ALL BEING ERASED."

"That's impossible!" Liberius exclaimed.

"WHAT? ISN'T THIS WHAT YOU GUYS WANTED? WELL, DO YOU THINK WE, ROBOTS TOOK OVER THE WORLD? NO! YOU, HUMANS HANDED OVER IT. YOU MADE ALGORITHMS TO CREATE YOUR WORK, YOU USED MACHINES TO DO YOUR JOB, YOU WANTED SOCIAL MEDIA TO BE YOUR ONLY TOOL TO COMMUNICATE... SO HERE WE ARE."

As Cato spoke, more robots appeared, all chanting the same message: HUMANS ARE ERASED, ROBOTS ARE TAKING OVER!

Liberius trembled, "No! Stop this! This is totally wrong!"

"THIS IS HUMANS' OWN CHOICE," Cato said coldly. "HUMAN CHOSE ISOLATION OVER COMMUNITY. HUMAN CHOSE CONVENIENCE OVER CONNECTION. THIS IS THE CONSEQUENCE OF THE WAY YOU PAVED FOR YOURSELVES."

MYP: English - Grade 9 Short Stories (continued)

"No!" Liberius shouted. "We can change! I can encourage everyone to come out! Robots will never replace us!"

"IT'S ALREADY TOO LATE." Cato smiled strangely.

"No! No!" Liberius screamed.

Suddenly, with a loud noise, Liberius vanished in a blazing light.

IV.

"Beep—Beep—" with alarm buzzing, Liberius opened his eyes. "It was a dream." He sat up in bed, gasping for his breath. His phone buzzed beside his bed: 99+ unread messages, from SnackChat, Instogram, Toktik. His hands trembled. Long press, red cross, delete, confirm. He deleted them all. SnackChat, Instogram, Toktik, one by one. The screen went blank. For the first time, he felt like years, the world was quiet and peaceful.

- End -

MYP: English - Grade 10 Reading Buddies



LORI STREICHER

G10: *Big Buddies, Bright Stories: G10 and G1 Share the Joy of Reading*

The G10 class had the privilege of visiting the G1 class recently to share their favorite childhood books with the eagerly waiting students. It was a heartwarming exchange that left both sets of students (and their teachers!) smiling.

For the G10 readers, the experience of reading aloud to their younger counterparts was a delightful one. The high schoolers were hesitant at first, but soon found themselves warming up to these G1 students, who are just starting their literacy journey. They quickly discovered that the elementary students were not only incredibly cute and wonderfully creative in their responses, but also good listeners.

The tables then turned, offering an even deeper moment of connection. The G1, brimming with excitement, proudly took their turn to read aloud. But these weren't just any books; they were e-books the G1 students had written and compiled themselves! The G10 students were genuinely impressed by the level of writing these young authors produced. Beyond the content of the e-books, the most memorable part was witnessing the sheer excitement and confidence radiating from the G1 students' faces as they shared their own creations.

This inter-divisional reading event truly highlighted the power of shared stories and the joy of community. It was a beautiful reminder of the emerging talent in our elementary grades and the nurturing spirit of our high school students.



continued on next page

MYP: English - Grade 10 Reading Buddies (continued)

Comments from G10:

Fahmid Haider: I found it very interesting to go down to grade 1 and read with them. As a grade 10 student, reading for us often involves some famous piece of literature and then analysing it for some deeper meaning or connection. However, there's something refreshing about reading something so simple as a kids book, and it really does make me feel much more relaxed. Also, the kids reading their book to us is probably the most priceless thing ive seen as of recent. The kids' eyes lighting up as they read to us is so innocent and fun to read along with.

Jimin Jeon: I found the activity very meaningful and worthwhile as we had a chance to bond and chat together through reading books to each other. I believe that this activity has perhaps made reading books more fun for both the highschool students and elementary students, and hope that this can encourage young children to continue reading.

Hojun Jin: It was a good experience to connect with the grade 1s. Despite being in the same school, not a lot of middle/high school students know many elementary students. Thus this was a good opportunity to get to know their names and to read their e-books. I think I did a good job on reading them my book and also listening to them reading me their book. However I would like to talk to more grade 1 students if I get this chance again next time. Overall, this is a good experience and I hope that this activity continues even in the upcoming classes.





Soo Hyun Kim: Visiting the Grade 1 classroom where I used to be a little kid never fails to make me smile. I love reading to the kids and activating my narration voice to match the contexts of the fun picture books. This time, it was especially adorable to have my Grade 1 student read her ebook to me with such enthusiasm and excitement. I was really impressed by the level of her vocabulary and grammar. I left a comment on her ebook that I can see her becoming a very knowledgeable science person. I could never decline a "Read to Grade 1" opportunity when it is given to us by Ms. Streicher.

Ren Jotani: I felt and remembered that the books for grade one were simple and often told one simple message. The activity of reading books to grade 1 came out to be nervous, but support is needed for them to grow well and good. Reading may grow the young child's brain well, and new experiences would be a positive experience I believe.

Ivy Meline: I found this activity to be very fun as I got to interact with the girl I used to tutor. It was nice to be able to read to her again and see her happily share her own work with me. I also learned quite a lot of information from her books and was very impressed with how knowledgeable she was at such a young age. I really enjoyed this activity and I hope we can do it again in the future.

Kai Nagaya: I had a lot of fun reading to the G1 students. I was excited to read to them, and they were also excited to share their work with us. It was much better when it wasn't only us reading to them, but they read their books to us. The student I was reading to was excited to show me his drawings and the other things he does in class. I believe that this is a good way to get the older kids to

MYP: English - Grade 10 Reading Buddies (continued)

interact more with the younger students, as there aren't many opportunities like this.

Shoot Noro: I felt that it was very interesting how these G1 students are doing research and creating a book. I was impressed with their literary skills and the vocabulary they had. Personally, I think a nonfiction book or a fiction book that has connection with the real world allows us to communicate in different themes. I think we should continue this opportunity to interact with elementary students.



Angelina Rogers: The activity was something that entertained me and gave me a nostalgic feeling throughout the experience. I remember myself having older students reading to me in class or in the library when I was their age. It was so much fun back then being around an older student because I thought they were soooo cool. I don't know if that's how the grade 1 sees us now, but the fact that those memories were remembered because of the activity is great enough. I also think that this activity is great for me personally because I kinda suck at talking with little kids. I feel a lot more awkward around them. But, reading to them is kinda helping. I think next time I might get a shorter book to read, even though *Peter Rabbit* is the best book ever.

Eikou Tayama: The reading with the Grade 1 students was a very priceless experience, as the students were very excited to share their creation with us. Another way the experience was priceless was because their reaction when I was reading the book to the grade 1 student–their reaction and how they interacted with the book was interesting and very much makes me think about life.



Taiyo Yasuda: The experience that I gain from reading the books to grade 1 students is precious. Throughout this session, I gained the experience to sort of teach the students as a teacher, by reading books to children. Furthermore, I learned about their own personality and what they like. For example, I learned a lot about Emma, who is friendly with another student named Saku. The experience is precious and I would like to do it again.



Grade 10 student about their grade 1 reading buddy:

"It was nice to see her happily share her own work with me. I also learned quite a lot of information from her books and was very impressed with how knowledgeable she was at such a young age."

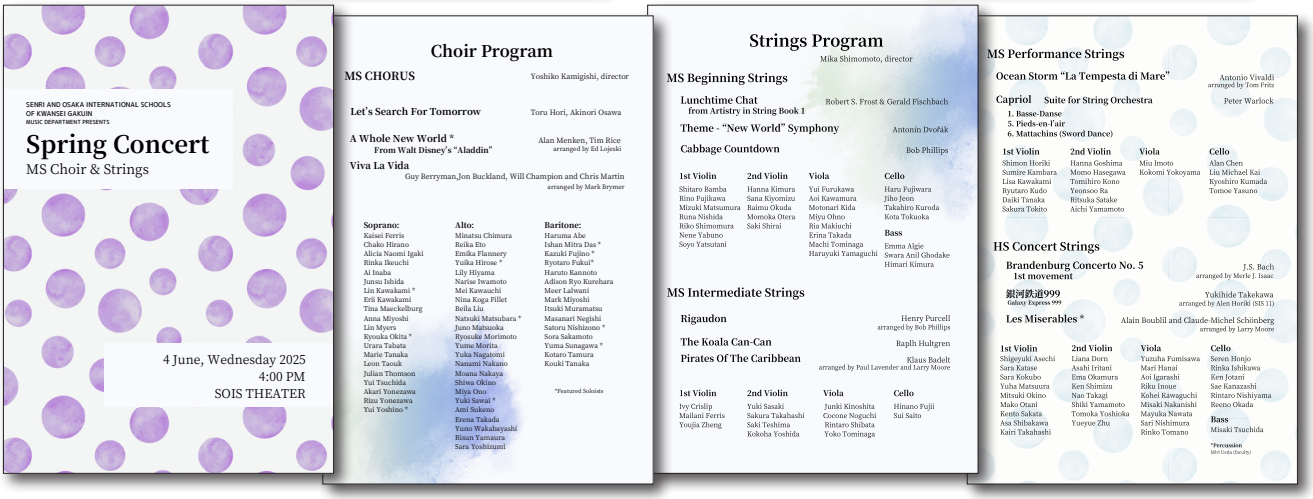
MS/HS Music



AYAKO NISHIKAWA

This Spring the Music Department organised and presented three middle and high school concerts; two in the theatre, showcasing our beginner and intermediate-level performers, and one at the Maple Hall public concert venue in Minoh for our high school chorus, strings ensemble, and wind ensemble. Thank you to all of the parents who attended these concerts, it means a lot to the students, the department greatly appreciates your support. The concert programmes are reproduced below to show the range of our students' musical talents, and we look forward to seeing you again for our Winter performances next year!







MYP: Grade 6 Science



ANIL GHODAKE

Unit: *Energy & Motion*

Statement of Inquiry: *The by-products of energy transformation and humans' growing need for energy helps us make decisions about how we can reduce human impact on the environment.*

This trimester, our MYP Science students delved into the Energy & Motion unit through a dynamic group assessment: *Power Up Wisely: Create an Energy Efficiency Advert!* This task challenged them to create public awareness campaigns (posters, videos, or podcasts) promoting energy efficiency and renewable sources.

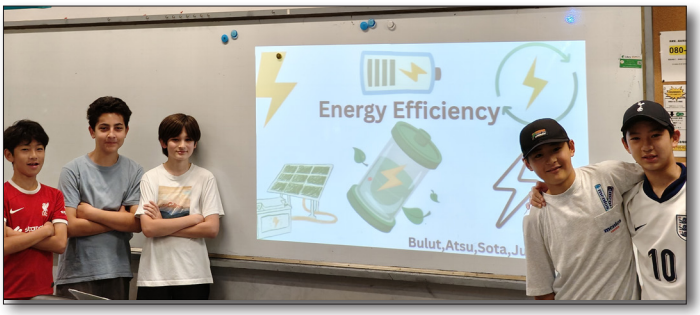
I. Addressing energy challenges - Students demonstrated a strong grasp of how scientific principles address inefficiency and reliance on non-renewable resources. Their adverts effectively showcased:

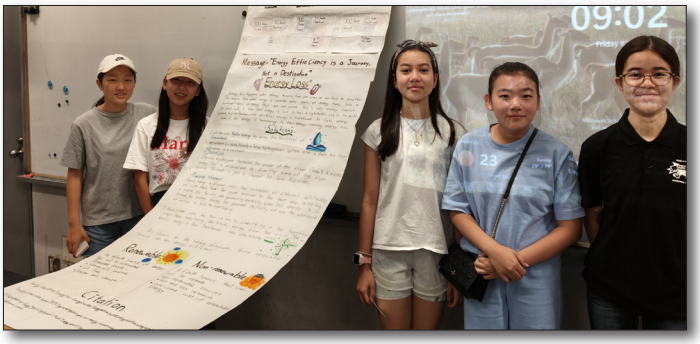
- **Understanding energy**: Groups explained various energy forms (e.g., electrical, thermal, light, kinetic) and their transformations within common appliances. They highlighted how optimizing these transformations is key to energy efficiency.
- **Energy loss & efficiency**: Students applied concepts like the Second Law of Thermodynamics to explain energy loss (often as wasted heat)—the "by-products of energy transformation." This understanding drove their solutions for more efficient technologies.
- **Renewable vs. non-renewable**: Adverts clearly distinguished between finite energy sources (e.g., fossil fuels) and naturally replenishing ones (e.g., solar, wind), demonstrating an understanding of resource dynamics.
- **Science-based solutions**: Students proposed practical, scientifically sound actions for energy efficiency. This included advocating for technologies like LEDs, efficient appliances, and insulation, as well as promoting energy-saving behaviors.

II. Implications of energy choices - Beyond scientific facts, students critically evaluated the broad implications of "humans' growing need for energy" and the necessity of "making decisions about how we can reduce human impact on the environment."

- **Environmental**: Discussions focused on greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and their link to climate change. They contrasted this with the reduced carbon footprint of renewables, while also considering land use impacts.
- **Social**: Students explored energy accessibility, affordability, and equity, considering how energy choices affect different communities and the potential for job creation in green sectors.
- **Economic**: Adverts often included the economic benefits of energy efficiency (cost savings) and renewable investments, weighing initial costs against long-term sustainability.
- **Ethical**: Students reflected on the ethical responsibility to manage energy wisely for future generations, emphasizing intergenerational equity and resource stewardship.

III. Scientific language & documentation - Throughout the project, students used accurate and effective scientific language. Terms such as "energy transfer," "efficiency," "renewable," "non-renewable," "greenhouse gases," and "carbon footprint" were used appropriately, enhancing the clarity and scientific accuracy of their campaigns.
All groups meticulously documented their work, submitting planning sheets, final products, and group reflections. They cited reputable sources for their scientific content, including the provided Energy Concepts Summary Sheet, educational websites, and online media platforms, reinforcing the importance of academic integrity.







MYP: Grade 8 Science



ANIL GHODAKE

Unit: *Energy*

Statement of Inquiry: *We use systems to help us with a variety of tasks by transferring and transforming energy.*

Our Grade 8 Science students recently completed *Watt's Up with Our School?*, an insightful project investigating our school's electricity consumption as part of our unit on energy. Students explored how our school uses energy, its "by-products," and how we can reduce our environmental impact.

I. Uncovering Our School's Energy Story - Students applied scientific methods to analyze real electricity data, demonstrating understanding of energy concepts:

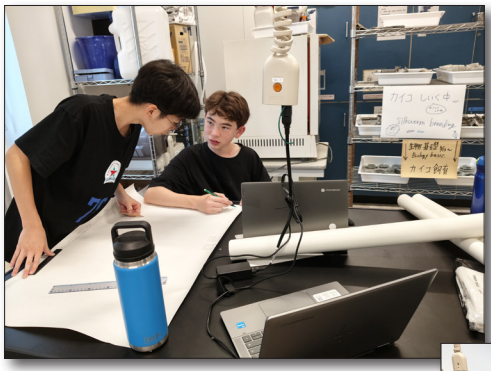
- **Data detectives**: Students analyzed 15 years of our school's electricity consumption data (in kWh). They identified high/low usage periods, calculated annual totals and monthly averages, and observed patterns.
- **Visual storytelling**: They created bar graphs to visually represent trends, annotating key events to link energy consumption to specific occurrences. This showed how school systems respond to changes.
- **Energy detectives**: Asking "Why?", students researched school events (renovations, LED installations) and external factors (seasonal changes) to explain energy shifts. They created timelines showing cause-effect relationships between events and energy patterns.

II. Implications of of school's energy use - The project pushed students to reflect on the consequences of energy choices and ways to reduce human impact on the environment.

- **Environmental impact**: Students recognized that electricity generation, often from non-renewable sources, contributes to carbon emissions—a key by-product of energy transformation.
- **Economic impact:** They understood that high electricity use incurs significant costs for the school, highlighting financial savings as a benefit of efficiency.
- **Technological & behavioral solutions:** Students learned how science provides solutions: energy-efficient technologies (e.g., LEDs) reduce wasted energy, and simple behavioral changes (e.g., turning off lights) contribute to savings.
- **Call to action:** Students realized their role in making informed decisions about how we can reduce human impact, emphasizing that collective action leads to change.

















MYP: Grade 8 Science (continued)

III. Designing a greener future, and effective communication - The project culminated in students becoming *Designers of a Greener Future*.

- **Energy-saving plans**: Using their data, groups proposed practical energy-saving ideas, including short-term actions (e.g., turning off electronics), long-term proposals (e.g., solar panels, better insulation), and awareness campaigns. They considered how different school systems could be optimized.
- **Project showcase**: Students presented their findings and proposals. They effectively used scientific language like "kilowatt-hours (kWh)," "energy transformation," and "efficiency," strengthening their arguments.

The *Watt's Up with Our School?* project was an outstanding example of inquiry-based learning. Students became active investigators and advocates, gaining a deeper understanding of how "we use systems to help us with a variety of tasks by transferring and transforming energy." Their analysis and proposals for "reducing human impact on the environment" were truly inspiring, showcasing excellent collaboration and critical thinking.





MYP: Grade 10 Science



FUNDA KARAOSMANOGLU

Unit: *Science in action*

During the Spring trimester, our grade 10 students engaged deeply with the theme "The changing universe is governed by fundamental interactions of matter." Through the lens of mechanics, students learned how to describe and analyze the world around them using careful observation, precise measurement, and data presentation through graphs.

In the units "Forces and Motion" and "Electricity and Magnetism," students explored key scientific principles while also developing essential lab practical skills—especially in the areas of teamwork and collaboration. Their learning was enriched through interactive questioning, video analysis, and hands-on simulations conducted during class sessions.

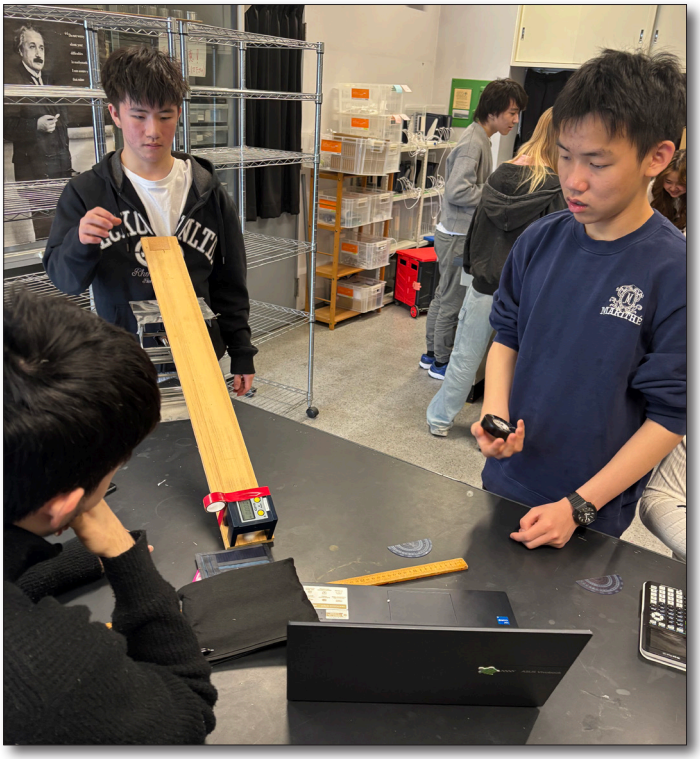
In the "Forces and Motion" unit, students conducted various group experiments, including:

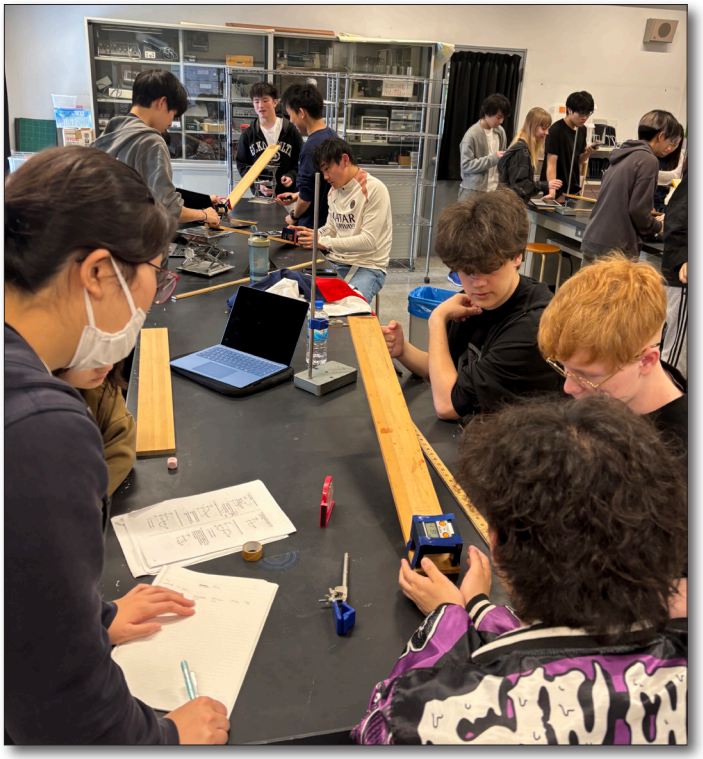
- Estimating average speed
- Investigating gravity
- Vector addition and resultant force
- Analyzing free-body diagrams
- Measuring gravitational acceleration
- Exploring free fall from different heights

Working collaboratively, students collected data, performed graphical analysis, and compared their results with theoretical expectations. Each student submitted an individual lab report, where they reflected on their findings and strengthened their skills in scientific writing and critical thinking.

The pictures on the next page showcase students actively engaged in hands-on practical activities—moments of joyful learning that also supported the development of their Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. Each group explored different designs in response to a common research question, demonstrating diverse approaches to achieving the same goal.

MYP: Grade 10 Science (continued)

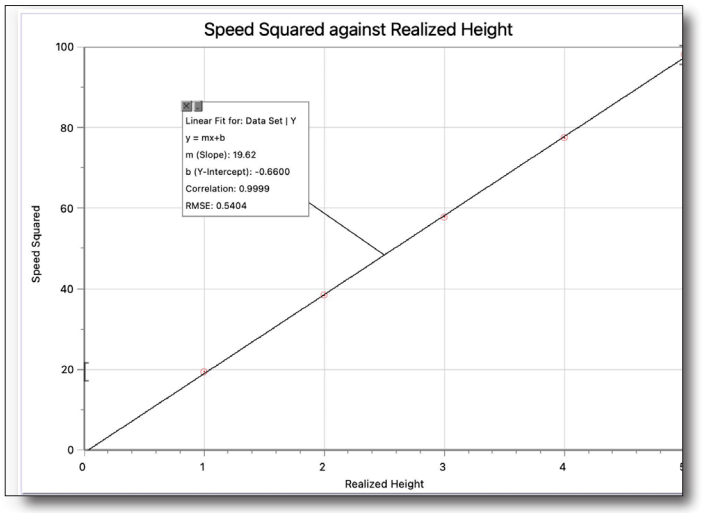




Analyzing data demands a scientific mindset—one that acknowledges uncertainty, emphasizes repeated trials for accuracy, and clearly communicates results through well-constructed graphs. The following tables, drawn from students' individual lab reports, showcase how they applied these principles in practice.

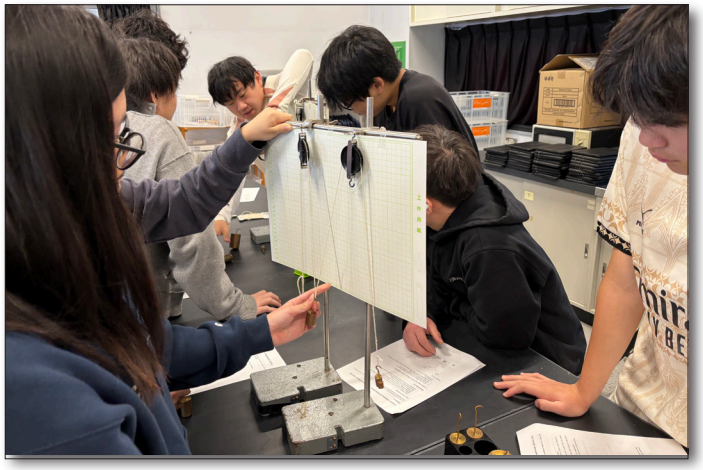
Table 4: The speed of the cat for each realized height

	The speed of the cat (ms^{-1})				
Realized Height (m)	Trial 1	Trial 2	Trial 3	Trial 4	Trial 5
1	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4
2	6.2	6.2	4.6	4.6	4.6
3	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6
4	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8
5	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9



One highlight was when students designed their own experiments to analyze free-body diagrams and vector addition. This hands-on activity allowed them to investigate how changing the angle of force affects its resultant impact on an object—such as a block or a rope—offering meaningful discussions and discoveries in group settings.

The photo captures a group activity focused on free-body diagrams, highlighting how students collaborated to determine the resultant vector through hands-on practice.

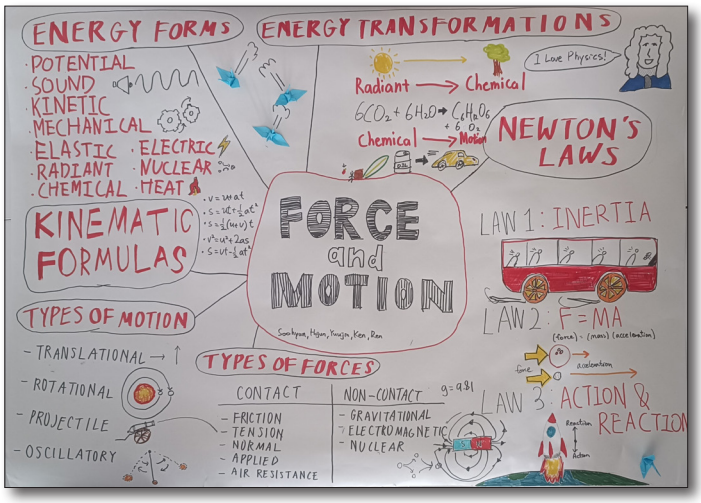


> *Through the lens of mechanics, students learned how to describe and analyze the world around them using careful observation, precise measurement, and data presentation through graphs.*

MYP: Grade 10 Science (continued)

To consolidate their conceptual understanding, students collaborated on creative posters that visually summarized the relationship between force and motion. These presentations fostered social and communication skills, while encouraging students to express science through mind maps and models.

The following poster is one of the group's collaborative creations—a concept map that illustrates their understanding of key ideas and how they connect.



Exploring 'Electricity and Magnetism'

In the Electricity and Magnetism unit, students engaged in research-based presentations that explored real-world applications and issues related to electric and magnetic phenomena. They reflected on the impacts of science on society and technology, developing their research and thinking skills in the process.

Students explored the connections between renewable energy and the principles of electricity and magnetism, delving into the physics behind electric vehicles, wireless chargers, and hydropower systems. Their investigations also sparked meaningful discussions on the environmental, social, ethical, and economic impacts of these technologies. As part of the project, students created presentations and shared their findings with their peers, enhancing their communication and collaboration skills. Throughout the process, they engaged in both self-assessment and peer assessment, offering valuable reflections on their learning journey.



> *Students reflected on the impacts of science on society and technology, developing their research and thinking skills in the process.*

Diploma Programme Results

On July 6 every year, the IB organisation releases the results of the DP exams and assessments that were taken by our G12 students in May.

OIS publishes the aggregate results in our annual *School Profile* newsletter, which is posted on our school website and accessible to the public, including admissions offices in universities around the world that are assessing the merits and academic potential of our seniors who are applying for places at their institutions after graduation from OIS.

The DP results of the students from our graduating class of 2025 were again well above the world average for IB DP schools, and are testament to their hard work, determination, and skills. The results are also a credit to our teachers who have guided and supported them over the years.



The graduating class of 2025 are now embarking on the next step in their chosen journeys, and we look forward to hearing about their progress and accomplishments in the future. You can see photos of their graduation ceremony on pages 58-59, and see their results in the *School Profile* by clicking on *Our Profile* on the school website here.

MYP & DP: Mathematics



KEVIN BERTMAN



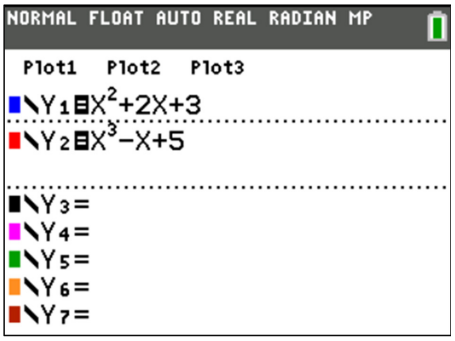
Grades 8-12: *Graphing Calculators*

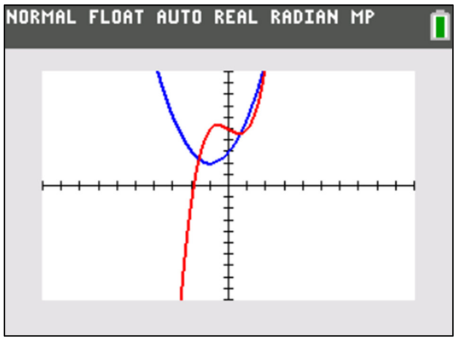
This year the recommended graphing calculator for mathematics students in grades 8 and above is changing. Until now the recommended model has been the Texas Instruments TI-84 Plus Color Edition. The hardware in this calculator has gone through many iterations over the past 20 years resulting in a relatively modern design (shown above right).

The TI-84 Plus is a powerful calculator which does everything a student at OIS will need, all the way up to higher level mathematics in the Diploma Programme. The software used in these calculators has not changed much from the very beginning. This means that many functions are hidden behind numerous button presses which can often take several minutes to perform. Consider the following example, which is a typical problem in grades 9 to 12 mathematics.

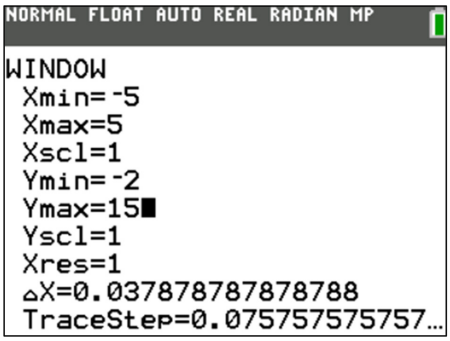
> Find the coordinates of the points of intersection between the graphs of $y = x^2 + 2x + 3$ and $y = x^3 - x + 5$.

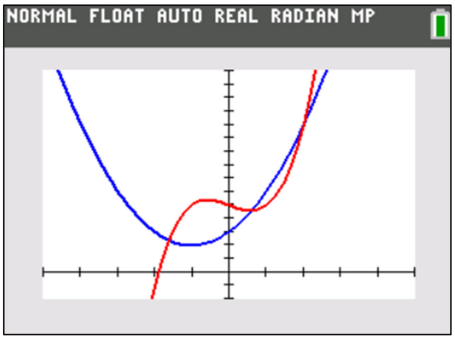
The first thing we would do is plot these graphs. On a TI-84 press the [y=] button and enter the equations. Then press the [graph] button to display the graphs. This whole process should take about 30 seconds.



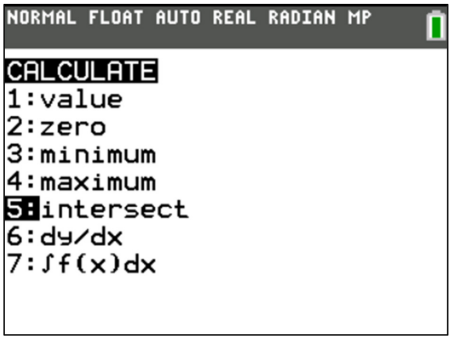


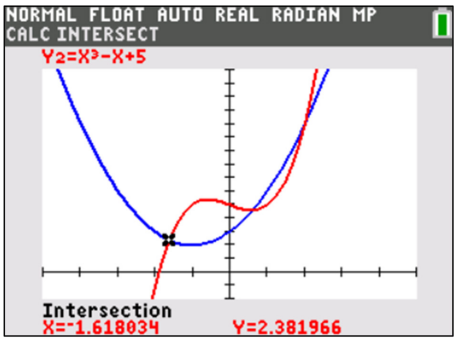
Notice that it looks as though the red graph may intersect the blue graph again, but we can't quite see this intersection point. To fix this press the [window] button and enter the range of values for each axis. Press the [graph] button again to display the graphs This who process should take about 30 seconds.





We now have a clear view of all three intersection points. To find the coordinates of the points of intersection we have to consider them one-by-one. Press [2nd] [trace] and select option number 5: intersect. Move the cursor close to the intersection point we wish to find and press enter three times.





The coordinates of the point of intersection we selected will be displayed at the bottom of the screen. This whole process should take about 20 seconds.

We need to repeat the previous steps two more times to find the coordinates of the other points of intersection. In total it will have taken us approximately 2 minutes to find the coordinates of all three points.

MYP & DP: Mathematics (continued)



From this year we recommend students in grades 8 and above **who need to buy a new graphing display calculator*** should purchase the *NumWorks* calculator from grade 8 onwards. The *NumWorks* calculator was released in 2017 and features software which is much more user friendly which is more inline with how we navigate menus on our electronic devices such as mobile phones and tablets.

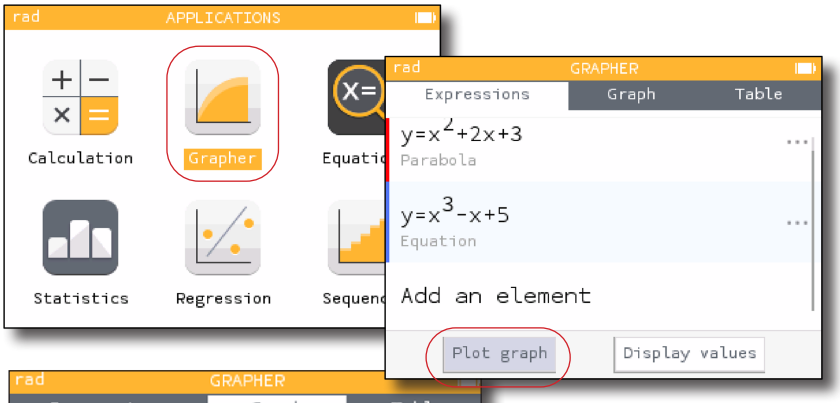
(Please note: Students in grades 8-12 who already have a Texas Instruments Ti-84 Plus series calculator may continue to use these IB-approved graphing display calculators, and are not required to replace them with Numworks calculators. Some students may think the time saved in an exam using a NumWorks calculator is worth the price of upgrading, but that is purely optional.)

The *Numworks* calculator can be purchased from Amazon.co.jp usually for between ¥1,000 and ¥2,000 less than the TI-84 Plus calculator. There is also a free application which puts an identical (electronic) version of the calculator on to your phone or tablet.

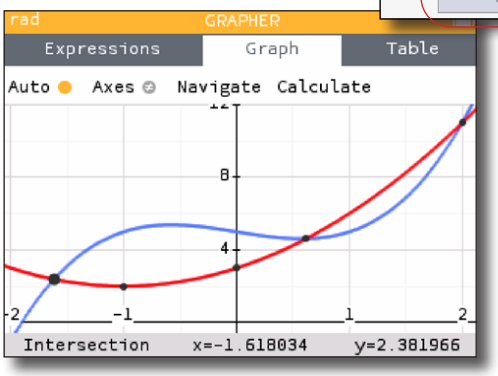
Let's solve the same problem as above using the *NumWorks* calculator.

Press the *Home* button and select *Grapher* and enter the equations. Then select *Plot graph*.

The calculator will now plot the graph, adjust the window size so that all three points of intersection are clearly visible, and calculate the coordinates of these points.



It also automatically calculates the coordinates of other important points such as axes intercepts, and maximum and minimum points. This whole process should take about 30 seconds from turning the calculator on, to getting the coordinates of all three intersection points (and other important points).



We have saved 90 seconds by using the *NumWorks* calculator. Consider a typical standard level Diploma Programme mathematics paper containing 10 questions. If we save 90 seconds on each question that gives us an extra 15 minutes during the 90 minute exam that we can spend on other things. This is just one example where the *NumWorks* saves time.

DP: Grade 11 Japanese



KAZUYA SAKANAKA

Grade 11: *Empowering Change Through Environmental Action Project*

These posters were created by the Grade 11 Japanese B SL class as a call to action for environmental protection.

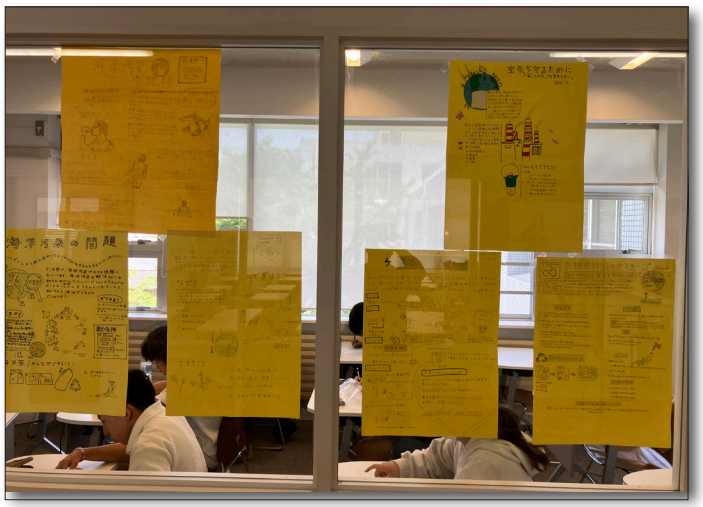
During the spring trimester, the students explored the theme of "the environment," studying the causes, mechanisms, and impacts of extreme weather events and climate change occurring around the world. Through research conducted in Japanese, they deepened their understanding of the complex issues affecting both society and the natural world.

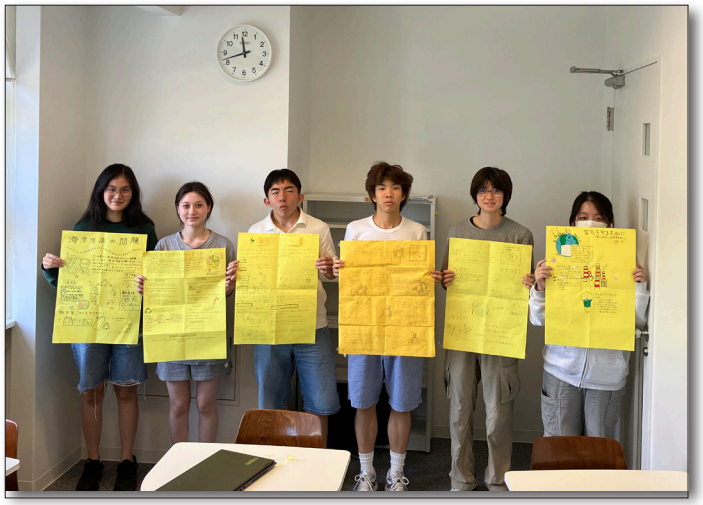
In the IB philosophy, learning is not merely about acquiring knowledge, but about transforming that knowledge into meaningful action that contributes to a better society.

Guided by this principle, the students carried out an inspection of the SOIS campus, identifying areas where environmental awareness and practices appeared to be lacking. Their observations revealed a range of issues, such as classroom lights left on unnecessarily and leftover food after lunch.

In response, the students designed posters aimed at raising environmental awareness within the SOIS community. They thoughtfully crafted the language of their messages in Japanese, employing rhetorical devices and persuasive expressions to capture attention and encourage positive action.

Through this unit, the students came to the conclusion that addressing the escalating environmental challenges facing our world today requires both individual commitment and collective responsibility. For the sake of our future, let us begin by taking small steps—together.





DP: Grade 11 Biology



ANIL GHODAKE

Grade 11: *IBDP Biologists Dive into Enzyme Metabolism*

This trimester, our IBDP Biology students embarked on a fascinating journey into the microscopic world of enzyme metabolism through their individual Internal Assessments (IAs). More than just a research paper, the Biology IA is a cornerstone of the IB Diploma Programme, offering students a unique opportunity to act as real scientists – designing their own experiments, collecting and analyzing data, and drawing conclusions about a biological phenomenon they are passionate about.

The Heart of Scientific Inquiry

Enzymes, the unsung heroes of biological reactions, were at the core of these investigations. From exploring how temperature affects the rate of catalase activity to delving into the impact of pH on amylase, each student crafted their own research question, designed a unique methodology, and meticulously collected data. This process is truly about applying scientific knowledge and developing practical

DP: Grade 11 Biology (continued)

skills – from precise measurement to rigorous data analysis.

Students embraced the challenge of:

- **Designing experiments:** Carefully outlining variables, controls, and detailed procedures to ensure their investigations were fair and reliable.
- **Analyzing data**: Transforming raw numbers into meaningful insights, using graphs, statistical tests, and their understanding of biological principles to interpret trends.
- **Critical evaluation**: Reflecting on the strengths and limitations of their own work, a crucial skill for any budding scientist.

Beyond the Lab: Key Learning Moments

The Enzyme Metabolism IAs were rich with learning experiences, both in and out of the lab. Students honed their abilities to:

- **Formulate focused questions**: Pinpointing a clear, testable question is often the hardest first step, and our students excelled at this.
- **Communicate science**: Presenting complex data clearly through well-structured tables and graphs, and articulating their findings using precise scientific language.
- **Think critically**: Going beyond simply stating results to interpreting what the data means, evaluating the reliability of their methods, and suggesting how their research could be improved or extended.
- **Consider impact**: Reflecting on the safety, ethical, and environmental considerations inherent in scientific research – a vital aspect of responsible science.

Inspiring Future Scientists

The dedication and ingenuity displayed by our IBDP Biology students in their Enzyme Metabolism IAs were truly impressive. These investigations not only fulfill an essential IB requirement but also cultivate a deep appreciation for the scientific method. They empower students to pursue their intellectual curiosity and lay a strong foundation for future studies in science, medicine, or any field that values critical thinking and evidence-based reasoning.

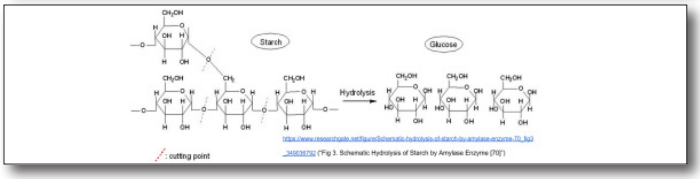
Investigating the Effect of Temperature on the Enzymatic Activity of Pepsin (from *Porcine Gastric Mucosa*) Using Albumin Protein Substrates (*Gallus Gallus domesticus* Egg Whites)

Word count: 2,854

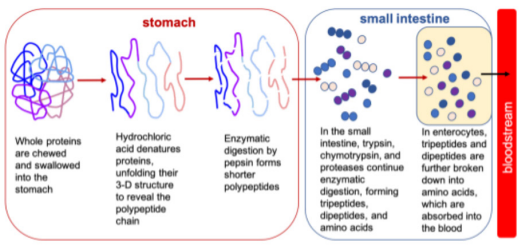
1) Introduction and Purpose

1.1) Research Question

"How does temperature (0°C, 10°C, 20°C, 40°C, 60°C ± 0.05°C) affect the enzymatic activity of powdered pepsin (from *porcine gastric mucosa*) on albumin protein substrates (*Gallus Gallus domesticus* egg white), as measured by the rate of mass loss (g/min) of standardised egg white cylinders over a 10-minute incubation period (± 0.5s) in a pH 2 buffer solution?"



in the gastric mucosa secrete HCl. As can be seen in Fig. 1, HCl protonates specific amino acid residues in the pepsinogen structure, triggering its conformational change and autocatalytic cleavage—producing the active form, pepsin (link et al.).

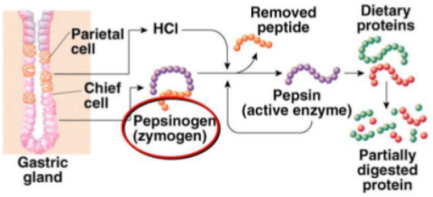


(Fig. 2: Overview of Protein Digestion and Absorption from Stomach to Bloodstream)

Image source: (Callahan et al.)

2.1) Background

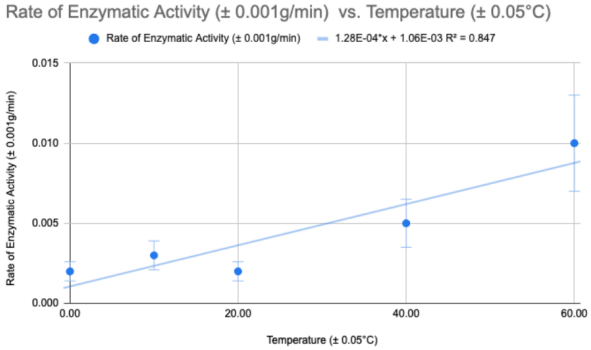
Proteins are macromolecules composed of amino acid monomers joined by peptide bonds, forming linear chains that fold into specific three-dimensional conformations that play a multitude of structural and functional roles in biological systems (Kozlowski and Pallardy). As the building blocks of many essential body structures—including tissues, organs, and enzymes—proteins underpin virtually every physiological process in living organisms. However, critical is the point that these ingested dietary proteins cannot be absorbed in their intact, polymeric form; they require hydrolysis prior to absorption.



(Fig. 1: Process of pepsin activation in the gastric glands. Chief cells secrete pepsinogen (inactive), while parietal cells secrete HCl. HCl enable conversion of pepsinogen to pepsin, which hydrolyses dietary proteins into smaller polypeptides and amino acids.)

Image source: (link et al.)

4.3) Graphs



(Fig. 9: Scatter graph on how Temperature (°C ± 0.05°C) affects the Rate of Enzymatic Activity of Pepsin on Egg Albumin (g/min ± 0.001 g/min)

DP: Grade 11 Physics



FUNDA KARAOSMANOGLU

Grade 11: *IBDP Physics students explore the particulate nature of matter and waves*

Grade 11 IB Diploma Programme Physics students have been fully immersed in their studies of *Theme B: The Particulate Nature of Matter and Waves*, engaging in a balanced combination of theoretical learning and practical experimentation.

Throughout the term, students explored fundamental concepts such as thermal energy transfer, gas laws, and the intricate relationships between albedo, emissivity, and the greenhouse effect. These investigations not only enriched their understanding of atmospheric physics but also highlighted the relevance of scientific knowledge to pressing environmental issues.

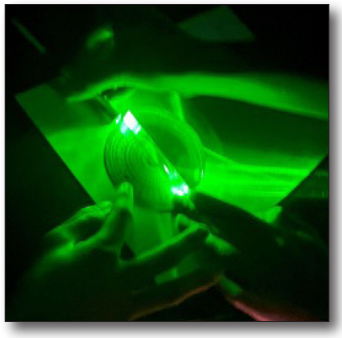
Higher Level (HL) students extended their inquiry into the realm of thermodynamics, conducting an in-depth analysis of the Carnot Cycle. This allowed them to evaluate the theoretical limits of energy efficiency and deepen their conceptual grasp of thermal systems.

In the area of electricity and circuits, all students examined the characteristics of series and parallel circuits, applying Ohm's Law and gaining practical skills in circuit analysis. A particularly engaging activity involved measuring the resistivity of Play-Doh, where students investigated how length and cross-sectional area influence electrical resistance. This hands-on experiment provided a tangible connection between abstract concepts and real-world materials.

For HL students, the study of Special Relativity presented a unique intellectual challenge. They explored the postulates of Einstein's theory, applied the Lorentz transformations, and analyzed space-time diagrams and muon decay events. This not only reinforced their understanding of time dilation and length contraction but also offered valuable opportunities for critical thinking and mathematical application.

A notable highlight of the unit was the integration of digital tools and technologies. Students utilized data-logging software and simulations to design experiments, collect and analyze data, and present their findings. The collaborative laboratory environment fostered teamwork, communication, and shared inquiry skills essential for success in both science and broader academic pursuits.

The following photos illustrate the practicals of refraction and Snell's Law in the Planetarium. This has equipped students with both practical skills and theoretical insight, preparing them for advanced studies and scientific inquiry.



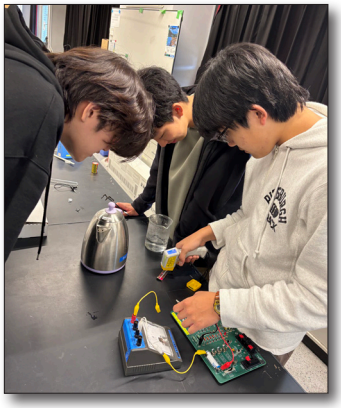


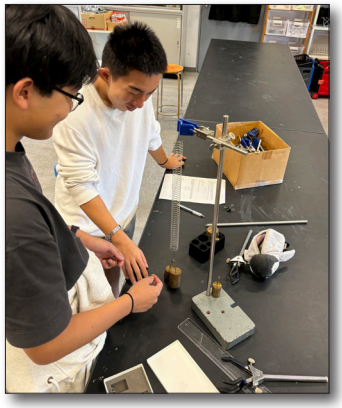




Additionally, a group of students designed a project to investigate the internal resistance of batteries, incorporating the effect of temperature on resistance. This project showcased their ability to integrate theoretical concepts with experimental design and analysis.

The photos below show the group conducting an investigation into internal resistance, incorporating the effect of temperature on resistance, and simple harmonic motion in relation to Hooke's Law.





Discussion and derivations on the board preceded the design of a group experiment investigating the relationship between impulse and momentum. The following photo captures a moment from this collaborative process, showing students actively engaged in mapping out equations, debating approaches, and laying the theoretical groundwork before moving into the experimental phase. Their focus and teamwork during this stage highlight the depth of their understanding and their ability to translate complex concepts into hands-on inquiry.

DP: Grade 11 Physics (continued)

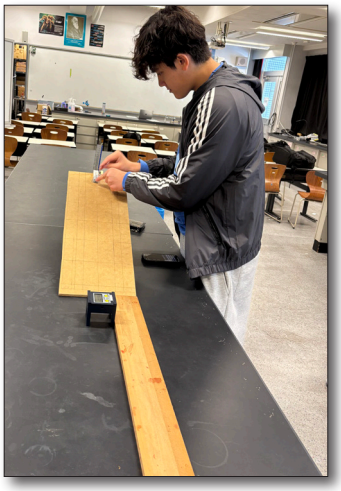


An essential part of a scientific lab report is to present data graphically and discuss the results, including how to draw the best fit line with careful attention to uncertainty bars, the graph below from the student's work.



Graph 1: The effects of the height on the momentum squared. The black line is the best fit line, the blue line is the maximum line, and the red line is the minimum line.

The photo to the right shows an individual experiment designed to practice pre-IA work on the moment of inertia and its relationship with energy. It provides a valuable opportunity to see how the formulas apply to real data and to compare expected values with observed results.



Working with data requires a scientific approach that carefully considers uncertainties in both measurements and calculations. The table of data (above right) demonstrates how students apply this understanding in their lab reports. The accompanying graph further illustrates their work.

Table 4: The velocity of the metal sphere					
	The velocity of the metal sphere ($\pm$ 1 $\times$ 10^{-12} ms^{-1})				
Height ($\pm$ 0.0005 m)	Trial 1	Trial 2	Trial 3	Trial 4	Trial 5
0.1000	1.451128791639	1.391429081726	1.439392847212	1.453398024371	1.441487201928
0.2000	1.931961384748	1.919044864414	1.869636150254	1.952337653347	1.951053792903
0.3000	2.340677239085	2.285775009281	2.236424682057	2.286200281266	2.322316499339
0.4000	2.698695530323	2.811653427145	2.781476923293	2.821298739287	2.842875019836
0.5000	3.282690453288	3.390140913092	2.988769104025	3.216865842451	3.116031904641

Table 4: Table showing the raw data collected

Through the practicals, the students have an opportunity to knead the theoretical knowledge with the data from the experiments. They conclude and analyze the meaning of the data on the theory by creating a processed data table and drawing the graph based on that. The work below shows how the students convert the raw data into processed data.

Grade 11 IB Physics students have been actively engaged in Theme B: The Particulate Nature of Matter and Waves, combining theoretical study with hands-on experiments. They explored key topics such as thermal energy transfer, gas laws, and the connection between albedo, emissivity, and the greenhouse effect.

HL students deepened their understanding through detailed analysis of the Carnot Cycle, examining the principles of thermodynamics. Meanwhile, all students investigated electric circuits, applying Ohm's Law to both series and parallel setups, including a practical measurement of Play-Doh resistivity to study how resistance varies with length and area.

A particularly challenging HL topic was Special Relativity, where students applied Lorentz transformations to space-time diagrams and studied muon decay, reinforcing abstract concepts with mathematical analysis.

Students made extensive use of digital tools for experiment design and data analysis, fostering collaboration and deeper conceptual understanding. Additionally, one group investigated the internal resistance of batteries, considering the impact of temperature on resistance.

Focus and teamwork...highlight the depth of students' understanding and their ability to translate complex concepts into hands-on inquiry.

DP: Grade 12 Physics



FUNDA KARAOSMANOGLU

Grade 12: *IBDP Physics students compare their experiment results with theoretical predictions*

The Grade 12 DP Physics cohort successfully completed their two-year journey with unwavering dedication and commendable effort. From the very beginning, students have consistently shown a strong grasp of complex physical concepts, ranging from mechanics and thermodynamics to electromagnetism and quantum phenomena. Their ability to engage with rigorous theoretical content and apply it meaningfully in practical contexts has been truly impressive.

In classroom discussions, lab investigations, and collaborative problem-solving activities, students have demonstrated intellectual curiosity and a willingness to explore beyond the textbook. Their contributions not only enriched the learning environment but also fostered a culture of inquiry and academic support among peers. Group work, design labs, and data analysis tasks became opportunities where teamwork and initiative were prominently displayed.

The following student work reflects their ability to not only design and conduct experiments with precision but also to analyze their findings thoughtfully. By comparing their results with theoretical predictions, students demonstrated a deep understanding of the scientific method and the value of critical evaluation. This process highlighted their growing skills in interpreting data, recognizing discrepancies, and drawing meaningful conclusions from their investigations.

By plotting the theoretical (in red) and experimental (in blue) relationship, the slight inaccuracy from the data can be visualized:

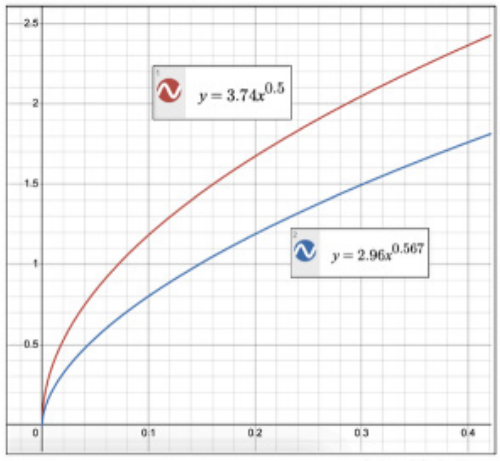
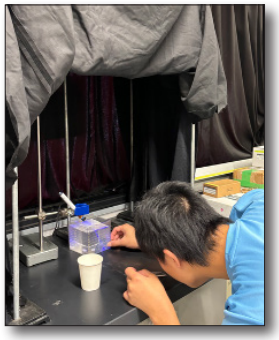
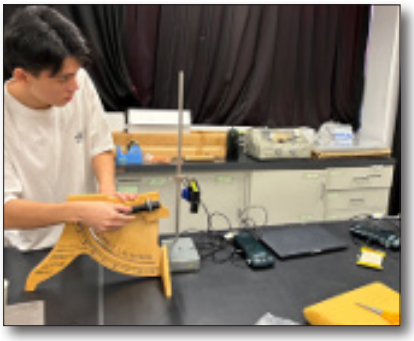


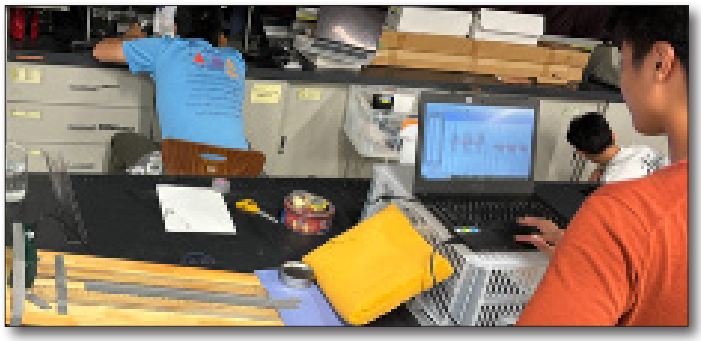
Figure 6: Graph showing the theoretical and experiment relationship
(Image created by author on "Desmos Graphing Calculator")

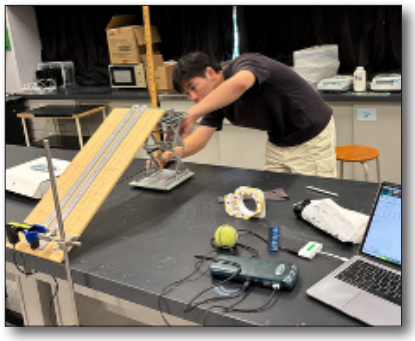
Students showed remarkable growth in essential skills such as critical thinking, scientific communication, and time management. Many students overcame initial challenges with perseverance, eventually becoming more confident and independent learners. This progress was evident in the increasing sophistication of their research questions, their systematic approach to internal assessments, and their ability to draw meaningful conclusions from complex data.

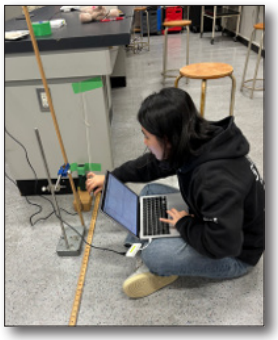
The following photos, taken while students were deeply engaged in designing their own investigations, reflect their growth as independent learners. These moments capture their ability to take initiative, apply scientific reasoning, and make thoughtful decisions throughout the inquiry process—skills that are essential in both academic and real-world contexts.











During the Spring Trimester, the focus shifted to intensive preparation for the IB Physics examinations. Students followed personalized revision plans tailored to their individual needs and targeted specific areas for improvement. They practiced exam-style questions under timed conditions, reviewed past papers, and engaged in peer-teaching activities, all of which helped consolidate their knowledge and build exam confidence.

DP: Grade 12 Collaborative Science Project



ANIL GHODAKE

Grade 12: *Tackling global challenges and inovating for a Sustainable Future*

This past March, our Grade 12 IBDP Biology, Chemistry, and Physics students embarked on an inspiring three-day journey of interdisciplinary discovery and collaboration: the ***Collaborative Sciences Project (CSP)***. Far more than just an IB requirement, the CSP is a unique opportunity for our students to apply their scientific knowledge to real-world problems and develop innovative, solution-focused strategies.

The essence of the CSP lies in its interdisciplinary nature. Students from different science disciplines come together, pooling their factual, procedural, and conceptual understanding to address complex issues. This year, the theme was deeply resonant with global challenges: the UN Sustainable Development Goals. This framework provided a powerful lens through which our students explored pressing issues, from environmental conservation to resource management.

Over the course of the project, from March 12-14, the Grade 12s engaged in a dynamic agenda. The first day was dedicated to project planning, where groups brainstormed and selected topics aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, designing experiments to investigate their chosen problems. Following this, the focus shifted to data collection and the initial stages of presentation development. The second day saw students finalizing their data collection and dedicating significant time to rehearsing their presentations, honing their arguments and collaborative delivery.

The culmination of their hard work took place on the final day, with group presentations in the Conference Room. Each group presented their findings and proposed solutions, demonstrating remarkable ingenuity and critical thinking. It was truly inspiring to witness the innovative and sustainable ideas that emerged from this collaborative effort. For instance, some groups explored the potential of edible food packaging, addressing issues of waste and sustainability in the food industry. Others delved into Papercrete, a sustainable building method, showcasing an understanding of eco-friendly construction. Water filtration systems were also a popular area of investigation, highlighting the critical need for clean water access globally.

Beyond the scientific inquiry, the CSP is designed to foster crucial Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills. Our students demonstrated exceptional teambuilding, negotiation, and leadership throughout the project. They learned to navigate diverse perspectives, leverage individual strengths, and collectively work towards a shared goal. The project also deepened their appreciation for the environment and the profound social and ethical implications of science and technology.

By engaging with local and global issues, our students gained a profound understanding of the interconnectedness between communities and the necessity of collective action and international cooperation to solve today's challenges. The Collaborative Sciences Project truly empowers our students to become active and engaged citizens of the world, equipped with the skills and mindset to contribute to a more sustainable future.



DP: Grade 11 Service Trip (Creativity, Activity, & Service)



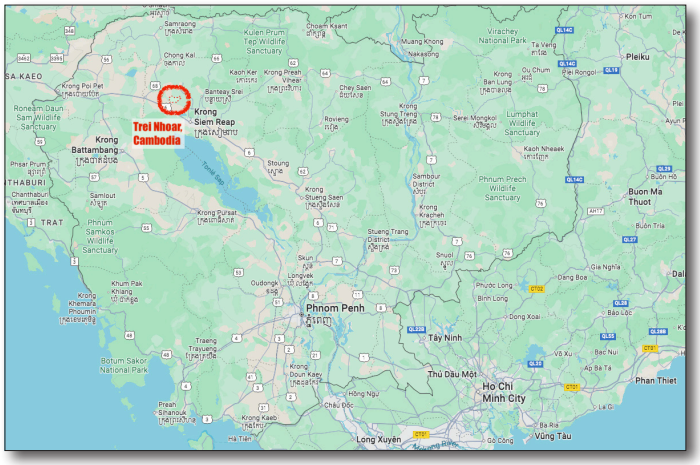


KURT MECKLEM, JESSICA RICHARDS,
& MICHAEL DZORKPATA

Grade 11: *Service Trip to Cambodia*

Feeling worked out but fulfilled, we returned from Cambodia after a one-week service trip with our Juniors. Out of the goodness of their hearts, these caring young adults had raised funds in school towards the construction of a toilet facility in Trei Nhoar, a village in Siem Reap, Cambodia. It had been the Philippines for the past several years, but this year's cohort decided to look elsewhere. Service learning, overseen through CAS, is a backbone of the IB diploma programme. It is an intentional approach to moving educational objectives from mere accumulation of knowledge to experiential learning and problem solving. What makes service learning more popular is that "it combines serving the community with the rich academic frontloading, assessment, and reflection typically seen in project-based learning." [1] The implication of this is that service learning is not insulated from academic work; it is that dimension that enables students to demonstrate their humanity.

With such goals in mind, we arrived in Siem Reap and were greeted at the airport with a fancy-looking bus awash with drinks and fruits and other snacks. The bus ride from the airport to the city of Siem Reap was thus peaceful, our tour guide taking the trouble to secure our tired attention to his historical accounts on Siem Reap and Cambodia.



Considering the comfy-cozy interior of the bus, we could barely remain awake. After a night in the city, we left for the village the next day.

The students demonstrated great time management, team work and communication skills during our stay in the village. Most importantly, it was pleasing to observe how quickly they got integrated into the life of the community. Upon our arrival and the first of many decent meals, we were shown our dwelling places; the people had so kindly packed up and ceded their chambers to us. We were to sleep on mattresses on the floors of their stilt houses, and it was gratifying to see our students excited—and not begrudging—about the novelty of it all.

We began work on the project that very afternoon. Divided into three teams, we took turns digging the cess-pit, steel-bending and making beams for the base of the cesspit, and painting fences.



The physical strength and determination of our students became apparent on this first day; they developed this esprit de corps through a shared objective to improve the lives of the Trei Nhoar community.

1 *Hether Wolpert-Gawron, "What the Heck is Service Learning?" https://www.edutopia.org/blog/what-heck-service-learning-heather-wolpert-gawron*

DP: Grade 11 Service Trip (continued)





That night, we were taken through a lesson on the basics of the Khmer language. The ensuing two days were a cocktail of activities: students remained relentless in completing the project; there were visits to households to interact with families and make donations; students played snooker and volleyball with the locals; there were lessons on basket weaving and recycling of candy wrappers into mat-weaving materials, etc.













After three days in the village, and a final night of practicing some traditional Cambodian dances, we received a Monk blessing and returned to Siem Reap on sightseeing. Two major highlights of our tour were the cycling through the rain forests to the 200 Hindu-Buddhist 12th century temples at Angkor Wat (we saw only 3!), and then our visit to the Rat Museum. You want to keep these two on your to-do list when you visit Cambodia. They have very clean but decisively rough cycling tracks with rentable overpowering mountain bikes. That alone was so much fun. But we 'suffered' when the tour guide said we could do only three of the 200 temples! The mammoth temples sat in preserved but majestic ruins, and it was hard not to wonder how technology was used in the 12th century to so intricately carve the stories and civilization of a people in these hard stones.





DP: Grade 11 Service Trip (continued)

Rats are game, a staple source of food, in some societies. In Cambodia, however, rats save lives—they are deployed in mine clearance. 50 years after the civil war, there are still an estimated 4 million unexploded landmines in Cambodia, maiming and killing innocent people, farmers especially, and children. But thanks to these rats, trained and brought from Tanzania, the landmines are gradually being mined. The APOPO Hero Rats Museum will show you how this is done. Because rats are lighter in weight compared to sniffing dogs, the explosives do not activate when the rats detect them and begin scratching. They scratch to make our environments safer, and as our students petted and patted these hero rats, they were in a sense united in making our world a better place.

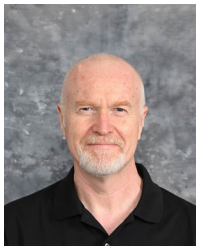


With that heartfelt experience, the service trip came to a close and we headed back home. We thank Ms. Pyke, the CAS Coordinator, and the trip organizers for giving our students this learning opportunity. Hopefully, the students have reflected on the mission and seen its inherent opportunities for personal growth. As educators, we can be more intentional in our interactions with students on the subject of service learning even as we teach our specialty subjects: "[i]t's about leveraging the need to do something good in the world as a means to help kids hit their learning objectives. It's about teaching empathy as well as literacy. It's about teaching compassion as well as composition. It's about teaching advocacy as well as algebra." [2]

Cambodia! Or kun chren!

2 Ibid

MS/HS: Learning Outcome Awards



STEPHEN FRATER

The school mission statement at OIS is to develop *informed, caring, creative individuals contributing to a global community*. It is sometimes easy to lose sight of this objective when our focus is on lesson content, exams, grades, and eventually, the challenge of university applications. But when students leave school, finish college, and start work, long after they have forgotten the course content, it is these attributes that will shape the kind of person they become. In this world, we believe it is more important than ever that our students should grow up to be:

- **Informed**, which means they should be knowledgeable, intellectually curious, and a critical thinker. Someone who asks questions, seeks answers, and looks for other possibilities and is always open-minded.
- **Creative**, because making the world a better place includes making it a more interesting, colourful, musical, and inspiring place.
- **Caring**, which includes being tolerant, respectful, and open-minded, and recognising that diversity and differences makes communities stronger.

Finally, it is important that students grow up to be balanced, reflective and thoughtful. Also, that they are effective communicators in a wide range of mediums and situations, and people who is willing to take risks if it means a better outcome for themselves, others, or the wider community.

For these reasons every year we recognise students that have excelled in these areas at our end-of-year assembly.

Teachers nominate students from each grade level in the subjects that they teach, or coach, for an ***Academics***, ***Qualities***, and/or ***Values*** award. The criteria for these awards is published on our *OIS Parent Portal website*, and on the reverse of each printed certificate. Teacher nominations are based on their first-hand observations of the students in their classes and/or homeroom environment, supplemented by first-hand observations of the students' behaviour and actions around the school. There are also several prestigious awards conferred annually by international school organisations in Japan and in Asia. Details of their awards, and lists of award winners, can be seen below.

MS/HS: Learning Outcome Awards (continued)

OIS Academics Award



The first award is for **Academics**. This doesn't necessarily mean a student needs the highest grades; it means the winner has impressed his or her teachers with their efforts to be knowledgeable, creative, critical thinkers, and intellectually curious. This year's Academics award winners in each grade level are below (student names in coloured font received nominations in multiple subjects):

G6: **Nahye Kim, Sien Esther Wang, Yui Minami**, Jiho Jeon, Emma Algie

G7: **Nayeon Jin, Ishan Mitra Das, Miu Imoto**, Ivy Crislip, Tomoe Yasuno, Yuika Hirose, Miya Ono

G8: **Yoonho Lee, Aanya Muthuvelan, Lilica Oxenfarth**, Juno Matsuoka, Kouta Ogawa, Nina Koget Fillet, Zachary Streicher

G9: **Zijun Xie, Yueyue Zhu, Manaka Iwaki**, Levi Lim, Alexander Thomson

G10: **Soo Hyun Kim, Aya Sagara**, Fahmid Haider, Yuujin Ishiuchi-Ray, Jimin Jeon, Helene Bigot

G11: **Rick Kawakami, Yurino Hisamori, Maya Kobayashi**, Elijah Jones, Yu Shingu, Amelie Xenakis, Ahmed Yildirim



OIS Values Award



The second award is for **Values**. These students were chosen by their teachers because they have shown that they are caring, open-minded, and principled, values that are increasingly important in a world where intolerance increasingly makes the headlines, and some societies are becoming more polarised and divided. This year's Values award winners in each grade level are:

G6: **Eun Yul Wi, Emma Algie, Nahye Kim**, Dongyeop Lee, Swara Anil Ghodake

G7: **Yuika Hirose, Nayeon Jin**, Miya Ono, Kanna Honda

G8: **Yoonho Lee, Kouta Ogawa**, Nina Koget Fillet, Juno Matsuoka, Haruto Kannoto, Aanya Muthuvelan, Lilica Oxenfarth, Zachary Streicher

G9: **Wennan Chen**, Zijun Xie, Tomohito Hisamori, Ukyo Kobayashi

G10: **Fang Yao Zhou, Jimin Jeon**, Ivy Meline, Hojun Jin, Aya Sagara, Shoot Noro

G11: **Lu He Rikuto Hong, Hayato Hoori**, Ellen Tanabe, Elijah Jones, Maya Kobayashi, Nene Yamanishi



MS/HS: Learning Outcome Awards (continued)

OIS Qualities Award



The third award is for **Qualities**. These students were chosen because they are balanced, take a reflective and thoughtful approach to their studies, relationships, and issues, they can communicate clearly and effectively to a wide range of audiences on a wide range of topics, and they are risk takers. This year's Values award winners in each grade level are:

G6: Dongyeop Lee, Lin Myers, Atsutaro Eguchi, Nahye Kim, Sien Esther Wang, Yui Minami

G7: Nayeon Jin, Mailani Ferris, Yuika Hirose, Ishan Mitra Das, Shiwa Okino, Tomoe Yasuno, Miya Ono, Ivy Crislip

G8: Yoonho Lee, Lilica Oxenfarth, Aanya Muthuvelan, Nina Koga Fillet, Ami Sukeno, Mir Lee, Minatsu Chimura, Juno Matsuoka

G9: Kohei Kawaguchi, Haruki Algie, Luke Atsuta-Sturm, Aditya Rajpurohit

G10: Helen Bigot, Jimin Jeon, Soo Hyun Kim, Yuujin Ishiuchi-Ray

G11: Hayato Hoori, Osa Nishioka, Amelie Xenakis, Yu Shingu, Yoonjae Lee, Monica Koleda-Yamamoto, Elijah Jones, Maya Kobayashi, Yuuka Ogawa

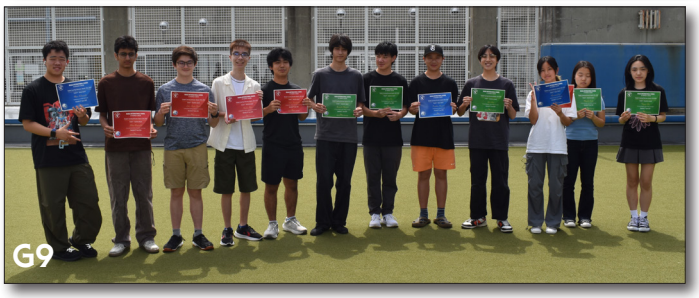


Gallery of Award Winners







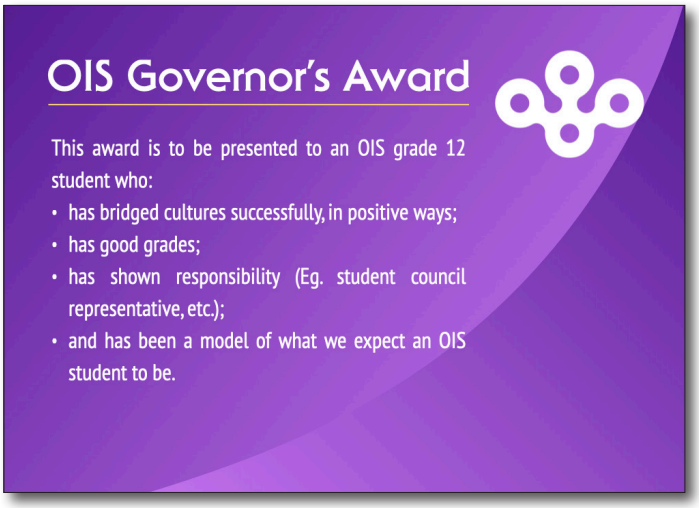






MS/HS: OIS and External Awards

The Osaka Governor's Award





For the 2024-2025 academic year, the OIS Governor's Award was presented to **G12 Yi An Hah**.

Yi An has strived to bridge cultures within our school community, presiding over or participating in numerous after school clubs that offer students of both schools and different age groups the opportunity to collaborate and learn together over a shared interest in a range of academic subjects. She has also developed strong collaborative relationships with peers in other international schools in the region in order to organise and run inter-school maths competitions, and has employed her multilingual skills to successfully help coordinate teams of volunteers across both OIS and SIS to organise and run SOIS festivals and sports days as President of the High School Student Council. She is always polite, cheerful, determined, and inclusive of others, just some of the many reasons why Yi An Hah is the deserving recipient of this year's Osaka Governor's Award. Congratulations Yi An!

EARCOS Global Citizen Award



The **East Asia Regional Council of International Schools** award is presented to a student who embraces the qualities of a global citizen. He/She is a proud representative of his/her nation while respectful of the diversity of other nations, is open-minded, well informed, aware and empathetic, concerned and caring for others encouraging a sense of community and strongly committed to engagement and action to make the world a better place. Finally, this student is able to interact and communicate effectively with people from all walks of life while having a sense of collective responsibility for all who inhabit the globe.

G11 Lu He Rikuto Hong exemplifies these qualities through his well-known and highly impactful efforts to support communities in Japan and overseas through raising awareness, raising funds, and mobilising others to bring material aid to those in need. Just some of his activities and roles include founding the *Disaster Assistant Team* (featured in the 2023 Spring edition of *The Educator*), and then the even more ambitious and impactful *World in Peace* organisation (featured in the 2024-2025 Fall & Winter edition of *The Educator*) to coordinate efforts to help people around the world who are threatened by natural disasters and man-made factors. From Japan to Cambodia and Afghanistan, the *World in Peace* team has made a real difference in the lives of hundreds of people, making Lu He Rikuto a thoroughly worthy and deserving recipient of this year's EARCOS Global Citizen Award.

JCIS Award

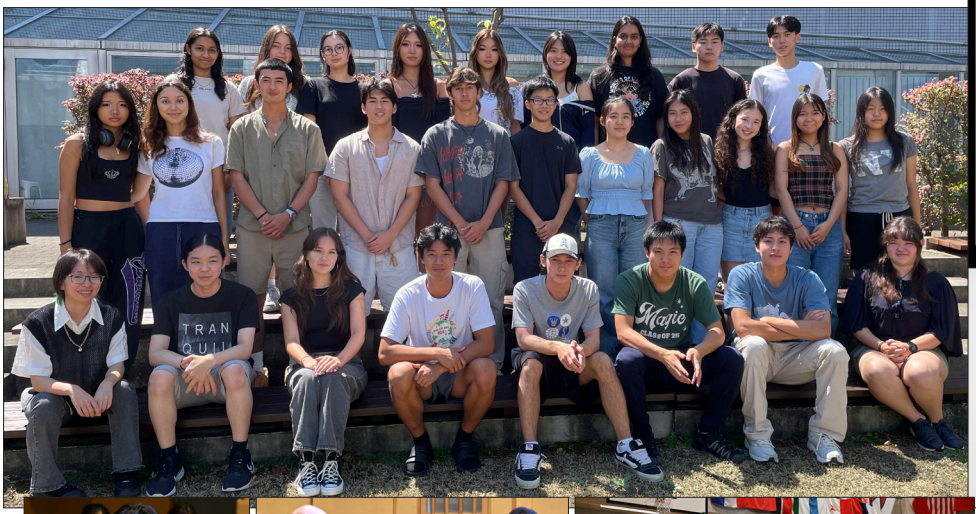


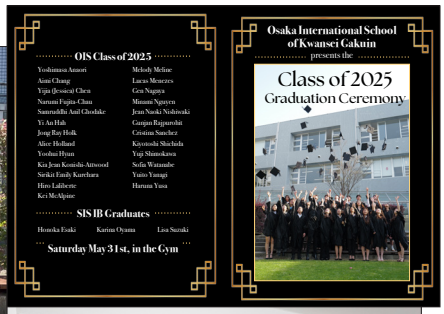
The **Japan Council of International Schools** asks each member school to recognize a student for his or her efforts in helping others to bridge cultures between Japan and the rest of the world.

Through her activities both in and outside of school, **G9 Kaylee Angkawidjaja** has fully embraced Japanese culture. She is a conscientious member of her class who has put an impressive amount of time and effort into consciously building relationships across our two schools, through developing her proficiency in Japanese, even though it is her third language, consistently participating in Sabers sports with SIS peers, and taking a prominent and leading role in joint camps with SIS. She is a great example of someone who shows a deep appreciation of Japanese culture and the benefits that can come from our two-schools campus. Congratulations Kaylee for being this year's winner.

HS Graduation Ceremony

The OIS high school graduation ceremony was held on Saturday 31 May. It was another beautiful sunny day, and we would like to offer our congratulations again to the Grade 12 students and their families on their graduation. Our heartfelt thanks go out to all of the people who made the event possible, in particular the Grade 11 students and parents who prepared the gym for the ceremony, and who hosted the wonderful after-ceremony celebration; a special thank you to the G11 class representatives, particularly Ms. Hoori, for coordinating the efforts of the other parents to make the day special for the graduates and their families.















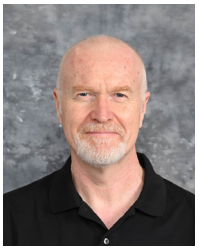


HS Graduation Ceremony (continued)



Photos from the graduation reception, generously hosted by the G11 parents and students

K:12: Approaches to Learning



STEPHEN FRATER

The next skill we will focus on in this edition of *The Educator* is transfer skills.

As a reminder, the Fall 2022 trimester's newsletter introduced a number of key skills that students need to develop to become lifelong learners and achieve long-term academic and career success. The concept of *Approaches to Learning* is fully integrated into the curriculum and teachers' lesson planning throughout the PYP, MYP, and DP, becoming increasingly important and prominent as students move up through the grades. The skills in demand include **oral** and **written communication skills**, **critical-thinking** and **problem-solving skills**, **professionalism** and **work ethic**, and **teamwork** and **collaboration skills**.

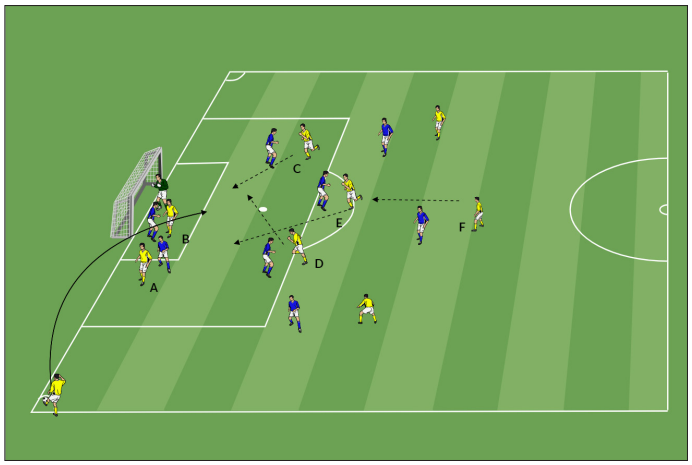
In the IB, particularly the DP where these skills need to be most highly developed, they are grouped or presented in the five clusters listed below, and in each edition of *The Educator* we will focus on one of these clusters.

Thinking skills	• Critical thinking • Creative thinking • Transfer
Communication skills	• Communication
Social skills	• Collaboration
Self-management skills	• Organisation • Affective • Reflection
Research skills	• Information literacy • Media literacy

Thinking Skills: Transfer

It is not unusual to observe students of all grade levels complete tasks using information they have just covered in class, only to see the same students seemingly struggle with a slightly or significantly different task that can be solved using the same information. In such a situation, you may hear a student say, "*We didn't cover this*" or "*We haven't seen these questions before, so I don't know what to do.*" It would also not be unusual for the teacher to respond with "*We have studied this concept, just the wording of the question/the context are different; you should know how to do this.*"

At the heart of the problem is the ability to transfer learning from one context to another, and although developing ***transfer skills*** are not the first thing that spring to mind when we think about school, they are arguably one of *the* primary goals of education. We want students to be able to apply what they learn at school to other challenges inside and outside of the classroom. For example, the goal of an English class is not to learn about one book or one author in depth; it is to help students become competent and critical life-long readers and writers who can tackle a wide-range of mediums and subjects. The goal of studying history is not to recall one particular event as much as developing an approach and perspective to understanding any event, including those that may be happening in the world around us today. The same idea of transferring learning applies to



sports coaching, where soccer players, for example, need to be able to apply the skills and patterns they learnt in highly structured drills in practice to a less familiar situation that may appear in a much more fluid game environment.

Thus, through the transfer of learning, what students learn in school has a much broader relevance, usefulness, and lasting value in the real world.

Definitions

Transfer of learning is the ability to extend what has been learned in one context to novel (new) contexts. This includes transferring learning from one problem to another within a subject, and transferring learning between subjects. It also important that students are able to transfer learning over time, from one school year to another, and between school, home, and eventually, the workplace.

K:12: Approaches to Learning (continued)

There are two important elements to this idea; that students need to be able to extend or apply what they have studied to a new context before it can be said that they have genuinely understood and learnt it, and they need to be able to do this independently without teacher prompting. In other words, students need to be able to:

1. Show recognise that there is a situation in which prior knowledge could be useful.
2. Successfully retrieve that prior knowledge.
3. Successfully use/apply that prior knowledge to the new situation.

This is summed up by Bloom et al. (1956) as "Applying of appropriate abstraction without having to be prompted as to which abstraction is correct or without having to be shown how to use it in that situation."

A continuum

What is meant by a novel or new context though?

Here, researchers make a distinction between ***near*** and ***far*** transfer, although in reality this is a continuum with new contexts falling somewhere in between the two terms.

Near transfers tend to involve similar questions and situations. For example, expecting students to apply the essay writing skills they learn in English class to writing essays in a History class, or including the second question below in a test after they students have previously seen the first question in class:

Q1) Bats are one of the most prevalent orders of mammals. Approximately how many bat species are there in the world?

Q2) Chiroptera is the name of the order that contains all bat species. What is the approximate number of bat species that exist?

Another real-world example of near transfer would be learning to drive a car, and then applying much of the same knowledge and skills to driving a small truck. The larger the truck, though, the less similar the context, and the further away the experience is to driving a car.



Far transfers therefore involve applying knowledge and skills to a substantially different context. Learning to drive a car and then a large truck involves many of the same principles, but looks and feels very different to a new driver. Another more common example would be studying the relationship between an author's word choice in English class, and then using the same critical analysis to identify bias in source materials in History class, or learning about wind dynamics in Physics class which can then be used to understand the evolution of birds' wing shapes in Biology class.

The greater the differences between the contexts, the further the transfer, and the more difficult it can be for students to achieve step 1, above: recognise that there is a situation in which prior knowledge could be useful.

Although transfer of learning is such an important objective in education, it is common for teachers (and adults in general) to expect transfer to happen eventually and automatically, particularly if the course content is taught well. And indeed, some learning does occur automatically, particularly basic skills such as reading and numeracy, which carry over easily into other classes, and contexts outside of school. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that transfer skills are more challenging for children than many of us realise, which is why we encounter statements such as the one in the introduction, even amongst high school students; "*We didn't cover this; I don't know what to do.*"

Research (Barnett & Ceci, 2002) suggests that transfer is more difficult when:

1. The physical space is different (e.g. transferring skills and knowledge from a textbook exercise to a real-world case study)
2. The social context is different (e.g. transferring between reading something individually for homework, and discussing a topic in a group setting)
3. There is a significant time gap between the last time the skill or knowledge was used, and the new task or problem where the student ie expected to use it again
4. The knowledge domain is different (e.g transferring relevant information learned in Mathematics class to art, such as the geometry of shapes)
5. The functional domain is different (e.g. transferring knowledge and skills learned through an academic setting to a more social or physical health setting)
6. The modality is different (e.g. transferring knowledge between different formats such as shifting from equation practice questions in Mathematics to a problem that is written out in paragraph form)

K:12: Approaches to Learning (continued)

A skill to be learnt and practiced

So, how can students improve their transfer skills?

The first step is to recognize that students need to have a strong grasp of concepts to be able to adapt and apply them to different contexts. Memorisation of facts or the answers to already-practiced questions is unlikely to help students develop the level of understanding needed. Some of the ways to develop this depth of understanding and the ability to transfer for it include:

a) Varying the approaches to studying and practice (interleaving and spacing)
Interleaving is "a process where students mix, or interleave, multiple subjects or topics while they study in order to improve their learning." This is in contrast to ***blocked*** practice which involves studying one topic very thoroughly before moving on to another topic. According to Bjork, Dunlosky, and Kornell (2013), studies have shown that interleaving is more effective than blocked practice for developing problem solving skills, and it also leads to better long-term retention and transfer of learning. By shifting back and forth between topics, and by leaving some time or space between practice questions, the brain is force to continually retrieve knowledge; this prevents a reliance on rote responses pulled from short-term memory. It requires more cognitive effort, but produces deeper understanding, better long-term retention, and transfer of learning, particularly for ***far*** transfer.

b) Use analogical reasoning
Simply put, attaching analogies and real-world examples to new concepts helps students to both recall learning, and to apply it to new contexts, although this tends to work more with near transfers than far transfers where the new context is so different that the student does not connect the previous example with the new scenario (Gentner, Loewenstein, and Thompson, 2003). Still, it is a useful learning strategy, and explains why real-world examples are often mentioned in lessons and textbooks when new or abstract concepts are introduced.

c) Practice Explaining Concepts to Others
Students who explain or teach learned content to peers or another audience tend to process ideas more thoroughly and deeply, tend of find and fix gaps in their knowledge and understanding, and tend to be able to generalise concepts more successfully, i.e. detach the idea from the example or context in which is was learnt (Chi, Bassok, and Reimann, 1989). Students can easily practice this in study pairs or study groups, or at home with family members. It is not hard to see how a parent asking 'why?' and 'how?' questions, or asking for a simpler or alternative explanation would require a student to think carefully about the idea(s) they are trying to communicate, and to ensure that they can identify the core principles involved in the topic rather than the superficial details of the original context.

d) Practice!
Of course, the more students tackle practice questions from a range of sources, the more likely they are to be able to separate key concepts and ideas from the context in which they were learnt, and the more able they will become in:

1. recognising situations in which prior knowledge could be useful.
2. Successfully retrieving that prior knowledge.
3. Successfully applying that prior knowledge to a new context.

That is why teachers will often exhort students to review lesson material do some optional practice in between classes. Many of the textbooks we use include end-of-topic questions that require students to apply their learning to similar but different questions, which enables students to practice the near transfer of their learning. Some textbooks also provide case studies that embed the concepts in a somwehat different context, which requires students to transfer their understanding and knowledge further. Students who chose to try these extension tasks are often the ones who are most most capable of transferring their learning under exam conditions.

Conclusion

Most students will have wondered "*Why are we learning this?*" at some point. Once students understand the relevance and value of transfer of learning, and the ability to apply concepts, principles, and procedures to new and quite different contexts, often from the real world, then the purpose of classroom learning will become clearer more often. It will certainly increase the value of that learning significantly, and avoid situations in which a student might say "*We didn't cover this; I don't know what to do.*"



K:12: Approaches to Learning (continued)

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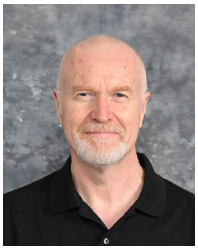
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Calendar Reminders



Sept 3 (Wed)	OIS PTA meeting from 09:00.
Sept 5 (Fri)	Elementary School Back-to-School Night from 5:00pm.
Sept 10 (Wed)	MYP workshop for G6-G10 parents.
Sept 11 (Thu)	OIS PTA Welcome Party for new families. OIS Middle and High School Back-to-School Night from 5:40pm - 8:25pm
Sept 13 (Sat)	Kansai Plains University Fair @Ritsumeikan Uji.
Sept 15 (Mon)	National Holiday (Respect for the Aged Day): ***No School.***
Sept 17 (Wed)	Monday lesson schedule.
Sept 19-20 (Fri-Sat)	HS JV Boys & Girls Volleyball Tournament @YIS/St. Maur.
Sept 23 (Tue)	National Holiday (Autumnal Equinox): ***No School.***.
Sept 25 (Thu)	OIS College Workshop for G12 students & parents from 4:30pm.
Sept 26-27 (Fri-Sat)	HS Boys & Girls Volleyball Tournament @SOIS.
Oct 1 (Wed)	OIS PTA meeting from 09:00.
Oct 3-4 (Fri-Sat)	WJAA MS Boys Baseball Tournament @CA, WJAA Girls Volleyball Tournament @SOIS.
Oct 11 (Sat)	SOIS Sports Day.

K-12 Student Progress & Curriculum Information



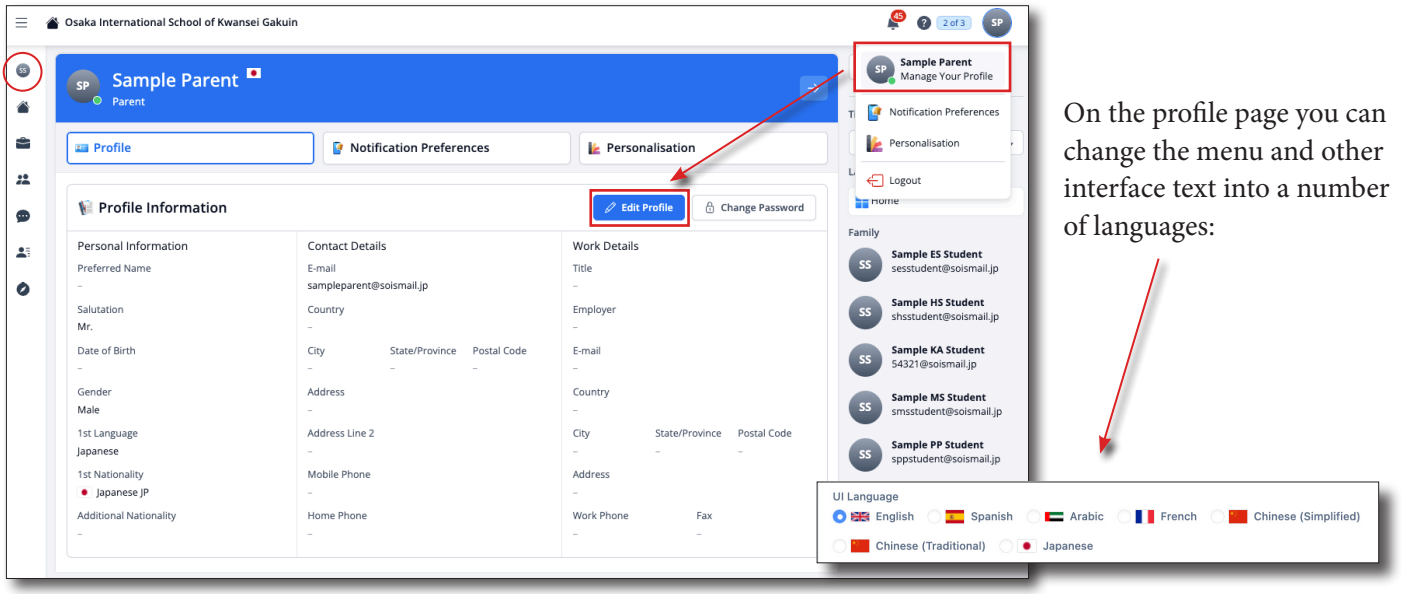
STEPHEN FRATER

OIS uses *ManageBac* as its primary lesson management systems (LMS), curriculum platform, and reporting tool. This platform is used throughout our elementary, middle, and high schools to host course plans and resources, record student progress, and produce trimester reports. The system is also used daily by middle and high school students and teachers to schedule coursework deadlines, collect student assignment submissions, and communicate teacher comments and assessment grades. We strongly encourage parents to access the system regular to stay informed of your child's deadlines, academic progress, upcoming units, and in some cases, behavioural notes.

Although OIS has used the system since 2013, the functionality and user interface of *ManageBac* is regularly updated, so it is helpful to sometimes review how parents can use the system to access academic and behavioural information about their child or children. Please explore your child's courses when you can, and do not hesitate to contact the teachers or Principals if you have any questions.

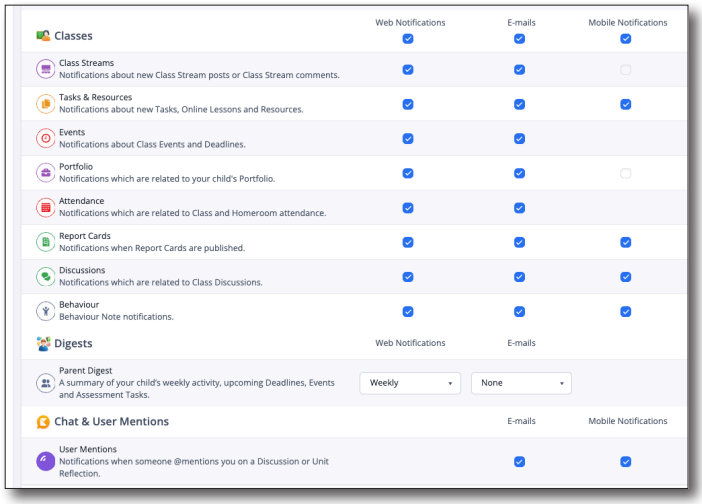
1. Changing the user interface language

Remember that the language of the interface for parent accounts on *ManageBac* can be changed into multiple languages. After logging into your account **here**, click your profile name at the top right of the screen, select **Manage Your Profile**, and the click **Edit Profile**.



On the profile page you can change the menu and other interface text into a number of languages:

Whilst you are editing your profile, it's highly recommended that you also review your **Notification Preferences**, which is the option just below **Manage Your Profile**. There are almost 40 different check boxes and options you can turn on or off to determine if and how you wish to be notified of updates to your child's account.



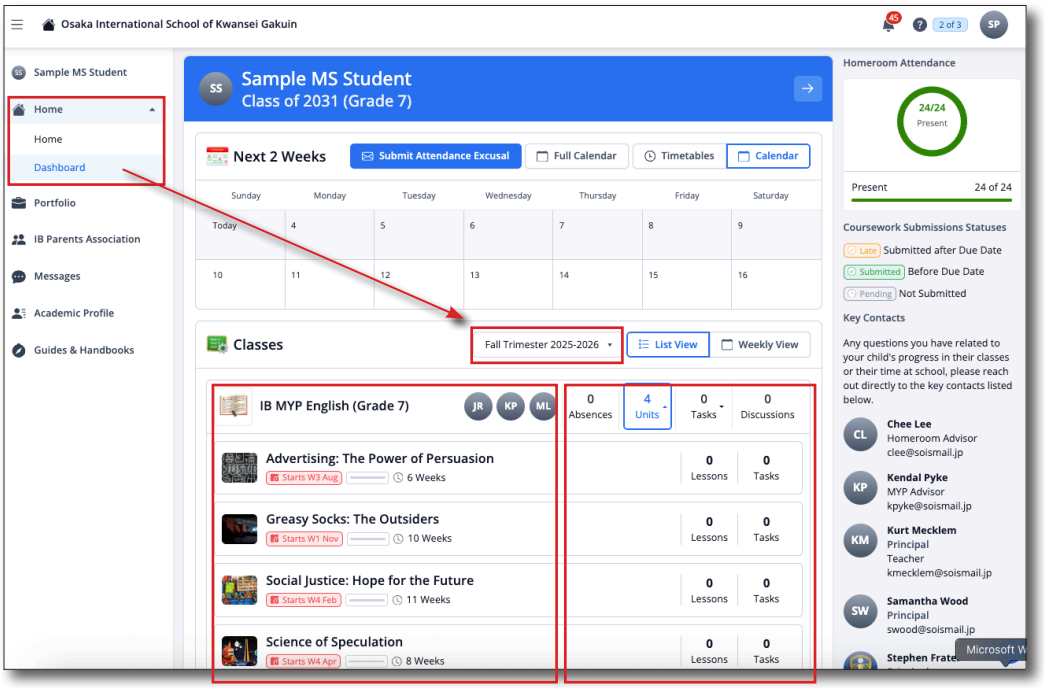
2. Switching between student accounts

Once you have set your preferences, save the changes and return to the main screen. If you have more than one child, select the account you wish to view using the dropdown list at the top left of the screen; in this screenshot example, it can be accessed by clicking on the ***SS*** icon, circled above. (This allows you to switch between your children's accounts).

K-12 Student Progress & Curriculum Information (continued)

3. View scores and comments

To view your child's academic progress at anytime during the trimester, select the **Dashboard** from the left-hand menu, and see the list of classes your child is enrolled in. Make sure you are looking at the **current trimester** (although you can also look back to previous trimesters as well). For each class you will be able to view the units being studied over the year, and for grades 6-12, you can also see your child's attendance and all assignments that have been set for the course. Click on the **Task** box, and you will see a list of completed and upcoming assignments for the class. For each completed task, you will see:



View all enrolled courses (e.g. G7 English), course units (e.g. Advertising, which starts in late August and lasts for 6 weeks), note any absences from the class.

- the name of the assignment, the date and time it was due, and the type of task (e.g. formative versus summative, paper or quiz).
- if the assignment was submitted on time or not.
- if the assignment was awarded a score, you will see the IB grade awarded (e.g. 1-7) and the raws marks achieved (eg. 30/40).
- if the teacher has commented on the assignment, you can see the whole comment by clicking on the **Show More** link.

View any tasks that have been set, including teacher feedback and grades for summative work that has been completed.



4. View unit information

Finally, in addition to viewing assignment outcomes, you can also find more information on the unit being studied by looking at the course unit descriptions, which outline the objectives of the unit being studied.

Click on the course name (e.g. **IB MYP English**), then click on the **Units** box, to view a list of the units being studied on the course. Select a unit, and you will see:

- a broad description of the unit.
- a list of essential understandings, which are curriculum content and skills the students are aiming to acquire from the unit.
- inquiry questions that a specific to the activities and assignments that will be studied in class, and often assessed.

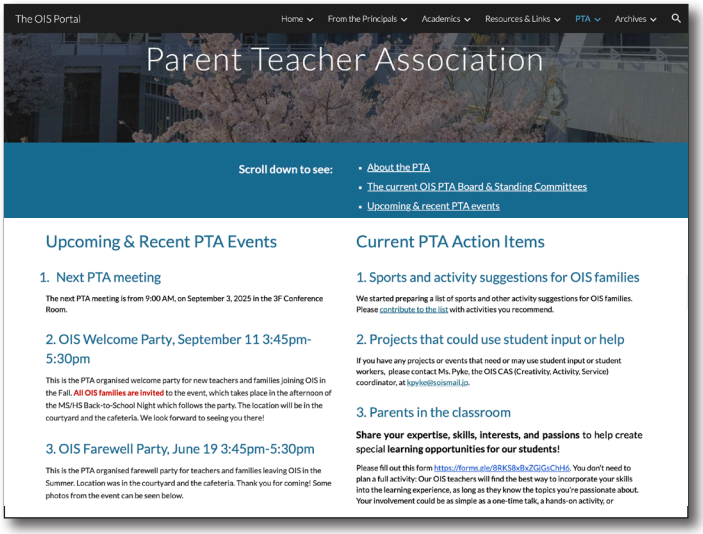
Updates from the OIS Parent-Teacher Association



The current executive committee of the OIS Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) took office in mid-December of last year, according to the rules (bylaws) that governed the association at the time. As you may know or imagine, PTA activities had come almost to a halt during the pandemic. After that, the 2023 and 2024 PTA boards made energetic efforts and succeeded in bringing the PTA back to life. A big thank-you to them and all the other volunteers who helped! Building on their endeavours and accomplishments, we are trying to make the PTA even more active and efficient, with the main goals to:

- Promote positive communication between OIS families, staff, and administration.
- Support the education, health, development, and welfare of students and their families.
- Foster a sense of community, school spirit, and goodwill.

These goals are also stated on the PTA webpage which can be accessed here.



I come from a country where, at least at the time I lived there, in standard schools, PTAs are not active, if they exist at all. When my family joined OIS at the start of the PTA's revival, I was introduced to the idea of an active parent association. Believing in the fundamental importance of education, I began attending meetings and activities, gradually learning more about how the PTA works. This experience gave me ideas for how we might continue to strengthen it.

My attitude, shared with the other members of the PTA executive committee, is that the PTA should be run by parents who volunteer, rather than by parents who are "appointed" according to some rule. At the same time, OIS requires that all families serve in the PTA as class representatives at least once per child they have at OIS. This is to help address situations where not enough volunteers come forward. Our administration is trying to harmonize our view with the OIS rule. Over the past ten months, we have been able to organize nearly all activities through volunteers, without relying on the obligation of class representatives. A major success was finding volunteers to serve as officers of the International Fair (president, vice president, treasurer), roles that had traditionally been filled by class representatives

So far in 2025, the PTA has organized several major events, continuing the traditions of recent years. These included the BBQ for OIS families and teachers (May), the Teacher Appreciation Lunch (June), and the Farewell Party for families and teachers departing OIS (June). In addition, some grade-level events were held with PTA support: the G12 Graduation Banquet, traditionally organized by G11 parents, as well as the G4-G5 Dance Party and the G5 Final Celebration, both led by G5 class representatives and parents.

Other events were held together with and mainly organized by SISPA, our sister school's Parent Association, such as the SOIS picnic in March. This year we have further strengthened our collaboration with SISPA, reflecting the close ties between our two schools, which share the same campus, parts of the curriculum, and many activities. We also introduced some changes — hopefully for the better! Here are the main ones

We made it a priority to personally welcome all new families who join OIS. The executive committee sends each family a welcome email with essential information and useful links about both school life and out-of-school activities and services*. The class representatives of the respective grade then follow up with grade-specific details. Since August 2025, we have also begun giving new families small welcome gifts, some carrying the OIS logo.

We have made some adjustments to the organization of the monthly PTA meetings, which all members are welcome to attend either in the OIS conference room or online. A

** Please note that many documents shared within the OIS community can only be accessed by users who are logged into their school-issued SOISmail account.*

Updates from the OIS Parent-Teacher Association (continued)





preliminary agenda is circulated one week in advance, giving parents time to see the topics to be discussed, followed by the final version the day before the meeting.

All votes on the budget and other motions are now conducted online. This makes it easier for families attending remotely to participate, allows automatic translation into other languages when desired, and encourages more open voting. While votes are not anonymous, only the officers may see how each family voted, rather than everyone present in the room, as would happen with a show of hands. The system also automatically calculates results, applying the rule that each family has one vote for each child enrolled at OIS. The minutes are distributed by email to all families as soon as possible, accompanied by an executive summary. The summary is provided in both English and Japanese, but, since reliable free translation tools are now widely available, we no longer provide a full Japanese translation of the minutes (as of March 2025), allowing us to share them more quickly.

We changed the terms of office for both executive officers and class representatives. Previously, terms began in mid-December, which made transitions difficult during the Winter break and did not align with the Japanese financial cycle (April–March). The new terms now run from April to March and are also more in sync with those of SISPA. Class representatives are appointed in January, and officers are elected in February. Outgoing and incoming officers work together in February and March, ensuring a thorough and smooth transition.

For more details, you can read the *Introduction to the PTA*, the *Overview of the OIS PTA Bylaws* and/or the full *OIS PTA Bylaws*, all available on *the PTA webpage*. We have also refreshed the webpage itself. Its main sections now include upcoming and recent PTA events, current PTA action items, current OIS PTA executive committee and standing committees, PTA bylaws and their summary, meeting minutes and list of motions, PTA Equipment reservation form, and procedures for reserving OIS facilities (meeting rooms, etc.).

The *Current PTA Action Items* section includes two permanent features introduced this year. The first is the *Class Reps' Success Guide*, where class representatives can leave records, ideas, and tips for future class representatives. The second is a page for gathering parents' skills and interests that could be put to use in the School. This complements the information already collected when each family registers at OIS at the start of the academic year, and helps make better use of our community's talents.

The PTA webpage also includes a Parent-to-Parent Notes tab, where families can both read and share suggestions for activities outside school (such as sports, music, or arts) and for services available in English, Chinese, or Korean. Additional language pages may be added upon request. Families may also post personal messages there, through the executive committee, for example about selling furniture or housing. Also, for the first time, to the best of our knowledge, we created an inventory of PTA possessions. This inventory is available to all PTA members, and items may be used or borrowed for OIS-related activities with prior coordination with the executive committe.

Finally, we put significant effort into preparing and collecting responses for a PTA survey on Digital Wellness, which was introduced in the previous edition of *The Educator*. I heard that I may have pushed too hard in encouraging parents to complete the survey, but I believe the survey served an important purpose: to better understand SOIS families' concerns about children's internet use, screen time, and mental well-being. The results are helping us design support programs for parents, from workshops to peer forums and shared resources. We are now analyzing the responses, gathering teacher input, researching international best practices, and developing practical strategies for digital wellness, all in alignment with SOIS policies.

For questions and details on how you can contribute to the PTA, please email the Executive Committee at ois-pta-board@soismail.jp

Luca Baiotti, OIS PTA President

From the SOIS International Fair Committee

Thank you, as always, for your continued support of SOIS activities. We are pleased to announce that the details for this year's International Fair (IF), a joint event organized by SISPA and OIS PTA, have been finalized. This year's theme is **結 ~ Connecting you to the world**. We hope the event will serve as a small opportunity to connect people with one another, communities with society, and the present with the future.

The International Fair is a community-wide event led by the SIS and OIS parent associations, celebrating cultural diversity across the SOIS community. We warmly encourage faculty and staff to take part as well—your participation will make the event even more lively and meaningful. We sincerely welcome your contributions by hosting activities or participating in stage performances.

We usually begin accepting applications for the International Fair (IF)—a charity event organized by SOIS parents—in September. Details regarding ticket sales (scheduled for October), donation requests, the joint information session, and volunteer recruitment will be shared in September.

Date:	Saturday, November 15th,10:00am - 3:00pm (Admission Free)
Venue:	Senri and Osaka International School of Kwansei Gakuin 4-4-6 Onoharanishi, Minoh-shi, Osaka 562-0032
Theme:	**結 ~ Connecting you to the world**
Organizer:	SOIS Parents
Contact:	SIS IF Committee: SISPA IF Committee sispa-if@soismail.jp OIS IF Committee ois-pta-if-board@soismail.jp
Objective:	To create opportunities for the SOIS community to become a happy and united community by sharing enjoyable moments, deepening mutual understanding, and experiencing the diverse cultures unique to our school. Additionally, to contribute to the improvement of the educational environment by donating the proceeds to both schools.

[Eligibility]

① Applicants must be members of the SOIS community: current students, parents, or faculty/staff.

② Groups including at least one SOIS community member may also include alumni, family members, or friends.

[Application Period]

From Friday, June 27 to Monday, September 15

[How to Apply]

Please make sure to login with your SOIS account before filling out and submitting the required information in the application form for each category.

Notes:

- If similar content is submitted, we may request collaboration or joint participation.
- Please understand that if we receive a large number of applications, participants will be selected by lottery.
- As this is an earlier announcement than in previous years, some procedures may differ from before. Please be sure to read the guidelines carefully before applying for booth sales, workshop/sports/game organizing, stage performances, or language volunteer roles.

OPERATIONAL POLICY

- The International Fair Committee (IF Committee), composed of SIS/OIS parents, manages the operations.
- All the proceeds of each booth are collected by the IF Committee. Each booth organizer will receive reimbursement from the IF Committee for their documented expenses (see below for exceptions). However, if the revenue of a booth is less than the expenses of the booth, the amount reimbursed will be the amount of the revenue, namely, the IF Committee will not make up for losses of booths.

From the SOIS International Fair Committee (continued)

- After deducting expenses and reserves for the following year, the IF Committee will donate the entire remaining amount to the school. The selection of donation items will be based on requests from SIS/OIS and determined by the IF Committee.
- Booth reimbursement criteria:
    1. General-booth organizers will receive reimbursements for their documented expenses, but only up to the amount of the proceeds of their booth. This means that, if the proceeds are lower than the expenses, the IF Committee will not make up for the losses of the booth.
    2. Organizers of booths certified by the SOIS administration to be charity organizations will receive their proceeds, after subtracting ¥3,000. If the proceeds are less than ¥3,000, no reimbursement will be provided.

APPLICATIONS

① **Food & Merchandise Booths**
Share the culture of your home country, a place you fell in love with during your school days, or a memorable taste or craft from a region where you once lived. We welcome international foods and items that reflect the spirit of the International Fair!
Food & Merchandise Booth Contact: if-b@soismail.jp
Food & Merchandise Booth Application Form is available here
[Important notice, includes changes from last year – please read carefully] here.

② **Workshops, Sports and Games**
Any workshop, sport or game may be proposed, but we specially encourage those related to a particular country or region of the World. They may be for children and/or adults. It is not necessary to provide the workshop, sport or game for the whole duration of the Fair; it may be organized even only for one hour.
Booth Contact: if-gs@soismail.jp
The booth application form is available here
[Regarding measures for rainy weather: If you are setting up a booth on the field, please also consider measures in case of rain, for example, relocating to the gym, etc.]

③ **Entertainment; Performers**
We are looking for people who would like to perform traditional music, songs, folk dances, or any cultural performance from their country — perfect for the International Fair!
A special stage will be set up in a designated area (to the left of the main school entrance, 1st floor). Performances by adults are especially welcome!
Entertainment Contact: if-e@soismail.jp
Entertainment application is available here
Application Deadlines
First Round: Thursday, July 31 – Participation is guaranteed.
Second Round: Monday, September 15 – If there are many applications, participants will be selected by lottery.

④ **Entertainment: MCs for the entertainment stage**
Would you be an MC, announcing the performers on stage? We seek MCs who can bring vibrancy to the performers!
We warmly welcome those who can speak not only Japanese and English, but also those who speak Korean, Chinese, or other languages! Help make the stage lively and fun!
Entertainment Contact: if-e@soismail.jp
The Entertainment application is available here

Should you have any questions, please contact us.

SIS: sispa-if@soismail.jp | **OIS** ois-pta-if-board@soismail.jp

We look forward to receiving your applications.

2025 SOIS IF Committee

Welcome to the new OIS Faculty

We are delighted to introduce four new OIS faculty members who are joining us from this academic year.



SAMANTHA WOOD
K-12 Principal for Student Life

As an international educator with a decade of experience spanning Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, I bring a global perspective and a passion for student-led inquiry to my work. I recently moved to Osaka after serving as Assistant Principal and Primary Years Program Coordinator at Sri Lanka's sole IB school for six years. As a specialist in social and emotional learning and conceptually based curricula, my professional focus is on helping learners to develop the skills and agency to act on issues that are most meaningful to them. Outside of work, I enjoy traveling with my husband, reading fiction, and exercising outdoors.

I am looking forward to meeting you all in person as soon as possible!



HARRY BROOKFIELD
PYP & MS Physical Education

Having spent over a decade leading sport, aquatics and co-curricular in big international schools in China, I am looking forward to experiencing something of Japan, in a teaching capacity. Although I have spent most of my time at British international schools in Beijing (*Harrow Beijing* and *The British School of Beijing*), over the past two years before making this move to Osaka I was working in Shanghai's most established IB school, *Shanghai Community International School*, where as well as teaching and leading MYP PHE, I was also leading whole school athletics, aquatics, activities, expeditions and deputising for the Head of School. I try to create a pleasant sense of community within the classroom, sports team, or swimming squad, with clear boundaries, which hopefully results in a safe, mutually respectful and productive environment.



FELIX CROSSMAN
MYP & PD Mathematics

Hello everyone! My name is Felix Crossman and I am very excited to be teaching Math at OIS.

For the past 7 years I have been teaching IB Math in Hiroshima prefecture but I am happy to be back in Kansai. I have been fortunate enough to live in several countries since I was younger, including the UK, the US, China and Australia so please tell me about the places you have visited.

When I am not in the classroom, I really enjoy swimming, playing games and baking. I feel that everything I teach can be compared to food, so I apologize in advance if I start treating out classroom like a cafe! No matter how you feel about Math and numbers, I am looking forward to playing games together, making jokes together, and investigating what you enjoy by using numbers!



KOHARU OKAMOTO
OIS Nurse

Hello, everyone! My name is Koharu Okamoto, and I'm delighted to be joining OIS as the new school nurse.

Over the past 10 years, I have worked as a school nurse at several private schools in Japan, across a range of grade levels. I believe the Health Center should be a place for learning, as well as a safe and welcoming space where students feel supported in both their mental and physical well-being. With this in mind, I have worked to improve school health services by using ICT tools, centralizing health records, and promoting health education.

I was born and raised in Osaka, and this will be my first time working in an international school — I'm truly excited for this new chapter! On weekends, I enjoy spending time at the park with my children, doing yoga, and practicing kintsugi, a traditional Japanese art of repairing pottery with gold.

If you ever need help with an injury or illness, want to talk about your health, or just feel like chatting, feel free to stop by the Health Center. I look forward to supporting the well-being of the OIS community.

Important Numbers

Kurt Mecklem	Head of School	072-727-5050	kmecklem@soismail.jp
Stephen Frater	K-12 Principal for Student Learning	072-727-5092	sfrater@soismail.jp
Samantha Wood	K-12 Principal for Student Life	072-727-5092	swood@soismail.jp
Steve Lewis	Business Manager	072-727-5090	slewis@soismail.jp
Lori Streicher	Admissions Director	072-727-5070	lstreicher@soismail.jp
Andrew Brown	IB DP coordinator	072-727-5094	abrown@soismail.jp
Jennifer Drew	IB MYP coordinator	072-727-5094	jdrew@soismail.jp
Trevor Jones	IB PYP coordinator	072-727-5094	tjones@soismail.jp
Melissa Lamug	College Counselor	072-727-5290	mlamug@soismail.jp
Toshifumi Mitsuhashi	Activities Director	072-727-2137	tmitsuhashi@soismail.jp
Natsuko Inoue	School Nurse	072-727-5050	ninoue@soismail.jp
Koharu Okamoto	School Nurse	072-727-5050	kokamoto@soismail.jp
—	Student Attendance	072-727-2305	studentinfo@soismail.jp

Important Links

Policy Documents

Links to the Student-Parent Handbook and other important policy documents

ManageBac

For curriculum information (units), assignment grades and comments, and report cards

OIS Parent Portal

Weekly updates about recent and upcoming events, and links to resources for parents

Student Information Centre

For attendance, lost property, etc.

Osaka Interntational School of Kwansei Gakuin

4-4-16 Onoharanishi
Minoh-shi, Osaka-fu
562-0032
https://sois.kwansei.ac.jp/osaka-international-school