



KANG CHIAO SPOTLIGHT

Issue 6

Growing at your own pace — Grade 3 Independent Reading Program

~ Jaryd Spevack

English Teacher, International Department



Every child is unique, having their own special interests, skills and motivations that affect how and at what pace they learn. So how can educators provide students with opportunities to study material that interests them individually? In grade three at Kang Chiao, we do so by incorporating an independent reading program.



In grade three we give students the opportunity to read stories independently in class purely for pleasure. Students are given 20 to 40 minutes each week to quietly read story books that teachers and students collaboratively choose. This allows students to apply their phonics skills at their own pace. The two questions of importance at the start of the semester are what books will interest each student, and at what level will they gain confidence but still be challenged? So to start, teachers discuss with their class what topics and types of stories interest them. Adventure stories? Fairy Tales? Realistic Fiction? Sports? Each teacher then selects books from different genres and of varying DRA levels from our school library. This ensures that each student can find something they will enjoy, regardless of their ability. During reading time, the teacher will display the books, explain their content and difficulty level, and then allow students to choose the book they will read. Time is also provided for students to discuss what books they read and if they enjoyed them.

As students read independently, the teacher is able to spend time with students individually. They are able to answer important questions for each student like what subjects interest them, how well they can express ideas they read, and at what DRA level they can best apply their phonics skills. The teacher adjusts the books chosen each week to maximize interest and motivation, while also balancing a suitable learning challenge and building of confidence. Thus students improve their reading skills at their own pace.



Why differentiated instruction?

Classrooms are filled with students who:



Making sure all the students are equally motivated and challenged is what our program is all about. It is about making sure the highest achieving students are not bored because everything is too easy, while also ensuring students who may be struggling don't give up because everything is too hard. Providing material independent of our curriculum and allowing student choice keeps everyone engaged. It also keeps students on task with other work. They are self motivated to finish their work on time so they have more time to read the book they choose. Students gain confidence while also reinforcing and improving their phonics skills. Each student's needs are met individually, rather than teaching to the top or the bottom of the class. In the end, this program helps both teachers and students remember that everyone is unique, and that our learning environment should reflect that.

From the Editor

Let's Read Together

國際處主任 賴國宜

How long do you spend on reading for personal interest per day? A study from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has found that the average American spends only 19 minutes a day on reading; young people read even less. Mr. Spevack's article explains how the grade three foreign teachers encourage our students to read more willingly and more often by incorporating an independent reading program where students are allotted twenty minutes each week to choose what they want to read and what they want to learn. We hope this independent reading will lay the foundation for them to become enthusiastic life-long readers.

The grade one Chinese English teachers integrated the English project with the Christmas carol show to help children feel like part of a team to improve their social and communication skills. We believe the ability to work with others as a team isn't just a skill children need at school; it's an essential skill they will use for the rest of their lives. I hope you enjoy our grade one students' writing and drawings about their experience of working together.

工作之餘，您一天花多少時間閱讀，電子媒體興起，國內外的統計都顯示，個人閱讀的時間一再下降，尤其是青少年和兒童，除了學校規定的作業，幾乎很少在休閒時間主動閱讀。從上學期開始，三年級外師們開始在各班進行獨立閱讀的活動，在教室布置一個小書區，每周固定20到40分鐘，讓學生自由選擇讀本，安靜閱讀，Mr. Spevack的主題報導，說明外師設計此課程的目的和執行的現況。透過選擇自己想看的書籍，培養孩子閱讀的習慣，欣賞各種文學作品，進而對自己的學習產生更多的主控權和責任感。

社會能力的發展，是兒童期最關鍵的成長任務，在同儕互動中，發展出積極正向的人際關係，培養合作溝通的能力，對兒童日後人格和情緒的發展有重大的影響。一年級的中籍英師利用Let's Work Together這個專題，結合聖誕節歌謠表演活動，引導剛上小學的寶貝們，一起探究如何在團隊中合作、一起成長、一起學習變得更好。

三月了，天氣漸漸暖和，春暖花開、生氣蓬勃的季節，是個適合閱讀的好時節，建議您也可以和孩子約定個家庭閱讀時間，一起關掉電腦和手機，找些好書，靜靜閱讀，享受文學的美好。

What's New?

★ There are three amazing summer camp programs in the US for our grades 3 to 6 students to choose from. The camps in Chicago and San Francisco will focus on STEM and the Nasa camp in Huntsville will be all about space. Feel free to pop in at the ID office for more information.





Learning by Working Together

~ Tina Liang

English Teacher, International Department

What Is Teamwork?

As our world becomes more and more complex, being able to work well with others becomes more essential. For our students, it is important that we teach them the concept of teamwork as early as possible. Doing so allows students to express themselves, learn from one another, and help their peers, thus giving them a more well-rounded learning experience.

If you expected kids to learn the concept of teamwork, what would you do? Would you tell them how important it is? Would you give them some creeds to memorize? Why not provide kids a chance to work together and learn teamwork skills at the same time? With that idea in mind, grade 1 teachers designed a project to have kids experience how to work together by putting on a Christmas carol show. Our Let's Work Together project teaches students teamwork skills and gives them a chance to apply those skills.

Sharpening Teamwork Skills by Immersing in School Activities

Every December, each grade 1 English class presents a Christmas carol show to grade 3-6 students and teachers at school. Grade 1 students must practice and create many props in order to have a great show. This creates a perfect moment to introduce teamwork to our students. Teachers asked students what teamwork means to them and challenged students to consider how they can work with others. Some students expressed how teamwork means working together, and good teams help each other by explaining things nicely. Others explained that part of being a good team member is knowing when to say sorry. Teachers then introduced a real group of kids who work together as a great team, the 4-H club. From a short clip, students generated and learned about the following teamwork skills: **Head** (Learning and Thinking), **Hands** (Doing with Hands), **Heart** (Listening and Sharing from Your Heart), and **Health** (Helping Others Become Better). Later, they learned about how kids in 4-H club use these teamwork skills in Reading Street 1 Unit 2, Helping Hands at 4-H. After familiarizing themselves with the 4 H teamwork skills, kids tried to apply them when they practiced their Christmas carol show. They not only reflected on how they applied teamwork skills individually, but also what their classmates did to be good team members.

Enriching Writing with Experience and Observation

Based on their experiences preparing for the Christmas carol show in groups, students were able to provide solid examples of who is good at each teamwork skill and how he/she applies it. Students taught their team members how to do certain tasks, such as cutting and gluing when making props. They let one another borrow different materials and always said please and thank you to one another. Their thoughts flowed smoothly when they wrote about teamwork. By describing their classmates' behavior, they began to appreciate the merits of their peers. This reinforced and strengthened bonds in each class. Students easily described teamwork and provided authentic examples while also becoming closer to one another.

Life-long Benefit

Teamwork, like many important social skills, is an abstract concept, difficult to describe to young learners. Through this grade one project, students experience teamwork in their own lives. The concept becomes real, and life-long through describing their experiences. Having time to reflect throughout the whole project connects the concept to their heart. These skills truly provide benefits to our students, both at school and in their daily lives at home.

G1 Student Work

Let's Work Together

Krystal Lai 賴恩嫻 101

We work together to prepare for the Christmas carol show.

Joey is good at helping others. She teaches me how to glue. Kelly is good at making things with her hands. She folds paper well.

We are happy when we work together.



Miranda Tseng 曾群希 108

We work together to prepare for our Christmas show.

Ashley is good at doing things with her hands. She helps others to make a colorful Santa craft. Yui is good at sharing and listening from her heart. She shares her happiness.

We use 4-H skills to make good teamwork.



Janet Tai 戴祐蓁 102

We are a good team. We work together to perform our Christmas carol. Melody is good at listening. She can follow what Ms. Coral says, and she makes a beautiful Christmas tree headband. I am good at helping Felicia. I help her to change her clothes when we have a show. We do well on the Christmas Carol because we work as a team, and I feel happy.



Connie Chen 陳予勻 102

We do the Christmas show together.

Dora is good at helping others become better. She teaches me how to sing the song better. Emily is good at doing things with her hands. She cuts the paper beautifully. I get presents from the teacher. I feel happy.



Surie Pan 潘思宇 104

We work together to practice for the Christmas carol show. Lucy is good at helping others because she helps Sophie and Chin-yu finish Christmas stuff quickly. Charlie is good at doing things with his hands. He can cut Christmas stuff nicely. We are happy to sing together. We make a great team.



Daisy Tsai 蔡雨蓁 105

We work together to help put up a Christmas carol show. Jeremy is good at sharing. He shares his ideas with everyone. Kingston is good at learning. He learns the lyrics quickly, so he can help Howard know the lyrics. Others will think we are very good when we work together.



Larina Liao 廖苡晴 106

We work together to perform our Christmas carol well. Jessie is good at doing things with her hands because she always has big dancing moves. Kai-Sin is good at helping others because she always cares about everybody. After we work together, we are a better team and better friends.



Phoebe Liu 劉宇菲 107

We practice for the Christmas show.

Charise is good at doing things with her hands. She cuts the paper nicely.

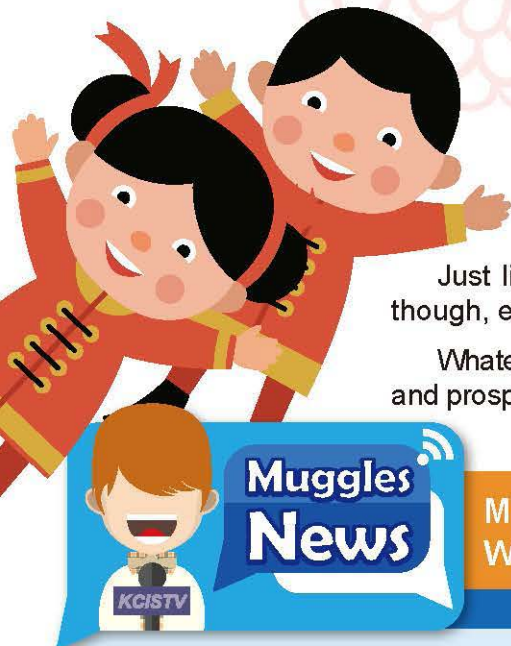
Nobel is good at learning and thanking. He learns how to cut the red paper well. We become better after we work together nicely.





Greetings fellow reader! Here at Kang Chiao Spotlight, we hope you enjoyed a wonderful and relaxing Spring Festival! To the casual observer, Spring Festival is filled with many random customs that might not make sense. However, these customs often have logical reasons for existing. Let's take a look at the New Year's customs for other countries, and see what new insights we gain.

In some South American countries, people are very careful about their underwear color on New Year's. Why? The color you wear can determine your fate for the New Year. This is similar to the Chinese belief that wearing red clothes during Chinese New Year will bring good fortune. However, in South America, red will bring love, while yellow will bring wealth. Blue brings good health, and white brings happiness and peace. Whatever you do, don't wear black underwear, unless you want bad luck!



How many grapes can you fit in your mouth? Can you fit twelve? In Spain, people try to eat twelve grapes when ringing in the New Year for good luck, one grape for each month. Eating the first few grapes is easy enough. However, by the end of it all people are laughing with a mouthful of grapes. Be sure not to start before the clock strikes midnight, as it's considered bad luck!

In Denmark, jumping isn't just for taking cool pictures. People will actually stand on chairs, wait for midnight, and "jump" into the New Year for good luck.

Just like Taiwan, in Estonia New Year's is all about eating traditional food. Estonians take things to another level though, eating seven times on New Year's Day so that they will have plenty for the New Year.

Whatever customs you have for New Year's, we hope that the coming year brings you peace and happiness, fortune and prosperity. Now, let's begin the coming school year with a renewed spirit, an open mind, and a ready heart.

Muggles News

Muggles News is organized by a group of KCIS students from the Reporter Club. We provide the latest and most exclusive reports on what is happening at KCIS.

Celebrating Chinese New Year

by Sonic Lin

We celebrated Chinese New Year in many different ways. For example, we had the feast on New Year's Eve, went shopping to buy new clothes, traveled in Taiwan and stayed in a hotel to spend the time with family or just stayed at home doing nothing.

We have many foreign teachers in KCIS, and they are far away from their hometowns. Have you ever wondered about how our foreign teachers spend their time during the Chinese New Year holiday? Do they celebrate the Chinese New Year like we do or don't they celebrate it at all? This time we asked a lot of foreign teachers to share with us how they celebrated the Chinese New Year.

Mr. Canal

by Ethan Yeh and Joy Liao

We interviewed Mr. Canal on how he celebrated Chinese New Year. Mr. Canal has two kids, a 7 year old boy and a 5 year old girl. He celebrated Chinese New Year with his wife's family, and they had a New Year's feast together. His favorite dishes for the Chinese New Year's feast are fried rice, noodles and sweet and sour chicken. They also set firecrackers at the beach. He follows some of the Chinese New Year traditions, such as buying new clothes and cleaning the house. Mr. Canal played Mahjong with his wife's family. His children say 恭喜發財 to Mr. Canal and his wife when they receive their red envelopes. He really enjoys Chinese New Year and having a great time with his family.



Mr. Muir

by Yu-Shan Lin

Mr. Muir celebrated his Chinese New Year with his wife's family. He went back to Chaoyi. He stayed there for the whole Chinese New Year holiday. During that time, he spent New Year's eve the same as other families. He had dinner with his friends and relatives. He said that he never decorated his home, but his mother-in-law did. On the second day, Mr. Muir's wife, kids, and mother-in-law went to do some of the traditional activities, like to worship in the temple. Mr. Muir then went camping with his friends. He has a lot of friends that are from Canada, who are all married to Taiwanese people. He said that he and his friends always choose a camping spot that is deep in the mountains. Mr. Muir likes the feeling of being a part of nature. He also thinks that celebrating New Year in Taiwan is more fun than in Canada.



Mr. Niemandt

by Edward Chao and Katherine Chang

Mr. Niemandt has been in Taiwan for years. He knows the cultures and traditions here, for example, people have to clean their houses before the New Year. During the Chinese New Year, Mr. Niemandt celebrated it with his wife and his children. He gave his kids red envelopes and bought new clothes for them. Mr. Niemandt's family went to Tainan and visited his in-laws. They had a big feast with his wife's family and relatives, played games, and watched firecrackers. He really wanted to see the traditional dragon-dance in the temple because that's the traditional culture of celebrating Chinese New Year in Taiwan. He can say the blessings in order to wish others a happy new year. Mr. Niemandt thinks that Chinese New Year is a great time to spend with the family to relax and have fun.

