

The Firefly

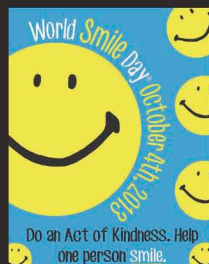
Yanping English Magazine

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Foreign Language Center
Yanping High School

延平中學外語中心





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Editorial

Welcome back to another new issue of Yanping English Magazine.

It is once again my honor to present our readers the latest 20th issue of the Firefly. Yanping students have long been renowned for their outstanding academic performance, and thus there is this stereotype that YP students know nothing but study because of the saying “All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.” As a matter of fact, this is totally a misconception, and we are going to prove in this latest issue that in addition to studying hard, our versatile students are enthusiastically taking part in many extracurricular activities as well. For instance, various student clubs are thriving under the school’s support. In this issue, you will find the articles introducing the Boxing Club, where students with a passion for boxing gather and practice.

Though school clubs offer different choices for students to explore things outside the textbooks, it doesn’t mean life off campus can’t be as splendid. Check out the article on MUN, written by one of our students who took part in youth model united nations, where participants, referred to as delegates, debate and collaborate to come up with possible solutions to international issues. I am sure her experience will ignite your passion for international affairs.

Of course, the above mentioned are only a few highlights in this issue. We also include award-winning articles from the English composition contest this year so you can appreciate those thought-provoking essays our students produced. All in all, it’s definitely worth your while to browse through our magazine. You will either find something of your interest or something informative to read. Enjoy!





The Boxing Club

The red tracks with white lines on it is the floor of our club.

The green leaves that form a shade is the ceiling of our club.

Yes, we take the activity at this place. I am not joking, just stating the fact. There is a story behind this club. A leader of our club, who wants to become a boxer in the future, invited his classmates that have similar hobby or those who want to train their body by themselves. At first, there were about ten members in our club. There weren't enough people to meet the minimum requirement of fifteen students to create a new club.

Although he couldn't reach the goal immediately, he didn't give up recruiting more students to join the club. His efforts encouraged a lot of people in his class to attend the club. The boxing club was thus created.





Hearing the news, I decided to support his achievement. On the one hand, I didn't want to keep joining my original club because I couldn't keep up with the fast pace on their lessons and I began to feel bored about computer programming. On the other, I couldn't bear so much stress from the club this semester. There are many familiar club members, so I like to practice fist with them. In the lesson, our teacher taught us a basic action. Holding a left hand to become a fist in front of the body, the other fist (a commonly used hand) nearby our body to protect the cheek. A light foot turned 45 angles and a right foot behind of it. Lean forward our body and look ahead. This is the basic move. From lesson to lesson, we learn various kinds of fists, like right or left hook fist, straight fist etc. On raining days, we take weight exercises. Although that is so much labor, we finished them all eventually. Finally, I find the right club which I belong to and I'm proud of being a member in the boxing club.

By 高一 6 王昱凯




The special things in Yanping High School

Life in high school is very different from life in the junior high school. We become busier, working hard in a stressful environment. There are so many challenges, trials and tests in our life. Sometimes when I am confronted with difficulties, I feel discouraged. But I will try many possible means to get over it. After trying many methods, I realized that finding the beautiful things around us to change my mood is a great way. But where can I find these special and beautiful things?

In my eyes, the most special and greatest things in Yanping high school can be divided into people and environments. First, the students in Yanping are special. Most students in our school have good manners; we respect our teachers and parents, treat our classmates as our family members and take care of the junior students. When students meet their teachers, they will give a smile and greet them politely. Besides, though students in Yanping high school are living in a stressful environment, they do not lose their sense of humor and always try to look on the bright side of things. A sense of humor helps us release tension, create a great social atmosphere and help people to have better mood to confront difficulties. That makes me forget the bad things and have more energy after chatting with my classmates. Moreover, discussing with friends also helps me to overcome difficulties.





Second, Yanping is special in its environment. The campus is tiny but delicate with completion; for example, there are many basketball courts compacted in one small playground. If we walk around our campus, we can find many lovely corners, scenes and vigorous plants. Thought there are no large lawns or big trees in Yanping, we can see beautiful flowers and bushes. We can also find many potted plants in the corridors. They provide us with a better environment to learn. When I was depressed, I usually watched the blue sky and went to beautiful corners in our campus alone, which helps me release tension and recover to a better condition. After that, I will find the problems easier to solve; therefore, I won't be bothered by troubles.

As the saying goes "Life is not a running race; it is a journey. Make sure you enjoy the scenery along the way." I am thankful that I chose this school which provides a special and well developed environment for learning. I enjoy it and also make many good friends here. I believe that there are more special and interesting things in Yanping waiting for us to discover!

By 高一 6 吳立凡



MUN



“I hereby announce the floor of 2014 YMUN Taipei officially closed.” The secretary-general banged the gavel. (Please, no pun intended. That was supposed to be a pretty sacred moment.) I would’ve motioned for an extension, but of course such a motion would be ruled out of order. So there goes the first model United Nations conference Yale or any Ivy League school has ever held in Taiwan, which was also only my third MUN as a delegate. You can hardly call me experienced, in fact, I’m a novice. But you CAN call me a MUNer because I’m planning on attending more of them and because I’m definitely obsessed with it. Actually, I wouldn’t really say ‘obsessed’, that sounds so irrational, but that’s what my best friend likes to say: “God, you’re really obsessed with this MUN thing, huh?” Yes. But let’s put it in other words shall we? I’m utterly in love with MUN.

I fell head over heels for it on our first encounter at HSMUN2013, the same way any girl would be totally beyond herself on her first date with Mr Darcy. (That is, if he really exists and without prejudice of course.) It was summer, it was romantic and surreal, it also got hot and passionate but it was no summer fling.

If HSMUN2013 was a memory beautified by my excitement as a first-time MUNer like how one might view a first date through rose-tinted glasses, paging at PAMUN2013 was the second date where you realize things are not the way you thought they were. They’re even better.

Next, NYS2014 was the kind of third date where you discover not only is this guy hot with nice abs (think Channing Tatum), and if he smolders again you might faint (think Ian Somerhalder), but he also understands you perfectly, is a suave gentlemen and is generally all-round awesome.

Then it was YMUN2014, fourth date, he takes you to the best cupcake store instead of his favorite fancy restaurant because he knows that you love desserts. You figure that he’s a keeper and think “He is it.” (Wow, I just created ideal dream-man, didn’t I?)

Okay, so the last paragraph that got you drooling and melting was a description about MUN, not a man, sorry to disappoint you. I thought it was a pretty accurate metaphor.





Now you get how I'm crazy about it. Imagine sitting in a conference room, everyone dressed immaculately in western business attire, each representing a country and you're discussing a worldwide issue, trying to come up with a solution to a problem that even the world's best diplomats and most revered experts cannot solve; attacking, defending, most important of all, compromising. Diplomacy, courtesy, a place where almost everyone makes (or at least tries to make) the statement 'ladies and gentlemen' true. Researching, coming up with practical solutions, establishing consensus and drafting resolutions.

For once, internet security, gender equality or the South China Sea dispute has something to do with YOUR decisions. Even though, rather than deciding things according to your own opinion, you have to speak and act entirely on the behalf of the country you represent, you are involved – even if your resolutions won't be carried out by the actual UN in the end. It opens your eyes to different points of view and different events in this world.

Ask a MUNer what his or her motto is. As far as I know, the mass of us seem to have reached a consensus: "Work hard, play HARDER." So, aside from being composed and serious during committee sessions, you should see us at the social events.

Delegate dances always start off as a white tie occasion: a formal cocktail reception, with delegates mingling and taking pictures. Or you can always go and talk to that pretty girl you've been watching out for since day one. Then the music starts, the dance floor is opened and delegates start ballroom dancing. Before long, it's party music blasting through the speaker. Girls are dancing in their dresses and stilettos, guys have their shirts pulled out and their jackets are nowhere to be seen.

I admit though, MUN can be sleep-depriving. I barely sleep at all each time I attend MUN. It's not like I need any – every MUN is like a four-day long adrenaline rush for me, where I need no food and no sleep. (Bonus: weight loss!)

With the taste of YMUN2014 still fresh in my mouth, I can't wait till my next MUN conference.

By 高二 11 黃詩懿

Noelani— the mist of heaven

Finding it unbearable to get along with the intense heat in the scorching summer days? Always getting irritable over the feeling of being soaking wet due to the seemingly non-stop sweat? If so, make sure you get yourself a glass of noelani, the so-called coconut water, right after going through the article below!



Noelani, a Hawaiian word meaning the mist of heaven, reveals how significant it is to the island inhabitants. In fact, not only is it indispensable to the Hawaiians but it's also a popular drink in all the tropical areas, Taiwan included. Bearing a resemblance to water in the appearance, the coconut water has a special taste which is not so acceptable to every person. I still retain a vivid memory when I had the very first taste of it. I had a mouthful of it with the anticipation of a palatable drink like an orange juice, and what happened next was that I splashed the liquid all around. However, as time goes by, I somehow start to enjoy the drink. Therefore, there are definitely a few good reasons for you to consider it a decent friend in summer, just as the Hawaiians do.

First of all, it serves as a fantastic beverage with the sufficient amount of vitamins as well as the electrolyte contained. It will be your priority choice when it comes to supplementing the needed elements after exhausting exercise. In addition, it is its low contain in sugar that makes it a desirable drink to those who are concerned about their state of health. What's more alluring is the hormone that it's equipped with has a magical effect on keeping us young! Much to our surprise, there are still abundant of advantages lying in coconut water; it does good to our eyes, skins, kidneys, both digest and immune system. Last but not least, it can even prevent us from suffering from cancer and heart disease, which is reported by Bruce Fife, an expert in coconut.

To sum up, with the numerous benefit it bears, it's not difficult to see why the Hawaiians give it such a charming name. So...what are you waiting for? Go to the traditional market in your neighborhood, and get a bottle of "noelani." Then you will no longer be plagued by the annoying heat and can relish the great time in summer as well as the decent taste of coconut water at the same time.

By 高二 11 陳妍廷





The True Home of Romeo and Juliet

“Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things.
Some shall be pardon’d, and some punished,
For never was a story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo.” – Shakespeare

To the residents in Siena, the golden age had been the late Middle Ages, and the city clung to its medieval self with a stubborn disregard for the attractions of progress. The world had evolved around it, but Siena didn’t care.

Walking along some narrow roads in Siena, you could see touches of Renaissance here and there, the facades of ancient houses closing in on you from all sides, and you find yourself trapped in a labyrinth from centuries ago.

What if I told you Romeo and Juliet was set in this beautiful city sitting between the mountains, called Siena? What if I told you that the Bard had not invented the story, but had merely piggybacked on previous writers? What if I told you that the so-called feud between the star-crossed lovers’ families was never there, and Romeo was actually a young playboy from another household?

You might want to exclaim, “This person is a total nutter!” But don’t rush, because the truth is, I’m right and you’re wrong.

“What about Juliet’s statue and her balcony in Verona?” you demand.

First of all, sorry to break your little romantic fantasy, but those were built for tourists. Just think of it a bit, a city where the world-famous romance happened and every woman on earth wishes to visit at least once in her lifetime? It’s not a city those businessmen see, what they see is money. They don’t even care if it’s true. As long as the women in the whole world believe in it, they’re happy.

And, indeed, Shakespeare was a genius with words, and if he hadn’t run the whole thing through his pentameter machine, it is rather doubtful whether it would ever have become so widely known. But even so, it looked as if it had already been a supreme story when it first landed on his desk.

The very first version of Romeo and Juliet was written in the 15th century by an Italian man. It had stated that it was based on a true love tragedy of Gianozza (Juliet) Tolomei and Marriotto (Romeo) Marescotti (as a matter of fact, their parents weren’t at war in this version) and the scenes were set in Siena.

Nevertheless, the second writer chickened out on the location, as well as the names of the involved characters – he then moved everything to Verona, and changed Tolomei, Marescotti and Salimbeni into Capulet and Montague.

A couple of other writers passed the torch of rewriting the story down in the 16th century. After its circling around in Italy, it journeyed to France, then England, to end up on Shakespeare's desk. Despite its constant rearrangement, the key ingredients are alike: the secret marriage, Romeo's banishment, the hare-brained scheme of the sleeping potion, the messenger gone astray, and Romeo's suicide based on his erroneous belief in Juliet's death.

Some brilliant editors over time weaved in the masked ball and the balcony scene, and the double suicide also added colour to the story. All in all, Romeo and Juliet were – more certain than not – already a well-developed story when our old Bard laid his hands on it, and all he did was to immortalize it.

Now, your heart must be in mid-air and a huge question mark pounding hard inside. Why are there three families? Juliet was a Tolomei (Capulet), Romeo was Marescotti (Montague), okay. But who was this Salimbeni?

Let me explain it. Siena is not just Siena, but 17 different neighborhoods, or 'contrade' within the city that all have their own territory and their own coat of arms. To the Sieneese, these 'contrade' are what life is about; they're your friends, your communities, your allies, and also your rivals. In the original storyline, it was the Tolomei and the Salimbeni that were the feuding households. And the grudge of Juliet – Messer Salimbeni, was Shakespeare's Paris, the evil one who wanted to marry Juliet because of her incomparable beauty. (I didn't say Paris was evil. Salimbeni was. Actually, in my opinion, Paris was a far better chance than Romeo.) This kind of led to the tragic end of the story.

The story of Romeo and Juliet has always appealed to me; but it was not until recently that I discovered all the facts above. Yes, I was as surprised as you are now when I first learned that it was true, from a novel I formerly thought of as a fiction.

All these confirmations never extinguished my passion; it only added another must-visit place on my list. One day, I am going to venture through Siena, where Romeo and Juliet really lived hundreds of years ago and breathe in the air they might once have breathed.

By 高二 11 黃詩媛



Chick Lit

"You read a lot? :)" My friend asked in one of our midnight conversations. It's obvious that I'm book obsessed to some degree. How else could I be reading every time we texted late at night? Who else quotes 'It pains an artist's eyes to see a snowy dove dally with crows' (Juliet by Anne Fortier) when talking about a pretty friend dating an ungrateful jerk that treats her like trash?

Then, inevitably, the following question came.

"What do you read?" Of course, I saw that coming. Still, when he asked, I felt like hitting my head on my desk. No, that would've left a nasty bruise. But maybe I wanted to slam my head into my pillow. (Harmless, I know. Though I am a drama queen, I do not risk bruises on the forehead and a possible concussion for dramatic effects.)

"Well... Gone Girl, Tithe, Walk Two Moons..." I couldn't believe I had just typed Walk Two Moons. Three books down the list and I was already naming what I'd read five years ago.

"The Phantom Tool Booth..." I continued pathetically, another book that I'd read at the age of eleven.

"The Angel of Death," I typed excitedly. Yes! I just read that a month ago. Then I came to a full stop. "That's about it."

Fortunately, this friend of mine does not read a lot. Still, he asked "That's it?" That was completely understandable. I mean, what kind of person that reads all the time recommends five books and says "That's it"?

"That's about what you'd like," I reluctantly confessed. I honestly could not think of another book that would impress him that I had read in the past three years.

"There's still Double Helix, I suppose," I offered weakly.

"What else do you read then?" He had picked up my hint of how he wouldn't like the rest of the books I read and he simply HAD to ask. I tried to avoid answering it by emphasizing that there was nothing else that he wouldn't find lame. He saw right through my excuses and before I could change the subject, he figured out the answer on his own.

"Haha. Girls' stuff then?" (Of course he didn't use 'stuff', he used a word that starts with 's' and is the synonym of 'excrement'.)

"You got me. Pretty Little Liars, Confessions of A Shopaholic, Everyone Worth Knowing..."

"You're so lame :P" He joked.





This had been one of the more pleasant encounters when it comes to book preference discussions. He had already known me well so when he discovered my predilection for chick lit, he did not think any less of me.

Lots of people tend to jump to conclusions upon hearing a girl declare her affinity for chick lit, without even bothering to further understand the depths of her personality and intelligence. I even had a guy friend gasp at the fact that I “actually care about international affairs”.

“That’s so not you!” he said, when he heard me discussing the news with people. Needless to say, I was outraged. In fact, it was all I could do not to slap him in the face. (In case you’re wondering, instead of punching his nose like I should have, I had replied “Did you know that I want to study international relations?” Gracefully, I hope.)

The name ‘chick lit’ does somehow imply a gender quality, but it definitely wasn’t meant to be morphed into a gender stereotype. How the readers of chick lit have been portrayed as shallow shopaholics without a brain that are more concerned about their manicure than what their hands can do for them is completely misleading. Andrea from Devil Wears Prada became an entrepreneur; Brooke in Last Night at Chateau Marmont worked two jobs to support herself and her struggling artist husband; Meg from Baby Be Mine is the best PA one could ask for. And do I even need to say how many were inspired by the iconic Carrie Bradshaw from Sex and the City? There is no need to be embarrassed about being a chick lit lover. Chances are, it means that you’re an empowered and intelligent woman.

My moment of epiphany hit me when I was reading Something Borrowed and a male classmate told me that he thought it was an awesome book. I was stunned but also delighted that chick lit could actually be relished by both genders.

From then on, I never again avoided telling people that I enjoy chick lit. It is part of my persona after all. And if people can’t appreciate chick lit and chick lit lovers, they don’t deserve us.

“A treasure such as this should not be left in the hands of Philistines.” (By the way, I was quoting chick lit: I’ve Got Your Number by Sophie Kinsella.)

By 高二 11 黃詩懿



Locker Culture

Watch any American teen-fiction flick about high school and you'll see rows of lockers lined up in the hallways. In the lockers are stashed textbooks, make-up or clothes. Lockers have always seemed so much fun – putting up a locker mirror, sticking your favorite photos and making your locker your own personal space. By the way, don't forget all the pranks you can play!

As a kid, I believed in many fantasies of what this world would be like. (Including how all men on earth would be at least 6ft tall. Hey, like I said, fantasies.) One of them being



that lockers are compulsory facilities of every middle and high school that is or was. However, when I turned twelve and set foot in Yan-Ping, my belief was shattered. (I was kind of used to that by then, since I had discovered that I am not living a real-life Disney motion picture.) A few months ago though, my locker fantasy actually came true.

As high school juniors, the people in my class are facing the approaching G SAT and our

textbooks could've piled up into a heap higher than Mt Everest. And all those textbooks were scattered and stacked on the floor of our classroom. Our classroom could've been a tiny New York. Congested traffic and tall buildings – built by books – we even had Wall Street! You know, where all our books were constructed into a wall. Fine, that wasn't a funny joke, I apologize.

One day, our homeroom teacher finally decided that we couldn't live in that textbook jungle anymore and assigned me to the task of arranging a purchase of shelves or something that would keep our books out of sight. So I set off searching with little to no excitement at all, being unaware of what I was about to stumble upon. Soon, I discovered that to my delight, the cheapest and most practical thing I could find was a set of lockers. The lockers were poor replicas of what I had imagined, smaller and with keys. (I had fantasized combination locks.) Nevertheless, I had suddenly become over-the-top psyched about the new lockers we were getting.

As soon as I announced the thrilling news of our soon-to-be lockers, I was completely flabbergasted by the two entirely opposite reactions I received. Some people became as excited as I was and immediately pounced at the chance of customizing our lockers. As for the rest, they didn't even understand lockers. The very few that actually knew what lockers were had asked, "Aren't they the cubicles you get when you go swimming?"

"No! They are not!" I objected, before





seeing their point. “Fine, Yes. Lots of gyms do provide lockers in which you can temporarily stash valuables but lockers don’t equal swimming pools! You don’t think cheese steak and immediately scream Philadelphia, do you?”

Okay, that was a horrible example. But making a direct connection between lockers and swimming pools is like seeing Americans in Taiwan for a few times then deciding that most Americans, if not all, live in Taiwan and that Americans just remind you of Taiwan. Ridiculous right? Exactly. It didn’t take me long to realize that locker culture doesn’t exist in ‘this part of the world’ at all. (As if I wasn’t born and raised solely in ‘this part of the world’.) No matter if lockers are an ‘American thing’ like some argued or not, I was astounded. I mean, it’s a globalized world where Scandinavians eat ramen and Americans sometimes say “bloody hell!”

I then came up with another one of my farfetched dreams: to explain the locker culture to people. First I started off with the most iconic piece of locker furniture, locker mirrors. Immediately, I was confronted with questions that I couldn’t answer.

“Why do I want a mirror in my locker?”

“It’s convenient.”

“How?”

“You don’t have to look for it or hold it when you need your mirror. You just open your

locker and it’s there on the door.”

“What if I need a mirror when I’m not in front of my locker? I have to walk there?”

“No... then you use the compact in your bag.”

“So why do I want a locker mirror?”

Great. Back to square one. Next.

“It will no longer be mine after senior year. Why decorate it?”

“For fun! It’ll be yours for more than a year.”

“Don’t care.”

Right, nice talking to you, I give up.

When the lockers arrived though, I started getting different questions.

“Where can I get a locker mirror?”

Before long, lockers were decorated and pictures were put up. The anti-locker-decorators had well-decorated lockers.

Maybe the locker culture was never meant to be explained. It all just happens when you have a locker.

By 高二 11 黃詩懿



Sugarcoating


“A little inaccuracy saves a world of explanation” said C.E. Ayers.

Telling the complete truth requires courage and honesty has always been considered a great virtue. But is being truthful the right option all the time? That has been controversial throughout history. Sometimes the truth itself is ridiculous and unbelievable, which demands even more explanations. Just look where being honest took Stanley Yelnats in *Holes*? Nowhere. Well, actually it did take him somewhere. It took him to a boot camp in the desert in the middle of nowhere. Fab.

Sometimes the truth itself is the cause of our misunderstandings. You kissed a stranger at a party after seven tequilas. I understand how you feel obligated to be totally genuine in a relationship but your boyfriend does NOT need to know. And sometimes, the truth hurts. “You look like a wedding cake in that dress. By the way, when was the last time you showered? Something smells like a dead rat in here. Maybe you’re just seriously stress-sweating. Want deodorant for your birthday? Don’t worry. I’d be stress-sweating too if I was in that dress.”

Sugarcoating what you want to say is so important. Especially nowadays, where everyone knows everyone and you do not want to offend anyone because, remember? Everyone knows everyone. (In case you did not know or have not heard of what a small world we live in, please just take it from me. I figured it out the hard way. Don’t ask.)

We all want to be nice but candid. So take the ‘truth hurts’ demonstration as an example. You might want to say, “Hey, cute dress! But isn’t it a little difficult to move around in, especially at a cocktail reception? By the way, it is kind of hot in here, right? My armpit is like a waterfall right now. Have you heard of the KIEHL’s Superbly Efficient Antiperspirant &



Deodorant Cream? I'm dying to try it, seems awesome. I could really use it right now. Want to get it together?" Preferable to the original comment, no?

I know some reading this are probably thinking, "I couldn't care less about others' feelings and I really don't give a damn if I offend them." First of all, you DO give a damn about offending people. (Everyone knows everyone! Didn't I tell you? Pay attention!) Second of all, sugarcoating is still important to you. If you don't sugarcoat for other people, you do it for yourself.

At an interview, you honestly want to be frank but you definitely do not want to sound like some flawed individual, which is when you sugarcoat your shortcomings. Let's talk about me. I'm very sarcastic a lot of the time. (In case you haven't figured that out yet.) I go shopping for eight hours and need three grown strong men to carry all my shopping bags. (Okay, maybe that was an exaggeration. But the eight hours part was every bit true. And there's nothing wrong with wanting to go shopping with three Channing Tatum's, is there?) And I simply cannot make decisions. I repeat, CANNOT. (Should I wear the orange dress or the navy dress? Orange is hot but navy is so my color. Oh should I get the berry flavored lip balm or mint flavored one? Pink notebook or purple notebook? I want some ice cream, should I have chocolate, mango, raspberry, or vanilla? And which lip balm did you say I should get? Should I switch it for the caramel flavored one? I really love the smell of caramel. Oh! Maybe I should have caramel ice cream?)

So how do I introduce myself? I can't possibly say, "Hi everyone! I'm a bitchy shopaholic and I cannot make decisions." Yes, that pretty much concludes a big part of me in a short and brief sentence but that's not how you're supposed to sell yourself. "Hi everyone! I'll be making comments on your hair and clothes, I love shopping and by the way, I always come up with many varied options when it comes to decision-making." Much better. Though, "I'll be making comments on your hair and clothes" may still be a huge giveaway (seriously, how do you sugarcoat bitchiness?) at least the decision-making part was well coated. In fact, it was almost glorified!

Let me reiterate my point. Sugarcoating is a survival skill. It's an integral technique you need. And in the end, we had remained honest all along. How could you accuse me of being dishonest? After all, a candy apple is still an apple, no?

Just one little thing you should watch out for though. Sugarcoat but don't take sugarcoated truth because even if the truth hurts, it is the sugar that's poisonous. Shhh – you didn't hear it from me.

By 高二 11 黃詩懿

The magic power of smile



Living in this fast-paced, increasingly competitive world, there is little doubt that more and more people feel confined and stressed in their lives. They have a tendency of being pessimistic and are always in a bad mood, being afraid of failing to live up to their own expectations or fall behind others. Thus, approaches to soothe their turbulent moods and help them escape from the heavy spiritual loads have become a burning issue for people in many different stages of their lives.

As far as I am concerned, the easiest way to relieve my stress is through laughing and smiling. When I am smiling, I can escape from the endless examinations and feel refreshed. It seems like a powerful spring which pushes me consistently, giving me strength to stick to my goal and renew my spirit.





Research has even shown that smiling releases serotonin—a neurotransmitter that stimulates the brain and produces feelings of happiness and wellbeing. It is like a circle of happiness. Smile and you feel happy, you feel happy and you smile! Moreover, smiling is also a vital ingredient for establishing healthy and genuine friendships. For example, when you first step into a new classroom, you may feel uneasy and nervous. After a classmate beams to you when you talk to her, you will feel this person is kind and be encouraged to talk more. Eventually, she may become one of your bosom friends in your new school life! A smile is such a contagious thing that it not only makes one feel comfortable but also brightens the days of those around, making a difference in their lives.

Dale Carnegie once said, "The expression one wears on one's face is far more important than the clothes one wears on one's back." The power of smile is so remarkable that the world even recognizes the first Friday in October as World Smile Day. World Smile Day is held on this date for all people, regardless of proximity, religion, culture, or economy to observe the popular yellow smiley which was created by Harvey Ball, a commercial artist from Worcester, to improve company morale. Its intent is to do an act of kindness or help a person smile, filling the world with more harmony and concern. Initially, its popularity grew slowly. Then, it exploded in the 1970s, becoming so popular that the US Post Office even issued a stamp with the smiley face.

World Smile Day has become a popular event and is widely celebrated. Since smiling is not a hard thing and we can benefit a lot from it, even when you are not feeling great, why not give it a try and see how you feel!



By 高二 11 楊悅音



Night Runners

In order to live a longer and healthier life, modern people pay a lot of attention to their diet and lifestyle. As a result, jogging has stirred up a fashion in recent years, and it has also hit Yanping campus at night time.

Jogging brings numerous benefits to students. It can strengthen one's stamina to survive under great pressure. In addition, it is able to advance students' concentration during classes. That's the reason why Ministry of Education actively promotes it.

To soothe their strained mind, some students in YanPing will jog between two classes during night individual study time. Why does jogging attract so many willing students? The main reason may be the school rule which bans playing with balls after 6:30pm. Therefore, students can only do track sports. Moreover, it's indeed cooler and more comfortable running at night.

Besides, jogging is a free exercise. You can listen to music, chat with friends, and even recite texts in the process of jogging. Last but not least, jogging can outstandingly consume one's calories. It's a good way for classroom-bound students to keep in shape.





“Jogging is just a part of my life,” said Joanne, who is facing the Advanced Subjects test. Despite the fact she is confronted with huge pressure, she has still never given up jogging.

“I want to break the 1600 meters record and win first prize next semester.” said Henry. He had lost the record (to his classmate) every year.

“My grade isn't bad, but I always get sick before every exam. My physics teacher suggested I take exercise regularly to have an enough stamina to fight the General Scholastic Ability Test.” said Jeff, who is in first place of the school academic ranking.

There were various kinds of aims that students were chasing after, as if everyone who runs on the playground has their own belief to be defended. Whatever it is, it appears that the trend of jogging will still maintain for a long while.

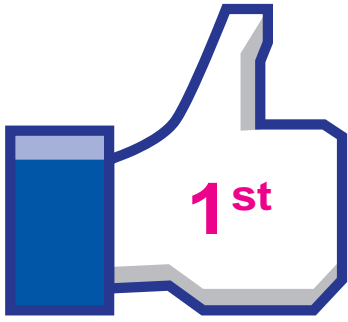
By 高二 12 林恆毅

2014 Spring Grade 11 Composition Award

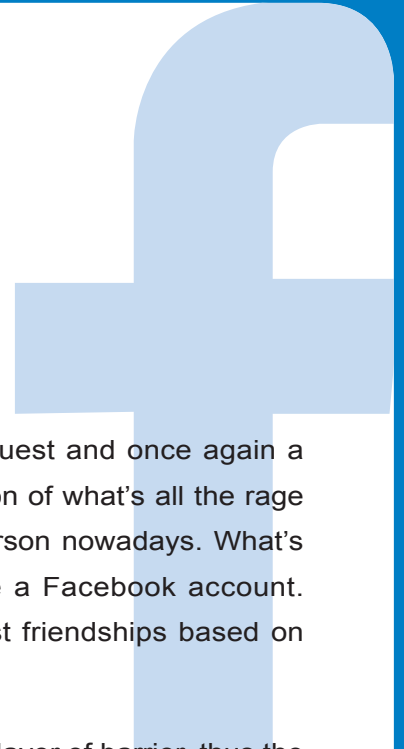
**What is your attitude toward Facebook
friendship?**

Use specific examples to demonstrate.





高二 11 程祥如



Click. Seventeen-year-old Ruby responded to yet another friend request and once again a new friendship is formed. This particular example is a perfect demonstration of what's all the rage right now, Facebook friendships. When we get acquainted with a new person nowadays. What's inquired is no longer their phone number but rather whether they have a Facebook account. Convenient and prevalent such measure is, I for one am strongly against friendships based on Facebook interactions.

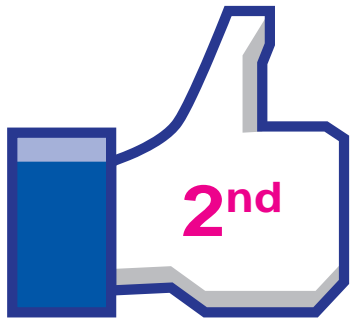
When friendships are formed over Facebook, there would always be a layer of barrier, thus the two parties wouldn't be able to get a clear picture what the other person is really like. Hiding behind the internet and typed out words, it has become way too easy to conceal or even lie about our true identities. My friend once spent weeks talking to a claimed twenty-year-old student via Facebook only to discover the hands behind the screen is a middle-aged factory worker.

Aside from deception about ourselves, another common problem that frequently appears is your dishonesty towards the opposite party. A person's Facebook page is loaded with one's personal information, consequently being able to create the misconception that you know all about their interests and hobbies without bothering doing so. Often is the case that you see a person pretending to have remembered all the minor details of the other while, in reality, they are scrolling down their pages desperately to find the date of their birthdays.

Another phenomenon I strongly dislike about Facebook friendship is the excessive use of stickers. Stickers, a tiny image that can be sent to whom you're messaging with is often used to fill in awkward blanks during conversations. I get frustrated when talking to someone addicted to sending me stickers so as to convey what they want to express. Different interpretations lead to misunderstanding and even conflict between the two people. I'm convinced that communication with words would bring people closer rather than pictures of a little grey cat eating popcorn.

Click. Everything about Facebook friendships are done by a single click. But easy and time-saving though it is, I am still against using Facebook as your basin of relationships. After all, whom you want to befriend is not the words running through your screen, but friend who can experience life alongside with you.





高二 11 沈維琦



Facebook has long been a social media that embodies convenience and widespread accessibility. Myriads of users take advantage of the network's merits and connect with people intimate or oblivious. Friendship bonds gradually form, adhering worldwide relationships in one website. However, I don't support the fact that people prefer to acquaint friends through a page of blue instead of getting to know each other in person.

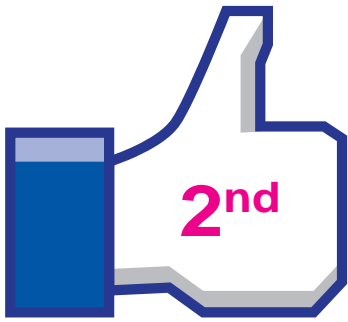
Humans are emotional. The art of talking is to read the recipients faces while delivering your speech. Chatting online is only a series of alphabets and emoticons. Misunderstandings occur due to the lack of real facial expressions. For example, say that I was to make a sarcastic remark. If the person I'm talking to didn't appreciate black humor and took it offensive, I would have no clue because her face is hidden behind a computer screen.

In addition, due to the fast connection between mutual friends, it's not difficult to have over hundreds of Facebook friends. And since Facebook reminds your friends of your birthday, you would receive hundreds of birthday blessings that all look similar: the two words, a smiley face and maybe an "LOL" at the end. To me, this internet form of blessing is quite insincere and seems like my friends just typed out a standardize birthday wish out of reluctance. Various statements of congratulations, consolation or greetings face the same problem. I prefer a handwritten card with words written out of genuine passion and not a random birthday message from a mutual friend.

Real friends are supposed to spend time with each other. Afternoon tea, ball games or even trips to the psychiatrist can strengthen bonds between friends. Visiting a verdant ranch is a way to improve friendship, but stealing from your Facebook buddy's once prevalent Happy Farm is not. Facebook games have limited real interactions between friends and made it too easy to make new friends. Personally, I would enjoy trick-or-treating with my friends instead of competing in the Candy Crush Saga amid a group of online friends.

Facebook has indeed brought many lost families back together and served as an access to universal connection. Still, I would enjoy a face to face relationship with people I really love and who would equally love me back with an unfeigned heart.





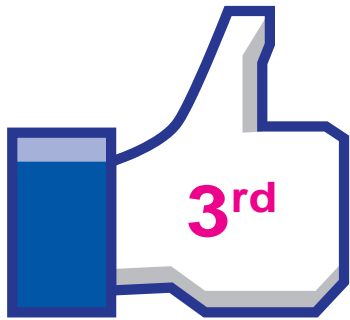
高二 10 徐夢蔭



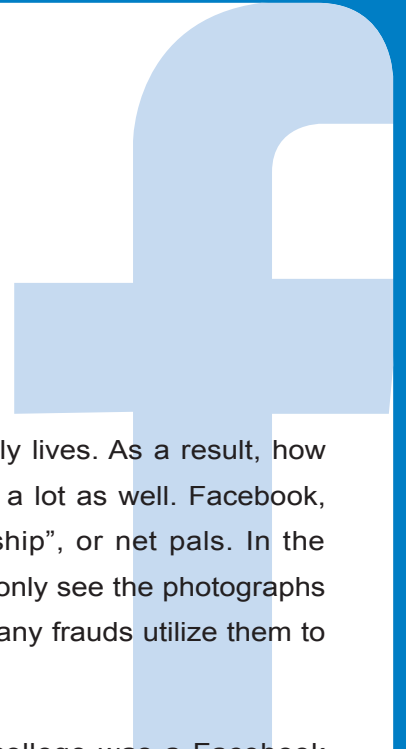
We are no stranger to the app Facebook, an app which allows you to note down important matters happening in our lives. It can almost be referred to as an online diary. And of course, another function of Facebook that cannot be missed is “friending” someone. Originally, the “friending” function is for those who actually know one another in real life so they can follow whatever’s happening to the person quite effortlessly. One can just log into the app and check another’s status update easily. The invention of this app saved us much time as we no longer need to make phone calls when we’re curious about how a friend’s coping with their life now. However, more and more people seem to have forgotten the original aim of this function and thus leading to the undeniable popular trend these days – Facebook friendship.

The term “Facebook friendship” is for friends who don’t know each other in real life, but got close through Facebook. There’s a slight difference between a Facebook friendship and other online befriending routes such as those sites that set you up on a random blind date with someone living in the same district as you. Before you decide to click that “send request” button on someone’s profile, you can go through his or her photos and posts to see what they are like in real life. Then, after contemplating in your head, using every piece of information in your hands, you can decide whether to send a friend request or not. But of course, there are still risks to this kind of friendship. We always have to keep in mind that we can’t be too carefule when making friends online. Personally, I don’t think it’s a big deal since I’ve made a promise to myself that I will never meet my internet friends in real life, on Facebook or not. Facebook friends to me are people whom I can empty my heart to without being judged by. I don’t give out personal information, but I do tell them about my school life, how school is wearing me off and how arguments with friends makes me feel down. The fact that they don’t and will never know me in real life enables me to pour my heart out without a care in the world. Some of them are really nice, too. They give me advice on how to improve my fear of speaking in public and on how to repair my relationship with friends and family. They make me feel loved and worthy when I suffer from depression, and when no one in real life gets what I’m going through. We are just like friends who live far away, and that doesn’t make me see them less as a friend in any way. They are with me all the time, mentally if not physically.





高二 12 江緯璿

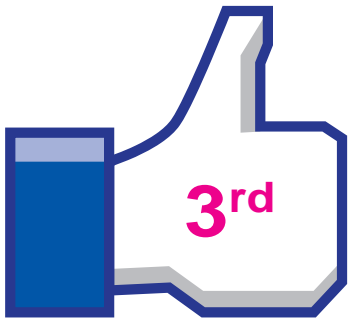


In this cutting-edge era, Internet has become a necessity in our daily lives. As a result, how people contact with one another and construct friendship changed quite a lot as well. Facebook, with a humble beginning, plays a crucial role in so-called “Net-friendship”, or net pals. In the process of Net-friendship, people won’t see each other. Instead they can only see the photographs of their net pals. Due to the setbacks such as the enclosure of identity, many frauds utilize them to cheat others. The following example is a miserable incident of Net-frauds.

According to the news report, Amy, a freshman in a prestigious college was a Facebook addict. She uses it to share her status, playing celebrity-endorsed web game, and, the most important of all, make net pals, many of whom were foreign to Amy in reality. Amy, however, didn’t pay much attention to the potential risk of the enclosed personal identity of her net pals. Rather, she chatted with them without caution. One day, as Amy was chattering with one of her best net pals, Kenny, who seemed to be a handsome guy in his photographs, asked Amy to give him her own mobile phone number in order to receive a text message owing to the unstable cellphone signal at his home. Amy, without a second thought, gave her number to him. A month later, Amy received her phone bill and was shocked by the incredible amount which was much higher than her salary from part-time job. Not until this moment did Amy realize that she was tricked by Kenny at that time. Furious, Amy wanted to scold Kenny and request him to pay the bill. Nevertheless, Kenny had deleted his Facebook account right after the incident. Not knowing what to do, Amy just paid the bill, deciding not to be fooled anymore.

Facebook is indeed a nice tool to contact with friends or relatives. Yet, there is a lot of traps in the virtual world. Aside from taking good advantage of its convenience, I’m convinced that we should always be cautious in the Internet, especially when faced with those who are foreign to us. As long as we pay much notice to it, we are able to prevent ourselves from suffering the shortcomings of Facebook friendship and relish the convenience as well as delight offered by the social website tycoon, Facebook.





高二 12 萬安祖

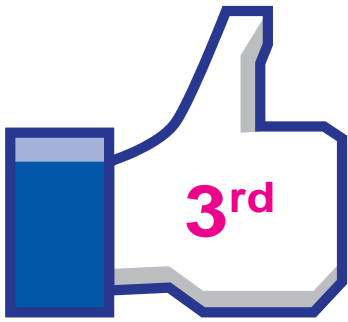


In the modern society, there are lots of cutting-edge products being launched every few months, not to mention the easy access to the Internet and the impact on us.

The number of people using social network websites is increasing considerably, and some addicts even immerse themselves in the virtual world, neglecting the importance of the real world. Facebook, for instance, is a popular website for people to get acquainted with others, and meanwhile keep in contact with those friends with other people, but there sure are some potential risks. For example, the personal information shown on the Internet might not be true thus causes a series of problems. The person you're chatting with might post a photo of a stunning, beautiful girl that catches your attention, but the person behind the electronic device might be an old lady with an ordinary look, or even a man. For example, last year there was a man who had a great time chatting with a young lady on Facebook, and after knowing each other for a few months, he plucked up his courage and asked the girl out for a date. On that day, much to his surprise, the person who showed up wasn't the pretty, young lady he expected; instead she looked more like a woman in his late-fifties without exercising. The news tells us the Internet may be convenient for people to make friends with others, but we should not completely trust the information give on the Net; otherwise you might end up being astonished and feeling stupid.

Nowadays, Internet is an inevitable tool for us to complete some formidable tasks and a good access to entertainment. Facebook has worked its way up to a popular website and has an enormous number of users. Some may have a simple mind of making new friends and enriching his life, but others may have a different thought, causing some uncertain danger if you don't keep some privacy to yourself, For all, Facebook might be a wonderful website, but make sure to be aware of the risks and dangers when you're relaxing and having fun.





高二 12 陳柏諺

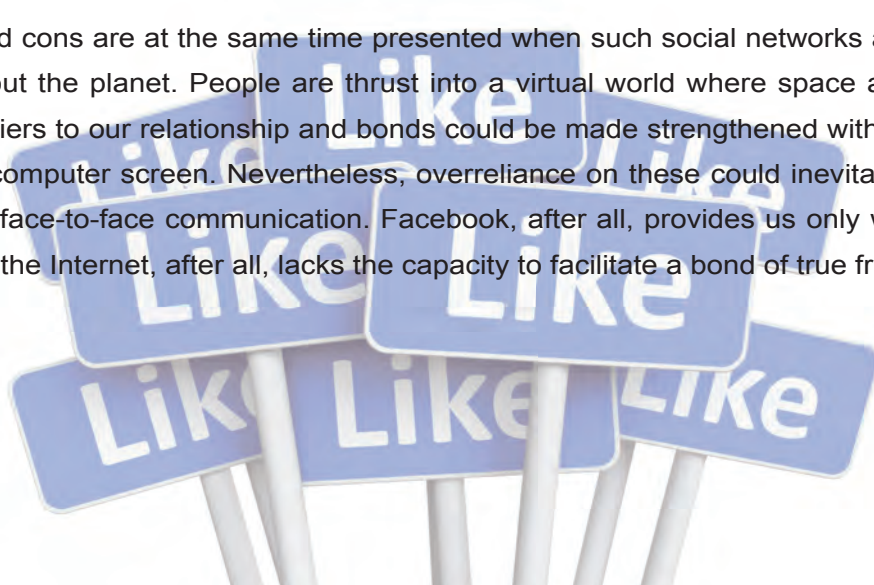


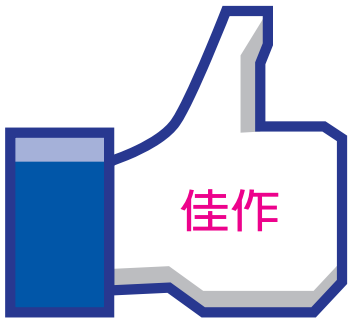
As the birthday of my best friend drew near, I could not but worry about what I could offer to make his day special. For all that we had been through, I felt the strong obligation to think outside the box rather than leaving a simple birthday post on his Facebook wall. After some discussion, my classmates and I decided to hang out for an afternoon this weekend to celebrate his name day, as we believe this is something really unforgettable.

As the Internet and a spectrum of social networks evolve, people nowadays are given the choice of another kind of interaction: through the virtual world. This has given us fast and convenience connections to all the people around us, but it comes at a high cost. People are forgoing the fundamentals of communication to embrace a relationship based on message in a virtual world. The art of interpreting what people really conceive through gestures and facial expressions is now fading away. Had I simply left a message on my best friend's Facebook wall, I would not have had the delight and opportunity to see his radiant smile when we told him we're going to the movies.

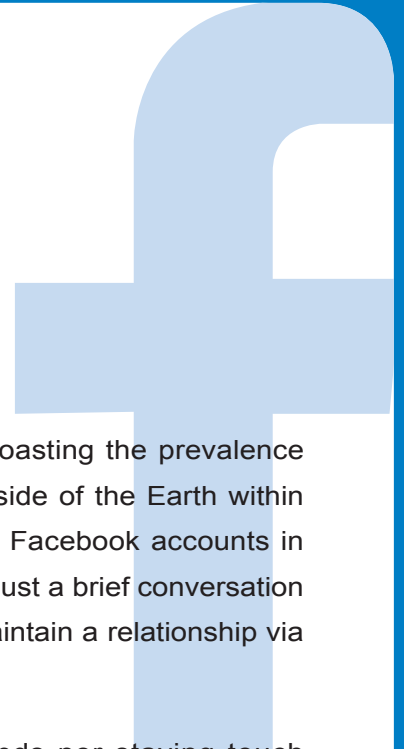
However, social networks such as Facebook has brought countless benefits as well. For instance, when I came across a childhood friend on Facebook, I was soon able to reunite with all my classmates when he simply added me into the group. Social networks do significantly make this world a much smaller community as many of our friends and relatives are merely a few clicks away. Connections that are lost through time could now be rebounded easily as the world is gradually coming as one.

Pros and cons are at the same time presented when such social networks as Facebook catch fire throughout the planet. People are thrust into a virtual world where space and time no longer become barriers to our relationship and bonds could be made strengthened with a few moments in front of the computer screen. Nevertheless, overreliance on these could inevitably lead to the lost of virtues of face-to-face communication. Facebook, after all, provides us only with the "face" of a relationship; the Internet, after all, lacks the capacity to facilitate a bond of true friendship.






高二 1 陳妍廷



Facebook has definitely stirred up a sensation worldwide recently. Boasting the prevalence throughout the world, it enables us to connect friends even on the other side of the Earth within seconds. So prevailing is it that people make it a habit to exchange their Facebook accounts in virtually every social occasion, including summer camps, meetings or even just a brief conversation at a coffee shop. However, be it an appropriate way to set up as well as maintain a relationship via Facebook still remains controversial.

As far as I'm concerned, I'm disappointed of neither making friends nor staying touch with friends by virtue of the virtual media. Though convenient as it is, the tragedy episode that happened a couple of months ago has kept me from Facebook ever after. It was a day of fatigue and depression that I decided to pour my heart out to my bosom friend Vicky about the horrible day. After clicking on the small green light beside Vicky's name, I started to complain about the terrible day, especially the irritating fight with our classmate Joy. Nonetheless, never would I be aware that Vicky and Joy were working on a paper together at a coffee shop and that all the harsh words about Joy were seen by her! Vicky told me the misery the next day. So much was I haunted by regret and embarrassment that I wrote a letter for both apology and explanation to Joy and meanwhile swore not to have any emotional chats on Facebook. After all we have definitely no idea about the person behind the electronic screen! Moreover, I once heard about others talking about their thrilling experience on Facebook. The nice-looking and well-tempered "Facebook friend" ended up being an annoying guy after they met. There are numerous incidents whichever embarrassing or miserable resulted from the virtual world which Facebook sets up. Therefore, while relishing the incredible convenience provided by social network, keep it as a constant reminder that we should never fail to be conscious of our remarks on Facebook since we have no idea who the person is at the other end of the virtual world!





高二 9 詹舒伊

poem



Shattered

How many times can I break until I shatter?

Can't define who I am or what I am after

Life is a total disaster

Things never seem to get better

But it doesn't matter


Gonna live my life my own pattern

Stars

One starry night
Stars above high
Flashing signals
Each one dreadful
A sudden sparkle
Out of the corner of my eye
A shooting star
Fleeting across the sky
Knelt down in prayer
Once upon a time
Begged for forgiveness
Under the dimmed moonlight
Time flies
Chances slip by
Someone please tell me
How do I redeem myself in time?



Gambling



Flip a coin
Take a chance
Cast the die
And let me have this dance
When you came into my life
I did not think twice
That the demons of love could make me vulnerable to life
With the value of luck already stuck in my hand
I played Russian roulette and quickly changed up the stands
Gambling with fate's plans while winning her love
But there was something stirring
More than I could think of.

Fact or Fiction?

Everything is no fact but fiction
Wish life came with a retry option
Seems to be no satisfaction
I need salvation
Overwhelmingly it brought me down
Desperately I am stuck on the ground
All I need is a shoulder to lean on
To bring me back on

Untitled

I tell myself I am just fine

But the shiver in my spine

Made me realize

I am just a sadness in disguise

My heart has been chained

I have been imprisoned by shame

I cry in the shower so no one could hear a sound

Someday I will cry in the ocean in hopes that I will drown.

Prayers drifted quietly into night

Into stars, into fleeting sparks of fire flies



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