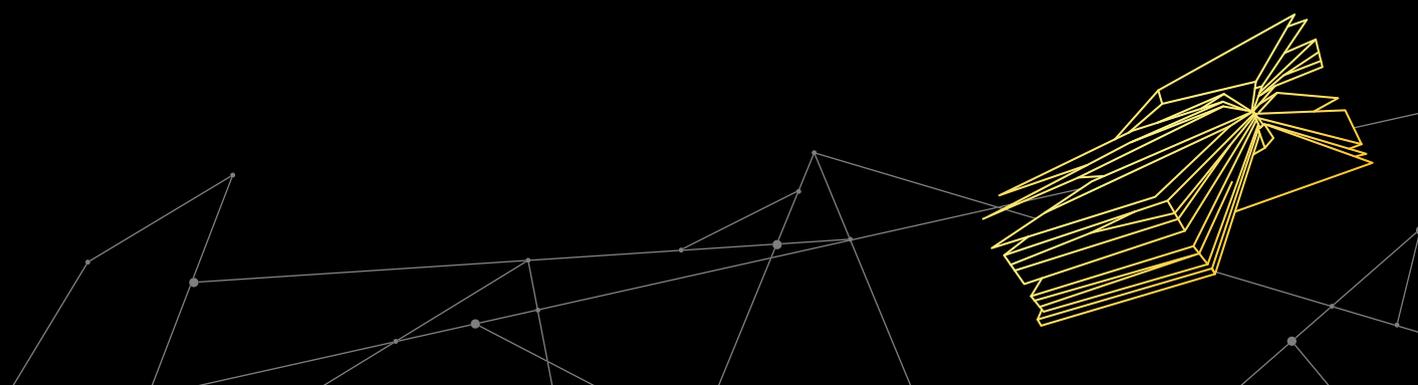


Updated to include videos!

For the Love of Reading



*For the Love
of Reading*

Written and edited by: Cheryl Anne Lee Jia Lin, Christabel Sim Poh Ling, Gan Siew Lee, Heng Huey Bin, Raneetha Rajaratnam, Siti Aisyah Binte Abdul Nasir, Teo Xing Zhi, Yeo Si Hwee

Designed by: National Library Board, Singapore & Graphic Masters Pte Ltd

Printed by: Paddyfield Pte Ltd

Published by:

National Library Board, Singapore

100 Victoria Street

#14-01 National Library Building

Singapore 188064

www.nlb.gov.sg

All rights reserved. © National Library Board, 2017.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning or otherwise, except as expressly permitted by the law, without the prior written permission of the Publisher and copyright owner(s). Whilst reasonable care has been taken by the Publisher to ensure the accuracy of the information in this publication, the Publisher accepts no legal liabilities whatsoever for the contents of this publication.

ISBN: 978-981-11-2984-1

National Library Board, Singapore Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Name(s): Singapore. National Library Board, editor, issuing body.

Title: For the love of reading : a compilation of best practices in Singapore schools / written and edited by National Library Board Singapore.

Description: Singapore : National Library Board, Singapore, (2017) | Book is a compilation of the best reading practices from the winning and shortlisted Singapore schools from the Reading Excellence Award (REA) 2016 - 2017 by the National Library Board and the Ministry of Education.

Identifier(s): OCN 974421920 | ISBN 978-981-11-2984-1 (hardcover)

Subject(s): LCSH: Reading. | Books and reading -- Singapore | School children -- Books and reading. | Students -- Books and reading | Reading promotion -- Singapore | Libraries and schools -- Singapore.

Classification: DDC 028.55--dc23

For the Love of Reading

A COMPILATION OF BEST PRACTICES
IN SINGAPORE SCHOOLS

For the

Men and women

And children

Who believe we all should read

Quietly

Noisily

Together

Alone

Always

CONTENTS

Check out the award
ceremony on Page 117!

Quick Guide	7
Foreword: NLB	9
Foreword: MOE	11
A NOTE.	12
How This Book Could Work for You	13
The Reading Excellence Award: A Story in Five Parts	14
Primary Schools	
Princess Elizabeth Primary School	18
Xinghua Primary School	24
Mee Toh School	30
Qifa Primary School	36
CHIJ Kellock	42
CHIJ Our Lady Queen of Peace	48
Seng Kang Primary School	54
West Grove Primary School	60
Yu Neng Primary School	66
Zhenghua Primary School	72
Secondary Schools	
Clementi Town Secondary School	80
Bukit Merah Secondary School	86
Edgefield Secondary School	92
Hwa Chong Institution	98
Riverside Secondary School	104
Timeline	110
Glossary	111
Reading Excellence Award Nomination List – Primary	114
Reading Excellence Award Nomination List – Secondary	115

QUICK GUIDE

NEED BUY-IN?

READ@PEPS
Princess Elizabeth Primary, Page 19

Mystery Readers
Xinghua Primary, Page 29

Principal's Selections
Bukit Merah Secondary, Page 88

TARGETING SPECIFIC GROUPS?

School Reading Ambassadors
West Grove Primary, Page 62

Rethinking Picture Books
Clementi Town Secondary, Page 84

Library Council
Hwa Chong, Page 102

LOOKING TO LEVEL UP?

Library Education Curriculum
Mee Toh, Page 33

Moo-O
CHIJ Our Lady Queen of Peace, Page 53

Murder, She Wrote.
Riverside Secondary, Page 106

JUST GETTING STARTED?

Meet Uncle Biblio
Seng Kang Primary, Page 57

Hot Seating
Zhenghua Primary, Page 75

DIY Wicked Reads
Edgefield Secondary, Page 95

SEEKING NEW PARTNERSHIPS?

Book-a-licious
Qifa Primary, Page 38

Reading Dads and Mums
CHIJ Kellock, Page 47

Working Smart
Yu Neng Primary, Page 68

Foreword: NLB

Most people will agree that reading helps a person to learn and grow. As Margaret Atwood put it succinctly, “I read for pleasure and that is the moment I learn the most.”

Our schools actively seek to nurture a love of reading in their students, complementing the efforts of families who encourage good reading habits at home. Teachers juggle multiple roles to support their students’ learning and development. They come up with creative ways to grow strong reading cultures in their schools, and have established tried and tested reading practices that can be emulated by other institutions.

Libraries also play a role in ensuring that reading continues to be a lifelong habit. Through Read@School, the National Library Board (NLB) brings a myriad of reading activities to primary and secondary schools under the Ministry of Education (MOE). This ensures that students have multiple avenues to library books for their reading pleasure.

In 2016, NLB and MOE initiated the Reading Excellence Award to recognise vibrant reading cultures that teachers have fostered in their schools. The award sets a benchmark for schools to strive towards as our teachers come up with ever more ingenious ways to encourage their students to read, and to enjoy reading.

This publication presents the best practices from the Reading Excellence Award that have been well-received by students, many of which can be easily adapted to suit other schools.

I applaud your efforts to encourage the love of reading in your students, and I hope you will find inspiration in some of the ideas showcased in this book.

Mrs Elaine Ng
Chief Executive Officer
National Library Board

Foreword: MOE

Reading opens up the world around us. It brings us to places we have never been, gives us experiences we never had, and presents us with ideas we never knew. We can learn from inspiring people whenever and wherever we choose.

Besides being a source of knowledge and learning, reading provides a gateway to help the child become aware, articulate and imaginative. A good reader becomes an independent learner and thinker, capable of critical thinking and making sound decisions. Inculcated early, the reading habit will create a lifelong advantage for the child. Books are not only a child's best friend but they enrich and improve his life. They help him become what he wants to be.

With that fundamental belief, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has actively supported schools to put in place school-wide structures and processes to promote reading to all students and build a strong reading culture. Whole-school approaches to promote reading through various subjects such as English Language, Mother Tongue Languages, Social Studies, Humanities, Sciences and Physical Education using the schools' Media Resource Libraries as hubs of reading activities and events, are also carried out. MOE also leverages inter-school, inter-cluster and zonal platforms such as the Centres of Excellence (COE) for English for schools to share good and innovative practices that are effective in nurturing the reading habit.

As part of Professional Learning, MOE organises the Reading Symposia and networking sessions for teachers to share and learn from each other. MOE collaborates with professional organisations such as the National Library Board (NLB) and the National Institute of Education (NIE) with the expertise to support schools in promoting reading.

Foremost, we recognise that parents play a critical role in nurturing the love of reading in their children. Hence, MOE encourages and supports parents by sharing tips on how to nurture the love for reading on Schoolbag.sg, which is an online publication that offers parents, educators and the general public the latest in educational news and parenting advice.

Last year, NLB and MOE launched its Reading Excellence Award to recognise schools that excel in promoting a love of reading and creating a whole-school reading culture. We congratulate and celebrate with all Primary and Secondary schools which had participated in the Reading Excellence Award. It is our hope that recipients of this year's Reading Excellence Award will pave the way and inspire other schools to actively nurture the reading habit amongst their students.

Mrs Kelvyna Chan
Divisional Director, Curriculum Planning and Development 2
Ministry of Education

A NOTE.

Dear educators, librarians, students,

One educator, one reading initiative. One school, one reading culture. Multiply that by all the different schools in Singapore, and you have a reading nation. Oh, the not-so-secret dream of the librarian.

On a more serious note, we have been very privileged to have read through the 61 submissions for the Reading Excellence Award and seen countless reading initiatives that can be easily adopted by other schools. Of them, 15 schools are on the shortlist, and their range of reading activities have either built up to a strong reading culture overall or strengthened the learning lifestyles of specific student groups in school.

Collected in this publication are the pearls of wisdom gathered from these 15 schools, especially for you, in hopes that you will be inspired to promote the love of reading among your students. You will find interviews with reading champions in schools, hear from students who have benefitted from these reading programmes, and even discover how to go about adapting these programmes for your own schools.

After all, if even one (more) student in your class or school picks up reading, you will already begin to taste the fruits of your labour. They will taste sweet indeed.

From all of us at the Reading Excellence Award

HOW THIS BOOK COULD WORK FOR YOU

Step 1:

Read A NOTE.

Step 2:

Figure out where you are now in terms of promoting a reading culture in your school. Then, read QUICK GUIDE.

Step 3:

Identify a reading initiative that is suitable for your school.

Step 4:

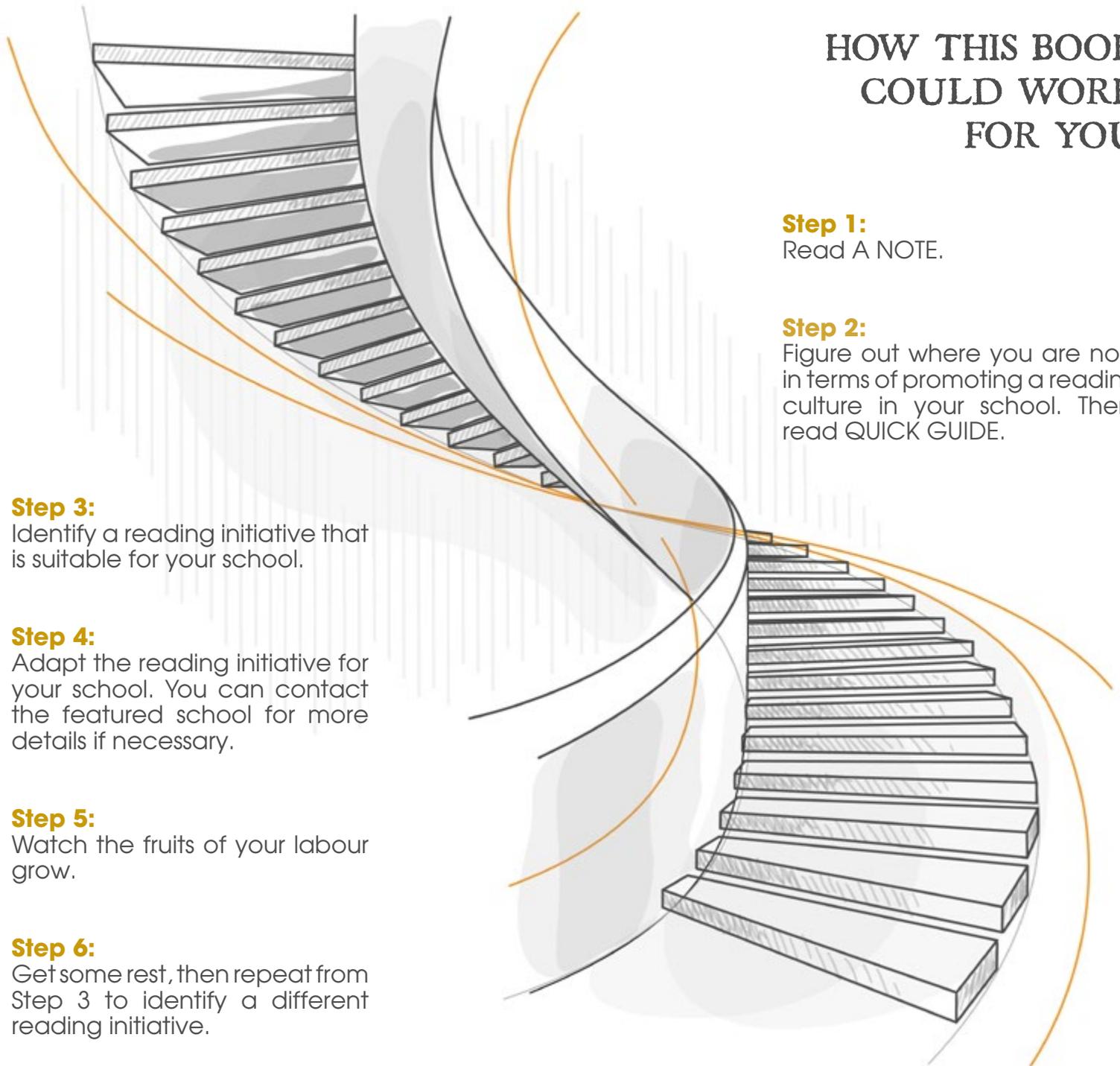
Adapt the reading initiative for your school. You can contact the featured school for more details if necessary.

Step 5:

Watch the fruits of your labour grow.

Step 6:

Get some rest, then repeat from Step 3 to identify a different reading initiative.

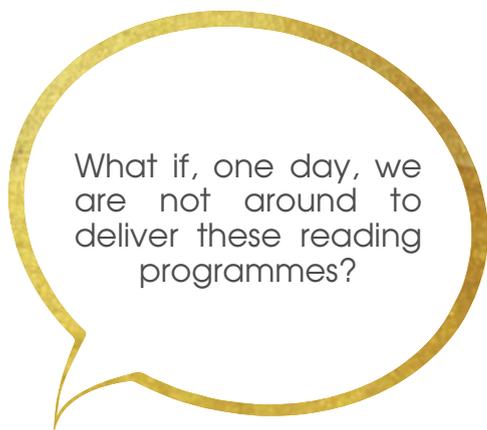


THE READING EXCELLENCE AWARD: A STORY IN FIVE PARTS

ONCE UPON A TIME, SOME LIBRARIANS MET

There once was a project by NLB known as Read@School. In this project, every school had a dedicated NLB librarian delivering reading programmes to it. Over the next four years, there would eventually be 30 librarians working energetically on Read@School. One day, these librarians looked upon their work, and mused.

THEY ASKED QUESTIONS



What if we discover schools with many wonderful ideas on how to nurture a love of reading among their students? Would other schools be able to take these ideas and use them? Better yet, would schools be able to adapt these ideas for their students?

THEY ORGANISED A COMPETITION

The librarians strongly believed that if they asked, schools would be very forthcoming in sharing the reading practices that they had. They believed too, that these schools ought to persevere in their quest to instill a love of reading among their students, and that these schools could set a benchmark for other schools to aspire towards.

Reading Excellence Award

First Place: S\$10,000

Second Place: S\$7,500

Third Place: S\$5,000

Crowd Favourite: S\$2,000

They hoped that the competition would raise an awareness of the importance of a comprehensive reading programme in schools. After all, students spend their formative years in school learning life skills, and reading is a life skill fundamental to survival.

In their hearts, they hoped too, that schools which won the competition in the first year would set out to better their reading cultures subsequently.

THEY UNCOVERED EXCELLENT READING PROGRAMMES

What reading programmes could be considered best practices and recognised as excellent? Three key characteristics were identified – measurable impact, scalability and replicability, and reading innovation.

It was important that the reading programmes engaged the students visibly, and could be adapted to different student profiles and across multiple platforms. It was equally crucial that the educators sought to be innovative in how they shared a love of reading with their students, so that their enterprise could ensure that reading would always be surprising, enjoyable, and relatable.



THEN, THEY WROTE A BOOK

The librarians realised that, as the competition got well under way, they had uncovered a treasure trove of reading best practices. They saw that people needed to know and talk about these practices. Educators needed to stumble upon these practices and find out how wonderful they were, and customise them to their students' needs.

Thus, they sat down and created this book.



PRIMARY SCHOOLS





Click here to watch the Princess Elizabeth Primary Crowd Favourite video now!



Reading Excellence
Award 2017
First Place (Primary)

PRINCESS ELIZABETH PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Reading opens up the mind. With an open mind, all things are possible! We can't be everything and everywhere, so reading provides us with a window to delve deep into people's hearts and see far into the horizon. We develop empathy and love for one another, and grow to understand the world around us."

Mdm Moliyah Binte Hashim, Principal

Before school begins, the students participate in **ASPIRE Moments**. This is when they engage in silent reading and get into the right mindset for the rest of their day. Sometimes, they also engage in brief activities that are related to reading, such as storytelling and book sharing.

Mdm Moliah taps into ASPIRE Moments to cultivate the reading habit in her students. She role-models reading with her students and also tries to impress upon them the importance of reading.

She does so by conducting storytelling or sharing thought-provoking points that she comes across in what she reads. From one of the books, titled *Who's Behind That Wall?*, she told stories about migrant workers who helped to build Singapore into what it is today.

She has also created platforms to reinforce the benefits of reading. She initiated **READ@PEPS**, in which staff members share different reading materials during Staff Contact Time. She regularly emails reading recommendations to her teachers. After all, as Mdm Moliah believes, "Reading makes you a knowledgeable, sensitive, and interesting person!"

ASPIRE

Ambition

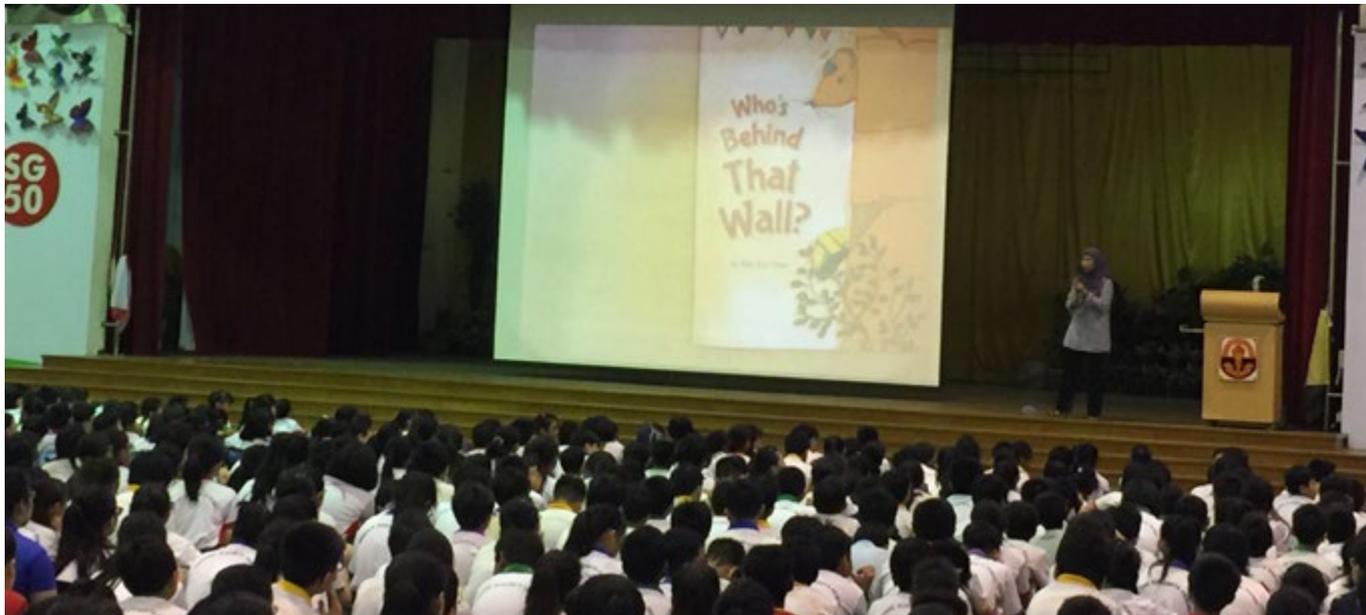
Self-Discipline

Perseverance

Integrity

Respect

Excellence





READING EVERYWHERE!

Pre-loved books find a new life in **THE READING NOOK**, where students get to read. Better yet, if they love the book, students have the option to take it home.



THE PRINCESS LIBRARY puts up different monthly displays and holds mini-competitions to attract students to borrow books. In the **SUPER READERS PROGRAMME**, students get to redeem tokens after reading 10 books.



In **DON'T JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER**, each book is wrapped up to generate an air of mystery. Students are so intrigued that they borrow the books to find out more about the stories.

When **CHARACTERS COME ALIVE**, students and teachers dress up in the spirit of cosplay and have great conversations about stories and book characters.



READ & SHARE @MYBOOKSHOP

Tamil Language students run their own virtual bookshop. Students have to read, comment, and recommend books in their bookshop in order to “sell” them to interested classmates.

The rewards system motivates students to read widely so that they can promote many books and receive points. These points can be exchanged for items that they can decorate their virtual bookshops with.

This is how technology can be used to encourage students to become enthusiastic readers and develop a preference for Tamil Language books. Moreover, these students become engaged participants in an active reading community.



Students and teachers are filmed recommending their favourite books in **STORY RECORDINGS**. They get to dress up as characters and the videos are put up for everyone in school to watch.



“I hope to adopt, adapt or introduce new innovative programmes in the school to sustain the students’ interest in reading. My aim is to have a community of book lovers to spread the reading bug to ensure the sustainability of a reading culture.”

Miss Chin Sau Lai, Level Head (LH), English Language

EXCITING PLANS AHEAD

Miss Chin plans to expand the reading programme, despite the diversity it already boasts. The teachers review the reading activities regularly, and stay abreast of the latest educational developments. They get meaningful feedback from students and teachers alike, to ensure the overall quality of the programme.



Some changes Princess Elizabeth Primary will be implementing in 2017 include:

- Reinforcing the reading process in regular reading activities to increase reading motivation in students
- Enhancing the use of information technology to supplement reading
- Featuring a reading challenge during the English Fortnight
- Integrating reading into other subjects beyond the languages, by getting the different departments in school to plan at least one reading-related activity

WHY DO SO MUCH?

The school leaders and teachers at Princess Elizabeth Primary have inspired students, and the students, in turn, respond and inspire one another to read.

“My reading role model is Miss Chin because she often shares about reading. She always encourages us to read more. My schoolmates who have also won the Avid Reader Award are my role models.”

Amutha Senthilkumarasan, Primary 5

One teacher shares that she has a student in her class who is losing her sight. The girl requires a visualiser to enlarge the words on the page so that she can see them one by one. Still, she participates gamely in reading sessions, and is determined not to lose out on the story that her friends are enjoying. She wants to ask questions and contribute to the story that is being discussed.

To her, this shows that her students are hungry to read, and this is why she strives to bring books to them.





Click here to watch the Xinghua Primary Crowd Favourite video now!



Reading Excellence
Award 2017
Second Place (Primary)

XINGHUA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Xinghua Primary seeks to provide a strong reading environment, in which the educators are able to guide students along their reading journey. They hope that their students will learn to appreciate reading, and in reading, the students learn.

“We observe that there are many more children who are reading during recess. If they choose to read instead of play, it shows that they are willing to sacrifice the precious playtime that they have with their friends. Then we know that we have made a difference to these children.”

Mrs Shirley Quek, Vice-Principal



STRONG READING ENVIRONMENT

The spaces in school are designed to facilitate self-initiated reading and learning. Students interact with their immediate environment to read independently and have reading-related discussions with one another.

BOOK EXCHANGE CART

The Book Exchange Cart is filled with books donated by students and placed in the school canteen.

In this way, students get to talk about books during recess and recycle their own books. This creates a constant supply of books in school.

Nearby, parent volunteers run reading activities such as tongue-twisters and poetry recital sessions.

SCHOOL LIBRARY

The school library is seen as an integral part of student life, and one period a week is set aside for each class to visit the library. The school librarian and student reading ambassadors design monthly thematic activities and displays, such as a "Crime Scene Investigation" area for the mystery genre.

CLASS LIBRARY

Each class has its own class library, and the books in the collection are selected by the students themselves. Cushions, pillows and chairs help to turn the class library into a comfortable reading corner.



Learning centres are set up in classrooms for students to learn at their own pace. They can participate in differentiated activities in small groups with minimal intervention from their teachers. They get to play word games, use a special reading pen that reads aloud words on the page, and engage in interactive exercises that reinforce their literacy skills.



LEARNING CENTRES

“It is all about the gradual release of responsibility.”

Mrs Quek

Students get to expand upon what they have learnt from their teachers in the learning centres, where they can grow into independent learners. The teacher has to step back so that the student can grow at his or her own pace.

“Each class is very different, so you cannot duplicate the same activities for everyone.”

Mrs Amanda Soon
LH, English Language

Both new and experienced teachers come together to brainstorm on what would be useful to have in the learning centres. Then, the teachers plan the learning routines that would eventually be used in them. These resources are pooled in a central bank, so that teachers can draw out what they require to customise specific learning centres for their classes.

“Technology helps students to learn, but it cannot be allowed to replace interaction among students.”

Mdm Siti Hajar Bte Saini
Assistant Year Head (YH),
Primary 2

The learning centres first started off with only STELLAR materials and audio compact discs. Since then, the teachers have incorporated more advanced technology such as the reading pen and eBooks. However, they are mindful that technology is primarily meant to provide additional support in the act of reading, and that the students must continue to talk about what they have read with one another.

“All of us acknowledge that reading is important regardless of which department we come from. The teachers from the other departments are keen to come on board to send the same message to the whole school.”

Mdm An Bee Ling, Head of Department (HOD), Mother Tongue Languages (MTL)

NURTURING READING ROLE MODELS



Reading Ambassadors

Across each student level, the most enthusiastic readers have been identified as reading ambassadors. They meet regularly with the school librarian and teachers-in-charge to discuss how they can promote reading to their peers. They also collate book recommendations from their peers and suggest titles to be included in the school library collection.

“As a Reading Ambassador, I try to promote great books to encourage my friends to read.”

Ashley Yeo, Primary 3

Buddy Reading Programme

The Buddy Reading Programme encourages good readers to take the lead when reading with their peers.



Teachers as Role Models

Teachers take pride in reading to the whole school regularly. There are also posters which show them reading, and feature a quote, character or book that they enjoy.

“One of the most powerful ways to engage our students in reading is by being a role model to them.”

Miss Kanaran Shanta Kumari, HOD, English Language



Mystery Readers

Mystery Readers are a twist on how students are usually read to. At various times in a year, teachers walk into a class that they do not teach to read to them.

The teachers come from different departments, including the Mathematics, Science and even Physical Education departments. The students are usually very excited and try to guess who the next mystery reader will be.



Click here to watch the Mee Toh Crowd Favourite video now!



Reading Excellence
Award 2017
Third Place (Primary)

MEE TOH SCHOOL

"I was greatly influenced by the school environment in my primary school. What we used to have in the past, in my classroom, were shelves that the teacher stacked books on. There were different books – big books, small books. I used to see my friends pick out books to read, and so I did too. What particularly motivated me was when I read *Heidi*, a thick book, and felt a sense of achievement after completing the story. I had enjoyed the book, and the mental images that came to me as I read it really compelled me to continue reading."

Mrs Jacelyn Ang, YH, Primary 1 and 2

HOW WOULD YOU GET YOUR FRIENDS INTERESTED IN READING?

“Having real-life shows of a book.”

“Have a competition to see which student can read the most books – that would be fun!”

“Maybe the school can organise an activity where every book you read will get you a point. At the end of the semester, the person who has the most points will get a prize.”



THE MEDIA RESOURCE LIBRARY

With the simple objective of encouraging students to read, the library is designed with modern library principles in mind. Books are shelved by age group to allow for easier access, and there is a mini-theatre where books come alive in storytelling, movie or show-and-tell sessions.

Student librarians leverage peer influence to promote books and tell stories to their friends to get them hooked on reading.

BOOK BUFFET

A “buffet” of books from the school library is displayed near the canteen to entice students to spend their time reading during recess.

WISH A BOOK

Throughout the year, the library tracks the number of books borrowed by each student. The student who borrows the most books gets to choose a book that he or she can keep as a reward.

20-DAY CHALLENGE

Organised in conjunction with the NLB National Reading Movement in 2016, every class pledged to read either 20 pages or for 20 minutes for 20 consecutive days.

The students then reflected on what they had read by creating a miniature book or writing a book review.



MORE THAN A SPACE

The **LIBRARY EDUCATION CURRICULUM** transforms the physical library into an experience for students. The English Language teacher conducts a lesson on library education for students at least once a semester.

The lessons cover three main areas – library etiquette, literary appreciation and enjoyment, and research skills and information literacy. For example, Primary 2 students learn how to take care of books as part of library etiquette, and are introduced to books by Roald Dahl for literary appreciation and enjoyment.



“The aim of the library as well as the school curriculum is to motivate the students to love reading. That is the crucial step for them to move forward as self-directed learners and critical thinkers.”

Mdm Valerie Brampy, Library Coordinator

DEPARTMENTAL EFFORTS

LITERARY APPRECIATION WITH ENGLISH LITERARY AND CHINESE CLASSICAL TEXTS

Students learn to read and understand classical literature such as *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* and *Journey to the West*. Primary 2 to 4 students also read English literary texts as part of the English Language curriculum. In these ways, they learn to appreciate and enjoy literature.



MTL FORTNIGHT

Entertaining activities, such as an Amazing Race with books, are organised for the students.

I READ

Students take storybooks home to read and complete interactive activities related to the stories.

This is conducted in the English and Mother Tongue Languages.

MTL BOOK TUBS

Students have easy access to books in the Mother Tongue Languages in their classroom. The school places books of various genres into tubs. Students can choose what they like to read based on their individual preferences. This allows students to read extensively.



EVERY TEACHER A STORY

Teachers take turns to tell a story after morning assembly every other week.

TIME OUT WITH BOOKS

Teachers also share books that inspired them to read when they were young. The book covers are displayed for the students to attract them to read the books.

BOOK CLUBS

Two book clubs, one for teacher leaders and another for Chinese Language teachers, have been set up for them to present and share their thoughts on the books read.

This is so that the teachers are active reading role models to their students.

TEACHERS' LIBRARY

A special section of the Media Resource Library (MRL) is reserved for the teachers, so that they have the space to read, discuss and reflect on what they have read.



STAFF INITIATIVES

“Some of the teachers volunteer, especially if they really like certain things. They suggest the types of programmes that would appeal to the students and they volunteer to conduct them. Those who are movie buffs take charge of Movie Treats. Some like a particular genre while others have special storytelling skills, so they look after different areas.”

Mdm Brampy



Click here to watch the Qifa Primary Crowd Favourite video now!



QIFA PRIMARY SCHOOL

“As a department, we sat down and asked ourselves why our kids were not improving. We reflected on our own experiences when we were students and realised that it all boiled down to reading.”

Mrs Doreen Chan, HOD, English Language

Reading is a family affair at Qifa Primary, and the school works closely with its Parent Support Group (PSG) to promote reading. Together, both teachers and parents ensure that students are exposed to books in different ways.

In turn, the students read keenly. On average, students have borrowed over 30,000 books a year from 2014 to 2016 from the school library.



Geronimo Stilton
CAVE MICE
DON'T WAKE THE DINOSAUR!
SCHOLASTIC

Geronimo Stilton
MOUSE OVERBOARD!

Room on the Broom
Axel Scheffler
Illustrated by Axel Scheffler
Ages 3-7
The Gruffalo

EVERY PARENT, A SUPPORTIVE PARTNER

“We have a very strong PSG because our school believes in partnership. We believe that if we can get our parents involved, they will also bring this reading mindset back home to their kids.”

Mrs Chan

Qifa Primary actively reaches out to parents to get them on board, and parent volunteers take very enthusiastically to their reading tasks.

“We try to get parents whose children are not yet in Primary 1 to start volunteering early. They spend 40 hours a year helping us tell stories during Book-a-licious and decorating monthly displays for the library.”

Ms Seow Wen-Qi, Library Coordinator

BOOK-A-LICIOUS

On Mondays at recess time, parent volunteers conduct storytelling in the English Language for Primary 1 to 4 students. Lower primary students are treated to an additional session in the Chinese Language on Thursdays.

Parent volunteers also hold book discussions with Primary 5 and 6 students on topics about information literacy and lifestyle. These sessions are held in the school library. Some of the topics discussed include “About the Moon”, “Saving Savvy and Spending Smart”, as well as “Scams on the Internet and Other Media Platforms”.



READING MOMS PROGRAMME

“Whenever we share stories, the children will pick up the phrases used. We see this relationship between reading and learning – reading helps to develop language abilities in the children.”

Ms Seow

Four parent volunteers work very closely with low-progress Chinese Language students in Primary 1 and 2. They guide the children in exploring the Chinese collection in the school library, and use specially-designed worksheets to reinforce what the students have learnt in class. In turn, the students demonstrate increased confidence in reading independently.

“The response is very good and we have students coming in during recess time to stay in the library to listen to us.”

Ms Lem Jia Jia, Parent Volunteer



RECOGNISING THEIR EFFORTS

Parent volunteers are always invited for school events and dinners such as Teachers' Day. At the end of the school year, parents are also given a Certificate of Appreciation. These efforts go a long way towards strengthening the school's relationship with the parents.

During Primary 1 Orientation each year, Qifa Primary encourages parents of incoming students to volunteer in the PSG. The school will share the different areas in which parents can help out, and parents will indicate their preferences.

“The parent volunteers are a very enthusiastic bunch. Some days, they come together in the morning for yoga.”

Ms Seow

A STRONG TRADITION

These parent volunteers are a close-knit group, motivated by the common goal of supporting students at Qifa Primary. Many of them go out of their way for the cause. Ms Chanthira Krishnan volunteers with the NLB kidsREAD club in school, which is for younger students from low-income families. Before she reads to the students, she makes sure to practise the stories with her son first. These stories double up as her son’s bedtime reading, and strengthens the mother-son relationship.

Some parents, such as Ms Regine Wong, continue to volunteer even after their children have graduated and are grown up. She is an active member of the PSG Executive Committee, and volunteers as a kidsREAD facilitator too. Ms Wong constantly promotes books to the students because she believes that reading is essential to their growth.



OTHER READING INITIATIVES

Mystery Reader

Once a week, a Mystery Reader will read aloud, and students will only find out who the reader is when they attend the reading session. The readers could be anyone, including the school leaders and teachers.

“My son likes Mystery Reader when it is read by the principal, because she helps him understand the stories through her expressions. It makes him see himself in that character.”

Ms Krishnan

Wondrous Wednesdays

On Wondrous Wednesdays, the Library Assistant conducts storytelling during recess. Students can also participate in related activities.

Wednesdays @ the Movies

After school hours, Wednesdays @ the Movies tempts students to read film adaptations of books.







Click here to watch the CHIJ Kellock Crowd Favourite video now!

CHIJ KELLOCK

“As a child, my father used to tell me that reading undoes poverty. It’s a stepping stone for anyone to pursue what they want in life.”

Mrs Shashi Kumar (Sri)
LH, English Language, Middle Primary

In CHIJ Kellock, there is something for everyone. Students are exposed to a variety of reading activities that are tailored to build their reading interest and capacity. These activities are anchored in the teaching and learning framework – Stretch, Strengthen and Support.

“I like to share stories with my girls, regardless of whether they are high ability or weaker readers. For the high ability readers, I introduce books every now and then, and encourage them to share among themselves. For the weaker readers, it is more of reading together with them.”

Ms Koh Wee Mong, Teacher, Chinese Language

STRETCH

CHALLENGE THE AVID READERS TO GO FURTHER

BOOK CAFÉ

Reading and eating? The best combination yet!

"I really like Book Café because the teachers introduce us to authors from other countries. For my level, we were assigned London.

They introduced J.K. Rowling and Beatrix Potter. They let us try shepherd's pie and English tea to expose us to the culture, and shared about English books and genres with us."

Charisse Lee, Primary 4



BLIND DATE WITH A BOOK

First introduced by a teacher to her Primary 2 class, this idea was adopted and expanded upon for English Fortnight.

Students wrapped up a book that they had read, and wrote a brief summary on the wrapper. They then found a partner to exchange books with.

To ensure that everyone could participate, students who were unable to afford a book were given one to read and exchange.

LIBRARY ALL-STARS PARTY @ THE NATIONAL LIBRARY

Top borrowers and students who regularly participate in library programmes get exclusive invitations to the All-Stars Party, where they get to play reading-related games.

“One of the games at the All-Stars Party that I tried out was the book hunt. It was very interesting and fun to hunt for books because there were different types and you could use the call numbers to find them.”

Dayanita Saminathan, Primary 3



STRENGTHEN

REINFORCE THE READING CULTURE IN SCHOOL

SUPER STORYTASTIC

“Initially it was more of a storytelling session for lower primary students. Then we were inspired by NLB’s Super Storytastic programme at the public libraries. We have adapted it for our students who are at risk in terms of their ability to read. We are also targeting the reluctant readers.”

Mrs Kumar

Super Storytastic is helmed by parent volunteers, who conduct fascinating storytelling sessions for the younger students. They use books that have been selected by the English Language Department. The parents tune the students in and role-play the characters in the stories to keep the students engrossed.

Upper primary students go through a modified version, in which movie clips and trailers are used to persuade them to read.

DROP EVERYTHING AND READ (DEAR)

“During DEAR, we allow them to bring in their own electronic devices. It doesn’t have to be a hardcopy book. Somehow, that’s a motivation factor for them to read and gain access to more books.”

Mrs Kumar

A protected period is set aside every morning for teachers and students to read. Music is piped in to create a conducive atmosphere for reading.



SUPPORT

PROVIDE THE NECESSARY HELP FOR WEAKER READERS

READING DADS AND MUMS

“We have very supportive parents who come early in the morning even before some of the students get in. They prepare materials for the programmes. If everyone plays a part, then I think any reading programme which we put forth will eventually see some success.”

Mrs Kumar

Parent volunteers guide Primary 3 and 4 students who are weak in their Mother Tongue Languages through storybooks, and thus help to strengthen the students’ language capabilities.

BUDDY READING

Primary 5 students guide Primary 1 and 2 students to read. The teachers extract familiar characters from the textbooks, and craft their own mini stories around the characters. With these, students quickly learn to read independently.

“For me, I feel that reading is one of the most important skills to learning a language. When I was in Primary 1, my Chinese Language teacher told us fantastic stories. We asked her how she knew so much, and her reply was that she had read a lot. That really inspired me to read.”

Ms Koh







Click here to watch the CHIJ Our Lady Queen of Peace Crowd Favourite video now!

CHIJ OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE

In CHIJ Our Lady Queen of Peace, the departments work very closely together to ensure that their students are exposed to a balanced range of books. The teachers believe that it is crucial for the students to see reading beyond just reading for language.

“We actually discuss with the different HODs in school, so that we can get their advice on the kinds of materials that are good for our girls to read. The SMART Mathematician magazines came about because I was discussing with the Mathematics Subject Head (SH), and liaising with the vendor at the same time.”

Mrs Joyce Lee-Ong, Library Coordinator

“Our approach is a whole school approach to reading. This vision applies to all the departments so when we have to do something – and also perhaps because we are a small school – there is this kampong spirit.”

Mrs Annabelle Woo-Tay, HOD, Curriculum & Innovation

EMPOWERING STUDENTS: LEARNING TO READ, READING TO LEARN

Over the past four years, Mrs Woo-Tay and Mrs Lee-Ong have explored different ways to deepen their students' love of reading. Here, they share what motivates them to champion reading in school.



Mrs Annabelle Woo-Tay
HOD, Curriculum & Innovation

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Mrs Woo-Tay started out as a Learning Support Coordinator for Primary 1 and 2 students who were weak in their literacy skills. She had students who could not read at all. She believed that reading was crucial to enable her students to keep up with what was being taught in class.

When Mrs Lee-Ong became the Library Coordinator in 2016, she wanted to make sure that students could read books at their own pace and in their own time. She sought to remove the need to return books to the school library by the due date. That, to her, was the essence of leisure reading.

She also believes that leisure reading will eventually develop into a lifelong habit. Thus, she places pre-loved books outside the school library on a regular basis.



Mrs Joyce Lee-Ong
Library Coordinator

WHO INSPIRES YOU?

Mrs Woo-Tay: My daughter! My daughter is only six years old and she is not picky about what she wants to read. As a result, we have all kinds of books at home – picture books and chapter books. We have books that are just silly – they amuse her.

Through her, I remember how much joy I had when I was reading books as a little girl. I think it is very important to have that sense of curiosity and enjoyment, even when you are an adult.

Mrs Lee-Ong: When I was in secondary school, I had a teacher who was always very calm and composed whenever she came to class. It is hard to be so when you have a class of Secondary 2 students who are monkeying around!

When she came to class, she would not say a single word to us. Instead, she would simply pick up a book to read aloud to the class. Over time, students went from “I can’t be bothered with you” to “I want to know and hear what you are reading.” Thus, the class settled down very quickly.

Now, I do this with the classes that I teach as well.

READING AT HOME AND IN SCHOOL

Mrs Woo-Tay: You need a village to raise a child.

Both teachers and parents have to realise why it is important to encourage a child to read, why it is important to participate in key reading programmes. Parents are actually very ready to be engaged.

Mrs Lee-Ong: I have just started reading *Matilda* by Roald Dahl. I started reading it because my son – who is five years old – likes to read only non-fiction books. So, I have been borrowing fiction books to read to him.

He is now slightly more willing to read picture books, but he still prefers books with real photographs, rather than illustrations.

For the girls that I teach, on the other hand, they read fiction books but steer away from non-fiction. Thus, I try to bring in some of my son’s reading preferences to read to my students. In turn, I also try to take home the fiction books that I have read to my students, so that I can inspire my son to develop a love of reading.

SIGNATURE PROGRAMMES

BUDDY READERS' CLUB

Student librarians partner budding readers from the Learning Support Programme (LSP), and read together for several mornings each week. They encourage the budding readers to read books that match their reading ability, and help them reach the target of reading one book a week. These student librarians also conduct peer-to-peer evaluation on the budding readers and track their progress. All this is done with minimal intervention from the school teachers.

To ensure that students can access suitable books easily, a Buddy Readers' Corner has been set up in the school library for them.



A SUCCESS STORY

Celine Chua, Primary 2, was struggling with the English Language when she first started school. She could not read or write any of the sight words. She joined the Buddy Readers' Club and was paired up with avid readers who helped her to read a book each week.

Celine went on to read competently on her own. More significantly, she has also progressed until she is able to guide new budding readers in the club.

"Reading is no longer difficult. I love reading!"

Celine

NEWSMAKER: PROMOTING NON-FICTION

“Our Primary 3 and 4 classes adopt a country to report on and they share it with the whole school during English Week. They develop confidence and it allows them to lead because they are sharing and advocating what they know.”

Mrs Woo-Tay

In the course of their assigned project, the students take on the role of a reporter. They read extensively to learn about the country of their focus, before distilling crucial information from the rest of the content that they have absorbed. They then put together a narrative so that they can create a report for the newscast.

In the research process, students are exposed to a great variety of information, both online and in books. They learn to be aware of the difference between reliable and unreliable sources, and privilege more useful information above unnecessary minutiae.

At the end of the project, students get to showcase their newscasts at the annual English Week in school.



MOO-O: STORYTELLING COMES ALIVE THROUGH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

When the school first embarked on Moo-O, Mrs Woo-Tay spent a year bouncing ideas back and forth with the provider to ensure that the digital storytelling platform was suitable for young children to use. She needed to ensure that Moo-O was user-friendly and able to achieve its objectives as a reading tool. Originally meant for students in the LSP, Moo-O was a huge success and was eventually rolled out to the entire Primary 1 and 2 levels.

“The students love the reading, as well as peer assessing their friends because it was more of ‘I can teach my friends how to pronounce a word’. This started a reading culture in the lower primary.”

Mrs Lee-Ong

On Moo-O, students inhabit characters within a story as they read it aloud. They watch their lines transform into animation on the spot, and can record or playback the story. When they listen in small groups, they provide feedback to one another. This self-directed, interactive learning platform thus enables students to immerse fully in reading, and builds confidence in them too.





Click here to watch the Seng Kang Primary Crowd Favourite video now!

SENG KANG PRIMARY SCHOOL

In Seng Kang Primary, the joy of reading is born out of a choice to read. Thus, they carve out conducive reading spaces in different parts of the school and make the process of reading as delightful as possible in imaginative ways.

They urge their students to read all the time, and diligently model reading each morning during silent reading sessions.

“You have to advocate the love of reading to the students. Let them experience the fun and build memories. The sweet memories of reading will encourage them to read more.”

Mrs Jasmine Chan, Senior Teacher, English Language

READING WHILE WAITING

Reading is a lifestyle at Seng Kang Primary. Students are expected to carry a storybook with them at all times, so that they can read whenever they have some time to fill.

This habit helps the students settle down more quickly. Students tend to reach for books whenever they are free, and are also exposed to the titles that their friends are reading.

“I started reading *Percy Jackson* because I saw that the boys in my class were really excited about the series. I tried to read one, and before I knew it, it was past lunch and I had finished the book!”

Arushi Pradhan, Primary 6

OUR STORYLAND

“The library is the heart of the school!”

With a moniker as inviting as Our Storyland, it is little wonder that the Seng Kang Primary school library is a popular place with its students. The library is decorated to look like a castle straight out of a fairy tale, replete with mossy stone walls, a portcullis, and a tall reading tree in the centre of its courtyard.



“Their range of books is very wide! I have never come across many of them. I am interested to read, and so I visit the library during my recess. My goal is to read all the books – I am about 30 percent through. I may not be able to finish, but I’ll try!”

Jade Goh, Primary 5

Many reading activities take place in the library. For example, storytelling sessions are conducted by student librarians and there are interactive thematic book displays set up to persuade students to explore various topics.

Once a fortnight during Library Period, students visit the library to browse books and learn about library user education. Lower primary teachers also borrow books in bulk for their classes, so that they can provide age-appropriate reading materials in their class libraries.



“The first teacher who introduced me to reading was my form teacher in Primary 1 and 2. She would share stories with our class, and I was fascinated by those stories. I went to the school library to find the books to read, and that was where my love of reading began. Even now, my teacher, Ms Tan, takes us to the library too. She reads her own books there, and sometimes, you can even borrow them from her!”

Arushi

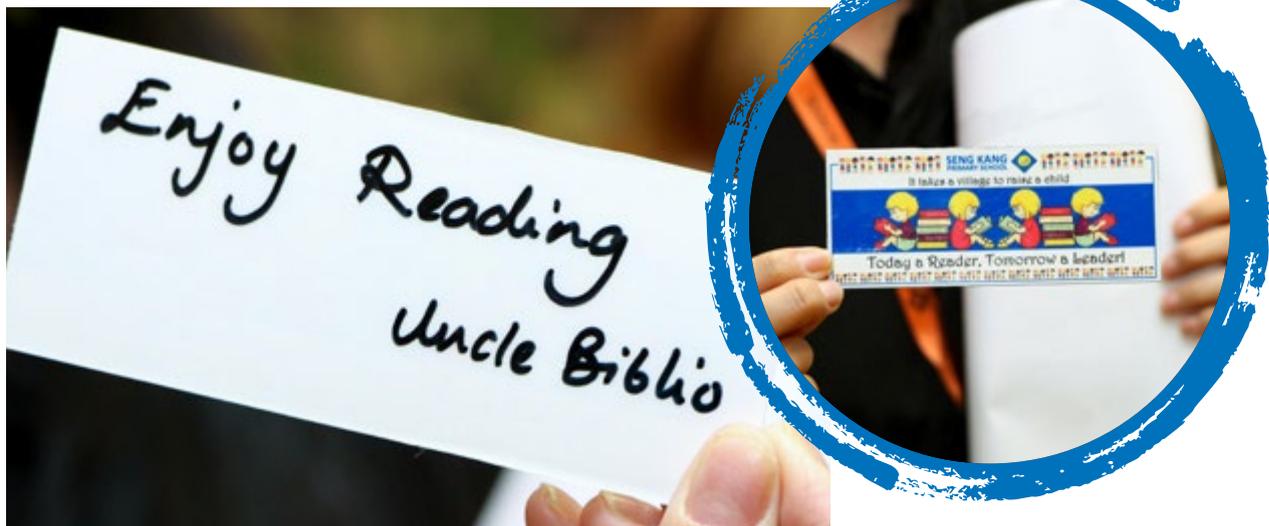
MEET UNCLE BIBLIO

“Although we always try our best to guess, we are never sure who he really is!”

In Seng Kang Primary, there is a mysterious man who wears a yellow coat with a matching fedora hat. He keeps his identity hidden behind large sunglasses and a black bandanna.

He pops up only when there are people reading, but he never says a word to them. Despite the deep mystery surrounding his true identity, the students adore him, and are always running to give him a high five.

Uncle Biblio often appears during silent reading sessions. Music heralds his arrival. However, the students bend their heads low and continue reading, because they know that Uncle Biblio will hand out a small gift to those whom he catches reading intently.



THE READING PARK @ SKPS

“Books are for sharing and not hoarding.”

Featuring a pay-it-forward tagline, the Reading Park is in a cosy nook between the canteen and parade square. Books are donated by teachers and students alike, for other students to read. Students can take the books home if they particularly enjoy them, or pass the books on to their friends when they are done reading.

There are book review templates for students to fill out upon reading a book. These book reviews then serve as recommendations to their peers. Short articles are also put up for students to read.





WHEN YOU WISH UPON A TREE

In Seng Kang Primary, some trees are truly magical. As a part of the annual Library Fortnight, which marks a two-week period that the library celebrates reading, students get a leaf each time they borrow two books. On the leaf, they write down the title of a book that they hope to receive before hanging the leaf up on a tree in the library.

By the end of the event, a few hundred leaves will have been hung up. 10 leaves are selected in a random draw, and the lucky students will get the books that they have wished for. The remaining leaves are tied to plants around the school as a subtle form of encouragement to students to read more.

CHARACTERS COME ALIVE

This activity is held at the start of the Library Fortnight. To bring the stories to life, teachers dress up as literary characters based on the set theme. Some notable characters that have come alive are Shrek, Long John Silver, Captain America, and Snow White.

“Students get very excited when they see the storybook characters come to life. It is fun, creative, novel! Students associate the characters with reading, and Characters Come Alive really encourages them to read.”

Mrs Chan

SPIN A TALE

During Library Fortnight, the cluster-wide Spin A Tale competition is also launched. The best storytellers from the six primary schools in the N1 cluster will pit their improvisational storytelling skills against one another.





Click here to watch the West Grove Primary Crowd Favourite video now!

WEST GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

“When I was eight years old, my teacher read to me. It sparked an interest in me, and I have never forgotten it. My teacher touched the heart of a future teacher, and I hope that if I spread this, the fire of our passion becomes bigger and we can inspire a reading nation.”

Mrs Nancy Tan-Chan
HOD, Information and Communications Technology & Media Resource Library



When Mrs Tan-Chan stepped up to take charge of the library at West Grove Primary, it was a quiet place. Only avid readers visited it. Now, barely three years on, the library bursts with life as students go about finding the books that they want to borrow or participate in various reading activities.

It all started with the West Grove Primary Media Resource Library (WGMRL) team that Mrs Tan-Chan built, and flourished under the support of her school leaders.

OF A SPIDER AND HER WISE WORDS

Growing up, Mr Tan Guodong, a Mathematics teacher, disliked reading. He only read stories with mathematical concepts in them so that he could introduce the books to his students. However, when Mr Tan joined the WGMRL team, he was tasked to conduct a lesson on the book, *Charlotte's Web*. That changed his life.

“This was where I actually started to read, and my passion for reading was ignited. Now, I enjoy working with the school reading ambassadors because I have to read what they read so that we can have critical conversations together.”

In Mrs Tan-Chan's team, the teachers teach different subjects. They help to ensure that the school library is able to support different departments, including Science, Aesthetics, Values Education, Social Studies, and Physical Education.

A NEW DIRECTION

“The whole idea is to promote a reading culture. That is a very simple objective – the only difference is how we carry out our programmes to meet the objective.”

Mr Tan

West Grove Primary identifies students who are keen to talk about reading to their peers. These are the students who will eventually deliver the reading activities in school.

SCHOOL READING AMBASSADORS (SRAs)

Many of the students who become SRAs do so because of their love of reading. They participate in workshops by NLB librarians to pick up skills such as storytelling, book talking, writing book reviews, and building book displays. They are also taught extensive information literacy skills, so that they can research on reading-related content for their peers.



Each SRA is then required to conduct a book talk to the whole school, based on a single, simple criterion: the book that is recommended has to be a book that is not commonly read by their peers. Students must produce their own presentation materials for these talks as well.

SRAs also conduct regular storytelling sessions at the public libraries, and participate in nationwide literary competitions.

PERKS FOR THE SRAs

Each SRA receives a special badge upon the completion of their first stage presentation. They also get to borrow more books from the school library. Better yet, the SRAs go on excursions to the places that they have read about in their books, such as a chocolate factory like the one in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* or an animal farm related to *Charlotte's Web*.



"I became an SRA because I wanted to share the magic of storybooks with everybody. Soon, I am going to Primary 6 and will be ready to pass on my place to the new SRAs. I hope they will introduce more books to the school. I want them to remember that SRAs are not to be underestimated!"

Du Ren Siang, Primary 5

SIGNATURE READING ACTIVITIES

Besides the SRAs, West Grove Primary shows book covers during morning assembly to entice students to borrow new books. They issue regular newsletters and run monthly contests to increase the awareness of reading among their students.

WEST GROVE READING FESTIVAL

This annual festival introduces students to literary themes and genres through entertaining activities that are held in the library. Stations are set up for students where they get to answer quiz questions, recreate storybook characters using simple props, and race to find books based on call numbers.

Teachers contribute reviews of their favourite childhood books, and these reviews are accompanied by colourful book covers. Students read the reviews and are motivated to borrow the books.



PROJECT O.W.L. – OUTSTANDING, WITTY, LEARNED

This project has three objectives. Firstly, students must become familiar with library user education; secondly, students who do not visit the library have to be encouraged to do so; and thirdly, students are to be greatly exposed to the library environment.

Every term, each class spends an hour in the school library. There, the students learn about books and information literacy. They learn how to select a good book, find out more about genres, and how to conduct research.

As the students graduate from level to level, they explore these topics more deeply. Through this, the students become comfortable with the library and its books.

DIY FOR GREATER CUSTOMISATION

West Grove Primary has worked very closely with NLB to bring reading activities to their students over the past four years. Additionally, they have customised the activities for targeted groups of students.

They translated the NLB Dare to Read game book – in which the act of reading is expanded into a DIY game – for their Reading Festival. Subsequently, they simplified it for Primary 1 and 2 students.



In the process of customisation, the teacher-in-charge, Mdm Koh Shini, SH, Information and Communications Technology & Media Resource Library, identified areas where the learning experiences for lower primary students could be enhanced. The resulting activity booklet incorporates opportunities for social and emotional learning, as well as collaborative learning through interaction.

Mdm Tang Oi Khum from the Chinese Language department translated the content for the Primary 3 students. In the process, she also changed some of the activities to reflect the nuances of the language.

West Grove Primary has since shared the game book online at NLB's [discoverReads](#).

WEST GROVE PRIMARY KIDS' LIT QUIZ™ (KLQ)

KLQ is an international competition on literary trivia. West Grove Primary has adapted the competition format into a school-wide version for their students, in a bid to drum up excitement over books and generate conversations about books.

They were innovative and this enabled them to easily conduct KLQ for the masses. Firstly, instead of having open-ended questions, they added multiple choices to each question. This allowed the students to deliver the correct answer more quickly.

Secondly, they incorporated the use of an electronic device that allowed students to indicate their responses easily on a large screen for everyone else to see. The score could also be easily tabulated based on what the students have selected.



Students relish the competition, and the school library has since seen an increase in the number of visitors and loans because students rush to try and get the books featured in the quiz.

“We went for KLQ and modified the competition to suit our school. The game format of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* was used to enhance the activity. We didn't want the child to feel bored, so we made it as interesting as we could.”



Mrs Tan-Chan





Click here to watch the Yu Neng Primary Crowd Favourite video now!

YU NENG PRIMARY SCHOOL

“In the future, Yu Neng Primary will be a community space for the learners in our school. We could have a speech and drama corner. It could be a working area and also a place where children express their opinions and creative ideas. We have a lot of ideas. We are working towards realising this future.”

Mdm Sitti Zainon Hassan, Library Coordinator

Teachers at Yu Neng Primary seek to ignite an interest in reading in their students, so that everyone reads extensively in school. Many of the students are visual learners, and so, the teachers adopt a multisensory approach to make books come alive. For example, they incorporate skits and costumes to help students relate to the stories.

Lower primary students are regularly exposed to storytelling by teachers during lessons and at recess. At times, book distributors who market their books at the monthly book fairs will excite the students with their well-scripted skits to promote reading.

Middle and upper primary students get their fortnightly copies of the Little Red Dot publication so that they can discuss the ideas that they come across.

The school continues to encourage reading and literacy during the English Week activities. English Language teachers are also supported by their colleagues from different departments, as well as volunteers.

WORKING SMART

Yu Neng Primary has enhanced reading opportunities for their students by identifying strategic partnerships.

WITH THE TEMASEK POLYTECHNIC – BRITISH PETROLEUM MENTORING CLUB

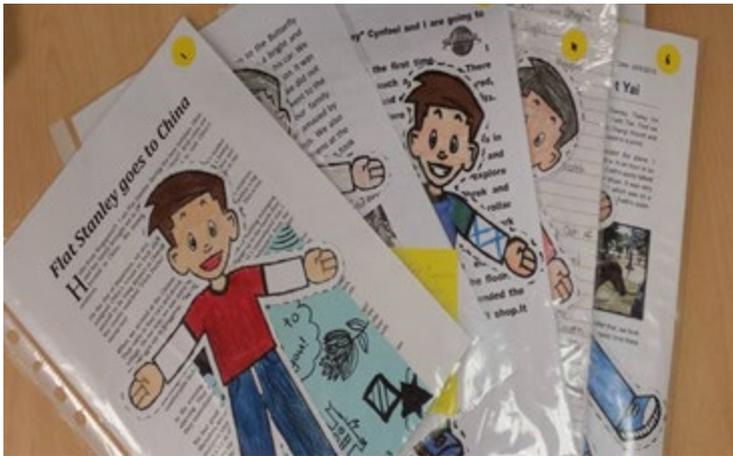
The school partnership with the mentoring club has its roots in Ms Lee's days as a polytechnic student. Then, already knowing that she wanted to be a teacher, she joined the club because it gave her the chance to interact with primary school students. Thus, when she was looking for programmes for the annual English Week, she saw an opportunity to invite the club members to volunteer their creativity and design reading-related games for her students.

The polytechnic volunteers worked together with the Yu Neng Primary Library Club members and co-created six game booths. Each game booth was based on a selected book suitable for Primary 1 to 6 students. They had discussions about the characters and plot, before identifying language and grammar features that could be taught through the games.



Ms Lee Hui Shan
Library Coordinator





WITH THE SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL (HONG KONG)

As part of their globalisation initiative, the English Language Department selected a Primary 2 class to partner their counterparts at the Singapore International School in Hong Kong. They embarked on the Flat Stanley Project, in which they read stories from the popular children's series, *Flat Stanley's Worldwide Adventures*, and went on related learning journeys. Then, they exchanged letters in which they described their experiences.

INSPIRED BY OTHERS

In 2011, some teachers attended a financial literacy workshop, and came up with an idea they termed "Money Sense". In Money Sense, students would learn how to be prudent with their money, and be able to distinguish between needs and wants. Over time, the idea grew to become a signature programme for Primary 3 students. In this programme, students get the chance to visit the Singapore Coins and Notes Museum by the Singapore Mint.

To link financial prudence with reading, the teachers extracted a chapter from Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. In it, Charlie decided against buying a bar of chocolate so that he could use the money saved to buy food for his hungry family. The students performed this scene in a readers' theatre, and participated in a creative writing exercise as well.

Ms Lee has big dreams for her Primary 1 students. Young as they are, she aims to nurture them into confident readers and independent thinkers. She believes that the best way to achieve her dreams is to expose her students to current affairs. Every day, for five minutes, she reads the newspaper to them.

Her students have responded very well – they are visibly excited when the noon break comes around, and readily volunteer to choose the news article to be read aloud. One of them, Angel Tan, also selects articles to put up onto the class bulletin board regularly.

“I want them to be confident and able to fight for what they believe in - with good morals and values. I want them to be very expressive. In short, I want them to lead and stand out in the crowd.”

Ms Lee

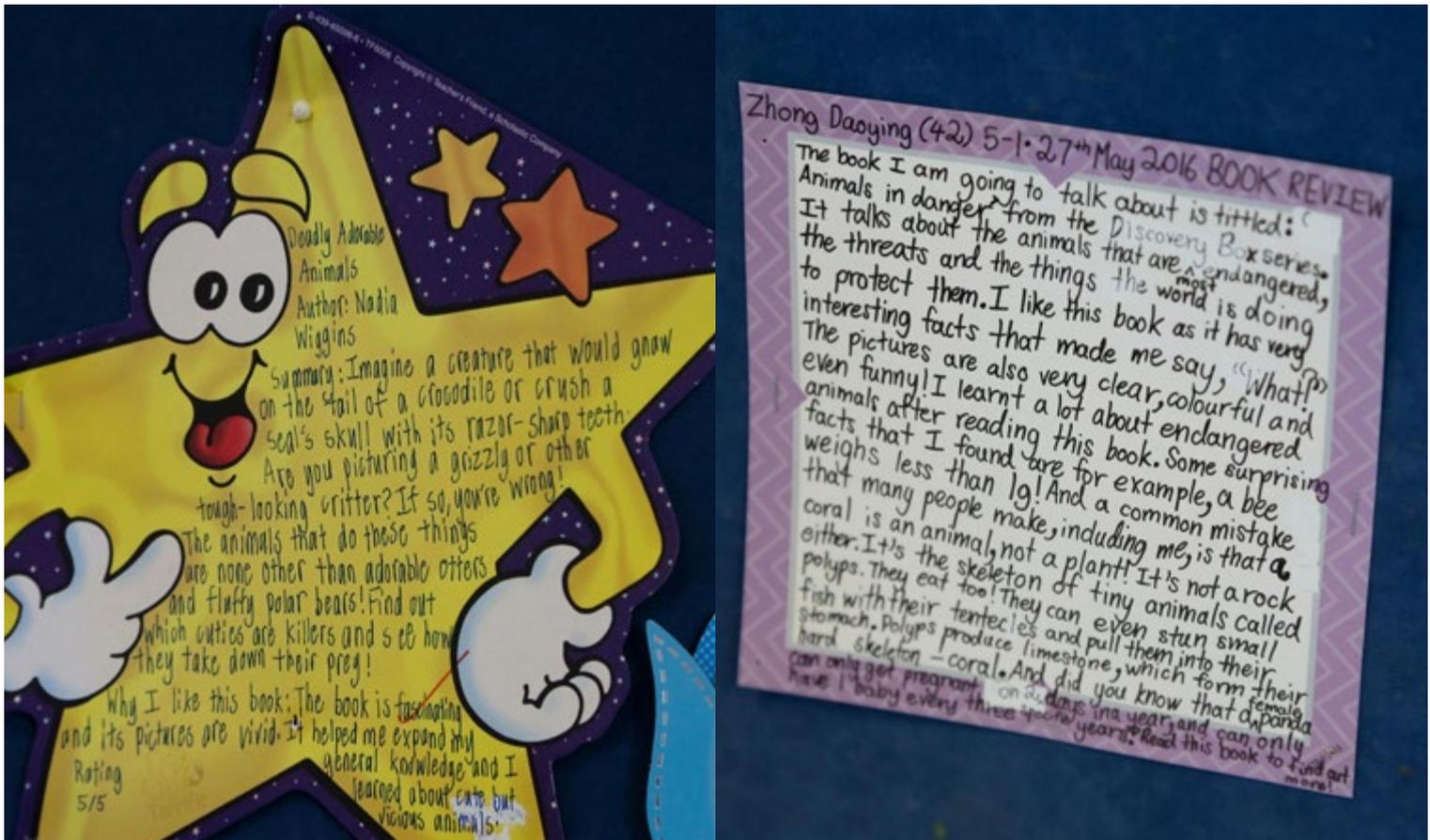


Ms Lee: It is my passion to see my students learn to read, and enjoy reading by themselves.

I like to think of a reluctant reader as a child with a picky eating habit. We need to understand his or her preferences, and recommend books that will entice the child to “eat”, or in this case, read.

Sometimes, we have to try methods that are out of the ordinary to get a child to read. After all, reading must be a pleasurable experience for our children.

WHY DO YOU CHAMPION READING?







ZHENGHUA PRIMARY SCHOOL

What goes into a successful reading programme? A sprinkle of fun, a pinch of creativity, and a dash of enthusiasm!

The teachers are inspired by the ideas and strategies that they encounter, and reinvent or modify them for their classroom use. NLB reading activities are redesigned to fit into their school curriculum, while information technology is tapped on to expand learning beyond the classroom.

“We do our own research and learn from other schools that have best practices. We share ideas with one another and come up with new initiatives or improve on existing ones to strengthen the reading culture in our school.”

Ms Lee Wei Ai, LH, English Language

The English Language department has expanded upon NLB’s Read, Reap, Write activity packages so that they can be used extensively in school. Extracts are drawn from fiction books of different genres that are available in the school library.

Activities are designed to relate to the extracts. For example, students have to predict the ending of a story or draw a comic strip of a particular scene.

Teachers also introduce recommended books based on the genres featured.

A SPRINKLE OF FUN

BOOK TRAIL AND BOOK DAY

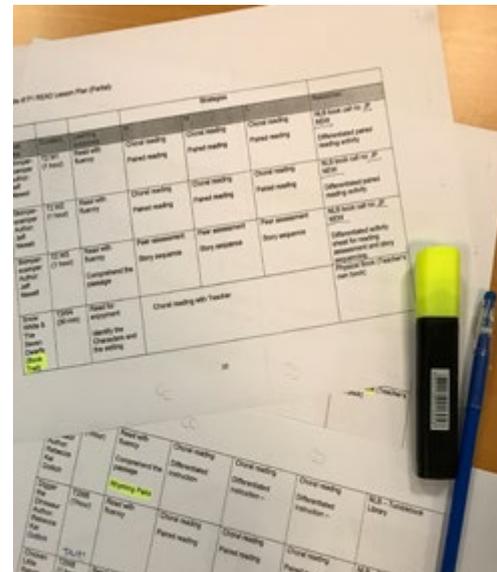
For the lower primary students, teachers came up with reading booklets that incorporate book themes such as fairytales, Aesop's fables and Singapore stories. These booklets are accompanied by reading-related activities such as guessing who the characters are and piecing together the plots of well-loved stories.



EL READ

Primary 1 and 2 students have their English Language periods structured around reading activities, so that students get to develop a better understanding of the books that they read in class.

To achieve maximum efficiency, the teachers also share resources and progress updates with one another.



HOT SEATING

Originally a strategy developed by NIE for teaching Social Studies, Zhenghua Primary has incorporated Hot Seating in their English Language lessons as part of NLB's Read, Reap, Write.

The student who sits in the hot seat takes on the role of a character in the book that the extract is from, and has to field questions from the character's perspective. He or she can make up the answers so long as they are reasonable within the character's universe.

As such, students have a wonderful time building backstories for the characters and unpacking the intricacies of the story.

"My favourite activity is Hot Seating! It plunges us into the characters' perspectives. When we were reading *Charlotte's Web*, my teacher chose two students to be Charlotte and Mr Arable. They had to sit in front of the class to answer questions."

Megan Lim, Primary 4

A PINCH OF CREATIVITY



A DASH OF ENTHUSIASM

The MTL department uses a diverse range of materials such as class readers, newspapers and even eBooks to generate reading interest among their students.

TALKING POINT

Students also get the opportunity to share books with the whole school! Every term, the book sharing takes place in four languages.

CLASS READERS

To help their students develop good learning habits and make reading materials readily available, every classroom has its own set of readers in the English and Mother Tongue Languages. Students are very curious about what their friends are reading, and often eagerly ask to exchange books after they are done reading.

“My teacher will take out the box of books, and my classmates and I will pick a book each to read. After that, we will share with the class what we have learnt. I get to read a lot of books from different genres.”

Minh Duc, Primary 3



CERITA RAKYAT NUSANTARA eBOOK APP

Students in Primary 2 use the app to access different books to read in class. They get particularly excited when they can scan the QR codes to find specific stories. The use of technology also enables the weaker readers to learn how words sound.



WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO NEW TEACHERS?



“Never be afraid to try new things even though there is resistance or there are challenges, because if you think of the challenges, you will never get it done. Just do it!”

Ms Lee Wei Ai
LH, English Language

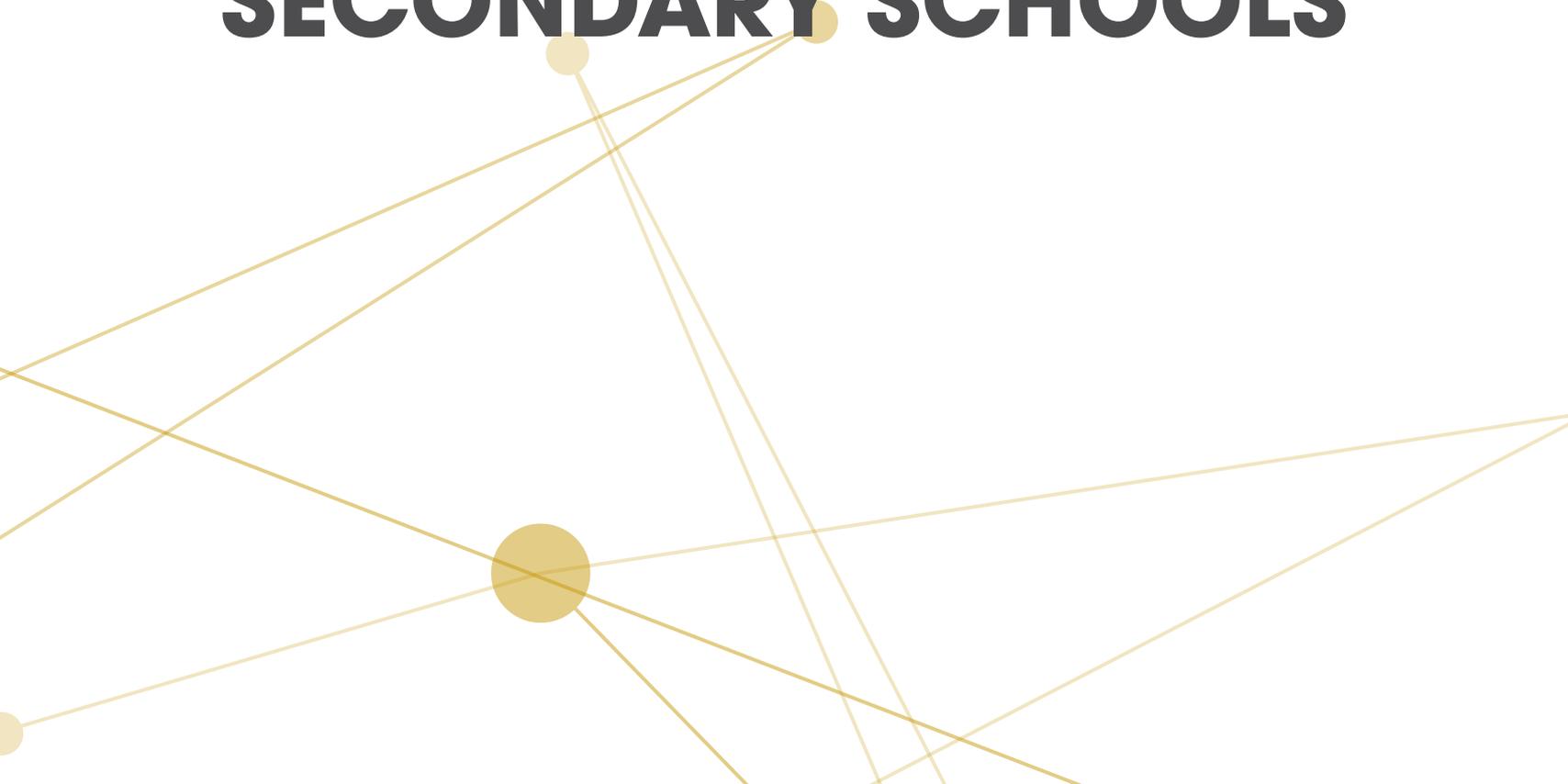
Don't stay in your comfort zone for too long. You have to get out of the comfort zone and try new things. You never know. It may just work for your school!”

Mdm Eileen Ng
Teacher, English Language





SECONDARY SCHOOLS





Click here to watch the Clementi Town Secondary Crowd Favourite video now!



CLEMENTI TOWN SECONDARY SCHOOL

"If one only works hard at conduct, but does not study books,
Then one relies only on one's own views, and remains ignorant of true reason."

"Di Zi Gui", No. 163 – 164

"READ@CTSS motivates you to read, because you see the school leaders and everyone else reading."

Zen Tan, Secondary 1

MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Today, Clementi Town Secondary students read in school for pleasure and by choice. However, this was not always the case. In the early and mid-2000s, students predominantly read the newspapers or prescribed materials by their teachers.

In 2013, students were surveyed and many were found to be disinterested in or apathetic towards reading. They preferred to play games or engage in social media on their mobile phones. Thus, READ@CTSS was launched to promote a love of reading across languages.

The school formed a reading committee comprising English and MTL teachers. This committee ensures that reading across languages remains a priority in the school curriculum.

READ@CTSS – WHAT IT MEANS

READING for pleasure and general understanding

ENHANCEMENT of good reading habits

AWARENESS that reading broadens experience and knowledge

DEVELOPMENT of reading competencies



Hemalatha D/O Ravinthran
Secondary 3

READING IS...DISCOVERING

"You will enjoy reading when you get to decide what you want to read."

To Hemalatha, reading enables her to discover a world outside of what she knows. Furthermore, the new things that she discovers inspire her to read more. She relishes discovering books with unique storylines, because she admires the amount of effort and creativity that went into the writing process.

READING IS...MAKING TIME

"I do have friends who read, but when you see our elders reading despite a busy schedule, it's very inspiring."

The school principal, Mrs Helen Tan, frequently quotes from articles that she has come across, and is very knowledgeable because of how much she reads. Hemalatha is enthused, and aspires to be like her when she grows up.

READING IS...BEING EXPOSED TO STORIES

"Whenever I wanted to buy books, my parents would always agree. However, when I wanted to buy other things, my parents would refuse."

As a child, Ms Eng was influenced by her grandmother, who would tell her many stories. Curious about the stories, she would then try to find the books to read. Her parents also provided her with many books, and nurtured in her a lifelong habit of reading.

Now, she believes that all it takes is 15 minutes to interest someone in a book, and he or she will want to continue reading to the end of the story.



Ms Eng Chia Lee
Teacher-in-charge
MTL Reading Programme

READING IS...INNOVATING

“The reading programmes in my primary school got me started on reading because I did not have a reading role model then.”

Ms Sia believes that so long as she can reach out to as many students as possible in different ways, she can coax her students to enjoy reading as much as she does. Already, she is seeing more students reading books as they wait for their teachers to come to class.

She is careful to select a wide-ranging collection for the school library, and tries to design creative reading activities that appeal to her students. She draws ideas from all over, ranging from Pinterest to professional development workshops.

Moving forward, she wants to incorporate fiction and non-fiction in a single reading activity. She is also exploring how she can use paper origami to bring to life the short story, “The Paper Menagerie”.



Ms Karen Sia
Library Coordinator



A GROWING COMMUNITY OF READERS

Twice a week, students spend time reading a range of materials, including newspapers, novels, magazines, periodicals, and even comics. On Wednesdays, they read in their Mother Tongue Languages; on Thursdays, they read in the English Language.

To promote reading, teachers also make sure that they are attuned to the students' preferences. The school library has reading materials that are popular, including a wide range of Japanese manga, Chinese Language comics and contemporary graphic novels.

OTHER NOTABLE READING INITIATIVES

Students and teachers alike can ask for books that they are interested in, and the library will obtain lending copies of the recommended titles.

The library is also bustling with different reading activities. There are movie appreciation afternoons and innovative book displays. Golden tickets are also hidden in books to encourage students to read.

“Some of the golden ticket hunt winners were from the Normal Technical stream – they like to read comics, and it is a source of encouragement for them when they find tickets in the comic books.”

Ms Karen Sia, Library Coordinator

RETHINKING PICTURE BOOKS

Chinese Language teachers make use of picture books, including wordless books, so that students can create their own stories based on the illustrations.



LITERATURE MOSAIC

Different plays, novels and poems come to life in this segment as students select various English texts to dramatise in a short video.



SOCRATIC QUESTIONING

Students are encouraged to analyse, question, infer, and explore texts and images that they have read, so that they can develop into creative and critical thinkers.



READING AND REFLECTING

When school is out for the term, students are still encouraged to read. There are fun reading-related holiday assignments such as developing character sketches or rewriting story endings.



“What gets people to want to continue to read is that they get to discuss what they have learnt from the text or what they think about certain characters. In the discussion, you find a community of people who are reading together.”

Ms Sia



Click here to watch the Bukit Merah Secondary Crowd Favourite video now!



Reading Excellence
Award 2017
Second Place (Secondary)

BUKIT MERAH SECONDARY SCHOOL

At Bukit Merah Secondary, the values that underpin reading are deceptively simple – *every educator a reading role model, and every student a reader*. In short, these values demonstrate that reading begins with the principal and does not end until every last student is reading.

Many students who enter at Secondary 1 do not have the habit of reading. Thus, the school sees its role as one providing the impetus for students to read, and subsequently find the enjoyment in reading.



EVERY EDUCATOR A READING ROLE MODEL

Books are integral to each staff member's professional development. Each year, every teacher receives a personal copy of the same book, and different departments take turns to share what they have gathered from the book during Contact Time. There is a well-stocked library in the staffroom that not only has books for professional development but also for leisure reading.

PRINCIPAL'S SELECTIONS

"The principal actually purchased books on his own for the students. He says that he loves books, and had done it before at his previous schools. He goes about doing so by observing what the teenagers are reading."

Mr Satwant Singh, HOD, Student Development

"It is a labour of love to curate titles for students to select and borrow. The key is to ensure a regular inflow of titles that students can look forward to whenever they visit the school library. It is much better to inject small batches of books at regular intervals than to have a large, one-off acquisition exercise, because this sustains continued interest among readers.

"When acquiring books, it pays to stay current, and library coordinators should keep up with upcoming titles online. I was fortunate to have a wonderful school librarian who suggested titles to me based on what the students had recommended to her."

Mr Sim Chong Boon, Outgoing Principal



A SCHOOL LEADER ON READING

What is the school leader's role?

"It is to champion and communicate the relevance and love of reading to the school community. School leaders work through existing structures such as the language departments to sustain efforts in nurturing a reading culture, for it is important that teachers teach their students reading skills.

"School leaders may also strategically partner stakeholders or institutions to enrich the resources and experiences available to students. My School Advisory Committee has been generous in funding the purchase of books in the Mother Tongue Languages. NLB has a variety of reading activities which the school has benefitted from over the years."

What advice can you give your peers in other schools?

"Leverage the energies of your staff members, especially those who have a passion for reading. They can help to drive reading programmes, and many of them have good ideas. For instance, I had a teacher who mooted and implemented a book exchange initiative for the students to swap their used books with one another."

Mr Sim



Two teachers share what they think about reading:

WHAT DOES READING MEAN TO YOU?

To Mr Satwant, reading is life. When he was young, he grew up in an illiterate family. His first exposure to the libraries was when the Toa Payoh Public Library first opened its doors. He started reading, and it transformed his life.

Similarly for Ms Fong, her love of reading grew out of her regular visits to the library. Over time, she became exposed to different kinds of books and reading became a lifestyle.



Mr Satwant Singh
HOD, Student Development

WHAT ARE YOUR FAVOURITE READING ACTIVITIES?

In Ms Fong's case, she enjoys Book A Book, a reading activity in which students choose a title from a preset list of books. These books are heavily subsidised by the school.

She is very heartened when she sees her students bringing their books to class and talking to one another about what they have read. Some of her students will also ask her if they can continue to read the other books in the list.

For Mr Satwant, he enjoys having book talks during school assembly periods. When NLB promotes books in school, he notices that students pay a lot of attention and are deeply immersed in the librarian's engaging presentation. He likes to talk about books to his students, and tries to help them to relate to the story.



Ms Chloe Fong
Teacher, English Language

EVERY STUDENT A READER

EXTENSIVE READING

Periodicals and magazines are selected based on students' reading abilities and interests, and are accompanied by post-reading activities.

"Reading is magical. It's my hobby."

Queenie Sim
Secondary 3



SCHEDULED READING TIME

The school timetable has a protected period for reading each day, in hopes that students will go on to make reading a part of their daily lives.

"A form of escape! Reading helps to relieve stress. It is a big part of my life. Reading is indescribable."

Elodie Lieu
Secondary 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

"I like to go to the school library as the location is convenient. Though there are not many books in the school library, the selection caters to my needs."

Elijah James, Secondary 2

"When there are library activities, it makes people want to know more about what reading can do. People prefer to have fun, and the activities show that reading can be fun too."

Elodie

10 students, 10 bean bags. This is one "chillax" corner in the school library where lower secondary students can participate in the **Book Whisperers** activity and talk about the books that thrill them.

Student librarians set up **monthly thematic displays** to promote books of various themes and genres. The displays feature themes such as Celebrating Friendship, Books to Movies, and the Secret World of Spies. There are reading-related activities to reel students in.

A **Book Feast** is held each January to encourage students to borrow books from the school library. English Language teachers will take their classes to visit the library and conduct post-reading activities that relate to the books read.



Click here to watch the Edgefield Secondary Crowd Favourite video now!



Reading Excellence
Award 2017
Third Place (Secondary)

EDGEFIELD SECONDARY SCHOOL

“They just haven’t found the books that speak to them yet.”

Mr Brennan Kwa, Reading Coordinator

In Edgefield Secondary, reading is a visible priority all over the school. Students are often seen with books, reading titles that have been promoted to them during reading activities.

Those who have yet to embrace the reading culture are not considered reluctant readers. Instead, the teachers believe that once these students find the right book, they will start to enjoy reading.

“I got to know all these genres through my teacher and she said the school library has books from these genres. Sometimes, during my free periods, I will come and look for the books.”

Nicole Ng, Secondary 3

All the departments are involved when it comes to creating a haven of books in the school library. As a result, many different types of books are readily available. Each term, the library also features a different thematic book display, and runs activities to encourage students to delve deep into the books.

“They have a lot of fiction and non-fiction books that are suitable for students my age. They are always adding more books.”

Leo Oh, Secondary 3

To cater to different student needs, as well as to satiate the avid reader's hunger, Edgefield Secondary serves up many different types of reading activities.

AN EXTENSIVE MENU

Once a week, at the end of the school day, there is an extra period known as the intensive reading period. During this time, students get to read and discuss articles with one another.

The content is painstakingly crafted by dedicated English Language teachers, who ensure that every level and stream is catered to. The articles are reviewed regularly and feedback from the students and teachers are taken seriously. Articles that are found to be too boring or outdated are replaced or refreshed.

The response from the students has been very positive too.

"There are QR codes that you can scan to watch videos. My favourite was the one about how people had surgery to increase their height. In the surgery, they drilled the nail inside the bone, and added metal things. Some surgeries are successful, some are not. However, people go through it because they want to be beautiful."

Nicole



"For me, it was interesting because I was assigned health as a theme and I thought it was so dry it would be terrible. Then I heard a couple of teachers discussing mental health and realised that it was a really interesting topic!"

Mr Kwa

BOOK SHARINGS

Teachers in Edgefield Secondary frequently introduce new books to students. The students respond very well – the books fly off the library shelves immediately afterwards.

“I tried to find the book in the library. My teacher shared about it once. It’s not there. I think someone has already borrowed it. I’ve looked for it at least four times, but it’s never there.”

Padre Daniella Marco, Secondary 3

The book sharing sessions also expand the students’ reading horizons. For one student, it was because her teacher introduced James Patterson that she began to read his writing, and crime fiction eventually became her favourite genre of books.

Students are also starting to recommend books to their friends. There is only one rule – *share the book that you like*.

“They take it very seriously. We give our feedback on their presentations too.”

Ms Tan Yih Tyan, HOD, English Language



DIY WICKED READS

Designed by NLB to target reluctant readers, Wicked Reads is a reading activity based on a self-contained extract from a book. Students will also complete interactive activities that help to connect the extract with their life experiences.

Originally facilitated by an NLB librarian, Wicked Reads grew so popular that the teachers adapted it into a DIY format and expanded it to appeal to readers of all levels. They customised it to their individual class requirements, and this ensured the sustainability and reach of the reading activity.

NEWSCASTS

Television screens at Edgefield Secondary frequently broadcast multilingual newscasts which are produced in-house by the students at the Innovation & Enterprise Studio in school. They take ownership of the creative process from blank slate to final product.

- 1** Students are given a topic. The topics are about values such as empathy and kindness. The topics may be repeated but the newscasts can be different.
- 2** Students research the topic and decide on the material that they want to present.
- 3** Students script their newscast and select an accompanying music video that will be shown after each newscast.
- 4** Students film and edit their newscast, with assistance from their peers in the Audio and Visual Aid Club, or under the guidance of a Technical Assistant.

“Since it’s our friends who are doing it, we pay more attention than if it was by a person whom we are not familiar with. Since we are familiar with our friends, we want to know more about them so we listen.”

Daniella

“NOW I’M GOING TO LEARN CHINESE!”

In a bid to lessen the stress of having to write imaginatively during the Chinese Language composition examinations, Edgefield Secondary has rebranded the off-dreaded exercise into an annual Chinese Essay Writing Competition.

“It interests us because it’s a competition, so people will always want to do well in it and thus put more effort in planning out their essays.”

Nicole

The essays are collected and published in two books – *Model Essays for Lower Secondary* and *Model Essays for Upper Secondary* – and are sold nationwide in leading bookstores. Students also receive a small royalty fee and free copies of the publications.







Click here to watch the Hwa Chong Institution Crowd Favourite video now!

HWA CHONG INSTITUTION

“I think reading is a way for me to understand the world. I don’t mean it in the clichéd way of simply learning new things. More so, I can pick up on the nuances that reflect an author’s worldview or perspective on specific issues. Getting to know these different viewpoints is always good because I can then see things differently.”

Wong Yihao, Secondary 2

Hwa Chong prepares its students for the global stage by turning them into global citizens. The school leaders perceive reading as crucial to the process of doing so, and include it as a key strategic thrust in the academic framework.

Called “Reading and Reasoning”, the strategic thrust is then turned into an operational framework for teachers to incorporate into their lesson plans. They have been so successful that their framework has been shared internationally with the Global Learning Alliance.

CHAMPIONING READING

“I guess I feel very strongly as a reader that it is very important for students to read.”

Ms Susan Soh, Senior Consultant for Library, seeks to instill a love of reading in her students because of her father. He is an avid reader and continues to read widely even though he is nearly 70 years old. She recalls her father taking her to the National Library as a child, and she would spend hours searching for interesting books in the children’s section.



“I decided I would focus on championing reading.”

Having been teaching in Hwa Chong for nine years, Ms Soh has tried out many different portfolios. She decided to concentrate on advocating reading because she no longer saw students holding books to read. It prompted her to wonder how she could do so in innovative ways. Now, she tries to use new media to promote books and organise unusual activities to excite the students to read.

Ms Soh realised that some students were not responding well to online book recommendations by the Library Council because the medium did not suit them. Initially, the recommendations were posted on the school electronic message board, but that was perceived to be too restrictive. Subsequently, the Library Council used their own website, but few students accessed it.

“For 2017, we are thinking of going onto Instagram and have only a very short description of the book. Hopefully, that will help!”

READING INITIATIVES

Students read at the start of each day for 20 minutes. They read from a wide variety of sources, including newspapers, current affairs magazines, and online news websites.

Older students have the autonomy to decide what they prefer to read, and can source for reading materials online.

Their reading is extended when the language teachers carry out follow-up activities in class. These include conducting online forum discussions, completing vocabulary exercises, or writing newspaper reports.

BOOK CROSS SHELVES

Students can leave books in designated areas for their peers to pick up and read. Book Cross shelves are placed around the school campus and this encourages the spirit of sharing.



READING FICTION

Students enjoy a sabbatical reading week at the end of each term. For an hour a day, they read for leisure. They have the freedom to choose what they want to read. These precious hours go a long way in expanding their reading diets so that they are exposed to a good mix of fiction and non-fiction.

There are cool activities to pull together what they have read, and these include share-a-book competitions, book circles, and poster competitions.

RELUCTANT READERS ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

In the same week, reluctant readers take part in Relishing Reading, a programme that seeks to motivate them to read extensively in the English Language.

For example, when they read a collection of short stories based on realistic drawings, the students go around campus taking photographs before writing their own creative stories based on the images.

LIBRARY COUNCIL

LIBRARY INITIATIVES

Students in the Library Council are given free rein to design reading activities that would interest their peers. The library teachers serve as consultants, and are often willing participants in the activities themselves.

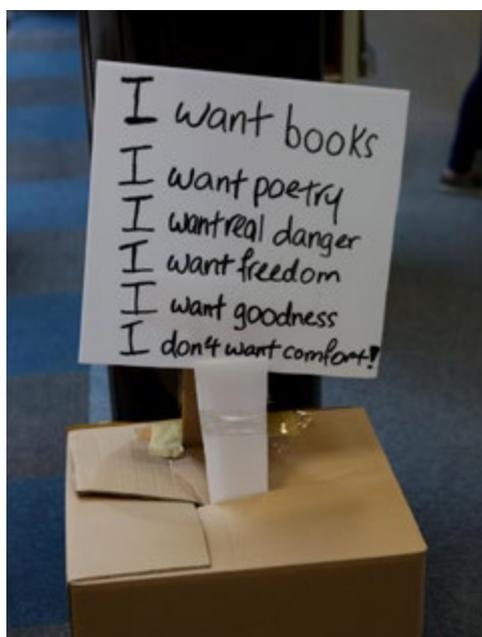
There are **MINI COMPETITIONS** based on books. Students are invited to design a timeline for the chain of events in the plot or rewrite the story ending.

Teachers talk about books they enjoy reading in **INTERVIEWS WITH TEACHERS**, and the videos are posted on the school library website.

The Library Council's full schedule also includes **BRIEF ASSEMBLY TALKS** on English Language and Chinese Language books.

They sell pre-loved books at very low prices (S\$0.50 to S\$2) during Library Week and in support of World Book Day. The money collected is then donated to the Needy Pupil Fund.





LIBRARY LOCKDOWN

Inspired by NLB's escape-the-room reading activity of the same name, Library Council members designed their own mystery room to challenge their peers. Students were tested on their knowledge of the mystery genre to gain bonus time to escape the room.

Their main objective? To change the commonly held impression that the library is a dull place.

“Many students feel that reading is a chore, especially when they are reading a thick book. The library council combines reading with games, such as Library Lockdown, so that students can view reading in a whole different light. Students tend to prefer to be engaged in games, and from these games, they can find out about new titles and pick them up to read if they are interested.”

Eugene Tang, Secondary 4, Library Council Chairman





Click here to watch the Riverside Secondary Crowd Favourite video now!

RIVERSIDE SECONDARY SCHOOL

In Riverside Secondary, teachers have been very innovative in getting their students to read. They pepper school time with digestible bits of reading, and immerse students in stories by running extensive programmes during the Language and Literature Week. Because of this, many students count their teachers among their reading role models.

“Our school vision is to create a caring community in a challenging global environment. Reading fits perfectly into our school vision, because, when students read, they get to take on a different perspective, experience different lives, step out of their comfort zones, and think from the characters’ perspectives. We hope that they will then be able to use the same approach in their daily lives.”

Ms Nithiyaa Muthu Kumar, Teacher, English Literature

“I had a student who was very reluctant to read. However, because of the reading activities that we organised, the day came when I saw him reading a book. I was so surprised that I took a picture of the moment. It is this moment that we all hope for, when our students realise that reading is not so bad and they want to hold on to books for a particular period of time.”

Mdm Noor Ashikin Bte Md Noor, Teacher, English Language

Juliet, Juliet, wherefore art thou?
Alas, the poor damsel! She is dead.

MURDER, SHE WROTE.

For their inaugural Language and Literature Week in 2016, the English Language and Literature Department embarked on an ambitious project that updated the classic murder-mystery game to bring stories to life. The teachers selected characters from the literary texts that the lower secondary students were reading, and wove these characters into an intriguing tale of deception and mystery.

Students took on the role of deputy detectives who had to investigate Juliet's murder in order to catch the perpetrator. They received clues throughout the week during English Language lessons, and they had to decode these clues to fill up an investigation report by the end of the event.

On the day of the event, teachers dressed up as the literary characters – Sherlock Holmes, Lord Capulet, the Ghost of Juliet, among others – and manned game stations. Students had to complete literary games before they could interview each character. The teachers attempted to throw the students off by denying their characters' culpability.

Kirti Kumar, Secondary 2, felt that the teachers dressing up as characters and building up a high level of suspense helped to generate a lot of interest among the students. He also felt that the activity was a light-hearted, memorable approach towards reading literary texts.

The students' enthusiasm have inspired the teachers, and the department now plans to turn it into an annual event. Moreover, they plan to innovate year on year, because the story can be written in many different ways to incorporate new and more literary characters.

There was a showcase on fantasy books, in which each teacher reviewed his or her favourite fantasy novel.

“Ms Renuga wrote about *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. The book went viral in school, because people were like, “Huh, heaven? You can meet people in heaven? You can write a book about it?” She explained all this in the book review in such a way that we were attracted to it.”

Kirrti Kumar, Secondary 2

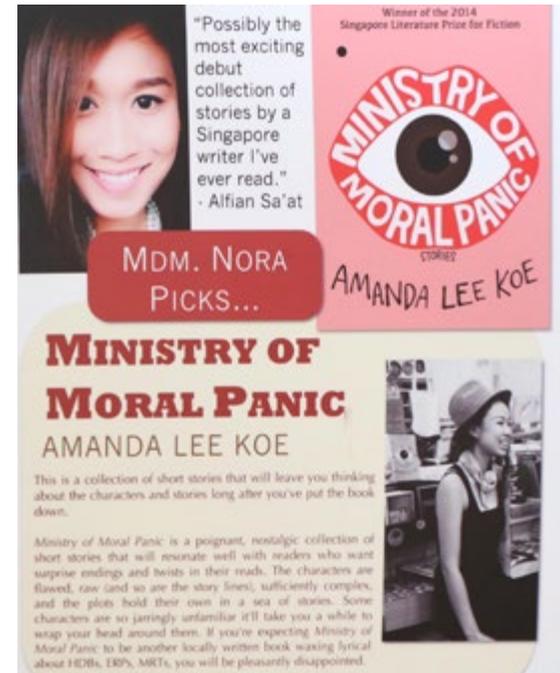
Meanwhile, the GCE O’Level Literature students got a chance to read aloud personal poems that they wrote, and the students were startlingly honest in their poems.

“Hearing my classmates’ poems was really interesting because I got to see another perspective, and it broadened the way I think and express myself. Reading a poem aloud gives it a different feel.”

Constance Tan, Secondary 3



LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE WEEK 2016



“Kids need to have an understanding of these characters. What were their motivations? Why do they behave in certain ways? We don’t want the students to simply read the book, close it and move on. So, the teachers dress up to bring the characters to life. We all got to live in a fantasy world for a day.”

Ms Nithiyaa

“I used to read those very thick books, but nowadays, I do not have the time.”

To address such sentiments, Riverside Secondary ensures that reading is an activity that can take place in short but fulfilling periods in school. They also ensure that the activities are inclusive and no student misses out.

#riversidereads

As part of the NLB National Reading Movement, the school leveraged social media to encourage the students to read. Students could post whatever they were reading at the moment using the hashtag.

The “cool, trendy hashtag” struck a chord with the teenagers as many of them were already on social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram.



Every Monday morning, students at Riverside Secondary start off with an unconventional bit of reading.

Student representatives from an assigned class will present a snippet on literary devices to the whole school, so that their peers can learn how these devices are used in the texts that they read.



ONE MINUTE OF GRAMMAR

“They might not see it as reading, but it does help in understanding these phrases and idioms when they come across them.”

Miss Hesley Ismail
Senior Teacher, English
Language

Each presentation is followed by a simple literary quiz. For example, the students are shown a picture and have to guess what idiom the picture refers to. If they get the answer right, they will win a prize.

“It is actually very interesting to find out what the answer is. My friends and I have different answers, so we will all be guessing until it is revealed the following Monday.”

Leonard Chan, Secondary 1

CCE Chronicles

Students receive monthly newsletters on Character and Citizenship Education (CCE).

These newsletters feature articles on good values and ethical issues. Some of these topics include water management in resource-scarce Singapore, as well as the role of the National Day Parade in nation-building.

Classroom Libraries

Each Secondary 1 to 3 classroom boasts a well-stocked library, and the students choose what they like to read based on their individual interests.

Every student brings a book to class to supplement the library.

Subsequently, conversations on books are encouraged and take place frequently during the English Language lessons.

Books On-The-Go

Every student is entitled to buy two books for S\$2 each. The books are heavily subsidised and the students can use their Edusave account to purchase them. The titles are shortlisted by a panel of teachers based on a student survey, and there are different titles for each student level and stream.

“The main reason behind this is to ensure that every kid has a book. Not just any book – we want to give them a range of titles that will cater to their reading interests and abilities. This is very beneficial, especially for students from low-income families who struggle to buy even one book.”

Ms Nithiyaa

TIMELINE

Mar-Jul 2016
"Come one, come all!
Send in your school nominations!"

61 paper submissions received

Aug 2016
The judges read diligently.

15 schools shortlisted

Sep-Oct 2016
The judges walked around the
schools very enthusiastically.

Site visits to shortlisted schools

Jan 2017
For the 15 shortlisted schools,
members of the public were asked,

"Which reading programme do you like best?"

Feb 2017
The results were released online.

Who won? They waited to find out.

20 Mar 2017
We revealed the overall results, and
gave away the prizes!

For the Love of Reading was launched

GLOSSARY

Amazing Race	A popular competition format in which teams race one another to complete challenges or reach an end-point.
Book Cross	Also known as BookCrossing. BookCrossing is an international movement in which people leave books in public areas for others to pick up and read.
Chillax	Calm down and relax. <i>Slang.</i>
Class Readers	A collection of stories or extracts and their accompanying activities meant to be used for class instruction.
Cluster	A group of schools supervised by a Cluster Superintendent. Member schools network, share and collaborate with one another, especially in the areas of school leadership and management.
Contact Time	A school staff meeting.
DIY	Do-It-Yourself. DIY reading activities are conducted by teachers for their students, and do not require external facilitators.
Di Zi Gui	An ancient publication of Confucius's teachings on how to be a good student and child.
Edusave	A scheme by MOE for Singaporean students in MOE-funded schools, in which students are allocated resources for school enrichment activities in support of their holistic development and to encourage students to excel in both academic and non-academic areas.
English Week / Fortnight	A period of one or two weeks during which the English Language Department organises activities related to the English Language.
Global Learning Alliance	An alliance of school leaders from top schools and universities around the world, initiated by the Studies in Educational Innovation at Teachers College, Columbia University.
HOD	Head of Department.
Learning Support Coordinator	A teacher who is appointed by the school to implement the Learning Support Programme.

Learning Support Programme (LSP)	A specialised early intervention programme aimed at providing learning support to pupils who enter Primary 1 with weak English language and literacy skills.
Level Head (LH)	A teacher responsible for understanding and managing a particular level of students. Also known as Year Head.
Library Assistant	Someone who supports the school library operations and provides customer service to users.
Library Period	A period in the timetable that takes place in the school library or is spent on library-related activities.
Little Red Dot	A weekly educational publication for primary school students by The Straits Times.
Lower Primary	Primary 1 to 3 students, usually aged 7 to 9 years old. When used with “middle primary”, it refers only to Primary 1 and 2 students.
Lower Secondary	Secondary 1 and 2 students, usually aged 13 to 14 years old.
Media Resource Library	Another name for the school library.
Middle Primary	Primary 3 and 4 students, usually aged 9 to 10 years old.
MOE	Ministry of Education.
Mother Tongue Languages (MTL)	Singapore officially recognises the group of Mother Tongue Languages to be Chinese, Malay or Tamil.
MTL Fortnight	A period of two weeks during which the MTL Department will organise activities related to the Mother Tongue Languages.
NIE	National Institute of Education.
NLB	National Library Board.
NLB’s discoverReads	A reading blog that allows children and teens to discover new and interesting books through recommendations, articles, events, and quizzes. There are resources for students, parents and teachers to foster the love of reading at home and in school. Accessible via www.nlb.gov.sg/discoverreads .

NLB kidsREAD	A collaborative effort by NLB, the People’s Association and self-help groups to promote the love of reading and cultivate good reading habits among Singaporean children aged between 4 and 8 years from low-income families.
NLB National Reading Movement	A five-year campaign by NLB to encourage all to read more, read widely and read together.
Normal (Technical) Stream	A course for secondary school students that prepares them for a technical or vocational higher education.
Polytechnic	In Singapore, students can opt to enter a polytechnic after secondary school. Polytechnics usually provide industry-oriented education.
Primary School	A school offering primary education, usually for children aged 7 to 12 years old.
Parent Support Group (PSG)	A group of parents who volunteer in support of school activities, usually with the school that their child is studying or has studied in.
QR Code	Quick response code.
Secondary School	A school offering secondary education, usually for students aged 13 to 17 years old.
STELLAR	Strategies for English Language Learning and Reading. An instructional programme for primary schools, providing materials, teaching strategies and training for teachers.
Subject Head (SH)	A teacher responsible for assisting the HOD in looking after a particular subject.
Upper Primary	Primary 4 to 6 students, usually aged 10 to 12 years old. When used with “middle primary”, it refers only to Primary 5 and 6 students.
Upper Secondary	Secondary 3 to 5 students, usually aged 15 to 17 years old.
World Book Day	A day designated by UNESCO to mark world literature and reading on 23 April each year. Also known as World Book and Copyright Day.
Year Head (YH)	Also known as Level Head.

Reading Excellence Award Nomination List PRIMARY

Anchor Green
Beacon
CHIJ Kellock | Shortlist
CHIJ Our Lady Queen of Peace | Shortlist
Farrer Park
First Toa Payoh
Fuchun
Greenridge
Horizon
Jing Shan
Juying
Kong Hwa
Kuo Chuan Presbyterian
Maha Bodhi
Mee Toh | Third Place
Methodist Girls'
Montfort Junior
Naval Base
North Spring
North Vista
Park View
Pei Chun Public
Poi Ching
Qifa | Crowd Favourite
Princess Elizabeth | First Place
Seng Kang | Shortlist
Shuqun
St Hilda's
Stamford
Teck Ghee
Temasek
Unity
West Grove | Shortlist
West Spring
Woodlands
Xinghua | Second Place
Yu Neng | Shortlist
Yumin
Zhangde
Zhenghua | Shortlist

Reading Excellence Award Nomination List **SECONDARY**

Bartley
Bedok South
Boon Lay
Bukit Merah | Second Place
Catholic High
Chung Cheng High (Yishun)
Clementi Town | First Place
East View
Edgefield | Third Place
Fuchun
Gan Eng Seng
Greenridge
Hua Yi
Hwa Chong | Shortlist
Nan Hua High
Pasir Ris
Riverside | Shortlist
Serangoon Garden
Woodlands Ring
Yuan Ching
Yusof Ishak

Until I feared I would lose it,
I never loved to read.
One does not love breathing.

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee



Reading Excellence Award Ceremony National Library Building, Events Plaza 20 March 2017



Missed the award ceremony? [Click here to watch the highlights.](#)



