

The Firefly



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Heartbreaking Drowning

With roaring laughter and gleeful chatter, a group of children, along with adults accompanying them, were on a nature-experiencing trip. They were having the time of their lives. They walked along a mountain trail leading toward a paradise for nature lovers. There was a glassy lake reflecting the shimmering sun above and a big expanse of the blue sky. It was a place perfect for a relaxing swim. No one was aware that beneath the seemingly shallow and calm surface lay turbulent rapids ready to turn monstrous, and take people by surprise with their devastating power. However, that's exactly what happened to the hikers as a sudden torrent came rushing down the valley and overwhelmed them all. The disaster claimed four lives and left two missing. Upon learning the news of the catastrophe, my heart sank. Seeing the family members of those victims standing forlornly on the shore with their brows knitted and faces ghostly pale, I couldn't stay detached. I related to the families' sorrows and despair. Two days into the fervent search to no avail, I felt all the more saddened.



圖片來源：聯合報

Something must be done to prevent such tragedies from recurring. First and foremost, the government must make sure companies responsible for those so-called nature experiencing activities must be licensed, for it turns out that the company in charge of the activity mentioned above wasn't. Besides, our government should have safety inspections conducted on a regular basis on such places as coastlines, mountain trails, and lakes where danger abounds but supervision usually falls



圖片來源：蘋果日報

short. More manpower should also be put to work, for example, to install more surveillance cameras, have frequent patrols, or put up signs reminding people of potential danger. As for us, while we rejoice at the fun Mother Nature generously grants, we should always remember to stay alert to our surroundings. Evacuate as soon as you see signs of rising water. It is my strong belief that, with the government and us both doing our share, we can successfully keep disasters at bay.

By 20720 王哲維



Earthquake

On Oct.24th, a powerful earthquake measuring 6.5 on the Richter Scale struck Taiwan. The relentless tremor, ominous sounds of squeaking walls and furniture woke me up from my otherwise sound nap. Starting out gently, the rolling sensation soon grew violent within a second or two. Appalled by the merciless shaking, I, on the 21st floor, could do nothing but lie in bed, too terrified to move. And while I earnestly prayed that the seeming persistent quake could soon come to an end, the scenario of our building being leveled and me buried in rubbles kept haunting me. Well, I may well be so horrified for earthquakes are devastating in nature. They bring about catastrophes such as mudslides, tsunamis, as well as floods, which never fail to claim a great many lives. Worst yet, humankind has not yet come up with any effective approach to predict earthquakes, let alone preventing it from happening.

Vulnerable though we are at the mercy of earthquakes, hopefully, there are still some things we can do to minimize the damage and the number of casualties. For one thing, we ought to shelter ourselves from harm and stay away from areas where we are likely to be hit by falling objects like windows, bookshelves or cabinets. Also, we can seek refuge under a sturdy desk instead. For another, prepare an emergency kit with a flashlight, food and water enough to last for at least 3 days. Last but not least, stay cool-headed; don't panic. When in danger people tend to make wrong decisions, such as taking an elevator for evacuation instead of taking stairs, risking the possibility of having themselves stuck in a confined space in times of emergency should electricity goes out. On the contrary, people with a mind calm enough are likely to remember to shut off utilities, including gas, electricity, and water, which helps to reduce the potential damage and danger. All in all, if we can carry out the safety measures mentioned above in an emergency, horrible and devastating though an earthquake is, we will be able to survive it safe and sound.

By 20607 劉軒羽

Kaohsiung Fire

On October, 14, 2021, a disastrous fire swallowed up a 40-year-old commercial and residential building in Kaohsiung, taking away 46 innocent lives. This greatly highlighted Taiwanese unawareness of the management of obsolete and dilapidated buildings along with justice for the disadvantaged residence. It was not only the appalling number of victims but the longstanding problems of the aged buildings that caught everybody's attention, because such old buildings are all too common in Taiwan overall.



圖片來源：網路照片

I can still vividly remember the scene of the 12-story building engulfed in flames and of the firefighters fiercely battling the blaze. At first, I barely notice the seriousness of the fire; however, as time passed by, the death toll rose up to 46, the second most severe building fire in Taiwan's history, and then I sank into a deep sadness. Wondering what caused such the disaster, I followed every detail of the event.

It turned out that the building was once a popular and fashionable department store, but gradually faded in popularity due to the shift of the commercial area to other districts.

With the decay of the building, more and more elderly and disadvantaged people began moving in owing to its cheap rent, which contributed to the poor management of the building. Due to legal loopholes and the reckless safety inspections, things that could have prevented the fire were all removed. For example, the building lacked routine fire inspections, not to mention fire alarms or detectors and even the fire escapes were destroyed by residents who wanted to profit from them.

I was astonished that such a situation still existed in our modern society. How could the Kaohsiung municipal authorities neglect such dangerous problems and never come up with a solution to improve the environment around? Why couldn't they offer aid to the residents there before the tragedy occurred? I also worried that a similar disaster might happen to my loved one or even myself.

Besides demanding the government to enact more related and stricter laws, educating people on fire prevention, fire safety, and fire escape is also indispensable. For instance, when fires break out, we should judge the situation calmly instead of acting in haste, and most of the time, ascending above can actually be more dangerous than descending. By doing so, we can not only save our own lives but the lives of others.

By 10818 賴虹瑾

Pai Kuei Food Company



圖片來源：中央社

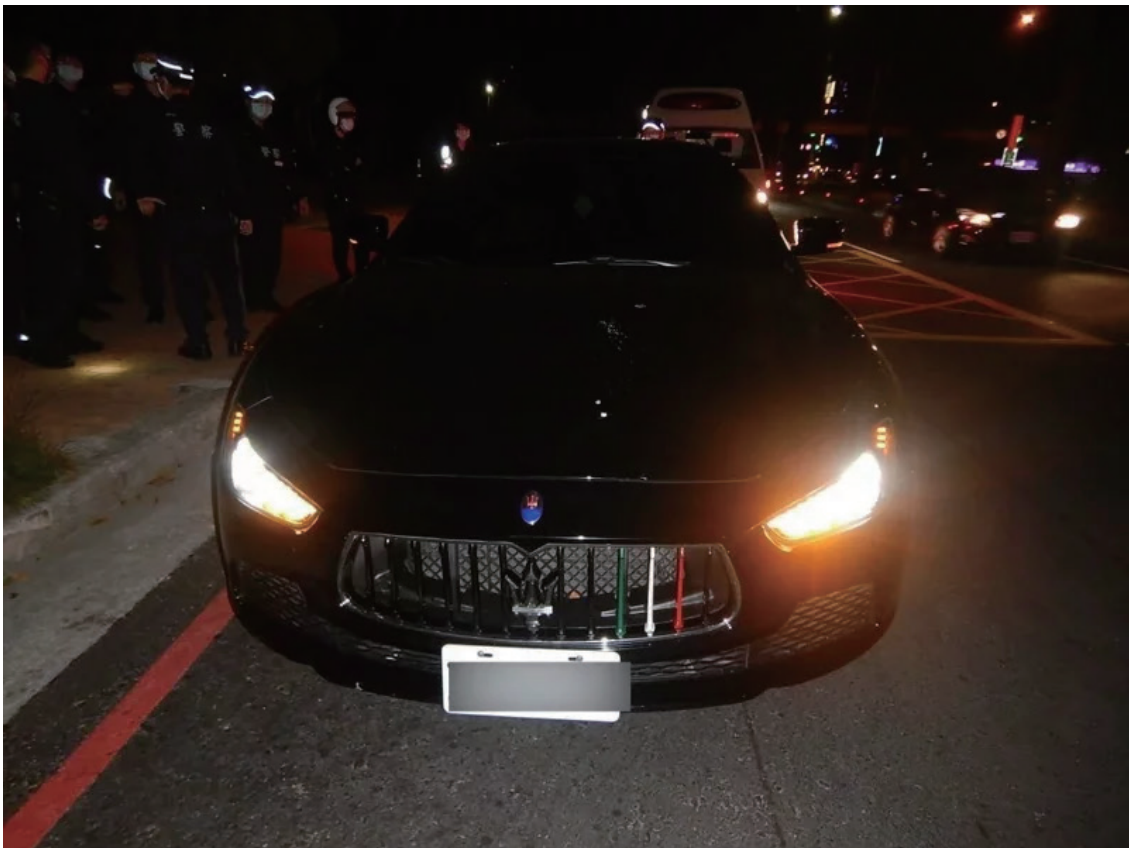
Pai Kuei Foods Company was forced to shut down on account of a boycott from netizens, which sprung from a car accident that ended up in blood leaving the victim in a coma. Upon hearing the news, the first question that occurred to me was the story behind his brutal action besides him being drunk. What led to him dealing with accidents in this way? How was he educated? It is his background that drew my attention and which I strongly consider the key to this controversy.

Born with a silver spoon in his mouth, he was a manager of his family business, without any financial worries. However, I believe that this background also triggered his outrageous behavior. For instance, being pampered by parents, when things don't go his way, feeling lost or ill tempered, he was always tolerated and not taught to control his emotions. Therefore, when he encountered such incidents, having no one to calm him down and with only friends who even provoke more of his negative actions, he wound up in trouble.

Instead of focusing on how we can shut the company down, or how we should penalize the criminals, finding a way to diminish such incidents is more pragmatic. The shut-down of the company would not last forever, since with

a quick change of the logo, the company will be in operation again soon. That is to say, we should analyze the cause, not the consequence. When a crime is investigated, it is true that we should do the victims justice. However, only punishing and figuring out “what” happened at the crime scene can barely change anything except for the criminal's life. Instead, “how” the crime happened would be the point to discussion. What makes a criminal? Does his reaction with rage derive from childhood experience or parenting? Or is it the lack of resources and caring that could not get him or her back on track? After exploring all possibilities can we thus in turn think about means of which to better cope with the roots of the tragedies, some of which even look irrelevant but initial. For instance, implementation of free after-school tutoring and accompanying reading for kids is one that could help kids in poor families lay their focus on learning rather than having relationships with those they may lead them astray.

I am of the opinion that it is crucial for us to understand why such matters happen and think of what we can reap from the experience to cease the vicious circle. In turn we will prevent future accidents and tragedies from occurring.



圖片來源：網路照片

Dangers Can Be Around Us

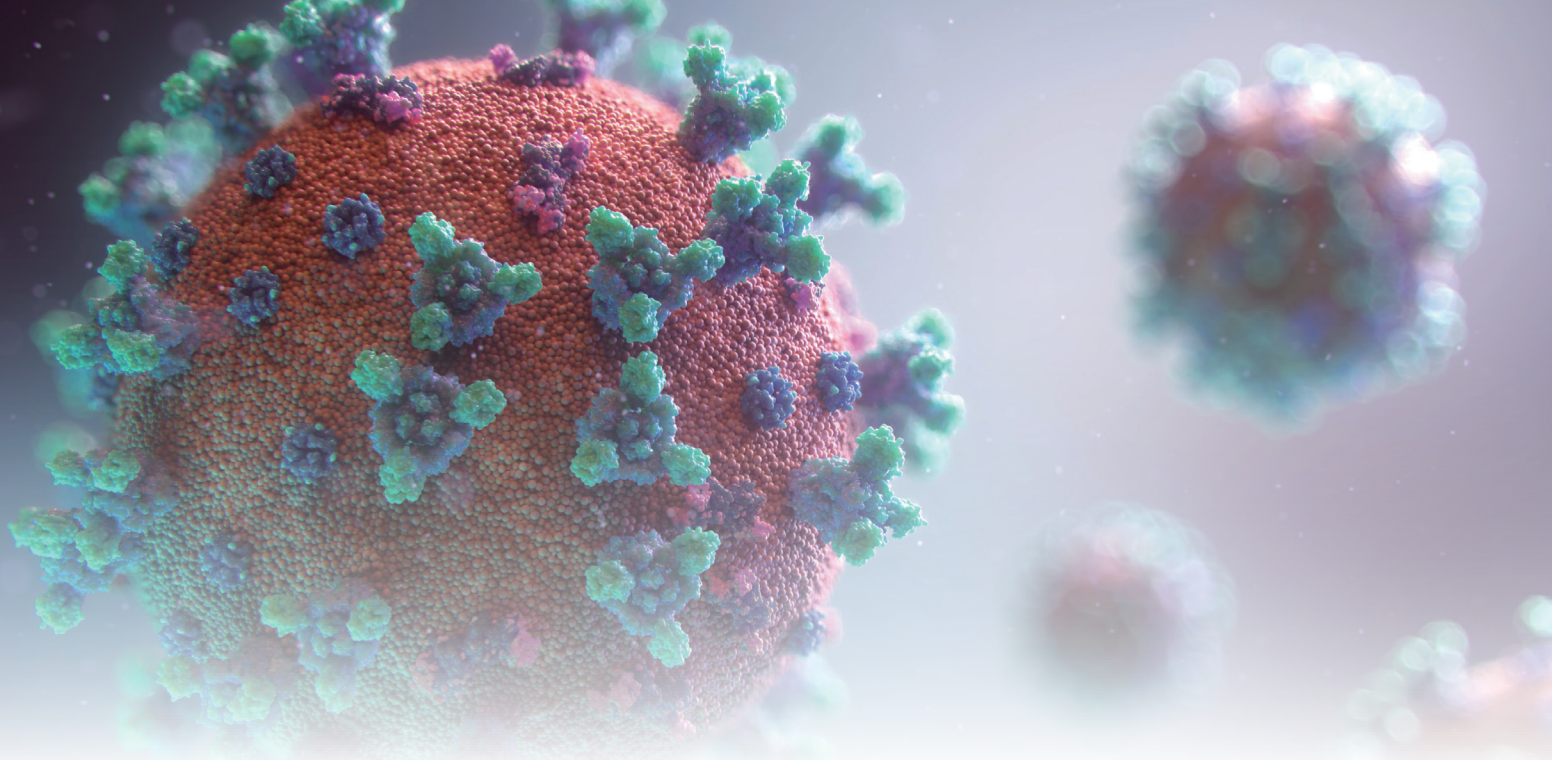
To me, the most traumatic event I have witnessed is a car crash which unfolded right in front of my very eyes. The horrendous screech of the tires representative of the driver's fruitless endeavors to halt this vehicle still rings in my ears and haunts me to this day. It was a fabulous day, as I was on my way to ensue my shopping spree. On the bus, all that occupied my mind was whatever delicacies or stationery I could get my hands on, when suddenly, a screech, eerily similar to a scream, was followed by a collision between a sports car and a scooter, on which was a mother and her child, both subsequently tossed across the road onto the pavement by the force of the impact, lying motionless. As the bus I was on drove away, neither could I comprehend my catastrophe, nor could I do my part to help.

Devastating as these tragedies are, many seem not to have learned the lesson. Accidents like this still make their appearances on the news daily, while being dismissed as irrelevant to themselves by most people. Many breach traffic rules for their own conveniences, trusting their luck, unfazed by the daily tragedies that could occur to them at any moment. To curb this, fines for violation of traffic rules ought to be raised or multiplied, as violators pose a threat to the society, whose damage can be permanent. On top of that, the government ought to increase awareness by raising campaigns or altering the teaching materials with a view to instilling the concept of road safety. These could surely play a much more significant role in educating citizens than the low-effort news with video clips of accidents that barely result in any reactions.



圖片來源：Unsplash

By 20629 黃丞軒



The Spread of Covid Around the World

During the Christmas holidays in 2019, Coronavirus - Covid-19, a highly contagious pneumonia virus - broke out and spread throughout Wuhan, China. It spread through most of Asia within 2 weeks. It was thought to be a normal flu, but it surely wasn't. The virus then eventually began spreading from Asia to the rest of the world.

Scientists first thought the virus' incubation period was only 14 days and not contagious during that time. But it turned out that there were people who had no symptoms at all for over 14 days but were still highly contagious. Many countries closed their borders and cancelled flights, but it was too late. The virus had already spread all over the world. But Taiwan was not affected as much until June, 2021.

During summer vacation, the virus began to spread through my country. When I woke up one day and turned on the TV, a news reporter said, "The domestic cases have increased from 5 to 20 today." After this shocking news, the CDC took several actions to prevent the virus from spreading, but the virus still continued to spread throughout Taiwan. Eventually, domestic cases rose at a fast pace: from 20 cases per day to almost 200 cases per day. Several events caused cases to rise continuously.

Soon schools closed and online learning became one of the biggest changes in our everyday lives. I woke up at different times, slept at different times, had fewer classes, less homework, etc. My life was very unusual in those days. It could have been because of the news I've been watching every day that was always reporting in a "Taiwan is about to fall!" tone. Time seemed to have passed a lot more slowly. Every day I'd go through the same boring routine which put me in a very bad mood. I hoped all of this would end because there were so many things I

wanted to do that I couldn't such as visiting my friends, going to other countries (you can but you'll have to quarantine for 14 days), etc. After many weeks, I found that there were many things I could do at home, going out was not the only option. I am very thankful to Taiwan's doctors, nurses, governors, and all the people that fought against the virus. They defended Taiwan from the virus with courage, and their acts of bravery kept Taiwan safe. I think we should feel lucky to be in Taiwan.

Taiwan cancelled flights, quarantined people who returned from foreign countries for 14 days, did contact tracing, set up quarantine motels, made masks as fast as possible, made coronavirus slogans and donated masks to countries who needed them. This was how we were saved from the suffering caused by Covid 19. But still, many countries didn't react as well which caused people pain, illness, job loss, mental illness, and even death.

People all over the world are spreading the virus to each other and making the pandemic worse. But Taiwan still remains one of the best countries at reacting to and preventing the pandemic.



圖片來源：Unsplash

By 70136 廖泓宇

Our Life And Mental Health

After The Pandemic

In the middle of May of 2021, the domestic cases of COVID-19 in Taiwan had increased by a large margin. This impacted our lives and caused serious consequences such as economic depression and the stagnation of production. This led to tension and panic. Now, it seems the epidemic is slowing down, so how should we get our peace of mind and revert back to normal?

For us students, the biggest change must be the way we study. We had been taking online courses from May to August. There's no denying the fact that online courses alienate us, but in-person classes help us build a rapport with classmates and



圖片來源：Unsplash

teachers, making us satisfied and joyful. For me, on hearing the news that we can go back to school, I was genuinely excited and grateful because I could finally chat with my classmates and learn extensively in class without pressing a button. Sure enough, not only am I surrounded by my teachers' love and care, but plenty of funny things also happen among my peers.

The pandemic has also changed the way we travel and have fun. During the pandemic, wherever I went, my parents always drove our car, because they thought taking the public transportation was highly risky. I have taken the MRT by myself recently. I sometimes walk with my friends, which makes me satisfied with my social life, even though I have to walk some distance. Seldom do I go to the movies, but I saw a lot of people posting their movie tickets on Instagram. During the lockdown, we couldn't go to the movies, so we could



圖片來源：Unsplash

only watch them on the streaming platform. My opinion is that watching movies on the platform has a lot of benefits, but going to the movies with friends can make us closer.

Many stores, restaurants, hotels, or even companies were forced to shut down due to the pandemic. However, they got the chance to reopen after restrictions were eased. The loosening of the lockdown means a chance for rebirth. During the pandemic, businesses feared bankruptcy. What they might do now is to exert themselves and seize the opportunity for growth.

Thanks to the efforts all the health care workers and ordinary people have made, Taiwan has overcome the hardship in less than a year, which I consider to be a miracle. People in Taiwan should all appreciate what we can do now, relish our wonderful life more and make sure that we don't take it for granted. We should also stay cautious and wear masks, in case that the highly transmissible variants cause an outbreak of coronavirus again.

By 91116 蕭亦珊

The Question of Morning Self-Study

It has long been a convention in Taiwan for schools to schedule a period of time in the morning for students to study. This means that students can supposedly switch to the right mood of absorbing knowledge, enhancing efficiency. Recently, however, it has been rumored that this period of time may be cancelled. In other words, students can arrive at school later than usual, and start their first class upon arriving at school. This proposal boasted nearly unanimous support, and is on the way to a landslide victory. Notwithstanding, neither am I in favor of it, nor do I see the purpose of it. For one thing, by giving students a greater margin of time to work with, they will likely alter their schedules and set the alarm to a few minutes later. This doesn't translate to more ample sleep, though, as students can use that half an hour of extra sleep as an excuse to burn the midnight oil. Research has shown that such management of time is by no means efficient, as we lose concentration exponentially late at night. Why not study at school in the morning instead? For another, this period of time acts as a buffer. Students can finish their breakfast without interrupting the teacher, and not miss out on lectures should they be slightly late.

If I were a teacher, I would not be optimistic about such legislation. Students might be late at times, and it is understandable. Nonetheless, it is a teacher's duty to deliver knowledge; hence, I would not want to witness a late student missing out on my class. If they are in dire need of some rest, I would not object to them doing so before any class ensues. The new implementation merely shifts the sleep schedule of students slightly later, and it is of no help. Once again, I expect to see this under reconsideration, as it is supported neither theoretically nor scientifically. A consensus with no ground to stand on is merely the manifestation of irrationality.



圖片來源：Unsplash

By 20629 黃丞軒

Reflections on 2020 Middle High School English Youtuber Competition

It wasn't until I was selected as the representative of the school that I was told a Youtube video was requested. Apart from being shocked, I wasn't nervous, not at all. I saw some youtubers monkeying around and sharing ideas. So I thought, it wouldn't be that hard, wouldn't it?

It turned out that I was just downright wrong. Due to the limited duration, I must build up the basic filmmaking concept in the shortest time, including pre-production, production, and post-production, which was a total chaos. Anyway, I figured out that being a Youtuber isn't as easy as it seems - It takes a lot of time, abilities, and opportunity, for luck is indeed required to appeal to an audience who fancies your video.

Speaking of my topic, my film is divided into two parts: the meaning of life and social interaction. I started everything by questioning the meaning of life, knowing that people must be confused and puzzled by why we are inflicted with such a pandemic and how we are to learn from it. Once questions are raised, the answers come. So I gave some examples and provided some useful tips for my audience to confront their obstacles at the time of COVID.

Next, in terms of social interaction, I stressed the importance



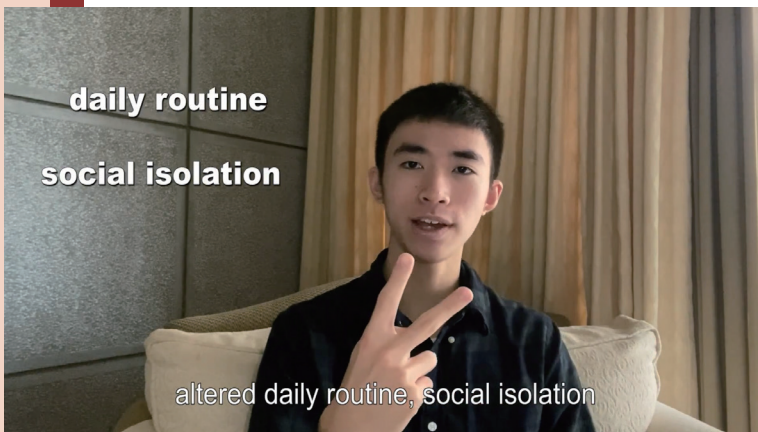
and convenience of digital devices, keeping everyone noted that the connection between our friends and us always exists. “Only the beauty remains, the pain always passes.” That's my most important message to deliver throughout the speech.

After I participated in the contest, there are several thoughts I would like to share. To start with, the limitations and rules must be grasped before anything is started, including the duration of the film and the main topics.

On top of that, film productions needn't be too fancy and delicate, for the ideas and how you deliver them are usually the core of a video. It is recommended to put emphasis on just a few points instead of touching every aspect lightly without providing any key point.

As for the speech, which is also the most important part, the script shouldn't be too long and sophisticated due to time limitations. Plus,

with the pressure and deadly atmosphere, anxiety and a little fear are inevitable. The above-mentioned points are my views and reflections on the contest.

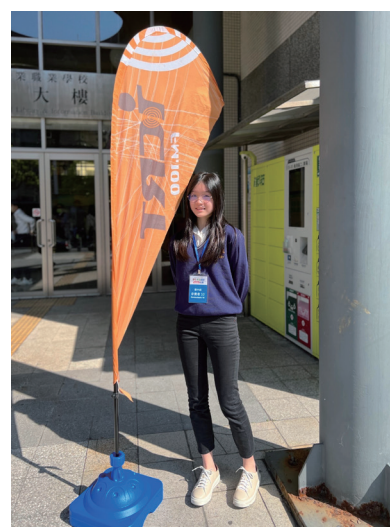


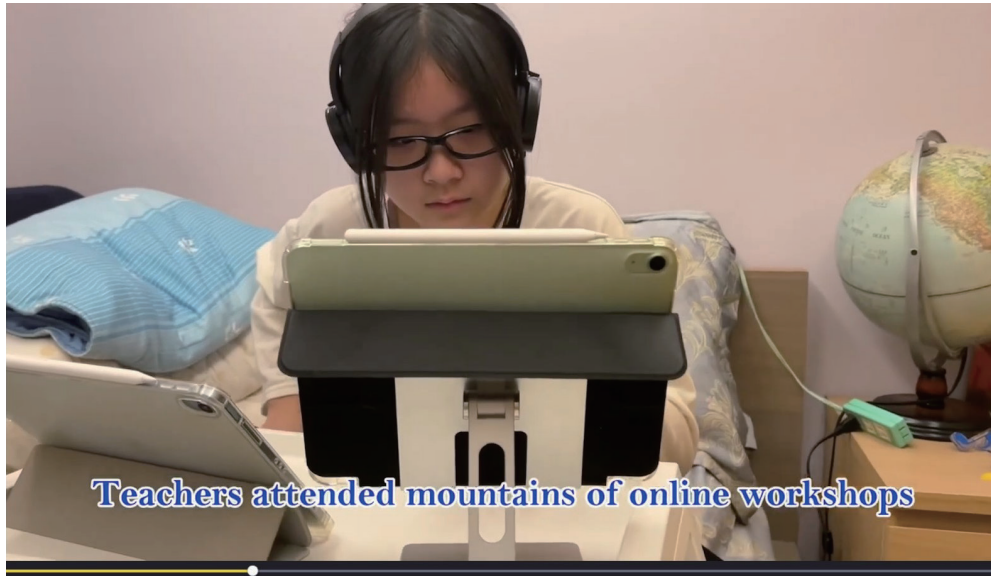
My Wonder Trip to Taipei City Middle High School English Youtuber Competition

This winter vacation, I was chosen to participate in the Taipei City Middle High School English Youtuber Competition on behalf of Yanping. Actually, I didn't have the experience of attending any impromptu speech in the past, and I had never thought that I would be the one having to face it, so that was a brand new challenge for me. Though hesitant and fearful at the beginning, I learned a lot through this competition.

To be qualified, I needed to equip myself with literally all kinds of abilities related to English: the ability to write a serious article in the preliminary stage and to come up with a 2-minute talk in a very short period of time later, to speak English fluently and pronounce it as beautifully as I could, to make a video clip on my own, and sometimes to act dramatically, which is so against my graceful and shy nature.

Different from the old-day speech contest, video-making is new. As a junior high student in the new generation, making videos is an essential skill. Yet, what turned out challenging for me was that I only edited videos on my smartphone before. To make the video





more exquisite, I had to learn how to cut and produce videos on the computer. Self-learning from one skill to another on the YouTube website took up much of my precious time.

The most difficult part for me lies in the impromptu speech. As a person who hates uncertainty, I only took part in prepared speech competitions before. Unlike the impromptu speech, I could get over my stage fright more easily in a prepared one. However I was forced to draft my speech script in only twenty minutes, trying to come up with a story that is vivid, attractive, and humorous if possible. A combination of those elements takes a lot of creativity and imagination. With time ticking away, I found my mind going blank most of the time while trying to squeeze as many ideas as possible. After thinking up the story, I also needed to memorize what I had written and overcome my stress, trying to put on my best show in front of the judges with a smile and great confidence. I have to say training did work out, and that hard work did pay off.

People always say, "The process is more important than the result." Although this time I didn't reach my own expectation, but through the competition, I have broadened my horizons. After all, life is always full of different kinds of challenges. At least I tried.





圖片來源：雅虎電影

Jojo Rabbit—Movie Review

Jojo Rabbit tells a story which takes place in Nazi Germany. The ten-year-old boy, Johannes, was a fanatic of Hitler, and even created “Adolf” as his imaginary friend. Eager to prove his ability, Johannes spared no expense in his preparation and joined the Hitler Youth training weekend. However, things did not go well. He was despised and teased by his peers, for he was unable to kill a rabbit, and earned the nickname “Jojo Rabbit” . What's worse, he was severely injured in an accident, which was also a terrible blow to his confidence. His caring mother was unwilling to watch from the sidelines as her son kept being pessimistic, and thus she gave him a lot of encouragement and consolation. One day, Jojo discovered a young Jewish girl, Elsa, hiding in his house. With great trepidation, he was forced to face his belief in Nazism, and he kept doubting the things he used to believe firmly.

Upon seeing the name of this movie, I was expecting a joyful plot full of laughter, but it turned out that I was terribly wrong. Jojo Rabbit is a masterpiece that will definitely tug at the audiences' heartstrings. Although the period of the Second World War is often utilized as a topic for literature and films, as far as I am concerned, the screenwriter of Jojo Rabbit does an extraordinary job dealing with this topic delicately. Furthermore, the combination of comedy and tragedy brings a novel effect and avoids clichés. The idea of adding elements of irony also creates dramatic tension, shaping the movie as a touching and memorable one. The ending scene of the movie, in which the war was finally over, and Jojo and Elsa were dancing freely, is so powerful that it sent a chill down my spine. Their

brisk dance actually concealed a great amount of the agony, grief and pain they had suffered. At the end, Jojo had realized the true meaning of his mother's words, that love is the strongest thing in the world.

"Let everything happen to you: beauty and terror.
Just keep going. No feeling is final."

This poem by Rainer Maria Rilke was quoted in the movie; it perfectly demonstrated the uniqueness of this film. After watching Jojo Rabbit, I am simply thrilled by how humanity could be so grotesque and glorious at the same time. It suffices to say that the war caused countless innocent lives to be lost, and innumerable families to fall apart. I suppose that the souls of the deceased may remain, as we must always bear the mistakes of the past in mind, so that we don't repeat them. In conclusion, I am haunted by Jojo Rabbit, and I believe you will be, too.



圖片來源：Unsplash

By 20515 陳岱昀

Reflection on the Movie *Jojo Rabbit*



圖片來源：Unsplash

At the beginning of the scene, a blue-eyed, blonde haired, ten-year-old boy called Bestler stood in front of a mirror encouraging himself. Full of anticipation, he geared himself up for the camp he had been waiting to attend for a long time. For the boys who were obsessed with patriotism, this was an appropriate avenue for them. They could enhance their fighting skills and qualify to attend Hitler-Jugend. Finally, they devoted themselves to their country with no regrets. Due to his father's attempt to escape during the war, he was sneered in the camp. He threatened to demonstrate that he had enough courage to kill fierce enemies when facing them. To prove it, the commander threw an animated and cuddly rabbit to him and asked him to kill it simply by twisting its neck. Facing the dilemma, he ended up setting the rabbit free out of compassion. Then he was deemed to be a coward like his father and they called him "JOJO RABBIT".

In the meantime, his imaginary friend, Adolf Hitler, inspired him just to be a brave and mighty rabbit because the humble rabbit could outwit other animals. Although he mustered his courage to throw a hand grenade, he not only made a blunder but also injured himself. This prevented him from fulfilling his dreams of being Hitler's personal

guard. Instead, he was commanded to spread the propaganda to the public by hanging political posters.

It was when his mom wasn't home that he found a Jewish girl hiding in his house. He gradually realized that her mom was the one who had protested against Hitler's cold-blooded administration and advocated for peace in Germany. Following the soaring number of casualties in the war and his mother's execution, he started to waver in his support for his great marshal and tended to side with the Jewish girl whom he met.

I am so fascinated with the fact that the patriotic concepts are ingrained in children at a young age. The decision to fight tooth and nail to protect the country really astonishes me. On the other hand, it's a pity being immersed in unilateral propaganda, children lack the ability to distinguish one thing from another. Wartime propaganda blinds not just children but adults. Furthermore, it is also a struggle for a child to take sides between his ambition and his beloved family. Only when besieged by the enemy, will the child be aware of the cruelty of the war.

The image of Adolf Hitler in this film is portrayed to be a humorous person other than a tough and monstrous chief; meanwhile, I can comprehend the tangled history human beings have been through. I can walk a mile in the shoes of the Jewish people and have compassion for them.

By 10719 賴虹璇



圖片來源：Wikipedia

Self-Introduction - Dalena Tran

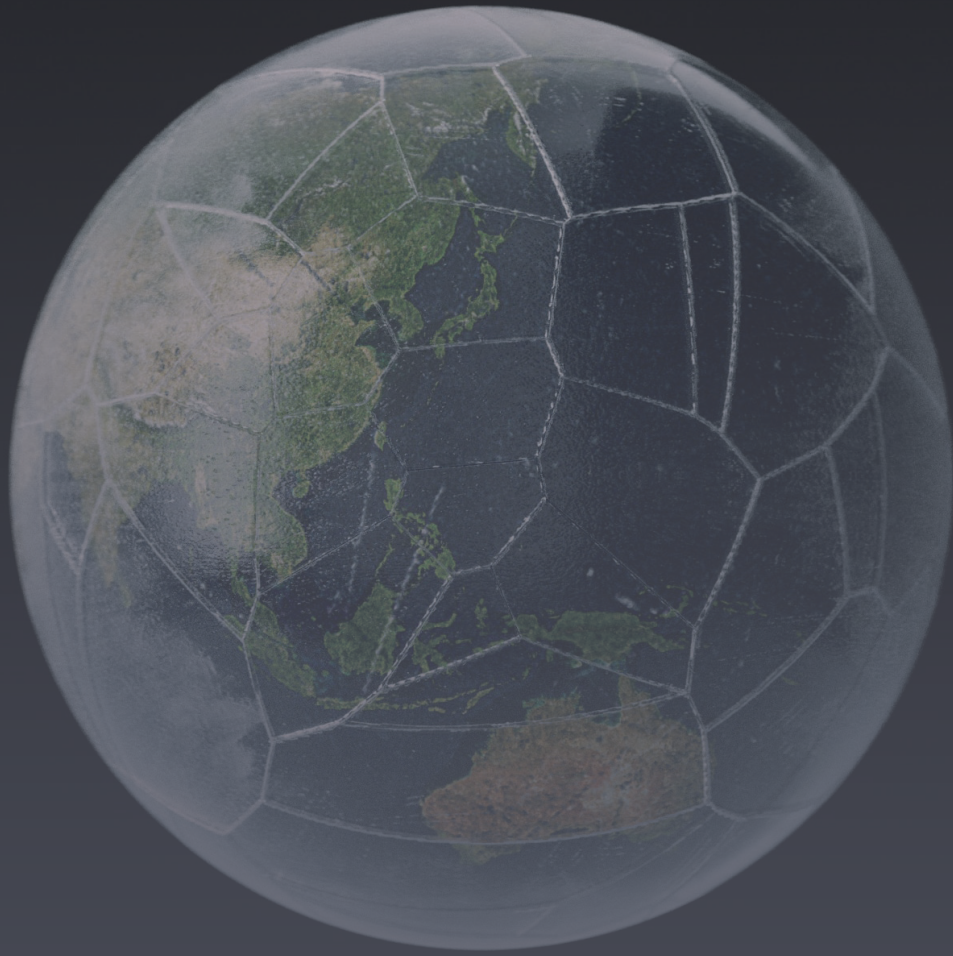


My name is Dalena Tran, born in Montreal, Canada, and grew up embracing a plethora of different languages and cultures. From a young age, I developed a passion for languages as I viewed them as tools to communicate and understand people from around the world.

When I found my calling for teaching, I decided to complete a Bachelor's of Education from Concordia University with a specialization in teaching English as a second language. This gave me the opportunity to teach multiple grades in both elementary and secondary with a wide range of abilities.

Upon completion of my degree, I was looking for opportunities to teach abroad and decided that Taiwan was the best fit: I already had a functional base in the language given the courses I took in college, had friends that studied here and, after conducting extensive research, thought it was such an intriguing place. So, I packed my bags and traveled to the other side of the world, eager to experience Asia for the first time.

Several years later, I am still here, in Taiwan, as happy as ever, and still discovering so many new things while meeting amazing people. I sincerely wish to continue helping students reach their full potential for many years to come.



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