

NEWSLETTER

October 2020

Principal's Message: Pedagogy Through Technology

Dear parents,

One of the many great things about Singapore International School is the fun we have, such as Halloween or the Mid-Autumn festival. Additionally, we have the constant drive to be better than before, and that includes school resources. We are always observing how our students are performing in class and if there's a way to provide them with greater educational means, then we will do it.

This year, we launched a computer-assisted language learning program called DynEd for students from Year 3 on up. DynEd is the world's leading provider of English language learning software. Used by millions of students around the world, DynEd offers students the opportunities to study exactly at his/her pace, which makes it possible for teachers to provide students with much greater individual attention. The results have been outstanding. English learners are able to learn faster than with traditional teaching methods.



Raz-Kids, which is offered for students in Years 1 through 4, is an excellent online tool for independent practice of reading comprehension skills, such as vocabulary and inference. Personally, I am pleased to see a mix of fiction and non-fiction. For teachers, it's allow them to differentiate student reading levels based on in class assessments and change those levels as necessary, either backing students up when they are struggling or moving them forward if a level is too easy. Students can read or listen to each book as many times as they want and also take the quiz as many times as they want.

For our K1, K2 and Prep students, we have Letterland. This program offers unique teaching techniques that motivate children to read, write and spell confidently. Best of all, Letterland teaches phonics using a story-based visual approach. The story logic engages students leading to long term retention of concepts. What's more, Letterland is wonderfully multi-sensory. It activates every learning channel through music, actions, alliteration, movement, song, art, games and role-play.

Although we offer these three state-of-the-art programs for students, we also welcome your help by encouraging your child to study at home. Meet with the teachers and inquire about what your child can academically accomplish at home. Provide positive feedback before, during and after studying at home. Pedagogy through technology is great; however, parental motivation and positive responses are priceless. Okay, keep your children also active in our fun school activities such as Outward Bound Vietnam and the Christmas Charity Fair. Life has to have some fun and games at times.

Sincerely yours,

Larry Synclair
Principal



On October 5th, Mr. Phuoc's Year 4 students and Ms. Oanh's Year 5 students participated in an Outward Bound event: an overnight stay at school. Just like a camping trip in the multi-purpose room, the students participated in various teamwork games and projects. After the event, all students received a certificate of completion. Outward Bound is an international outdoor education organization that has been teaching leadership for more than 75 years around the world. It serves over 250,000 participants each year in over 30 countries worldwide. Outward Bound Vietnam helps students recognize their true potential through experiential learning programs that include adventure, challenge, service and discovery.



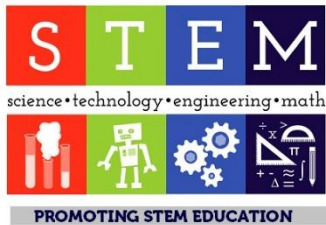
HUYNH HOANG HIEP - MAINTENANCE MANAGER

When it comes to keeping the school in top shape, Hiep is a valuable staff member. He first came to SIS as a security guard. But he went the extra mile by contributing to the repairs of the school. That earned him the promotion to maintenance manager. Today, Hiep is usually somewhere conducting repairs or maintaining the organic garden. Of course, he loves gardening and his skills come from being an electrical engineer. Hiep also has a fascinating hobby of raising his two eagles at home, which is in Hau Giang (a 40-km commute to school and back every day). At home, his wife is a kindergarten teacher and he's the father of two boys (ages 9 and 18 months).

NGUYỄN NHẬT NGỌC MINH

Tora is this month's winner. This Year 5 student loves to study a lot. Her favorite subjects are English, math, art, and ICT. However, she's also a very active student. "The thing I like most about my school," says Tora, "I can join many outside activities." Tora enjoys OBV and STEM as well as attending school celebrations like Halloween and Mid-Autumn Festival. When she's not studying, she loves to go out to restaurants with her family.





STEM Education – Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) is a problem-based and applied learning approach which focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics and is part of the curriculum from Primary to High School.



In **K2's STEM class**, students were not only learning parts of the body in English, they were understanding where these body parts are located. At first, students were taught English words identifying basic human anatomy. Then, students gathered as a team to make a cardboard illustration of the body. Of course, what is an illustration without knowing what it is? Students were asked to match the words of various parts of the body to the body parts. Perhaps this will be the first step for some students to become doctors.

In **Year 2 STEM class**, the students were asked to design a support foundation to hold weights. This is the correlation of the lesson invertebrate and vertebrae animals. The concept was the “backbone” support and designing the correct spine can hold heavy materials. The idea was very simple, the students were given Styrofoam and 4 barbecue sticks. To complete the task. As you go over the pictures of the activity the students were given a chance to think critically. Some group were using rulers to measure the length/equal of the sticks to divide and cut to have more support to hold the weight. The other group just utilize only the 4 sticks given to them. In this activity, it really develops the critical thinking, designing aspect and also the science behind of backbone/spine.



Year 7 and Year 8's STEM project was Floating Gardens: Because of climate change, many low-lying Asian countries face loss of farmland and livelihood due to flooding. In STEM this term, the Year 7 and Year 8 classes studied the causes of flooding, using a case study of Bangladesh. This country is successfully attempting to solve the problem by building floating gardens to grow crops. In groups, randomly chosen, the students built models of rafts to represent the gardens. These were tested for their ability to float and for their weight-bearing ability. In their subsequent reflections, the students commented specifically on how much fun they had and the invaluable lessons they learnt about teamwork.

This proved to be a meaningful learning experience

for both teacher and students!



You cannot catch a cold when it rains or if there's sudden changes in the weather.

MEDICAL MYTHS

According to the experts on WebMD.com, getting chilly or wet doesn't cause you to get sick. But there are things that make you prone to come down with a cold. For example, you're more likely to catch one if you're extremely tired, under emotional distress, or have allergies with nose and throat symptoms. In truth, it is bacteria and viruses, not the weather, that cause infections such as the common cold, influenza (the flu), or pneumonia.

Some studies have shown that stressful conditions, including exposure to cold weather, make animals more susceptible to being infected with a variety of bacteria and viruses. These studies, which have so far been conducted primarily on mice, suggest that exposure to severe chilling may suppress the immune response, making it harder for the animals to fight infections.

Donate to save others

You have seen and heard the shocking news about the devastating floods that hit central Vietnam. Sadly, the floods took the lives of many people as well as destroyed hundreds of thousands of homes and livelihoods. For the next few weeks, we will help provide support. The Singapore International School @ Can Tho is joining a donation drive with all campuses of KinderWorld Education Group in Vietnam to help victims of these recent floods in central Vietnam. Donations, such as clothes, household goods, books, backpacks, canned food and so on, will be collected at our school and transferred to the corporate office in Ho Chi Minh on Tuesday, November 13. Afterwards, all contributions from SIS schools will be delivered to specific schools that are located in the flooded areas. As for monetary donations if any, we plan to contribute to the Hope Foundation, a non-for-profit independent organization run by VNExpress and FPT, to provide aid and support for the flood victims. Please visit this website for further information: <https://quyhyvong.com>.

Thousands of families will suffer from food and water shortages. Moreover, the floods do not seem likely to recede any time soon. This is a time for everyone to come together and support those in need. Please join us by donating today.



HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Ghosts and goblins and who knows what other strange creatures were roaming the school corridors. Even several Captain Americas and some Spidermen were seen. That only means one thing: HALLOWEEN.



THE WIZARDING WORLD OF GAMIFICATION

By Ms. Feyza Yilmazer
KIK/SIS English teacher



Gamification has been applied to a myriad of circumstances including the classroom management systems in recent years, which is mostly associated with classroom enjoyment, self-control, participation and regular improvement of class performance. In this coin-based gamification, students can earn and spend galleons for their desired behaviours as a form of classroom currency.

ACTIVITIES	EARNING COINS
Participating class discussions and staying focused	1
Completing a task on time	1
Raising hands before talking	1
Asking for help without shouting	1
Helping others	1
Keeping the desk clean and tidy all the time	1
Sitting properly	1
Completing homework on time	2
Completing writing homework (neat & well organized)	2
Attending school activities	2
Putting extra effort in team activities	2
Perfect quiz mark	2

Galleons may also be granted for those who have a consistent phenomenal performance in class activities. The unexpected extra Galleons can encourage students to participate the classroom discussions and activities. Students are permitted to spend their Galleons during the semester in addition to their Mandatory house rent. The instructor creates a list of the offer with the aim of making students worth the galleons and manage their economy both in the world of



Wizards and Witches and in the real world through latent learning module.

This pricing was intentional, with the goal of making students value the coins they had earned while also encouraging them to work to avoid finding themselves in a position where they needed to spend coins. Through this, students may become more highly motivated to keep up with the reading, keep current on the homework, attend office hours right-away when they need help, and to start on activities and exams immediately. Recently, students spent their coins at a themed store "Wizard's Gift Shop". For simplicity, the store was a paper-based system because the final coins and prices were not calculated until just before the final date. More importantly, the prices and items were not a surprise for the students since the prices were discussed during the semester in purpose of leading the students to manage their Galleons in an effective strategy.

