

# Into the Mist

307 16 蘇聖驊

In the summer before high school, I was pondering a critical question: where should I head next? My path to Yanping High School was crystal clear, but the road beyond it—college—was a different matter entirely. It felt like standing at the edge of a forest covered in mist. I couldn't see far ahead, but I knew I had to step into it.

I wasn't set on going to the US at first. In fact, for a while, I wasn't set on going abroad at all. My initial thinking was simple: universities in Taiwan were starting to value the same kind of well-roundedness that schools abroad had championed for decades. Therefore, regardless of where I eventually applied, extracurricular activities would play a crucial role.

With this idea in mind, I pushed myself to try things I might not have otherwise. I joined seminars to deepen my understanding of math and computer science; volunteered with tutoring organizations to help kids build strong foundational knowledge; and sought out internships and organized projects that gave me hands-on experience and leadership opportunities. It was through all these endeavors that I became certain I wanted to study abroad and explore the bigger world beyond.

For future students planning to follow this path, I want to highlight the importance of "fit." Choosing a school isn't just about prestige or rankings; it's about finding a place where you can thrive both academically and personally. With so many extraordinary schools abroad to choose from, there's no reason to base your decision solely on rankings — it's the life and experience a school offers that truly matters.

I recommend starting with a personal essay to reflect on your passions and inner motivations. From there, explore the extracurricular activities you've been involved in, as they can help you discover what environments will support your growth. Research different schools, look into their academic programs, clubs, and read alumni



feedback. This approach will not only help you make a more informed decision but also guide you toward finding your true path.

I've also come to understand why people say college applications can sometimes feel like a giant raffle. You never really know what will lead to an acceptance or rejection. Maybe you happened to match the interests of an admissions officer, or perhaps, more practically, you lacked the financial resources to attend. So, don't let one denial discourage you. Instead, think, "Who needs you anyway?" After all, your next college offer might just be around the corner.

The most inspiring insight I gained from this journey was quite hidden in the depths. As you might have guessed, Yanping's support for applying abroad isn't as abundant as that of international schools. There'd be no dedicated counselors to guide me through every essay, no detailed timeline handed out at assemblies. It was up to me to research, to plan, and to keep moving, even when overwhelmed by schoolwork and applications. Looking back now, I realize the process built an independence in me that will carry me further than just applying to college.

Now, as I'm out of the mist, I'm truly grateful to my teachers for understanding me and allowing me to prepare in school, and to my parents for respecting my decisions and offering their unwavering support. As a final word, I want to tell all upcoming students with infinite potential not to be afraid of the mist, because somewhere in that fog lies growth and maybe even greatness.

## From Yanping to Caltech —My College Application Journey

309 43 楊鏘鏘

Never will I forget the summer of my junior year, when I finally made the decision to apply for US Colleges. In my first year, I registered for the Taiwanese Olympiad in Informatics, only to be rejected due to my U.S. citizenship. That sense of disappointment made me reflect, and I realized that perhaps going to the U.S. would provide me with a broader pathway to success. Thus, I decided to embark on this path that no one had paved for me.

Going away from the familiar education system and application process, I initially felt helpless due to the lack of successful examples to refer to; but I realized that instead of relying on others' experiences, I should focus on writing my own story. Since my greatest interest and strength lies in programming, I dedicated a lot of time and energy to computer science related activities, mainly centered around two areas: competitions and research. In my second year of high school, I began preparing for the USA's Computing Olympiad through online resources. In the end, I managed to rank 6th in the nation. I also received a second-prize award in the Taiwanese high school programming contest finals that year. In terms of research, I had the opportunity to collaborate with a professor at Academia Sinica, conducting theoretical research related to AI neural networks and completing a rigorous paper.

To stand out when applying for top universities in the U.S., grades are single-handedly the most important factor: one must

excel in both schoolwork and the various standardized tests (TOEFL/IELTS, SAT/ACT, AP courses). Since I was applying for the highly competitive computer science major, my school grades needed to stay close to an all-A level, and my test scores had to reach the highest tiers. This pushed me to improve my efficiency in learning so that I could balance my time on both academics and extracurricular activities.

"Give me a break!" I remember thinking, exhausted, revising yet another essay draft. What left the deepest impression on me throughout the application process wasn't the tests or even the activities— it was the time I spent wrestling with those essays. Every day, I kept asking myself: "Why choose this path?" "Why am I doing these things?" "What do I want to pursue in college?" I meticulously revised every essay, fine-tuning each word and even punctuation, trying to accurately convey my characteristics. For example, in the main essay, I shared stories about some of my creative extracurricular activities, which may have aligned with Caltech's preference for quirky students.

"You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." With this thought in mind, I pushed forward as my goals became clearer. I defeated challenges I had once thought were too difficult. The application journey revealed not just my academic potential but also my ability to grow. Through hard work, I was fortunately accepted into the California Institute of Technology.

# My First Solo Trip

106-33 曾睿淵

As the one and only trip I've ever taken by myself, I have to say the United States was absolutely unforgettable. At first, I thought America was a very apathetic country where people don't really care about others, everyone focuses on their own job, and you're seldom noticed in daily life. However, it was just the opposite—America is a diverse country where people show love for each other. Everyone expresses themselves in the most positive way I've ever seen in my life, which was quite a culture shock to me.

For the places we visited, I will never forget the magnificent scenery we saw. How big the Statue of Liberty is, how tall the Empire State Building

is, how beautiful Times Square is, and so many others—I bet you won't truly feel their impact unless you're actually there. But the coolest thing about this trip was the people I met at Archmere Academy. They were so nice from the moment we met until we said farewell, and that's probably why I love this trip so much. They took us to visit their beautiful school, join their courses, and even took us out for a small vacation on the weekend. I remember we went shopping for two days. It was crazy but so much fun.

Speaking of school time at Archmere, it was so different from Yanping. We started class at 8:00 AM, with each period lasting 50 minutes. There were so many different classes: English, math, history, chemistry,

and even philosophy, which involved discussing acts and morals in life which was pretty interesting. After each class, we had to move to a different classroom instead of sitting in one classroom waiting for the teacher to arrive. It was somewhat tiring but cool to look around other different subject classrooms. After six classes, school ended at 2:30 PM, which was amazing because students could spend hours doing many activities after school, such as sports. They have numerous sports teams—volleyball, basketball, football, swimming, etc. and they have huge facilities for practice: two basketball courts, a swimming pool, a football field, and a soccer field. This made the school so big that we couldn't explore every corner within one class



period. Overall, it was just so much fun to be a high school student in America and really expanded my mind and imagination.

This trip has become one of my most important life experiences and has unlocked many firsts for me. Most

importantly, the exhilarating happiness motivated me to keep working hard and studying diligently in preparation for my next adventure. Big thanks to all the people who took part in this incredible.



# Learning Beyond Borders

910 18 陳儀庭

Before the trip to the U.S., I was so excited because it would be my first time visiting the country that I had been eager to visit for so long, and it definitely did not disappoint me. In fact, I would even say it was the best experience I've ever had since I got the chance to experience many of the things that I'm not likely to encounter here in Taiwan.

For instance, I got the wonderful opportunity to take all kinds of classes with American students in the same classroom, which really blew my mind due to the surprisingly lively atmosphere in class. Because they weren't afraid to speak up, express their opinions, or ask questions in front of the whole class, they made the class full of creativity and laughter.

In addition, I was blessed with the

chance to be hosted by a wonderful family made up of the most caring people. Because of them, I could have fun skating on the ice rink as well as hanging out with new friends at the mall, roasting marshmallows on the campfire to make s'mores, and topping off one of the days with savory fries and creamy milkshakes at Five Guys. What's more, they always answered my questions patiently and did all they could to help me fit in. I can never thank them enough for their generous hospitality!

The trip to the U.S. was more than just a travel experience for me. It has broadened my horizons and made me start looking at things from a totally different angle. Needless to say, all the wonderful experiences will remain etched in my memory forever.

204 09 陳巧琰

After 15 hours of flying from Taiwan to the USA, we finally arrived at the hotel to rest. Everything felt new and unfamiliar. My first culture shock was the high prices and the city's appearance—low buildings, chimneys, and slanted rooftops, which were very different from what I was used to.

On the second day, we travelled to Delaware and met our host family. Amber, Jeremy, and I stayed with Ms. Yu, a Chinese teacher at Archmere Academy—and to our surprise, she's Taiwanese! She took great care of us, making sure we never felt hungry or cold. Her warmth and kindness made us feel comfortable and at home, even in a foreign country.

At Archmere, I experienced new ways of learning—students rushed from one class to another with their own schedules. I joined a Chinese class with my buddy and had the opportunity to exchange thoughts about academics and daily life with both students and teachers.

After school, we enjoyed fun activities like playing Mahjong and singing karaoke. We also went on trips to the University of Delaware and Philadelphia with the principal, who was very kind and even treated everyone to ice cream! I especially loved trying local foods like cheesesteaks and cookies and visiting the art museum.

I felt sad saying goodbye to my host family and buddy. After that, we traveled to New York, where I really liked our tour guide, Vicky. She explained all the attractions in Chinese, which helped me understand their history better. We visited Princeton University, the Empire State Building, Times Square, Wall Street, and the Metropolitan Museum. We also saw the Statue of Liberty by boat. It was freezing due to the melting snow and ocean wind, but it was definitely worth it. The tall skyscrapers of New York City gave me a very different impression compared to Delaware.

This was my first time visiting America,



and it was a truly special experience. Contrary to stereotypes, I didn't feel any discrimination. One night, I had a snowball fight with my classmates; on other nights, we stayed up chatting until midnight. I was touched by the kindness of our host family and amazed by new experiences—like visiting a church, joining youth group activities, and praying before going to school.

There are still so many unforgettable memories I haven't mentioned, and I know I will cherish them throughout my life.

## An Unforgettable Trip to Taoyuan Youth Experience Learning Park

804 17 歐陽靜

On a Saturday after the second midterm, our class and Class #2 went on a trip to an educational and experiential park for youth in Taoyuan. The night before, I was so excited that I could barely sleep. The only thought in my mind was, “I'm going on a trip tomorrow with my friends. It's going to be such a fun day…” and other similar thoughts.

When Saturday finally came, I woke up earlier than usual, got ready, and began the day I had been looking forward to all week. I met my friends at Yanping, and then we took a tour bus to Taoyuan. Fun fact: we watched Peppa Pig on the way! After what felt like ages on the bus, we

finally arrived at the park.

We were divided into groups, and each group had its own coach who told us what to do and made sure we stayed safe. First, we signed a contract, and then the fun began. Our group's first mission was for everyone to pass through a suspended tire.

We all had to work together—someone held the tire to keep it from swinging, and someone else helped lift the person going through it. Thanks to our teamwork, everyone made it through successfully. After that, the coach gave us a ten-minute break.



I liked the second mission the most. There was a large area covered by a net, with long poles running across it. It was a life-sized version of table soccer. I had played human-sized table soccer before, and I remembered how exciting it was. Our group was divided into two teams:

Blue and Orange. We each stood by the colored pole matching our team's color, and the five-round game began.

At first, my friend and I stood at the front—we were the ones who would try to score. The rest of the Blue team stood at the back, forming a tight defense. As a result, we stopped the Orange team from scoring and won the first two rounds. However, after the second round, some people switched places, and the Orange team won the next two rounds. With the score at 2–2, the coach made the final round even more exciting by adding a

twist to the game. There was a smaller ball—the ball that would decide the winner if a goal was scored. After minutes of fierce competition, someone from our team kicked the little ball and scored!

I loved playing table soccer—and winning made it even better! The one thing I truly took away from this class trip was the importance of teamwork. Many times, we had to work together and rely on each other's strengths. In the end, we managed to complete all of the missions successfully—and happily. Looking back, it wasn't just a one-day class trip. It felt more like a meaningful adventure that helped us understand and support one another.

## High School Singing Competition

101 01 王子容

I will never forget the joyful atmosphere I shared with my classmates in Class 101.

When we were first told about the singing competition, I didn't take it seriously. We had only been together for a short time—could we really have any teamwork? And with so little time to practice, I doubted whether we could manage such a big group of 42 students.

At first, just as I had imagined, everyone was talking over each other and we couldn't agree on a song. We originally chose <如果可以>, but due to its difficulty, our music teacher made us change it. That's when our class teacher appeared like a ray of light. She suggested singing <你是我的花朵> by 伍佰, and to our surprise, the whole class got excited. Even I, who had no hope at first, suddenly looked forward to what was coming next.

With only two weeks left, we worked hard. Under the guidance of our strict but encouraging teacher and a dedicated conductor, we practiced with our full effort. Slowly, more classmates

joined in, and our unity grew stronger.

On the day of the competition, we dressed neatly, hid roses in our pockets, and waited nervously. Before stepping on stage, we cheered each other on—not just to win, but to create a lasting memory.

The performance went smoothly. When we heard “Class 101—Second Place!” We all cheered with joy. That prize was not just a title—it was the result of our teamwork, practice, and dedication. We smiled proudly, knowing our efforts had paid off.

Looking back, this experience is engraved in my heart. It taught me the power of unity and passion. I will always treasure that time with Class 101.



## The Woes of a Yanping Student

711 35 馮耀鋒

Have you ever wondered why your parents expect so much from you? If you have, welcome to the club—let's see if your experiences resonate with mine. And if you haven't, well... I'll admit, I'm a little jealous.

I understand that many parents simply want their children to get a good job and be able to support themselves. They don't necessarily want you to succeed just so you can support them. However, over time, this hope can turn into an obsession, and the pressure on us keeps growing. Take me, for example. When I first entered Yanping, I was a bit naïve—but full of determination. As time passed, it became harder to express how I felt. I grew frustrated with the constant studying, especially when all my parents ever said was, “You didn't do enough.” My grades slipped slightly—from somewhere in the thirties to the sixties. To me, it suggested that something might be wrong with my study methods. But to my parents, even the slightest drop was unacceptable. This made me question my own abilities and drove me to escape into the virtual world to avoid reality. Now, I'm slowly learning to cope instead of running away—by trying to understand the source of the pressure, accepting that struggle is part of growth, and reminding myself that it's okay to move at my own pace. For example, many parents criticize you

at every possible moment—whether you're on holiday, getting ready for school, or even in the bathroom. There are ways to stay sane—from simply tuning them out to putting on a calm, agreeable face while fuming inside. It's a balancing act between self-preservation and keeping the peace. Still, they might see you as rude, apathetic, or even dishonest. So it may be better to focus on your own path and show your parents that your methods not only suit you but also work. Another common struggle we face is the emotional toll—feelings like self-loathing, depression, or denial—brought on by constant criticism and internal pressure. These feelings are valid, but no matter how overwhelmed you feel, remember there's always a way forward. Where there's a will, there's a way.

Even if studying isn't your strength, there are still many other paths in life. Last but not least, I often feel lost—wandering in uncertainty, weighed down by a heart unsure of where to turn. I'm still figuring out my purpose, but one thing I do know is this: Success is not final, failure is not fatal—it is the courage to continue that counts.

With that said, I hope you realize you're not alone in carrying your parents' expectations. And if you ever need help, talk to a trusted friend, pour your heart out, and ease that weight inside you.



# What Matters Most in My Senior High School Experience

209 13 黃靖雅

As a busy high-school student, my life is basically revolved around academics. However, I still try to squeeze in activities outside of my studies to keep my enthusiasm for living thriving. Here are three things that matter to me the most, unrelated to schoolwork.

Though I'm by no means an athlete, I enjoy exercising just as one does. Be it giving my utmost in P.E. classes or making time for a gathering with nature by climbing local mountains, doing sports never fails to help me unwind. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in getting myself fall back on track. We all have been stressed, and by shifting our focus from that burden to feeling sweat dripping down our foreheads, not only can we get a physical reset but a mental reset as well. In the long run, I can maintain a healthy body, a clear mind, and have the best method to combat hardships in life. While others might struggle with physical issues like back pain, or fail to effectively relieve stress, exercising helps me keep similar problems at bay.

Other than getting my body to work, having a hobby also aids me in numerous ways. First and foremost, having a hobby is like possessing the antidote to boredom, which eventually leads to mindless scrolling on phones and interrupts regular study sessions. During my leisure time,

I devote myself to architecture and fashion design. I am nowhere near a professional, yet doing so creates peace of mind, completely undisturbed by impending exams. At present, it's solely a source of comfort, while in the near future, my amateur skills might come in handy if anyone needs a helping hand. Moreover, my interest in designing can introduce me to like-minded companions, which in turn expands my social circle.

Last but not least, no success in life is better than the friends we make along the way. I deeply value the importance of connecting with others as well as making memories with each other. Making friends is not just about simply knowing more people, but the memories created with them will be a cherished part of my life, spicing it up. I regularly hang out with my friends, whether it is dining out or taking a stroll in the streets, and those mundane moments can turn out to be highlights of my life story. On another note, friends provide us with a perspective different from our own, which sometimes may enlighten us or alert us not to go down the wrong path. Had it not been for friends, I might still be stuck in the dark.

Life isn't only about academics, and time isn't going to wait. So step outside of study rooms and libraries, savor the sweet breeze, and enjoy living to the fullest.

207 20 廖珮辰

As a firm believer in the phrase “Work hard, play hard,” I hold the act of indulging in personal pursuits in the same regard as focusing on one's academics. Schoolwork aside, the main pillars of my high school experience have been participating in club activities, spending quality time with loved ones, and immersing myself in the vast world of literature.

First, joining the Model United Nations club was never an impulsive decision on my part. Growing up, I often felt powerless when it came to making a difference in the world. As a result, I developed a deep interest in global affairs, which ultimately influenced my decision to join the club. Upon joining, I was given the opportunity to expand my understanding of the world and broaden my horizons. I learned to see beyond my own perspective, speak confidently in public, and engage in thoughtful discussions about real-world challenges with peers from various backgrounds.

Second, my friends and family are my lifeline—a gentle harbor in the storm of life. I am not whole without them. Naturally, spending quality time with my loved ones is, to me, like a moment of peace and quiet after a long, hard day. My interpretation of “quality time” can range from

attending concerts together to sitting in tranquil silence, simply finding solace in each other's company. It doesn't matter what I'm doing, but who I'm doing it with. Like the calm after a storm, being in the presence of those I hold dear is the most ideal form of stress relief.

Third, reading has always been a significant part of my life, as I find it to be a valuable source of both inspiration and knowledge—whether in the form of beautiful phrasing or uncommon yet fascinating details. I consistently learn something new just by skimming a few pages of a book. My favorite literary genre, however, is psychology. Reading about mental disorders and cognitive functions has become a meaningful part of my personal development. It helps me understand not just how the mind functions, but also how closely human struggles are tied to thought, behavior, and emotion. By deepening my understanding of these topics, I've learned to look beyond surface-level judgments, view the world with greater empathy, and fully embrace the complexity of the human mind.

All in all, I believe it's not about choosing between academics and personal pursuits. Instead, we should strive to grow through both. In doing so, we can enhance not only our knowledge but also our sense of self—ultimately making our high school experience all the more meaningful.

## Should we separate our students into A and B classes?

108 19 王乃翊

As you all know, Yan Ping didn't have this system three years ago. Students, now upon entering grade 10, are divided by their performance during grade 9 into A and B classes, separating those ranked above roughly 100th and those ranked below with obvious intentions to boost academic accomplishments. However, said method is not only odd, as both classes still follow the same curriculum and pace, but also lacks undisputed practicability in science papers.

A few findings about this division strategy was revealed by a large-scale experiment in secondary schools in Mexico and a quasi-experiment in Chile, also in secondary schools. After reviewing both, there was no decisive evidence of overall educational attainment outshining the control groups. The

former found the result positive, while the latter suggested otherwise. What is consistent, however, is the fact that it further unequalized test scores. The Mexico study indicated that only the initial high achievers improved compared to the randomized groups, whereas the Chile one observed low achievers getting worse grades. Of course, we cannot directly compare these results to our school, in that the Mexico study had high achievers getting a better environment due to the absence of “naughty” classmates, and the Chile study included people without parental high-expectations, who experienced the biggest decline in grades. Rare though both phenomena are here, it is still worth noting how this approach seems to favor top students at the expense of lower-performing students.

Putting aside the scientifically-proven

effects, let's talk about how we feel about this. First of all, I asked a few friends in B class for their opinions. One expressed their slight frustration because they feel as if all educational resources are focused on the A classes. Had it not been for this practice, they could have received equal opportunities. Although, the other isn't bothered, and believes being in B class relieves peer pressure. Secondly, some students in A classes had some thoughts to share as well. Due to how their parents are dissuaded from letting them join the “engineering track” set in B class, which is a track that takes attention away from biology into other science subjects. In addition, this separation, in my perspective, inflicts unnecessary discrimination among classes. I've witnessed acts and remarks that subtly as well as purposely put down those in B class everyday, and I hated it. Even

more enraging is that sometimes I fall into that mindset as well, assuming that students in B class are automatically academically inferior and less disciplined. All in all, no matter how this separation system goes, we should treat each other without prejudice, with kindness and respect.

Scientifically, this method widens achievement gaps between students, yet having no apparent result on average. In our school, it demoralizes some, hinders others paths, but helps others. Incidentally, the



GSAT scores of the first cohort implementing this came out a few weeks ago. Even though it is worse compared to previous cohorts, it doesn't directly disprove its effectiveness—we still need more data to truly reach a conclusion. In other words, only time will tell.

## Vinícius Jr. and SDG 10: Fighting Inequality in Football

808 22 李宗翰

SDG 10 is about reducing inequality and making sure everyone is treated fairly, no matter their race, background, or where they come from. Vinícius Jr., a young football star from Brazil who plays for Real Madrid, shows us why the goal is so important.

Vinícius grew up in a poor area in Brazil and worked very hard to become a professional footballer. Even though he is now one of the best players in the world, he still faces racism. In a famous case during a match against Valencia in 2023, some fans shouted racist words at him, calling him names like “monkey,” and even threw bananas at him. This was deeply offensive and unfair. The game had to stop because players and referees wanted to show that they stand

strongly against racism.

This kind of situation is exactly what SDG 10 aims to prevent. No one should be treated badly because of their skin color or background. Vinícius has shown bravery by speaking out against racism. He wants people to recognize that this problem still exists and that we must continue to fight against it. Many football organizations have started to take racism seriously because of players like Vinícius. They want to make football a welcoming and fair place for everyone. This shows how sport can help reduce inequality in the world.

In conclusion, Vinícius Jr.'s story teaches us about the importance of being brave and speaking out against racism. SDG 10 reminds us to respect everyone and work toward a world without inequality.

## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

103 38 邱俊嘉

In today's world, as globalization and climate change intensify, human society is facing unprecedented environmental, economic, and social challenges. In response, the United Nations officially launched the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. These 17 goals cover critical issues such as poverty, education, gender equality, and climate action, aiming to establish a shared global blueprint for development to be achieved by 2030.

Poverty remains a pressing issue in many developing countries. With the support of international aid from chambers of commerce and non-governmental organizations, local governments have made efforts to improve conditions. For example, Namibia once implemented an unconditional basic income program in certain regions, where individuals under the age of sixty were granted a minimum living allowance without any

conditions. However, due to the loosely-structured alliance behind the initiative—where no organization assumed clear responsibility—the project eventually suffered from unstable funding, which relied heavily on private donations. As a result, the Namibian government did not approve a nationwide implementation, and the initiative ultimately fell short of its goals.

Moreover, international aid can sometimes lead to unintended negative consequences. It may reduce local competitiveness and oversimplify the economic structure. Over time, both



governments and farmers may become dependent on unearned resources, resulting in a lack of motivation and productivity.

Therefore, foreign aid should not be based on unconditional and indefinite support. Instead, it should focus on promoting local employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Aid organizations could provide tangible agricultural resources, such as improved seeds, fertilizers, and advanced farming techniques, rather than offering continuous financial assistance. In addition, local governments could attract foreign enterprises by creating special economic zones and offering subsidies, helping to diversify and professionalize local industries and thus address poverty at its roots.

Poverty is just one of many pressing issues we must address. Countless other challenges await our attention and action as we work together to build a brighter, more sustainable future.



# California Wildfires

102 21 朱容萱

In early January, a massive forest fire erupted in California, displacing millions and prompting schools and businesses to close their doors temporarily. The fire unfortunately continued to burn for over a month, claiming the lives of 29 people and leaving at least 31 missing. It became one of the largest forest fires in American history.

During this time, discussions arose about the effectiveness of fire alarm systems and firefighting efforts in tackling the disaster. Many residents observed that wealthier neighborhoods seemed to fare better, which sparked some conversations about how quickly private firefighting teams were able to respond. However, the enormous amount of water used by these teams put a strain on government resources, resulting in longer wait time for others in need.

Further evidence also support claims

that the fire hydrant system was not sufficient enough to put out widespread fires. For example, the waterline wasn't long enough to reach all the living areas, leaving lots of houses burned and destroyed.

Amidst the chaos, celebrities like Taylor Swift and Beyoncé stepped up, generously donating millions to support relief efforts for the California forest fire. Their kindness inspired fans to get involved and help those affected, as well as aid wildlife in distress. Thanks to the collaborative efforts of civil organizations and the government, the fire was successfully brought under control by January 31.

This whole experience highlights the importance of raising awareness about forest fires and the need for improved training for firefighters to handle such emergencies. We've learned so much from this forest fire, and it truly showcases the resilience and strength of those communities.

# A New Era for Semiconductors: TSMC's US\$100 billion Investment in U.S.

10113 楊惠涵

A tech revolution is underway! Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. (TSMC) has just revealed a major announcement at the White House, with U.S. President Donald Trump on March 4, 2025: The company plans to invest an extra US\$100 billion into expanding its semiconductor manufacturing in the United States. This significant investment is expected to reshape the future of global chip production.

The new investment will fund three chip fabrication plants, two advanced packaging plants, and a research and development center in America. These facilities will be responsible for creating some of the most powerful AI chips in the world, right in the U.S.

In my opinion, this is both a smart and timely strategy. It is not only a business deal but also a strategic move

that highlights the growing partnership between Taiwan and the U.S. With the growing demand for semiconductors in everything from smartphones to electric cars, TSMC's new investment shows its leadership in the tech industry. It also helps reduce America's reliance on foreign-made chips, which benefits both economic security and national defense.

Furthermore, there are some critically important aspects of this investment. First, it shows how essential Taiwan and the U.S. are to each other in the field of technology. TSMC is one of the most important leaders in the global semiconductor market, and by expanding in the U.S., it is getting closer and providing better service to American customers and markets. According to Raymond Greene, the U.S. representative in

Taiwan, this announcement highlights the "deep connections" between the U.S. and Taiwan—two global tech leaders. It is proof that international cooperation can lead to impressive innovations and mutual growth.

Next, this development is a good example of how global cooperation can benefit everyone involved. It strengthens economic security, fosters innovation, and supports job creation in both countries.

As technology becomes more advanced and global competition increases, countries need to secure strong partnerships and reliable production. We must explore how global trade shapes the products we use every day. Start thinking about ways to become part of this booming industry. Most importantly, be well- prepared to contribute to this high-tech future.

205 30 黃蓁彥

In 2025, after former U.S. President Donald Trump was re-elected, he quickly advanced his "America First" policies, focusing on protecting domestic industries and reshaping global trade. One of the most significant and controversial changes was sharply raising import tariffs on countries like China, Mexico, Vietnam, and the European Union. He even declared that, moving forward, all imported goods might face uniformly high tariffs. This bold, aggressive policy not only altered U.S.-China trade relations but also sent shockwaves through the global supply chain. Since Taiwan plays a key role in the high-tech supply chain, it is nearly impossible for us to avoid the impact of these sweeping measures.

The main goal of Trump's plan is to

impose high tariffs on high-tech products from mainland China, aiming to reduce America's dependence on Chinese imports and bring manufacturing back to the U.S. However, in today's interconnected world, the strategy is more complex than it seems. Many Taiwanese companies—especially in semiconductors, electronics, and assembly—maintain close ties with Chinese manufacturers. If Chinese products face steep tariffs, the entire global supply chain could be disrupted. Taiwan's exporters may face challenges such as shrinking orders, higher production costs, and pressure to relocate or restructure—moves that carry high risks and uncertainty. As an export-driven economy, Taiwan is especially vulnerable and likely to bear a major share of the impact.

For decades, Taiwanese businesses



have been deeply embedded in the global supply chain, with strong ties to both China and the U.S. If Trump's protectionist policies are fully enforced, even untargeted Taiwanese products could be affected—through rising raw material costs, supply chain changes, or shifts in global demand. For example, if TSMC's factories in the U.S. are required to use only American-made materials or equipment, production costs could rise

significantly. This has sparked concerns in Taiwan, with the public fearing that the so-called “shield of Taiwan” may face unforeseen challenges. The tariff war could also influence global chip prices and production schedules, affecting consumers and industries worldwide.

In the face of such a complex and unpredictable situation, we may feel powerless. But it's still crucial to consider how we can respond wisely. First, we should pay closer attention to economic trends and global news. We shouldn't be passive recipients of information, nor should we blindly chase cheap imports without considering the broader impact. Supporting local products and domestic industries whenever possible helps build a stronger, more resilient economy. Second, we must adjust our consumption habits

with flexibility. With prices likely to rise and supply chains growing more unstable, making smart financial plans and managing resources wisely is more important than ever. Finally, we need to invest in ourselves—by learning new skills, gaining knowledge, and understanding key industry trends. This way, even in times of economic uncertainty, we remain competitive and adaptable.

Trump's tariff policy is a powerful shockwave in both politics and economics. Yet, like a storm, it also forces us to reflect and rethink our direction. I've always believed that the world doesn't stop spinning for any one leader or country. What we can do is face reality, stay flexible, and continue to grow. That's the only way to remain steady and strong in uncertain times.

# How AI Is Changing Our Daily Lives

106 22 林易竑

In recent years, artificial intelligence (AI) has become a hot topic worldwide. Many people think AI is something distant—like robots in movies or high-tech labs. However, the truth is that AI is already part of our daily lives, changing how we live, work, and learn.

For example, when we use Google Translate or voice assistants like Siri, we're using AI. Even the videos recommended on YouTube or Netflix are selected by AI based on our viewing habits. These tools make life easier, but they also raise important questions. Are we becoming too dependent on AI? What happens when it makes a mistake?

In education, AI helps students learn more effectively. Apps can now check grammar, suggest better words, and explain complex math problems—especially helpful for students who study on their own. Still, some worry that students might rely too much on AI and stop thinking independently. Teachers also face challenges in ensuring students are truly learning and not just copying AI-generated answers.

Another concern is jobs. Many companies now

use AI to perform tasks once done by humans, such as in manufacturing, logistics, and construction. This makes work faster and cheaper but may also lead to job loss. Some experts believe that while certain jobs will disappear, new ones will emerge requiring different skills. In the future, we must find a balance—using AI to improve life while ensuring people still have meaningful roles in society.

AI is also transforming healthcare. It helps doctors detect diseases faster and more accurately by analyzing medical images and patient data. Smartwatches even monitor our health in real time. This technology can save lives and make healthcare more efficient, but it also raises concerns about privacy and trust.

From my perspective, AI is a double-edged sword. It can help us greatly, but we must use it wisely. As a student, I try to use AI as a tool—not a shortcut. I believe the best way to face this new technology is to learn about it and understand how to use it smartly. That way, we can enjoy the benefits of AI while avoiding its risks. Only by learning and thinking critically can we make AI a truly positive part of our future.

# Is Restarting Nuclear Power the Only Solution?

703 32 陳孜倫

With the closing of the last nuclear power plant in Taiwan, energy has recently become a serious concern. Many people are worried about possible electricity shortages, especially during hot summers or times of high demand. Some even fear that the government might have to limit how much electricity households can use, which could affect our daily lives. Because of this, more than half of the population now supports restarting nuclear power. After all, nuclear energy produces a large amount of electricity and doesn't create air pollution like burning fossil

fuels. But is restarting nuclear power really the only solution?

In fact, there's another powerful option that often gets overlooked: saving energy. Instead of focusing only on how to generate more electricity, we should also think about how to reduce waste waste less. A lot of electricity is used every day without us even noticing. For example, when we leave chargers, TVs, or computers plugged in all day, they still use electricity — this is called “standby power.” Leaving lights or air conditioners on in empty rooms, or using old appliances that consume too much energy, also wastes electricity.

If everyone made small changes to their habits, the impact could be huge. Simple actions like turning off the lights when leaving a room, unplugging unused electronics, using LED light bulbs, and setting air conditioners to 26° C instead of very low temperatures can help a lot. These changes are easy to make and don't require giving up comfort.

Saving energy may not sound as exciting or high-tech as nuclear power, but it's safer, cleaner, and something we can all do right now. If we learn to use electricity more wisely and responsibly, we might not need to restart nuclear power at all. The power to make a difference is in our hands.

