



SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL @ CANTHO

# NEWSLETTER

March 2022

## Principal's Message

Dear parents,

There is – at times – a misunderstanding about learning. It's more than students reading a book and listening to the teacher. Researchers explain that learning takes place beyond the classroom.

When we were students, the methods that our teachers put into practice wasn't very productive. Rereading our books, memorizing for a test, and highlighting text were the least productive of learning stratagems. A common misbelief is to make learning easier. There is no empirical research asserting that students learn better when instruction is received in a way that follows their desired learning style. According to the authors of *Make It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning*: "Many teachers believe that if they can make learning easier and faster, the learning will be better. Much research turns this belief on its head: when learning is harder, it's stronger and lasts longer...learning is deeper and more durable when it's effortful. Learning that's easy is like writing in sand, here today and gone tomorrow".

Almost 20 years ago, UCLA research observed that problems in our daily lives normally arrived first, followed by a need to find a solution. However, that same research indicated traditional or linear education settings functioned backwards: the teachers presented the solution first and then instructed their learners to replicate the problem. As we know, life does not work as *solution* and then *problem* but *problem* and then *solution*. It is a more challenging practice when it is characteristically non-linear.

At SIS, the KinderWorld Teaching Model applies non-linear education to classes. Our learning model integrates active development practices such as a project-based learning approach, meaning that student's study by completing projects (i.e., solving problems) and work through each project in a series of tasks. Nevertheless, there is no ideal answer to conquer the challenges of effortful learning but, research does provide some suggestions:

- 1. Explain the art of learning:** We invest time and effort in teaching our older students about effective learning before they proceed on how to learn: growth and fixed mindset (see our April 2021 newsletter), the importance of lifelong learning and self-regulated learning, notetaking, and the issues related to metacognition (awareness and control of thinking for learning).
- 2. Set clear expectations with proper orientation:** During the first few days of work, a new employee focuses on cultural onboarding, which is everything that leads up to that new person's total involvement into an organization's culture. The same process applies to our learning philosophy and culture. Students attend lessons and follow a school curriculum that's constructed step by step in a sequence.
- 3. Assess student views of learning:** With formative and summative assessments, we make time to understand our students' perception of learning along with other factors such as student satisfaction. This data is used by teachers to understand how to best support each student. It also serves as a stimulus for students to think about their learning and find ways to improve.

Overall, learning is not one-dimensional. It takes place in various ways and these factors influence how people learn. All the best,

**Larry Synclair**  
Principal



## SIS STUDENTS EARN CITY AWARDS



Two SIS students from Year 12 received awards from the city-wide high school academic competition in Can Tho.

Competition in English was fierce but difficult for 143 students. In order to earn 1<sup>st</sup> place honors, a certain score had to be reached. No one was able to meet that challenge, but Nguyen Khac Thong (Dan) came the closest – thereby taking 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the English competition.



Geography was also a challenging subject for many of the 127 students who enlisted. However, perseverance paid off for Dang Ngoc Thien Phuc (Rose) who was given Honorable Mention for her efforts. Good work Dan and Rose.



### *Vo Phuong Nghi*

This month's winner is from our nursery class. Teachers praise Nghi because she's punctual, studious, and responsible. She is never late for school. Nghi always arrives on time. This young student loves to participate in activities during class such as completing her exercises in shaping. Nghi appears to be artistically talented by demonstrating her coloring skills too. Congratulations, Nghi.



### LYON CASTRO

## Teacher Feature

Year 7's and Year 8's teacher, Mr. Lyon Castro, is more than an English/Global Perspectives teacher. He also taught ICT and comes from a family of teachers. Following his mother and grandmother's footsteps as teachers, Mr. Lyon graduated from The National Teachers College with a Bachelor's Degree of Secondary Education in Computer Education. Having teachers in the family gave him guidance. "They made me understand how important teaching and learning can be for a young child's life," he said. Mr. Lyon enjoys watching academic progress of his students: "To be able to share what I know to my students and see them learn makes me glad that I became a teacher." In addition to being an educator, Mr. Lyon spends time playing sports such as basketball, badminton, and table tennis. However, he also collects board games. He calls these games a challenge and a fun time: "It's a good way to have a real interaction with your family and friends instead of always on our smartphone and using the internet."





Singapore International School graciously reminds drivers to park with caution when dropping off or picking up students from the front gate. Please park your vehicle alongside the curb.

Stopping your car in front of the gate but in the middle of the lane is very risky. Other vehicles on this commercial road are travelling at fast speed and may not see your parked vehicle in the middle of the road.

If there are cars on the curb in front of the gate, it is safer – and wiser – to move ahead and find available curb space. Ten or 15 meters of extra walking from the gate is better than the risk of danger.



## Reading Can Take You Anywhere

by Ms. Feyza Yilmazer

Arts and crafts activities are highly popular and favourable at almost all age levels, and hesitant participants tend to be more motivated in a group setting when they have busy hands. Why not blend a crafting experience with a book discussion?

Everyone loves book clubs, but the new theme of the SIS library will bring the students to the edge of their imagination. To celebrate and emphasize Earth Day, the Year 3 and Year 4 students dip their toes in the water.

### Literature Circle in the Ocean: Crab a Book!

As a part of the literary competence group discussion activity, Year 4 students analyze *The Twits* by Roald Dahl. Students choose their roles among Word Wizard, Discussion Director, Summarizer, Connector and Predictor. Each role points to notable lines throughout the book since the students search for the new words, question their friends' comprehension, summarize the plot, make connections with the previous chapters and draw conclusions for the ending.



# SIS HACKATHON

## APPS 4 SUSTAINABILITY

*The contest encouraged students to design and build an app that helps improve sustainability.*

This wasn't just a contest just to participate in. This was a challenge that students were eager to take on. Our students spent several weeks planning and creating applications that would be determined by the value of local use. The student met the challenges with creativity and presented community applications to the judges thanks to the visual support tool of MS Stream software.



SIS@Can Tho winners are the following:



**Differland (Year 8)**- Nguyễn Nhật Nam Phương (Mickey), Bùi Khánh Quốc (Steven), Nguyễn Nhật Đăng (Andy), Nguyễn Linh Đan (Mimi)



**Give (Year 7)** - Tran Cong Vinh, Nguyen Phuoc Quang Nhan (Nick), Dong Tan Loc (Tim), Phan Tran Dong Nghi (Julia)



**Water Life (Year 9)** - Lam Huong Xuan (Jenny), Mao Kien Quoc (Ben), Thai Nguyen Hoang Anh (Max), Le Trung Tin (Eric)

Winner of "Best Sustainable App" went to Year 7's team, "Give." Hackathon representatives of the SIS@CT will compete with SIS schools in Ho Chi Minh City, Vung Tau and Binh Duong.



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

There were beautiful sunflowers and bright smiles for Singapore International School's female teachers and staff. March 8<sup>th</sup> was International Women's Day, an official holiday for many countries including Vietnam. Our female teachers received gifts and flowers from their students. Principal Larry Synclair and Head of Vietnamese Studies Tran Thanh Tam greeted all women working at SIS with a fresh sunflower and good wishes. This day recognizes the achievements of women and promotes the cause of gender equality. First held in 1911, International Women's Day was recognized by the United Nations in 1975. Since 1996, the UN has given the day an annual theme, which this year was "gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow."

