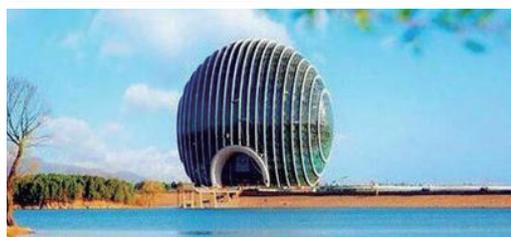


The Firefly

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

Time Flies!

We've said good-bye to the year 2014 and started a brand new year. It's always exciting to see new things and embrace beginnings. What is your new year's resolution? Studying harder to get better grades or reading more good books to broaden your horizons? If you say yes to either of the questions above, chances are you will find our latest issue very informative. For example, the article on the APEC China 2014 brings to your attention its satirical nickname – APEC blue, referring to something fleeting. As for the reason why such a major summit meeting of world leaders is made fun of, I will leave it for you to find out in the reading. Not attracted to such serious issues? Maybe you will be interested in knowing more about legendary Jordan Belfort, the famous Wolf of Wall Street.

Apart from international news, our students also have extraordinary life experiences to share with the readers. Last year the 8th graders visited the Taipei astronomical museum and explored the mysteries of the outer space; they are eager to share what they learned from that trip. Of course, versatile students at Yanping have more to offer. Since students are also encouraged to express freely in creative writing, we also included brilliant works of novels and poems in this issue.

One last feature, but not the least, in the 21st issue is the article contributed by one of our conversation teachers, Larisa. She loves travel and is an active athlete, so she joined a local Gaelic team during her short-term teaching career here in Taipei. Check out the article to find out more about the sport and the 2014 FEXCO Asian Gaelic Games, in which she represented Taiwan and actually won a medal.



FEXCO ASIAN GAELIC GAMES 2014



Your Trusted Partner



THE 2014 FEXCO Asian Gaelic Games

I had only been in Taiwan for little over a week when I started playing Gaelic Football. I was doing some rock-climbing at the Xinyi bouldering gym when I started chatting to a local Taiwanese girl, Yi-Hsuan. She asked me if I had heard of Gaelic football and if I'd be interested in joining the Taipei team. To her surprise I said yes to both questions as not many people outside of Ireland have even heard of the sport. I have a few Irish friends and had watched the game back in Australia but I had never played it myself so I thought this would be a good way to get to know people since I was new here.

So what is Gaelic football most of you may ask? It combines skills from soccer, rugby, Australian Rules football and basketball. It is not soccer, as, while there is kicking involved, the players also carry the ball in their hands. It is not basketball or netball, as it is a field sport and there are no hoops, only rugby-style goalposts — though it is not rugby of any form either. It is perhaps most similar to Australian Rules football — another little-known sport outside its home nation — with the object of the game to move the ball toward the goal by running, handpassing and kicking. In Gaelic football, kicking or handpassing the ball over the crossbar of the goalposts scores the team one point. Kicking the ball underneath the crossbar, past a goalkeeper into a soccer-style net, scores the team three points. So basically it is a field game where players are required to be skilled kickers, catchers and ball handlers, and there is a lot of running — so good fitness is also key.

Gaelic football is also unique in that it is one of the few team sports around the world that has kept its amateur status — even at the highest level. While the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), the organizing body of the sport in Ireland and around the world, is a highly commercial enterprise, the players in the national league receive at most a small stipend — enough to cover their costs. That means players play for their home counties for little reason other than passion — there is no financial incentive to play for other counties — and they usually have a “day job” to support themselves and their families.

So it was a Saturday morning in April when I went off to my first training session at Taipei’s Bailing rugby fields, by the banks of the Keelung River in Shilin District. I was surprised to find that there weren’t just Irish people or Taiwanese people playing the game but also people from the US, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Brazil, the UK, Hungary, Latvia, India and Japan, as well as another Aussie. We trained every Saturday morning through summer and as the Asian Gaelic games drew closer we stepped up our training to 3 times a week, training on Sunday and Wednesday nights as well.

Finally everything that we had been training for finally arrived. On the October long weekend I travelled to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia with 23 of my fellow teammates to compete in the Asian Gaelic Games. There were clubs from as far apart as Dubai, Ireland and of course Taiwan playing in over 180 games over two days at Taman Equestrian Park Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur. There were 24 different nationalities playing which made it not just an Irish or Asian affair but a truly international one.

We played an adapted style of nine-a-side with seven-minute halves. together as a team and for many players it was their first time playing competitively,

It was our first time playing in a competition including me. We had a shaky start on Saturday in our pool games, where we lost three and won one. Sunday’s games were knock-out style, so we needed to win to stay in the competition. We played Singapore first, who we lost to the previous day, and came out winners in a very closely fought contest. That took us to the semis against heavy favorites University College Dublin (UCD), a team from Ireland made up of international students and coached by Gaelic football legend Brian Mullins. We stepped up to the pressure of UCD, who



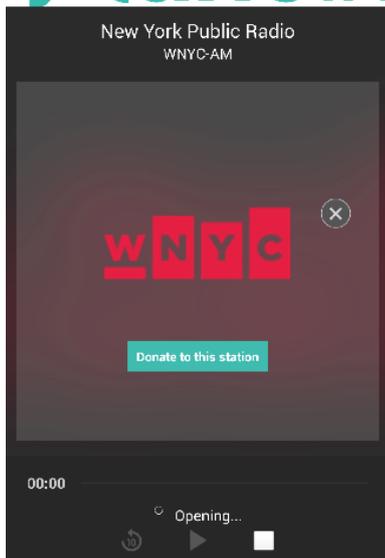
had also beaten us the day before and we scored a goal in the dying seconds of the game to take the win. We couldn’t believe it – after losing three games the day before we were now in the final against Saigon Gaels of Vietnam! We started strong in the final and maintained a high level of possession throughout the game, but Saigon kept pace and we remained neck-and-neck until full time, tied at 1-1 (4), 1-1 (4) to force a three-minute extra-time period. We opened the scoring in extra-time with a point over the crossbar, but Saigon found the back of the net for three points, to give themselves a two-point lead that we did not manage to claw back before the final whistle. The men’s team also made it to the final and coincidentally they also played Vietnam, went into extra time and were narrowly beaten!

Both the men's and women's teams were very excited with the result as we were not expecting to even make it to the final and we all received medals for being the runner-up. We celebrated that night at the official function where we all had to dress up as something green. You may remember me wearing a Ninja Turtle costume one day at school?

The Taiwan Celts Gaelic Football Club was founded in 1996, when a group of young Irish college graduates found themselves landed in the hustle and bustle of Taipei. To find out more about the Celts, search for "Taiwan Celts GAA" on Facebook. Come and join the team!



By Larisa Seghers

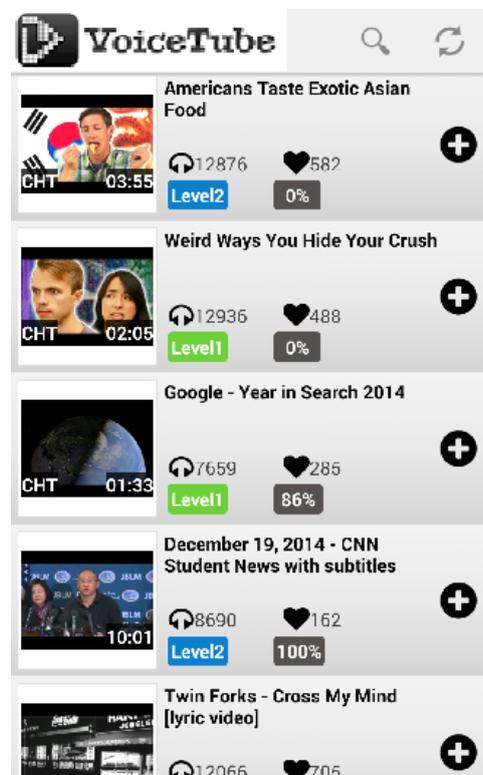


1. TuneIn Radio:

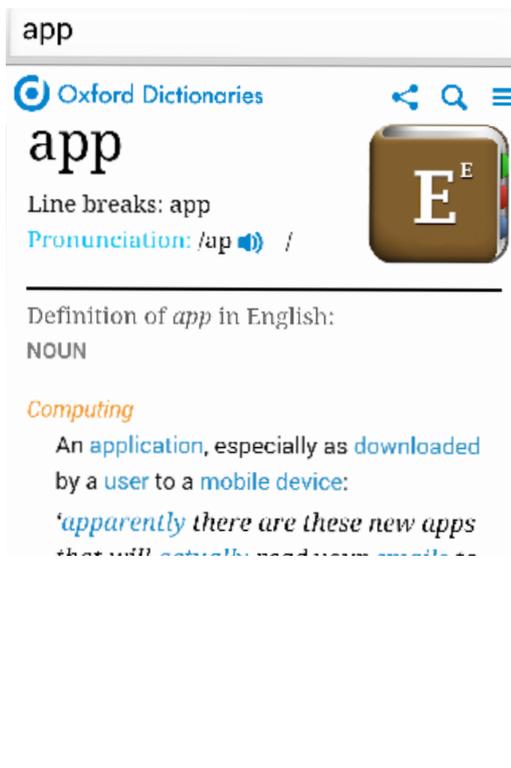
Listening to the radio is surely a good way to sharpen your English listening skills. Besides you must be tired of always having to listen through commercials on ICRT, the only English radio station in Taiwan. Try this one! For English pop music fanatics or anyone who demands instant access to the world's latest news, TuneIn Radio will surely satisfy your needs. It is equipped with more than four million podcasts streaming from all over the world, including genres of music, categories of news stories, or talks on various topics. Power Hits 97.5, Ted talks, and WNYC are my favorite stations, where I can listen to Billboard songs, gain knowledge of state-of-the-art technology or clever thoughts, and keep myself updated on what's happening worldwide. You can try this app and explore your own favorite station list.

2. Voice Tube:

This app adopts a natural approach that helps you ease into the English language and culture over time. It contains a wide variety of engaging videos – topics like popular talk shows, music videos, and funny commercials. By watching these select videos, of which the English subtitles are optional, you can easily learn English step by step. You can start from videos that interest you the most. Better yet, you can look up any unfamiliar word immediately by highlighting it; then the Chinese definition will pop out for you. Afterwards, you can keep a record of all the words you've looked up in your account so that you can review them later. Besides, most of the clips are no more than ten minutes long, you won't find it a burden to watch a full clip a second time in terms of reviewing what you have learned. That's why I like this app so much.



3. All English Dictionary:



To be proficient in English, a good dictionary is a must. But sometimes you may find it necessary to consult more than one. Typing in words from one dictionary to another on your smartphone is troublesome. Here's how All English Dictionary comes to your rescue—you only need to type once, and you can swipe from one dictionary to another, Oxford, Cambridge, Merriam-Webster, you name it! As far as I am concerned, I can look up words and learn how to use to them from many example sentences in these dictionaries. With this app, I have made great progress in expanding my English vocabulary. It is a handy app and I highly recommend every English learner to download it into their smartphone.



Smartphone apps make English learning more convenient and interesting than before. With your smartphone at your fingertips, you can learn English whenever and wherever you want.

Besides listening to TuneIn Radio, watching videos on Voice Tube, looking up words in All English Dictionary, there are still lots of other related applications waiting for you to explore. As long as you are willing to try, learning English will no longer be something you try so desperately to avoid like the plague. So come on! Let's learn English the fun way.

By 高三七班陳玫均

When was the last time you saw the blue sky? Living in Taipei, we often take the sky for granted because we expect it to be blue on most days. You just have to look up. However, for the residents in Beijing, the odds of seeing the sky in the winter has become a matter of luck.

A month ago, the annual APEC summit was held in Beijing, China. Leaders of countries around the Pacific Ocean and Asia gathered in Beijing to discuss international issues. However during a Beijing winter, the air pollution is usually worse because of the sandstorms blowing from Mongolia. Therefore the Chinese government spent billions of dollars to clear up the sky. The government ordered factories in the six provinces near Beijing which produce heavy pollution to stop operating. There was also traffic regulation in Beijing. For example, only cars with certain car plates can go on the road on certain days. Furthermore, they prohibited farmers from burning straw in order to cut down on smog. All of these actions contributed to the disappearance of smog during the summit. Sadly, the good conditions didn't last long. Only a week after APEC, the air quality index dropped sharply, even to a level that could harm the human body.

There are two aspects to view this phenomenon, newly named "APEC blue."

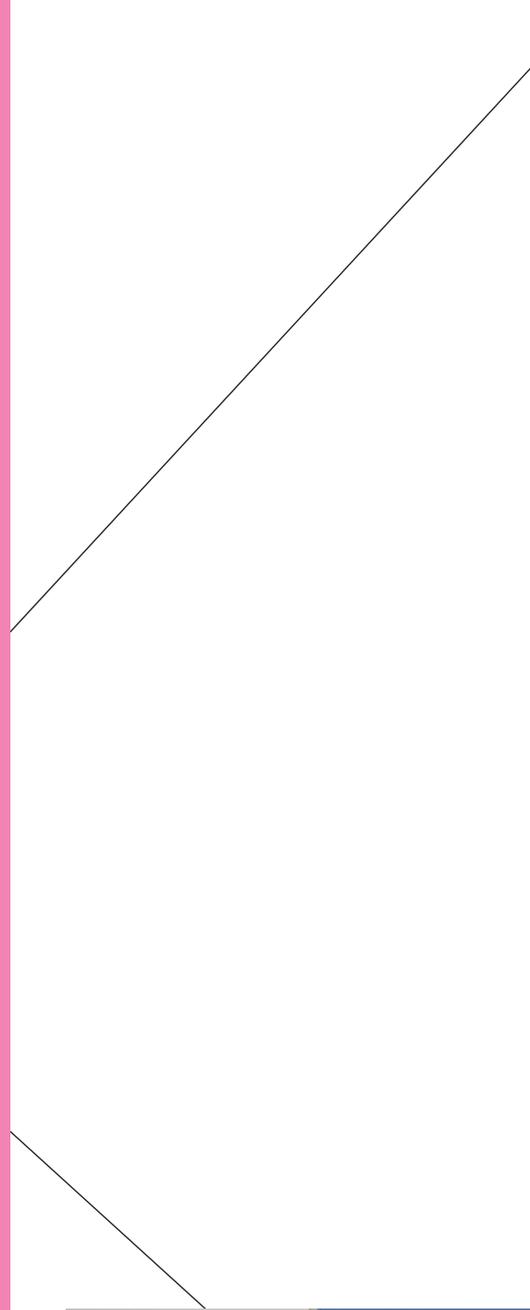
APEC BLUE



To begin with, the actions of the Chinese government were superficial at best. Their goal didn't meet any long term environmental objective. Instead it was a show of face or respect to the rest of the world. It is similar when our parents ask us to clean up our rooms and dress up in nice clothes because visitors are stopping by. Hence, the actions taken by the government was to cure the symptom instead of the main sources of pollution. The blue sky was just temporary. It's like fasting for a week to appear thinner. Therefore, after the ban was removed, the notorious smog was back.

But what if China kept the ban and maintained the blue sky? Would it be able to adapt to such a drastic change? First, it could be predicted that there would be a huge shock on China's economy. As China ordered factories to close and traffic to be regulated, according to big data, the economy was impacted which huge profit loses. Since China depends on its exports, the policy would damage key sectors of the economy. Second, the ban affected people's daily life. Not only was travel limited, but they couldn't heat up the stove even at the temperature of 3 degrees Celsius. In addition, since farmers couldn't burn straw, it can cause the fields to become infertile and unusable. Farmers would have to spray more pesticides or even give up the fields. The social unrest that can result from this policy can also destabilize society.

In sum, even though APEC blue seems right as a course of action, its impact on society can be viewed as a negative effect. China's president Xi hoped APEC blue could persist and become China blue, but before that, they must find ways to balance between economic and social responsibility.



A THRILLING DREAM

I can still remember the details now, and I will never forget what happened that night. It was just a dream, but I could easily visualize it. It was the most dreadful dream I have ever had, and it left an indelible impression on me. To my amazement, most of my friends believed me when I shared my dream to them, only a few of them gave a snort of contempt.

This incredibly horrifying dream happened about two weeks ago. It was a cold and freezing night. I was so exhausted after a hard day's work. I looked at the clock, it was almost midnight when I got home. I decided not to do anything and went to bed right away. I didn't even change my clothes! It took me less than a minute to fall asleep. At first, everything was just fine, but a few minutes later, my nightmare started. I remember that I was surrounded by darkness first, but then I soon realized where I was. I knew that I was in the derelict house beside the graveyard, it was extremely quiet inside the house, I stood up, and tried to leave the house, but before I took my first step, something creepy happened.

I realized that there was something wrong, there was a ghostly smell around. I heard someone tapping the floor, and there was a creaking from the door. I was so scared that I almost stopped breathing. I started to gasp for breath. A few minutes later, there was nothing but silence. When I was thinking that everything had finally finished, I heard another sound that almost stopped my heart and chilled my blood. It wasn't very loud at first, but then I heard a banging sound, someone was smashing the door in! I couldn't stand staying in this room anymore, so I stood up, rushed out of the room, and ran straight into the hall. There was spider silk all over the place, it was so disgusting that it made me want to be sick. I soon realized that I wasn't alone in this house, there was someone else. I could hear their footsteps very clearly, and it didn't sound like there was just only one person, it sounded more like a herd of people! Then I saw shadows in front of me, I was right, there were at least ten people in this room. I felt so relieved and walked toward them, trying to ask if they were the residents of this haunted house. When I was about two meters away from them, I suddenly stopped, because I heard that there was something wrong with the people's voices. I realized that they were not just ordinary people, their faces were corroded, pale and ugly, and they were walking very slowly. They were zombies! I yelled, and I rushed out of the house. However, when I saw the scene outside the house, I fell and sat on the floor, shaking.

There were dead bodies crawling out of their graves, and they were all staring at me. I knew that I was going to die, so I used all of my energy to rush back into the room where I started my dream. I huddled in the corner and cried. I heard banging sounds downstairs again and I knew they were devastating the house. Then the door opened and I saw the zombies scrambling towards me. I cried out loud and then, bang! I woke up. I looked around, nothing was wrong. Maybe I have watched Michael Jackson's Thriller too many times, I thought. After checking everything was alright, I went back to sleep.



**WHAT I
LEARNED
FROM
JORDAN
BELFORT**

If you ask 10 different people how they feel about Jordan Belfort, the Wolf of Wall Street, you may very well receive 10 different answers. One thing is for sure, though, the man was successful. From drugs, to cars, to women, to in-office antics, seemingly everything Belfort did was lavish and over-the-top, just the way he envisioned it.

Jordan Belfort, the real-life motivational speaker and former stockbroker, visited Taipei in August as part of his world tour, and gave an overview of his Straight Line Sales Seminar. Belfort's lectures were interesting and insightful, and his tenacity and business savvy ways can unquestionably be used as points of reference. Here are the things I've learned from Jordan Belfort:

1. Be a wolf.

In the real world, opportunities aren't always reserved for the most worthy candidate. That's the beauty of opportunities: they're reserved for the hungriest candidate to take them. Be the wolf in a world of dogs. Wolf, defined as a verb, means to devour greedily. Greed is not necessarily a bad trait, especially in regards to your goals. Be greedy. Take what's yours, and try to take what isn't yours. If it's out of line, you'll face the consequences — but until then, be a beast. When everything is all said and done, it'll be up to you to reap your own harvest, or you'll spend your whole life in the field waiting for someone else to. Go out and hunt, feed your killer instinct.

2. Failure breeds motivation.

A certain expression goes something like, "When God closes a door, he opens a window." These words have definitely resonated with me. Failure just might be the most powerful tool in the toolbox for success. You can never be truly hungry, until you haven't eaten for days. Likewise, you will never crave success until you've been dealt your share of defeat. Don't take failure as a stop sign, but rather, a detour. Do not be afraid of failure. As a matter of fact, be open to attempting things where you might find failure, because you will learn more along the way than if you were to sit around afraid to go out and do something.





3. Act “as if”--perception is everything.

Act as if! Act as if you’re a wealthy man, rich already, and then you’ll surely become rich. Always dress the part. If you’re not qualified for the part, at least look qualified for the part. In such a materialistic world, the sad truth is, you can’t sell stocks dressed like a used car salesman. It’s all about presentation. People are lazy and easily fooled. If a nice pair of shoes is what it costs to get your foot in the door, you’re only spiting yourself by not investing. Your appearance reflects your reputation and work ethic. When meeting your next boss, perhaps a sloppy suit implies a sloppy job.

5. You are not your past

No matter what happened in your past, you are not your past, you are the resources and the capabilities you gleam from it. And that is the basis for all change. The only thing standing between you and your goal is the story you keep telling yourself as to why you can’t achieve it. Reason people always tell themselves why they can’t have what they want. Results people don’t tell themselves a story, they take action. If you lack a skill you go out and get it.

4. Don’t hang up until the customer dies or buys.

This is the motto. For Belfort, “no” was simply not an option. There’s certainly something to be said about the power of persuasion. The pitch is everything, even more so than the product. A good salesman will sell salt to the slug and have it coming back for more — unless it dies, which I suppose is in accordance with Belfort’s motto. In the first 4 seconds of a sales call, establish that you are sharp as a tack, enthusiastic as hell, and expert in your field. After they perceive this, they will be convinced that you are a person worth listening to. Confidence is key. If customers aren’t sold on you, they’ll never buy into what you’re selling.

A TRIP TO THE TAIPEI ASTRONOMICAL

By 國二 1 班 16 號林霏瑤

MUSEUM I

Excitement bubbled in me as we arrived at the Taipei astronomical museum. This was my first field trip with my classmates and also a short getaway from schoolwork and tests.

Our first stop in the museum was the planetarium. It was definitely the highlight of the trip. There was a dome-shaped screen and rows of chairs. Since the dim room was so comfortable, people began to yawn and fall to sleep. Some completely dozed off and missed out on part of the film. Colors danced on the screen, and suddenly we were lying under a beautiful winter night sky. The stars seem to mesmerize us with their night performance. In amazement, we could see many different constellations and understand the legends behind each of them. The guide told us the tale of Gemini. It was about how Castor and Pollux were born and how they were transformed into constellations when Pollux begged Zeus to bring back his dead brother. I also enjoyed the myth about Scorpio and Orion. In this story, Hera sent a scorpion to end Orion's life because she was angered by his constant bragging about his hunting skills. In the end, it was his arrogance that led him to his death. And ever since then, Orion has been chasing after Scorpio to seek revenge. I would love to come back again in summer, so that I can learn about the summer constellations.

Next, we went to the exhibition halls and listened to the introduction. There were lots of displays on astronomy, including different planets, telescopes and pictures of the universe. We learned about our home planet—the Earth. The guide explained to us that there are lots of layers in the Earth—the crust, the mantle, the outer core and the inner core. The depth of the crust is about thirty-five kilometers, and humans can only reach one third of it. Upon hearing this, I suddenly felt so small. I was just a tiny speck of dust compared to the Earth. The mantle was made out of semisolid materials, and it moves beneath the crust. Aside from the Earth, we also learned about other planets in our solar system. There are also many interesting facts and theories about them. For example, we learned that Saturn has the brightest rings of all the planets. It can be seen all the way here on Earth. The guide also told us that Venus became the hottest planet instead of Mercury. This is because ninety percent of the atmosphere on Venus is carbon dioxide, which causes the Green House Effect. The Green House Effect is both helpful and harmful to our planet. It keeps us warm, so that we won't turn into ice cubes. But because of pollution, it is no longer helpful but melting the ice and causing the rise of the sea levels. This problem will continue to threaten humankind unless we start taking responsibility for our action.

A TRIP TO THE TAIPEI ASTRONOMICAL MUSEUM II

By 國二 4 班 陳慶瑜

We went on an outing to Taipei Astronomical Museum this morning. Although it was a half day trip, it was still interesting and unforgettable for me to learn so much about the universe.

First we watched a film about winter constellations in the IMAX Theater. There was an enormous hemispherical dome screen in the theater which showed the magnificent starry sky. I like the Pleiades M45 the most. It's famous for its six bright blue stars, and they are just like shining diamonds. I think it's really beautiful and glorious.

I think Sirius is cool, too. It's the brightest fixed star in the sky. The Chinese considered Sirius as an unlucky star. They think there will be robbers and thieves when Sirius changes its color. The Egyptians, on the other hand, worshipped Sirius because the Nile River would soon be in flood and bring soil nutrient when Sirius appears in the sky.

After that, we went to the Exhibit Hall to learn more from the guide. We talked about the speed of light. Even though light travels at a really high speed, it still takes eight minutes and nineteen seconds for light to reach the Earth from the Sun. We also learned about the Doppler Effect and many other things.

We came back to school at noon after the trip. After going to the museum, I've known more things of the universe, and I can't wait to explore and learn more!

Collapse /

“(CNN) – A brutal crime ended the life of 42-year-old Ryan Nichols, manager of a noted construction company in California. The man was found”

The TV was blaring out the usual news again, and Mia, Nichol’s grieving widow, burst into uncontrollable tears. She couldn’t believe they just got back from the happiest vacation ever and now she’d never see her husband again. Though the culprit was found and the case closed, the scar left on her heart would never heal.

* * *

“Ryan, I’m taking kids to the mall. Are you coming with us?”

“Nah. I think I’ll rest at home. Come back for lunch, ok?”

“Sure! Bye.”

Mia never thought that it was the last time she saw him alive. Three hours later, when she returned home, all she saw was a burned-down house and a dead body being pulled out from the debris.

“Ryan! Ryan!” she ran shrieking, when a man nearby grabbed her by the arm.

“Easy, ma’am!” the man shouted.

With fear gripping her, Mia felt limp, like a puppet whose strings had been cut.

“Excuse me, madam. I’m Sheriff Dylan. Do you live here?”

“Yes,” her voice trembled.

“Can I talk to you for a minute?”

She told him everything she knew. Meanwhile, someone walked in. It was Ethan, the best detective in Albany.

“I just got the news, and...Um...Did you find any of the victim’s family?” asked Ethan.

“I am his wife!” Mia responded.

“Well, according to your neighbor, Mr. Ratz, during your vacation, he heard noises in your home, some kind of renovation going on there...”

“What? No! We didn’t ask anyone to refurbish our house. Impossible! Mr. Ratz must have misheard. Or maybe...,” Mia explained, getting increasingly agitated.

“Calm down, ma’am. We’ll look into it.” Ethan reassured Mia.

* * *



Collapse /

“Ethan, the case is a tough nut. It’s impossible to piece the few shreds of evidence we have together.”

“Have you talked to the neighbors?”

“Yeah, a few. There’s this guy that caught my eye, Jacob Davidson. His father used to work for the victim. He was charged with misappropriation of company funds eight years ago. The verdict was guilty and he had to pay a fortune in compensation.”

“I remember that case. Unable to afford the money, Mr. and Mrs. Davidson killed themselves and their daughter in protest against the verdict.”

“How about Jacob?” asked Dylan.

“He was working at a fast food restaurant that day. When he got home, everything was beyond help.”

Suddenly, Ethan seemed to discover some connection between the two cases. He looked at Dylan with a familiar smile, and then Dylan realized what he was trying to say.

They went back to the scene, where new evidence came up.

“Sheriff, we found traces of gunpowder on the remains of a pot of some sort. Could it be the bomb?”

“Check for fingerprints and, if any, find out whose they are. Keep me posted. By the way, talk to nearby stores and check if any odd purchases were made recently.”

* * *



“Sheriff! A new witness volunteered info about seeing a man sneaking into the house through the balcony a few days before the explosion.”

Suddenly, Dylan’s phone rang.

“Um... All right! I see.” He hung up the phone, turning to Ethan, “I think it’s time to visit Jacob Davidson. Forensics has collected Jacob’s fingerprints on the remains of the bomb. Also, a store clerk said that the week before the

Nichols went on vacation, Jacob came to ask about or buy some regulated chemicals several times. The amount, if intentionally made into a bomb, could blow up a house.”

* * *

Collapse /

“Jacob! Jacob! It’s me, Jack. Open the door!”

A young man was knocking at Jacob’s door when Dylan and Ethan arrived.

“Excuse me. Are you Jacob’s friend? What’s going on here?” asked Dylan.

“Jacob called me an hour ago, mumbling about something like ‘justice has been served,’ ‘there’s no purpose in life.’ I’m afraid he might do something stupid”

Dylan and Ethan exchanged glances, and then they broke in. In sight was Jacob, dangling from the ceiling, dead, and a note on the table. . . .

* * * * *

Today is April tenth, the date of Dad, Mom and Grace’s wrongful death. It was all his fault! But for his devious manipulation, Dad wouldn’t have been convicted and forced to meet his doom. Mom and Grace wouldn’t have had to die because of this. A happy family was torn apart. Damn him! I kept telling myself that day, I’d seek vengeance. I wanted his family to suffer what I have suffered. I made it! Now Dad, Mom, Grace, and I will reunite in another world. Yes, I’m the person that set off the bomb. But, sadly, you can never have me, since I’d be gone before you can bring me to justice.

* * *

Hatred makes people blind and twisted. Jacob’s inability to cast out his inner demon and move on with his life drove him to finally step on “the road of no return.” Revenge isn’t everything. Only through forgiveness can one pull a person out of the depths of despair and misery. Shouldn’t we all



Model compositions

By 高三十二班 邱鈺翔

With the development of technology, cutting-edge devices are springing up, which makes it easy for students to get distracted in class as a result. I myself was one of the victims. However, I was not the one giving way to the temptation of the virtual world, but the one enraged by those who immersed in the online world in my class. One day, with a beautiful weather outside, I stood on the podium, making every endeavor to deliver an inspiring lecture to my students. The birds were gleefully chirping outside as if to echo each of my word of wisdom and the sunshine was streaming into the room, warming every soul aspiring for more knowledge. Things couldn't be better. All of a sudden, however, I noticed the student seated right in front of me with his head down and fingers busy flipping over something. Instead of blaming him, I kept having my eyes fixed on him, hinting him to stop texting messages. To my great surprise, he was still indulged in his virtual world without the knowledge of his misbehavior having been made known. Provoked by his indifferent attitude, I stormed toward his seat, lashed out at him in a fury, snatched away his electronic device and ordered him to come to my office after school.

Striding back to my office, I put the cellphone aside, and made a phone call to his parents in no time. Steaming with anger, I intended to give the child a lesson. Seeing me in such a fit of rage, my co-workers decided to leave me alone, focusing on their own work. In fact, an angry teacher trying hard to calm himself down or a depressed teacher sobbing at the desk is not an unusual scene to see in the teacher's office. Finally, the student showed up with a distraught face. Upon seeing me, he burst into tears, begged me not to punish him for his improper behavior, and promised that never would he take out his phone in class again. Due to his genuine apology, I decided to forgive and forget, reminding him not to make the same mistake. The next day, as he had promised, he was concentrated in class, with eyes fixed on the textbook and hands busy taking notes. I was more than satisfied to see a student change for the better because of me until I caught sight of another girl sitting at the corner of the classroom keeping her head down and texting messages. Again? Please give me a break, omnipresent technology!

Model compositions

By 高三十二班 陳賢祐

There used to be a popular spot in Kenting national park. Located on the top of a mountain in the reserve, it featured a wonderful view. When the sun finally fell, the scenery was even more awe-inspiring. Tinted with sparkling stars and twinkling lights given off by the fireflies, the spot was where thousands of visitors hoped to make pilgrimage. Unfortunately, things went wrong when a romantic boy wanted to top off his date with a few set of fireworks. Little did he know that his romantic move may end up with an engulfing fire, ravaging a large part of the reserve. Now, one year after the life-threatening accident, most of the facilities have been restored and tress, replanted. Throngs of visitors come flocking in, taking in the chirping of birds and the murmuring of the brook. Everything goes well as before except for the numerous signs put up by the authorities concerned, which read "No fire in the Ecological Protected Area," along the trails. And every group of tourists now is to be accompanied by an official guide, making sure regulations are strictly enforced.

It is expected that the attraction will keep drawing more and more nature lovers, providing them with a grand mountain to scale, a winding brook to cross and a diversity of wildlife to admire. Of course, on the other hand, more regulations are to be enacted to make sure that the reserve is well protected. Ambulances, fire engines and paramedics will also be ready for regular fire drills. After all, such an earthly paradise can never ever afford another raging fire.

Model compositions

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This is a survey on high school students' time spent on various types of activities. As illustrated by the chart, sleeping accounts for the largest proportion of time a teenager has on a daily basis. Studying ranks as the second, with six and two-thirds of hours per day. Such a time distribution does not surprise me; however, I find it shocking to see the relatively low proportion of time American students spend on exercise. It may be inferred that people nowadays would rather stay at home enjoying an exciting video game than go outside for a competitive basketball game.

As for me, unlike my American counterparts, studying takes up most of my time, usually starting from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., which really drives me crazy. Bombarded with the numerous assignments and heavy load of studies, I spend much less time sleeping, which, on the contrary, make up much of American students' life. With so much time devoted to my academic performance, I have no time for socialization or recreational activities, which American students enjoy. Nonetheless, I do find one thing we have in common as far as time distribution is concerned: we both spend relatively less time on exercise. Given that exercise is vital to our health, maybe it's time we squeeze more time for it.

1

No matter how high you jump,
The gravity is always pulling you down.
No matter how hard you punch,
The reaction is always forcing you back.
No matter how good you are,
The obstacles are always striking you out.

But therefore,
The gravity makes planes land safely.
The ground reaction force makes athletes run quickly.
And the obstacles,
Makes you grow fiercely.

Phoenix rebirths after fire,
Spring comes after winter,
And victory appears after failure.

Poems

2

You're a child lost in the dark.
Your own dreams of future were unseen in dust.
You're told to take exams, told to study hard,
Told to forget your dreams of running in the sun.
You tried to shout out your own future rhymes,
While unheard by the noise of the world's busy beat.

But as you are sure what you're fighting to do,
The goal is waving, calling to you.
With great determination and the hard work you paid,
You're pacing your own way to where victory lays.

Fighting for dreams,
A glorious eagle you are.
Flying above high, spreading the wings of pride.
Breaking through the winds, daring to touch the sky.
The world is beneath you, the tough and fearless mind.

As strong as metal, as wise as mirror,
You're no longer the child crying because of error.
As you achieve the goal, with the whole world admire,
You finally realize,
The dream has always been there.

Poems

3

All I'm telling you is true,
That a goose ate my homework.

I met it on my way to school,
And it begged me for some yummy food.

But all I had with me,
Were some rotten chicken sandwiches,
An apple with bruise all over it,
And some candies with ants surrounded.
But nothing it wanted to eat!!

So it kicked my belly, it hit my knees,
It ripped my T-shirt and tore my jeans.
But all of a sudden, all things changed,
When it saw the workbooks lying on the earth.
The goose thought and said,
"I think there is something I want to eat."

So there it went,
Page one, two, and three,
Science and Mandarin,
Math and English.
And all my homework was eaten by it!!!
Oh!
And that's why I don't have my homework with me.

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