



CHIJ ST JOSEPH'S CONVENT

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

2018

Dear SJC Community, as the semester draws to a close, here are highlights from semester 2. Our next publication will be the annual school magazine. If you missed previous copies of the monthly newsletter, they are all available online on the school website by the first day of each new month.

LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL AWARENESS THROUGH DRAMA

Since 2015, Secondary Twos have taken part in an interdisciplinary project called the Wax Museum Showcase. This involves English Language, Humanities, Literature and Drama and is one aspect of SJC's Applied Learning Programme, *The Art of Communication through Theatre and Debates*. Through the learning and application of drama elements in multiple disciplines, students build confidence and deepen their communication and perspective-taking skills.

A minute on stage requires ten years of practice off stage. The Wax Museum Showcase reflects the spiral curriculum approach at SJC. After analysing the challenges of futuristic genetic engineering in *The Giver* in Secondary One Literature classes, Secondary Twos were introduced to drama through the ALP drama enrichment classes and the study of the dramatic monologue, *Emily of Emerald Hill*, in English Literature classes. Using the stories and insights into the past that were gleaned from visits to the Singapore National Museum as part of their History Research Module to better appreciate Singapore's hard road to independence, our Secondary Twos then crafted stories about past and future jobs. Working closely with their English Language teachers, these stories were then crafted into dramatic skits. On 2 August, our girls held their drama festival one afternoon. It was a resounding success.



Some of our happy cast, crew and script-writers with their supportive and dedicated teachers from the English Department having a well-deserved photo opportunity at the end of the showcase.

Through their original scripts, well-constructed props and vivid characterization, our talented fourteen-year-olds skilfully transported their audiences to different periods and workplaces. At the end of the showcase, student-performers were presented with certificates to acknowledge their outstanding creativity, and their patience in working together to produce good quality ensemble work.

Student participants and audience explored the social and economic changes faced by Singapore across the years through the mediums of writing, speech and drama. They learnt how the changes in Singapore's social and economic tapestry shapes different trades and the lives of people, for better or for worse. As our girls grappled with juggling their team members' CCA and after school schedules so that they could find the time to sharpen their research, scripts, interpretations and acting, it was a good opportunity for them to reflect on the resilience, adaptability and resourcefulness of Singapore's forefathers, or simply Singaporeans who have entered the work force. As they communicated, collaborated and negotiated with one another, our girls caught a glimpse into how important twenty-first century skills are.

The results of the online survey that the students did were very positive. 93% of the respondents enjoyed the learning process of the showcase and 89% will recommend it to their juniors.

Here are snapshots of our girls' performances and their reflections from staging and watching the performances of peers from other classes.



Given Secondary 2A's interest in Science and Music, it came as no surprise that their skits explored the challenges that surgeons and music producers face.

I enjoyed the plot and the story line for all the performances that I watched today. We learnt how hard life is and what we do now may affect the future.

– Ng Yi Xuan, Rachel, 2A

Envisioning the challenges that women faced in a time when attending school was a luxury, Secondary 2B explored the role of Samsui women and milk women in the twentieth century.



Inspired by the stories in the history gallery, Secondary 2C explored the challenges that coolies face through a story about a trishaw rider.



I enjoyed the performances that I watched today and I learnt how to be a considerate audience.
– Kye Rodrigues, 2C

Inspired by genetic engineering and the implications of Kiasuism, one group of Secondary 2D students crafted a skit entitled, *My Baby is Better than Yours*, which examined how advancements in medical sciences which allow doctors to extract super genes and alter DNAs to produce super-intelligent and healthy babies also brought along with it new problems and challenges.



Another 2D group staged a skit entitled *H & R* which depicted a future where robots assist surgeons in the operating theatre in diagnosing and healing the patients. In such a world, how much of the success of the surgery can be attributed to the surgeon's skill and how much to the robot? Will we arrive soon at a day when robots may operate on humans independently? What need would there be for robots to operate on humans then?



I enjoyed watching my friends step out of their comfort zones to perform just for us. I enjoyed learning about what trades were like in the past and what they may possibly be in future.
– Anushree Ganesh, 2D



Secondary 2E explored the profession and day in the life of a space tour guide in two comedy skits, *To The Moon and Back: Life As A Space Tour Guide*, and *Hooga Booga, Who Are You?*

I enjoyed the process of brainstorming ideas for our script and learning how to present the issues to an audience. I learnt to think out of the box and to be more confident when I am speaking.

– Chantille Liew Xinhui, 2E



Secondary 2F explored the dark days of the Japanese Occupation. They paid homage to switchboard operators for connecting us with family, before tackling the inner conflict faced by local translators for the Japanese army during WWII.

I enjoyed learning about the different types of trades. I picked up drama techniques that are useful when we were planning our drama showcase. – Ananda Prashidhaa, 2F



Secondary 2G explored food shortages in a world debilitated by climate change in the year 2045. Two food engineers race against time to save the human race by inventing a food machine. While engineers grapple with food shortages, the very wealthy minority pay for the resurrection of dead animals and some take this far beyond the limits of safety, thus threatening the very existence of the human species. What legal implications need to be considered when we apply science?

Some of the plots were well thought out and really funny. Through the drama showcase, I learnt about past, present and future jobs and I really appreciate that the teachers planned this mode of learning for us.

– Tan Xuan, Sasha, 2G



Secondary 2H transported the blacksmith and letter writer back to twenty-first century Singapore and explored the concept of craftsmanship in a digital, mass industrial age.

I enjoyed the process of putting up the skit for my schoolmates. I also enjoyed watching the performances of other groups to see what they did to portray the trades that are different from those presented by my group.

– Shannon Chai, 2H