



Chinese YMCA Secondary School

English Department, Chinese Department, Liberal Studies Department, Music,
Physical Education and Visual Arts Department



Stories inspire our hearts-----

These are Our Stories



2015-2016

Principal's message

Stories foster one's life qualities

Dennis Chan

We might always ask questions like “Who am I?”; “Who do I take after in personality?”; “Who is my life mentor?” All these questions remind us the emergence of every single person in our life. Be they just acquaintances or close confidants, we have to thank each one of them as they have all left a trail in our growing path which helps to shape who we are today.

All these encounters not only leave us with invaluable memories, but also help foster vital life qualities in us. We can learn love from our parents and patience from teachers; perseverance from Olympic winners and courage from life fighters. That is the reason why we extend the programme to other subjects like Physical Education, Music, Visual Arts and Liberal Studies this year. Through appreciating distinguished athletes', musicians' and artists' stories, we believe students would be inspired to compose greater stories for themselves. It is through different real life stories that our teenagers are enlightened to become better young adults. They would also realise that hardship is something inevitable in life and thus develop proper resilience when faced with challenges and adversity.

Although this is just the second year for us to run the story-telling programme, we can see the growth of our students from the depth and breadth of their stories. The programme has already become an official platform for students to exchange life experiences. We hope the programme can nurture them to be more grateful and resilient; less egocentric and possess more empathy for others. After all, these are the qualities that will eventually lead them to a truly fulfilling and rewarding life.

Be the director of your own story—make it a promising one.

Contents

The bravest thing that I've ever done

1CL	Wong Wai Tung, Victo	P.2	3TW	Ip Sui Lam, Sally	P.24
1LT	Siu Wai Kiu, Cherry	P.3	4LY	Li Wang Ching, Sabrina	P.25
1CM	Siu Chung Ming, Jeremy	P.5	4IH	Jackie Walker	P.27
1LC	Wong Hoi Ching, Kimmi	P.6	4CW	Shu Kit Kwan, John	P.28
1LS	Wong Ho Hin, Carson	P.7	4NC	Mok Tsz Ching, Lily	P.29
2CW	Li Yik Long, Edison	P.8	4CT	Chau Hiu Yan, Stephanie	P.30
2CW	Leung Shuk Man, Sharon	P.10	4WW	Lee Tak Mei, Abbey	P.31
2CW	Lau Cheuk Hei, Cliff	P.11	5CL	Lu Sze Yu, Franklin	P.33
2CW	Chan Audrey	P.12	5HW	Jeremiah Olarte Baguisa, Jerry	P.35
2KT	Cindy Sze	P.13	5SC	Qiu Guang Hui, Fred	P.36
2KT	Carman Leung	P.14	5SY	Ng Yan Cho, Joanne	P.38
2LT	Chui Wai Lok, Ken	P.15	5CT	Tsui San Yuet, Steffi	P.40
2LL	Li Li Kwan, Venus	P.16	5CS	Shum Mei Suet, Chloe	P.41
2TT	Lai Wing Hei, Vanessa	P.17	6CL	Li Yuen Ying, Circle	P.42
2TT	Samantha Hui	P.18	6LC	Choi Ho Yi, Chloe	P.44
3TY	Lui Ka Chun, Harry	P.19	6LP	Chan Kei	P.46
3BC	Yip Cheuk Nam, Charles	P.20	6LW	Andre Ng	P.48
3BC	Pak Ho Lam, Mary	P.21	6PL	Yeung Hiu Ying	P.50
3CC	Wu Hiu Lam, Michelle	P.22	6HC	Chung Pui Yee	P.52
3LW	Chan Mei Han, Kenneth	P.23			

The Thing that I am Proud of

1CL	Yau Chi Hau, Chantal	P.55	3TW	Pang Chun Yeung, Jimmy	P.71
1LT	Ally Chung	P.56	3BC	Cheung Le Ru, Irene	P.72
1CM	Wong Chung Yao, Kevin	P.58	3LW	Wong Man Lok	P.74
1LC	Lam Hok Hin	P.59	4LY	Yeung Hoi Ching, Natalie	P.75
1LC	Chan Man Shing, Micky	P.60	4IH	Woo Nga Man, Bella	P.76
1LS	Chow Kwai Tung, Happy	P.61	4CT	Chan Tsz Yat, Hero	P.77
2CW	Lau Cheuk Hei, Cliff	P.62	4NC	Dovano Bacani	P.78
2KT	Han Tong Fei, Cindy	P.63	4CW	Lau Chun Hong, Leon	P.79
2CW	Li Hoi Lun, Helen	P.64	4WW	Yuen Chui Ping, Helen	P.81
2LT	Fung Ka Lok, Kelvin	P.65	5CL	Ngai King Yin, Kenny	P.82
2LT	Chu Yan Ting, Cherry	P.66	5HW	Wong Wai Leung, William	P.83
2TT	Law Tsz Lung	P.67	5SC	Chow Yee Kwan, Michael	P.85
2TT	So Ping Ping	P.68	5CS	Tsang Kai Yin	P.86
2TT	Ng Ka Hang	P.69	5SY	Chan Yuk Fan	P.87
3LW	Cheung Yuen Kei, Esme	P.70	5CT	Chan Chun Yu	P.88

The background is a soft, warm gradient of pink and peach. It is decorated with several stylized cherry blossoms in various shades of pink, some with visible yellow stamens. Large, out-of-focus circular bokeh lights in shades of pink and white are scattered across the background, creating a dreamy, ethereal atmosphere.

**The bravest thing
that I've ever done**

The bravest thing that I've ever done

1CL Wong Wai Tung, Victor

Being brave may be jumping into the sea to save a drowning man, or saving someone who is in desperate need of help. However, to me, being brave is just boosting up courage and admitting my mistakes.

As I remember, once when I was in primary four, I forgot I would have dictation the next day, so I didn't do any revision and I failed. I dared not ask my mom to sign my dictation book because I was afraid of punishment. Therefore I forged my mom's signature. After I handed in my book, the teacher discovered my crime. "Why did you try to forge your parent's signature?" the teacher asked. "Should I tell your parents, or will you do it?" I didn't answer her question at the moment so she asked me to answer her during lunch time. I was trapped between two choices. However, I boosted up my courage at last. I apologised to my teacher and said, "I choose to tell my parents by myself."

When I got home, I told my mom the whole thing. She said, "It's okay. Academic result is not the only thing in your life. Just work hard next time and tell me your result honestly." I was pretty surprised. My mom didn't even shout a word at me but forgave me. She also taught me a lesson: be honest and work hard.

This is the bravest thing I have ever done in my life. I am not proud of it because I lied. I lied but I have learnt a lesson from my mistake: life isn't just about academic result. We still have family, friends and our principles. More importantly, by admitting my mistake I understand that honesty is an extremely important personality trait we should possess. I am proud that I have learnt the most important lesson in my life.



Teacher's comments:

Well written, Victor. Honesty is indeed important, and being honest does take courage. I think you may also be proud of your mother; her grace in accepting your confession and allowing you to learn your own lesson is admirable. Thank you for sharing your story.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

1LT' Stu Wai Kiu, Cherry

Hello, everyone. I'm Cherry from 1LT. What is the bravest thing you have ever done? Going on a hiking tour on your own? Riding a roller coaster? Performing on the stage? Let me share my story with you. It's about going beyond my comfort zone, being free from fear, and pushing the boundaries of what I can achieve.

When I was in Primary 6, we had a training camp. At the end of the training camp, my teacher told us there was going to be a cooking competition. I was good at cooking and passionate about it; naturally, my classmates nominated me to compete with students from other classes.

Before the competition I wasn't particularly nervous, though I felt a tinge of fear lurking in the back of my mind. But once I got on the stage I felt scared, and I could barely move my legs. "The competition will begin soon. 3, 2, 1 and start!" the teacher said. I started to grab the ingredients and cooking utensils. When I tried to cut the fish, I could not hold the knife properly. The knife dropped.

I pretended nothing happened and kept on cooking, but deep down I was feeling everything; there was an angry sea within me. One minute I was doubting myself: 'Maybe that's it; I'm bad at cooking'; another minute I was wondering if other classmates would laugh at me.

Without my realising it my teacher came by and checked if I was okay, and I said, 'Nothing happened; I can do it. Don't worry about me.'

'Cherry, stay calm. Nothing is impossible; just stay calm,' my teacher said.

My teacher's words assured me. I took a deep breath and tried to stay focussed again. I knew cooking had been my passion, and I knew I mustn't let my fear imprison me. Of course, I was aware that I had a desire to be perfect, but I couldn't let that influence me as well. 'Cherry, just be yourself, and just cook the way you always can! Stay calm and nothing is impossible,' I said to myself.

After 60 minutes, I finished cooking and all the teachers liked my food. They called my food 'scrumptious'. Of course, with such positive comments, my class was the champion in this competition. "Nothing is impossible" my teacher said to me again. Warm tears streamed down my cheek and I was so proud of myself for overcoming my fear.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

From this competition I learned that we must not let fear take control of our lives. You see, sometimes it's like that: even when you're already good at something, you still feel fear; it's natural. The truth is: you must understand the nature of fear and overcome it. Fellow students, don't be imprisoned by fear; remember 'Nothing is impossible. Keep calm and you will be able to do it'.

What about you? What's your bravest experience?



Teacher's comments:

Congratulations, Cherry! You are right; however confident you may be in private, doing something in the public gaze can be unnerving – even frightening. It was US president Roosevelt who said “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself”. Congratulations on conquering yours and on winning the competition!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

1CM Siu Chung Ming, Jeremy

Hello, everyone. I'm Jeremy Siu from 1CM. A few days ago, I read a news story about a strong and kind man who saved a child from a swimming pool. It reminds me of something I did one year ago.



It was a Saturday morning. I went to Tin Shui Wai Swimming Pool. When I was about to jump into it, I heard someone scream, "Help! Help me!" When I heard that, I jumped into the swimming pool quickly and tried to locate the person as fast as I could.

Suddenly, I saw a man swimming toward me. I realised that he was the lifeguard. At the same time, from the corner of my eye, I noticed a body on the bottom of the swimming pool. I swam there and found out that it was the child who had called for help.

That child was already in a coma. I quickly brought him up the top of the swimming pool. Then I saw a nervous woman and I cried to her, 'Is this your son?' When she saw the child I was holding, she recognised that he was her son. She exclaimed, "Yes!" and hugged me.

Finally, everyone saw what I just did. They all clapped their hands thunderously and said, 'Good job! You did very well!' I was so proud of myself after I heard that. Of course, I was proud not because of that, but because I just saved a child's life, a precious human life!

Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

Well done, Jeremy. "Cometh the hour, cometh the man" – when a hero was needed, you were there.

I like your last sentence, because of what it seems to imply: that human life is of value. What you saw yourself as having done is a practical expression of "Love your neighbour as yourself".

The bravest thing that I've ever done

11C Wong Hoi Ching, Kimmi

19th January 2015 was a very important day for me because I had an interview. I needed to talk to the Principal of Chinese YMCA Secondary School and tell him something about myself in English for one minute.

During my presentation, the Principal asked me some questions. I completely forgot what I had prepared, so I just said whatever was on my mind at that moment, but I couldn't express myself in 100% correct English. I saw that the Principal was very confused, so I felt even more nervous. I was worried that the Principal would not let me study in CYMCASS because of my poor English. I was so scared that I couldn't understand what he said. At that moment, I boosted up my courage and asked him "Can you speak in Chinese, please?"

It might be an embarrassing question, but I still asked it because I didn't want to give up and I would like to try my very best until the last minute of the interview. I wanted to show the Principal my good learning attitude.

We then talked about my family, and leisure activities we usually did at weekends. The Principal also gave me some advice on how I could improve my English and Chinese. I should read more English books, listen to English radio programmes or watch English TV shows.

After the interview, I felt I was so much braver than before. I have learned to face challenges and fight bravely for what I want. Asking that question during the interview is the bravest thing I have ever done, and my courage helped win me a place in this school.



Teacher's comments:

I can see, Kimmi, that it must have taken a lot of courage for you to ask that game-changing question. Aren't you glad that you did? As well as learning about your own courage, you also learned that your Principal is kind, and that he had some useful advice for you on how to improve your language skills (and not just in English). Are you taking his advice?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

1LS Wong Ho Him, Carson



As you can tell, I am the fattest student in my class. However, I dare say I am also the bravest person among you all. After listening to my story, you may not become one of my thousands of admirers; however, it is the bravest thing I have ever done and I am very proud of it.

My brother is a big fan of acting and drama. He also performed in some dramas when he was in kindergarten. I enjoyed his shows very much and I think his passion has affected me ever since.

One day, my mum picked me up from school as usual. A teacher came and talked to us, "Good morning, I am Carson's class teacher. I would like to invite Carson to join our Drama Club." I still remember I immediately cried at that moment, because I did not want to join the club. You may wonder why I cried. It was because I was extremely afraid of performing in front of a lot of people; it was my fear. I was afraid that people would laugh at me if I made any mistakes. However, my mum encouraged me to join the club and be brave to take up challenges. Finally, I listened to my mother and decided to be a member of the Drama Club although I still had a great fear of public speaking.

I trained with the teacher every day. I needed to speak very loudly and stop being shy. I also needed to work with, and talk to, other students during drama practice. As a result I improved my confidence, and now I am brave enough to have attended the musical audition!

Although I was scared of performing on stage, I decided to improve myself by joining the Drama Club. I think I am brave to have made such a decision, and I am happy that I have become a confident drama actor.

Teacher's comments:

Well done, Carson. Knowing that there is such a thing as 'stage fright', you must have really sweated over the assignment you had taken on. In "Dune", Frank Herbert has the lead character recite "I will not fear. Fear is the little death"! By facing your fear, you have emphatically demonstrated that you are fully alive. Congratulations!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2CW Li Yik Long, Edison

Hi everyone, I'm going to share with you the bravest thing I have ever done. It happened a few months ago.

Early in the morning, I was woken up by my house alarm, ringing crazily. At first, I was not that afraid; I thought probably it was a homeless cat or something. I tried to turn it off, but I failed. I tried to 'phone my father, but I found out that there was no electricity at all at my home. "Did somebody cut it off?" I thought. "No, it must be the heavy rain!" "Don't be silly!" I told myself.

It was still dark, so I went back to my dream. Suddenly, I heard someone talking loudly, and my door bell went off too. My dog burst out of the bedroom door and barked very loudly. Something must be wrong! I jumped off my bed, shut my door and locked it immediately. I was completely awake and my blood was pumping in my veins very fast.

I hid behind my curtain and peeked out of the window, trying to see where the voice came from, but I couldn't see anything because of the fog and rain. My toes were freezing and I started to shiver, but I didn't move. I held my breath and waited.

After a while, the barking stopped. Everything became silent again. I waited for a while but nothing happened, except that I could hear my dog yawning outside my bedroom. He was back! I felt a bit relaxed.

I grabbed a baseball bat on my right hand and a pocket knife on my other. I slowly unlocked the door. The door switch made a huge noise in the dead silence. I stopped and waited. My dog got up and came inside. I felt more comforted when I felt him rubbing his head towards my leg.



The bravest thing that I've ever done

I slowly walked my way through the hall. My dog made a clicking noise as he walked behind me. We checked everywhere in my house. There was no one. Then, my father came back and I could finally put down the rock in my heart. What an exciting day for me!

Teacher's comments:

It sounds like an exciting night, Edison! Even though nothing actually happened, it must have acted as a practice drill for you as to what might be necessary in a real emergency: you know that your dog is very alert, and you know where to find a few weapons with which to defend yourself if the need arises! With luck, you'll never have to put your new-found bravery into real action!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2CW Leung Shuk Man, Sharon

I think the bravest thing that I have ever done is the first time I joined the Chinese Speech Festival, when I was in primary 3. My teacher suggested that I have a try, and it marked a great turning point in my childhood.

When I was little, I was very shy. I was afraid of facing the public to perform on stage. My teacher thought that perhaps I could build up my confidence and courage through joining the speech festival, so she signed me up for the competition. One day before the competition, my teacher said "Sharon, no need to be nervous! You will be great!"

However, before the competition I was still very nervous. I tried to calm down. Before I went up to the stage, I took a deep breath. With very good preparation, my performance turned out to be great.

Even now, I am still very grateful to my teacher. Without her recommendation and encouragement, maybe I would still be a coward hiding backstage. I learnt a lesson from that. It also made me more mature, more knowledgeable and experienced.



Teacher's comments:

Well done, Sharon! You took a huge step. Many people are terrified of being singled out for attention, and stepping out alone onto a stage is a sure way of attracting attention! It sounds as if your teacher saw a real need, and also saw a solution - and you rose to the occasion.

Taking a deep breath is often mentioned as the necessary prelude to doing something courageous. Perhaps you will find it useful in other contexts as well?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

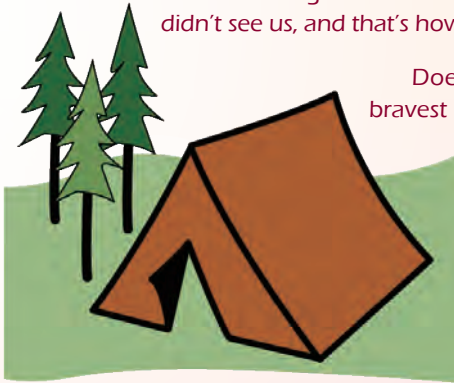
2CW Lau Cheuk Hei, Cliff

When it comes to the bravest thing you have ever done, what's the first thing that comes to your mind? Let me share with you my bravest experience; it will definitely amaze you!

When I was in Primary 6, I went to a camp with my classmates. The first two days were quite normal, except that I needed to do some things that I seldom do at home, such as tidying my room. When I was at home, the domestic helper always cleaned my room and I did not need to do anything. I was not used to it.

But then, the most exciting part came. That day we woke up early in the morning, since we had something special to do. Guess what? We were heading secretly to the golf course near the campsite.

First we had to climb a mountain; then we needed to cross a little forest, and finally we arrived at the golf course. Honestly speaking, we were all very scared of being discovered by the staff there. Fortunately, they didn't see us, and that's how our mission was completed.



Does it sound marvellous? That's the bravest thing I have ever done, and now I would love to listen to your own story. Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

It sounds, Cliff, as if your trip to the golf course was something the golf club might have frowned on – a sort of secret mission; if so, I can see why you would have needed courage, and felt brave. Can you find the same courage to face more orthodox challenges in your life? What do you see as areas in which you may need to find courage and show leadership – to yourself and to others?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2CW Chan Audrey

Different people have different fears. The bravest thing I have ever done is to overcome this fear. My biggest fear is playing the piano alone on the stage.

Many people know that playing piano alone on the stage is not easy. Last year, my friend joined a piano competition. I went to cheer for her. When she was walking on the stage proudly, she suddenly fell off the stage. As a result, she stayed in the hospital for observation for 2 weeks! I felt so scared because of this, because very soon it would be my turn! I had to play the piano alone on the stage.



Last week, I had a piano competition. I went back home from school to practise. I believe more practice would help me get more prepared for the competition, so I wouldn't become too nervous and fall off the stage like my friend!

Finally the big day came. I was very nervous because I had stage fright, so when I was walking to the stage, I almost fell from the staircase. When my mum saw that, she cheered me up and said "No need to be afraid, try your best!" With her support, I calmed down and started to play the song which I had practised millions of times. I suddenly played a wrong note; I was shocked but I could do nothing but continue to play. After the competition, it was time for the results and awards. I got only the 2nd runner-up place, but mom said I did great in this competition.

Yes! At least I didn't fell off the stage! I was so relieved!

Teacher's comments:

Audrey, your account automatically puts you in an elite group – those who have played piano on stage! The prospect appalls many people – not just those who cannot play the piano, but many who play perfectly happily in private but shake at the thought of playing for others to hear. I'm guessing that 3rd place put you well over halfway up the ladder, so you did indeed do very well; your mom is right! Can you find renewed courage to go back for another try?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

24KT Cindy Sze

One day, my best friend Zita asked me to go to Mongkok to watch a movie. I arrived but I could not see her, so I called her. On the phone, she told me that she would be an hour late! I felt disappointed and angry about her lateness. How to spend the hour? I decided to go to the bookshop nearby.

On the way, I saw a foreign lady with long straight golden hair. She was looking around confusedly with a map in her hands. I thought she needed help; yet I was not good at English, so I hesitated to talk to her. I stood aside and watched for a while. However, no one could help her because they did not know English, so I tried to be brave and walked to her. I asked, "Do you need any help?" She was excited and asked me how to get to the Flower Market. I understood what she asked. I used my finger to point out on her map where she was; then I showed her the way to the Flower Market. She understood my meaning clearly. She said "Thank you" to me and left happily!

This was the first time I had talked with a foreigner. I felt great about my bravery. I could show a foreigner the way with my poor English. Cool! Then, Zita called to tell me that she had arrived at the cinema. My anger disappeared and we watched the movie happily. I felt that helping people is very happy and meaningful. I hope we all can be brave and help others.



Teacher's comments:

Cindy, it does take courage to approach a complete stranger, even when – as here – it may seem obvious that the stranger needs your help. I am sure that while you felt good about your action, the lady you helped felt just as good that she had been helped to find her way. In your own modest way you were her "Good Samaritan"; you came to her rescue!

Isn't it interesting that your good spirits as a result of your success lifted you out of your earlier disappointment with your friend? Isn't that a common experience? How can we possibly remain angry when we are doing great things?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2KT Carman Leung

Good morning everyone, I am Carman Leung from 2KT. Now I'm going to talk about the bravest thing I have ever done.

The bravest thing for me has been singing Christian worship songs in the third week of this new school. One day, my class teacher approached me and invited me to sing with them together in the morning assembly. When I knew I needed to sing in front of so many people, I was scared and worried because I was still new to my classmates. But the teachers gave me confidence; they believed I could do this. Thanks to them, I was full of confidence and guts. Before the big day, I had spent a lot of time preparing for the stage.

That day I stood on the stage in our school hall with 'Joey sir' and two partners. At first, when I was standing there, I was shaking and I could even hear the beat of my heart. But I knew I could not escape. After that, I took a deep breath and started to calm myself down. I bravely opened my mouth and sang the song through to the end.

After that experience, I am ready for more challenges to worship God. And I want to thank the teachers for giving me this opportunity, and for so much support. Thank you all!



Teacher's comments:

Well done, Carman! I was looking for the origins of the quotation "Stand up and be counted" – since that is evidently what you did – but I found no definitive attribution; instead I found another saying to share with you: "Courage is simply fear that has said its prayers"! – and I couldn't find an attribution for that one either, although I am assured that it is widely known in America.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2LT Chui Wai Lok, Ken

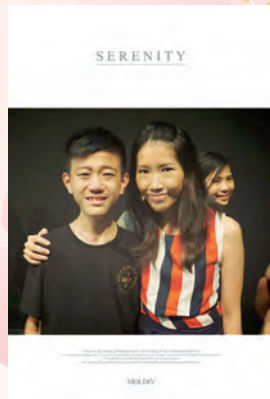
Hello everyone, I am Ken from 2LT. Today I'd like to talk about the bravest thing I have ever done. Before I start, let me ask a question: what does "brave" mean to you? To me, it is to face your weakness.

I remember that I have done a brave thing last year; that is, the school musical. I was very scared of facing an audience, so I asked my sister, "Maybe I could try to join the musical to overcome my weakness?" Also, I wanted to try some new things in my Form 1 life, so I joined the musical.

I was really nervous in the interview. After a few weeks, the audition result was posted on the wall. When I saw that paper, I just shouted, "Yes! I did it!" I could join the musical! I am not handsome, nor cute; I am not sporty nor good at anything, but I have become the main character! It was just because I fitted the main character of *1metre48* well. He is so short and he didn't feel good about his new school. Also, he thought he is the poorest one in the world. I was really surprised about that. It's amazing!

A few months ago, in July, it was our show time. I had to sing, I had to do drama, I had to overcome my weakness! These were all new experiences for me! At the end of the show we were all so touched that we hugged together, and we used tissues to rub the tears off our faces... I just loved that moment!

And now, I want to try some new things in my Form 2 life too! I want to be braver. I hope I can do it. I hope you can overcome your weakness too! This is the end of my sharing. Thank you!



Teacher's comments:

Well done, Ken! As we worked on *1metre48* we all realised, I'm sure, that it wasn't about being the handsomest, the cutest, the sportiest – or even the best, at anything; it was about doing what you could, as well as you could, to support the team. Having learned that, continue!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2LL Li Li Kwan, Venus

Good morning my fellow schoolmates. I am Venus Li from class 2LL. Have you ever been free in the air for a few moments? For me, I have! Today, I'm going to tell you the bravest thing I've ever done.

The bravest thing I've ever done is to play trampoline in my secondary school. When I was still a form one student, I didn't join many CCAs. But I was amazed when I saw other schoolmates doing some tricks on the trampoline. It seemed so fun to me. So, this year, I joined the trampoline class.

The first two lessons were quite hard for me, since it was the first time I got onto a trampoline. Out of the thrill, I realised that being in the air could be very scary! I was afraid I might fall down in front of everyone. The most difficult part was to learn how to balance myself well on the trampoline. But I didn't give up on that. I faced my fear and succeeded at last!

Now, I am in the school trampoline team. There will be more challenges for me, because I'll have chances to represent my school, to go outside for competitions. Luckily, I have my friends and teammates to support me and overcome any difficulties with me! I hope you guys can be brave to do what you want! This is the end of my sharing. Thank you.



Teacher's comments:

Wow! Venus, I'm jealous; I don't have the courage to get on a trampoline. I feel much safer with my feet on the ground! So I admire you for your courage in facing your fear and breaking through a barrier that could have held you back. Is there any other area of your life where you may need to break down a barrier? Do you see a need for another expression of courage?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2TT' Lai Wing Hei, Vanessa

Hi, my name is Lai Wing Hei, Vanessa, and today I am going to share the bravest thing I have ever done with you.

Different people are scared of different things, and my biggest fear is planning a trip. The bravest thing I have ever done is to face this fear. I was always scared of planning a trip by myself. However, now I am able to do it.

Everybody knows it is not easy to plan a trip by oneself when it is the first time. That is because if we find the wrong information, we will get lost in a place we don't know much about.



Last week, my friend went to Australia with her family. They did not follow the tour guide; they lost each other, and she almost got kidnapped. I was so scared, after hearing this from my friend, I thought, "I should follow a tour guide and never go travelling by myself". A few months later, my family wanted to visit Korea. They

insisted on travelling alone and were reluctant to join a travel tour. However, my parents were busy and did not have the time to plan the trip; so they asked me for help. I was scared that we would really get lost in Korea, so I had to find a lot of information about Korea. Luckily, we did not get lost and we had a lot of fun.

Now, I am not scared any more. The next time we need to plan a trip, I will do it.

Teacher's comments:

Congratulations, Vanessa. Now that you've demonstrated this new ability, you have opened a new door – to the rest of the world! There are many people in the world who never travel away from their home area; fear holds them back, even though they may have the opportunity and the wealth. You have opened your door and will never again feel that it is closed.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

2TT Samantha Hui

Many people think animals are very cute. If you have to stand near or touch an animal, how would you feel? For me, I will be very scared. I am scared of going near animals.

The bravest thing I have ever done is to stand near, touch, and also take a photo with, a dolphin. During this summer holiday, my family and I went to Taiwan. We went to a place where we could take photos with dolphins. I was scared by it; I thought the dolphin will bite me as I had never tried it before. I had to stand next to the dolphin. I had to touch it also. It was really terrible.

However, my dad said, "We have only one chance. We will not come across this opportunity at another place."

Finally, I did it. The dolphin didn't bite me. I am not scared of animals now. Touching and taking a photo with a dolphin is the bravest thing I have ever done.



Teacher's comments:

Samantha, that's a great start – and a difficult one; touching a dolphin is not an easy thing to arrange. Stroking a cat, a dog, or a horse would be much easier to organise! What is next for you? Will you try to make friends with other creatures? Will you adopt a pet?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

3TY Lui Ka Chun, Harry

Good morning, I am Harry from 3TY. Today, I want to tell you the bravest thing I have done. Let me think, how should we define "bravery"? Swimming with sharks? Or watching horror movies?

Sadly, in my memory I haven't done anything brave. I think things I've done were usually wrong: I fought with my parents; I stole money from my parents to buy a bicycle; I smoked; I did not go home. My family was so worried, but I did not care what they said. I was once sent to the police station. So if you asked me what is the bravest thing I've ever done, I really can't tell.

At this moment, I think the bravest thing I can do is that I can share with you about my past. I've never thought that I could face all my faults and share them with you. I've learnt a great lesson. Nothing is impossible as long as you choose not to escape from it. If you choose to face your problems, there

should be solutions. It's never too late to be a better person. Facing one's own problems is difficult. Even I have done it; you must be able to do it.

Today FORGET
your PAST,
FORGIVE yourself
and BEGIN AGAIN.

This is the bravest thing I've ever done. What about you? I would like to listen to your stories too.

Teacher's comments:

"Sometimes bravery is nothing more than gritting your teeth through pain, and the work of every day, the slow walk toward a better life.

That is the sort of bravery I must have now."

----- Veronica Roth, *Allegiant*

The bravest thing that I've ever done

3BC Yip Cheuk Nam, Charles

Hello everyone. Today I want to tell you the bravest thing I've ever done. I had always been a shy person, and when I was in form two, Ms. B chose me to give a speech in the hall. At first I tried to say 'No', but I realised that I could not run away from my fear forever and I had to overcome it someday. So, I got my guts up to give a speech in the hall.

After saying 'Hello everyone...', I wanted to give up immediately. But when I saw how much Ms. B was looking forward to seeing how I would do, I pressed on. I took a deep long breath and finished my speech.

I want to thank Ms. B for encouraging me and helping me to take one of the biggest steps in my life.

What I had experienced that day taught me that I should never say 'No' and give up so easily. Furthermore, I've learnt to be brave and persevere till the end.

Thank you for listening.



Teacher's comments:

Charles, several others have written that their greatest demonstration of bravery involved getting up on stage – to speak, sing, act, or play an instrument. It is something that scares many of us. You are lucky to have been encouraged to break out of the grip of this fear; now you have that experience to support you as you move forward. Next time will be easier, because you have already done it once. Courage!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

3BC Pak Ho Lam, Mary

Good morning, everyone. The bravest thing I have ever done in my life was rock climbing in a PE lesson. I remember the first time I tried was a failure. Then I started to watch my classmates climbing up the wall one by one. They were doing so well! I felt really sad because I couldn't do it, when everyone else around me could.

*Life is not about waiting
for the storm to pass,
it's about learning to
Dance in the Rain*

Then my friends encouraged me to try again, telling me that they would climb with me, so I decided to give it another go. I tried to climb up as fast as I could. However, no matter how hard I tried, I still fell down. When my PE teacher saw that I kept failing, he told me to stop and that I did not have to

do it. He said, 'Don't bother! If you are not going to make it, then just give up.' Of course, he was only kidding. But I still felt ashamed of myself.

At last I mustered all my strength and courage for another attempt. Amazingly, this time I climbed all the way up in just two minutes! I was so happy, and this was definitely the bravest thing I have ever done!

Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

Well done, Mary! There is a good reason why we like to include climbing in the school curriculum, and you have demonstrated it beautifully: resilience is an important quality in life; if you fall down, you have to get back up. Of course, in many cases giving up is an option, but it is rarely a good one; getting up again is important for your own self-belief. Your happiness is the result of your conquering the problem.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

3CC Wu Hiu Lam, Michelle

Hello, everyone! I am Michelle. Today I would like to tell you the bravest that I have ever done. Before my sharing, let me ask you a question first. Have you done anything to conquer fear in your life? I have. I think everyone has been brave in their lives. Maybe they face the thing they hate the most, or the thing they are afraid of. For mine, it may sound ridiculous, and you may laugh at me for it.

I remember that the day was a shiny Sunday. No one was at home, since all of my family went out to have their breakfast. I felt sad. Suddenly, I saw a cockroach passing by near my piano. It looked russet and auburn. It wasn't small, but a large one. I hate cockroaches so much, I brayed aloud and went back to my bedroom. After a while, I was shocked to see that the cockroach had followed me when I walked to my room! My hands were sweating. My heart was pounding. I used my hair spray on the cockroach. Of course, the cockroach didn't move immediately! Although I was scared of it, I plucked up my courage and threw my slippers at the wall. But the cockroach moved again! "How terrible it is! Where is my mum? Where is my family?" I almost cried.

A few seconds later, I calmed myself down. I used my hair spray again to attack the cockroach on the wall. This time I used so much hair spray that I made sure the cockroach wouldn't move anymore. I must look stupid; right? What is worse, I threw my slippers at the wall many times, until finally the cockroach never moved again. At last this cockroach had been killed. But my home had been dishevelled and was in a mess.

It was really the bravest thing I have ever done. It is also an unforgettable incident to me. Maybe killing a cockroach is easy to you, but to me, it is as difficult as getting 100 in the entire exam. Everyone must have something they are scared of, but I had conquered my fear already. How about you? If you can conquer your biggest fear, you won't feel helpless. Don't ignore the fear, since one day in the future the thing you are scared of will happen to you.



Teacher's comments:

Cockroaches? Yuk! My only criticism, Michelle, is that you killed just one! Now I need your help in joining the alliance to kill more – lots more! Are you up for that? Well done, anyway.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

3rd LW Kenneth Chan Mei Han

Good morning everyone. I'm Kenneth. What's the bravest thing you have ever done? Standing up to a bully? Saving a life? Falling in love with someone?

When I reflect on my life, I have done a lot of pretty brave things. I have stood up in front of people and given a speech. I went out by myself in public. Of course, I was scared most of the time. But I tried them all and I enjoyed the experiences.



The bravest thing I have ever done is abseiling. Consider that I'm really afraid of heights. To me, this is truly brave. As I remember, it was a sunny day. The P.E teacher smiled at us and told us we would be abseiling during that lesson. "Oh my God! Are you kidding me!?" I whispered thousands and thousands of times. Soon I started to sweat because of fear. I felt nervous and worried to death. What if I fall from mid-way? What if I break my arms and legs because of the accident? After a while, my friend came in front of me and invited me to come with her.

It seemed not too difficult when I looked at my classmates doing it. But when it was my turn, I took a deep breath and got on the handle. When I was half-way to the top, I looked down and I regretted at it. "How stupid I am!" I thought. "Why did I put my life in such a danger?" I wanted to give up at that moment but Mr. Chung didn't let me down. My heart beat faster and faster. My hands started sweating and shaking. My legs were so heavy that I couldn't move them at all. Slowly I climbed to the top. I grasped firmly the wooden pole beside me. Then the boys laughed at me. Then I closed my eyes and jumped down. Sure, I was stuck in there for almost 30 minutes. I lay on the ground and I could breathe again.

At that very moment, I knew I had done it. Although I was still in shock, somehow I knew I had accomplished something almost impossible. I faced my fear, and even if I didn't enjoy every second when I was up there, I'm still satisfied with what I have done.

This is the end of my story. What is the bravest thing you have ever done?

Teacher's comments:

Yup; abseiling would have to come reasonably high on the list, though probably below parachuting (a fear of heights didn't help a lot with that, either!). Congratulations on just getting through the experience and living to tell us about it. Are you game to do it again? Or do you feel "Well, I've done it; now I never need to do it again!"?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

3TW Ip Sui Lam, Sally

Good morning, I am Sally Ip from 3TW. Today I would like to talk about the bravest thing I have ever done. It is about a woman and me.

When I was a child, my mother left me and my dad. She went back to the mainland for her career. After that we had no contact with each other for almost four years. Although my dad was sad, she had her reasons for leaving, but I just accepted it; I couldn't call her. It was as though every time I tried there was something stopping me. I don't know what it is; maybe anger, or maybe just because I don't know how to handle it. For three years it was very painful for me. In primary school all my classmates laughed at me about it. So I found my anger became something worse; it was growing into hatred.

Then after four years, something changed. Suddenly one day she called me; in the call she sounded happy. She didn't talk about why she left me; she just invited me to go out with her. After thinking for a few minutes, I said yes. On that day everything was good; neither of us talked about the past. After that she started to send messages to me. One day we were sending messages as usual, when she suddenly asked if I had forgiven her. I was speechless, so I didn't answer. That night I asked myself the same question. I realised that no matter how well we got on with each other, I still had hatred inside me. I couldn't forgive her for leaving me a painful childhood. Until one day...

I remember that time we went out for dinner. She suddenly cried. She told me that since she left me she had thought about me every day. When I looked into her eyes, I realised I couldn't tell her I hated her. On my way home we didn't say anything. At that night I made a decision: I decided to let the past go. I decided to forgive her and have a new beginning with my mom. That night we were still strangers. But in the future, we are family. Nothing can separate us.



Teacher's comments:

Sally, we get to choose our friends, but our family members are given to us, and whatever goes wrong between us there is still no way of truly replacing them with anyone else. We may find family members difficult to love (they may find it difficult to love us!) but we really need to try hard to forgive, and rebuild bridges that are broken. It sounds as if you are finding the grace, and the courage, to do that; hang in there. This is a fundamental relationship in your life, and it is absolutely as important as the two of you make it. Good luck!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

4LY Li Wang Ching, Sabrina

Good morning, everyone! I am Li Wang Ching from class 4LY. Today I'd like to share a story from when I was thirteen. Do you know what courage is? How do we define brave behavior? I didn't know it before that day. But now I know it. I think courage is a kind of breakthrough of spirit which turns impossible things into possible ones.

Since my childhood, I have been told that snakes are terrible and dangerous animals. If you are not careful enough, you may get hurt by them or even lose your life. In the region where I live, most of the snakes are not poisonous. But before that day, whenever I saw a snake, I always trembled and ran away as fast as I could. I was so afraid of snakes from the bottom of my heart. When a snake showed its tongue, I immediately thought of its evil face.



One summer, my family went to the mountains for a summer retreat. My lovely niece was very excited to go with us. On the peaceful and beautiful mountains, we could see meandering streams, hear chirping birds, and smell fragrant blossom. While my little niece was playing as cheerfully as a lark, I was taking photos everywhere; I sent the scenery photos to my friend group.

The stones on the path were covered with moss, so we walked very carefully. There were many green vines climbing up along the mountain wall. The vitality with which they burst out surprised us deeply. My little niece saw a very nice pebble by the pool and ran quickly towards it. I tried to take good care of her in case she fell down. I tried to keep up with her pace, and kept reminding her to be careful. As the old saying goes, extreme joy begets sorrow. A small snake was creeping up from the vine and poking out its head. My niece had never seen a snake, so out of curiosity she stopped and turned her head to me. I saw the puzzling signal in her eyes.

My heart was tangled. Not only was I afraid of snakes, but there was also the possibility that my niece would be bitten by the snake. Fear made me feel

The bravest thing that I've ever done

tense, but because of my niece I suddenly got infinite courage and quickly walked two steps forward to protect my niece. I didn't let the snake out of my sight for even one second. After seeing us take no further action, the snake slowly swam into the pool. I marvelled at my behaviour! I never expected that I could do that!

What is 'courage'? I think it is 'courage' to protect someone important to me; I have overcome my fear. Alexander Dumas wrote in 'The Count of Monte Cristo': "All human wisdom is contained in these two words: 'Waiting' and 'hope!'" I think we should add one more word in this quote: the reasons why humans are able to open up the future are 'waiting, hope - and courage'.

Thank you!

Teacher's comments:

Sabrina, you showed a strong protective instinct in facing the snake on your niece's behalf, even though you had to face your own fear to do so. You put someone else's interest above your own.

That was a demonstration of love for your niece, of the sort required to 'love your neighbour as yourself'. You can justly be proud of your action.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

4TH Jackie Walker

Hi everybody! Today, I'm going to talk about the bravest thing I've ever done. Being brave isn't about doing the things 'most people' are afraid of doing, but it's about doing the things you're afraid of doing.

About a year ago, my parents signed me up for a competition on a sport I've only learnt for 3 months. My parents told me: "This is going to be an experience!", "It's just for fun!", "Let's see how well you're doing in this sport!" I wasn't very convinced, but I still let them sign me up.

On the day of the competition, 3 minutes before the match, I realised I'd made a mistake — a big one! My opponent was a brown belt, while I had been a white belt just a few months ago. I guess it was painfully obvious that I was scared and nervous because my 'shifu' (master) walked up to me and said, "Belt is only a colour. Don't panic!" My father gave me a slap on the back and pushed me onto the mat.



Guess how long I lasted on the mat. Three minutes? One minute? The referee just said "Hajime!" (a Japanese word) and "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, BAM!" She threw me. I lost in five seconds! I felt so embarrassed! I felt like crying, and that is what I did.

My father cheered me up by telling me really stupid jokes. "You could have broken your leg, but you didn't!" Then we ate ice-cream together and we went back home.

As I said, being brave is about doing things which you're afraid of doing. That was the bravest thing I've ever done. Thanks for listening!

Teacher's comments:

Well, Jackie, your father is quite right; you didn't get hurt! Certainly letting yourself be entered in the competition was brave, and telling others about it also shows courage, but I wonder whether you can do something braver still, by entering again. Then you will discover whether you learned from the experience of the first time. Everybody has to start out as a beginner!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

4CW Shu Kit Kwan, John

What does 'brave' mean to you? I think being brave means you need to stand up, give love to someone and do everything you could.

Last Christmas, my friends and I were invited by our volunteering tutor Mr. Ken to visit the homeless.



On that day, we went to buy a lot of snacks to prepare for giving those homeless as a present. We bought drinks and cakes. When we arrived at Sham Shui Po, we started to find some homeless people to give them a present. But to our surprise, there were not only the homeless, but a lot of different people. I even saw a man giving himself an injection.

At first, I hesitated. But I decided to know more about them. We met a guy called Chan. He used to be a sailor when he was 25. But he got busted in Hong Kong and his family has gone away. We chatted for some time about different matters, ranging from ourselves to Hong Kong.

Also, it was a winter day. But the people there just wore one down jacket, or covered themselves with thin newspaper or cardboard, and slept in the park. Every scene I saw made me feel pity.

On that day, we had done something meaningful, even though there is much more we could do. Those people want to talk to people about their feelings. But no one ever wants to listen, and we just did it. Sometimes, 'brave' does not mean that you are not shy. It means you need to stand up and give love to someone. I hope everyone could follow our example to do brave things.

Teacher's comments:

John, you are right; you went well outside your comfort zone to make contact with those on the outer edge of the community, and that does take a special kind of courage. Thank you for telling us about your experience, and reminding us of their existence.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

4NC Mok Tsz Ching, Lily

Hello, everybody! Today I am going to tell you about the bravest thing I have ever done. Once, my mom asked me if I did anything special when I was little. Then she told me one case when I was four. I tried to run away from my home!



One day after school, my mom picked me up from the kindergarten. She told me that my younger sister broke my toy. But I did not care much, because I was in a very good mood that day, and I didn't think it would be my favorite toy.

When I got back home, I saw my favorite toy lying on the floor. I screamed immediately and rushed to check if it was broken. The toy was covered with messy colours. My sister had painted all over it! My Teddy bear! And I called out, 'Oh! Mom! What's going on! My favorite toy!' Then my mom said, 'I told you already. Your sister destroyed your toy.'

I was very angry! I hated my sister! I fought with her, and she pulled my hair very hard! She started to cry even before me! I shouted, 'What's wrong with you! You destroyed my favorite toy! And you cried! Isn't it your fault?' My mom came in angrily and told me I can't do that to my sister, because she was younger than me. Then she punished me to stand in the corner.

I felt that was so unfair, and rushed out of the door. I wanted to run away from my home and find my auntie and stay with her forever! When I was waiting for the lift, my mom came out and tried to grab me. At the same time, the lift door opened and I saw my dad. I immediately hugged him and started to cry. My dad asked my mom what happened. My mom told him, and we went back home together.

Now I have grown up. When I look back on this experience, I feel very stupid. But this is the bravest memory I had about my childhood.

Teacher's comments:

Lily, you show some courage also in telling us a story which makes you feel stupid. Thinking of running away from home seems to be quite common among children; actually doing it is rather less common, and – fortunately! – not many of those who do get very far. In your case, just the physical presence of your dad was enough to change your mind; there was one family member you didn't think was unfair to you, and that was enough. You were only four; the world seemed a different place then!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

4CT' Chau Hui Yan, Stephanie

Good morning, everyone. I am Stephanie from 4CT. What is the bravest thing you have ever done? Today I will talk about the bravest thing that I have done, which is to stand on the stage and do public speaking in English.

Where I was a primary 5 student, I was given an opportunity to stand on the stage and talk to all students. When I was waiting at the back of the stage, I was so nervous that my legs were shaking and my hands were sweating. When the teacher called my name, all the students welcomed me by clapping their hands. I felt stressed when all of them set their eyes on me.

I stared at the clock on the wall at the back of the school hall and wished that time could go faster. However, what I felt was that time was running slower than it usually did. I was feeling helpless and my mind went blank. Then, I looked at my classmates and I could see them whispering my name and asking me not to give up. I took a deep breath and I finished the presentation.

After this experience, I am no longer afraid of standing on the stage and doing public speaking in front of all the students, just as I am doing now.



Teacher's comments:

Stephanie, I am sure many of us can relate to your situation, and your feelings about it. You must have managed very well, I think. We often hear that “taking a deep breath” is part of the process of preparation – and not just for public speaking! Try to remember the things that helped you, and deliberately go back to them whenever you need them again.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

4WW Lee Tak Mei, Abbey



Good morning, everyone. I am Abbey Lee from 4WW. Have you ever done any brave things in your life? I'm sure every one of you must have done something brave at some point in your life. When you did a brave thing, you must have met many challenges. Some people will give up but some people will soldier on – they choose to conquer it. Sure, I did a brave thing in my life and I overcame my fear. Today, I'm going to share my story with you.

When I was a junior form student, I was a very shy girl. I was afraid to talk with others. Talking with people was such a horrible experience that I basically did not communicate at all. At that time, I thought to myself, 'I need to change, but HOW?' Despite that I didn't know the way yet, I decided to make a difference in my life.

One day, in English lesson, my English teacher said that our class needed to choose one student to share his or her life on stage. That meant the student needed to talk in front of an audience. I thought I must not take part in this activity – it's too much for me. When my teacher asked if there were any volunteers, no one uttered a word. It's all quiet.

Suddenly, 'Abbey'. Someone called my name. Then, other students joined in to call my name! At that time, I was full of fear. It was because I really didn't want to talk in front of people. I would make mistakes and I would make a fool of myself. People will laugh at me. However, my English teacher thought it's a wonderful idea. I was going to go on the stage.

Finally, I mustered up the courage. I practised every day. I spent lunchtime, recess, and my leisure time practising my story. It was because I did not want to make any mistakes on stage. Soon, the big day arrived. On that day, I woke up earlier and practised myself many times. I was deeply anxious – I simply couldn't do it. It's too much for me. I'm going to look so bad on stage! I thought to myself.

When I was consumed with self-doubt, my English teacher appeared out of nowhere. She came to my side and gave me words of comfort. She told me to relax. She told me, 'Abbey, you have already done all the preparation you

The bravest thing that I've ever done

can. Now, it's the time to be natural. Just have fun and enjoy the experience.' Soon, the host called my name and I was on stage. My feet and hands were shaking.

Fortunately, with humility and confidence, I soldiered on. I did it. I did it in front of all fellow students. In spite of the fact that I did not do very well, I enjoyed it! And, seriously, that's the most important thing.

Now, I'm not afraid of public speaking anymore. Stage fright is never an issue any more. Maybe, every now and then, I may still shake a little but, in the main, I'm confident. I may still look shy but, deep down, I know I want to change my destiny by being brave, by going out of my comfort zone and by giving things a try. Although life will throw many challenges at us, I know that if you try your best, you can overcome all of them easily. At the very last, may you all seize every opportunity to be brave and conquer any challenges that come your way. Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

Abbey, what a huge challenge! It's not even as if you volunteered! Whatever were the rest of the class thinking, to nominate you for the task? By willing yourself to put in all that practice, and effectively drilling yourself to perform, you showed not only courage but method. Certainly if you approach all your challenges with such purpose you are going to succeed a lot of the time. Well done!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

5CL Lu Sze Yu, Franklin

Good morning, everyone. I'm Franklin Lu from class 5CL. When I say 'shells, crabs, coconut trees...', what comes into your mind? Yes, the answer is 'beach' and that's where my story starts.

In 2010, my family and I went to Hainan Island for a vacation. One day I was lying on the beach chair and napping. While I was relaxing, a voice came to my ears. 'Do you want to try scuba diving?' When I opened my eyes, I found that it was my father. He was pointing excitedly to a blockhouse and was waiting for my response. 'Why not?' I answered. I got up, and we walked towards the blockhouse. When we arrived there, I found that there were already at least twenty people in the room; they also planned to go scuba-diving. Twenty minutes later, a staff member led us on board, ready to go to sea.

Before going on board, everyone needed to put on a diving suit. It was close-fitting. At first, those 'challengers' were chatting with each other cheerfully. However, when we arrived at the destination, no one looked that relaxed any more.

The depth under our boat was three kilometres, and it looked like a black hole; you couldn't see the bottom. After all, it was not a swimming pool. Suddenly, some people started to throw up and others started asking to go back. Ten minutes later, only eight people dived into the water.

I was also scared, because I was worried that I would drown, even though I can swim. For safety reasons, everyone dived with a professional coach. The coach helped me carry the oxygen tank. He said, 'When you want

to call me under the water, just show me the sign.' Then he pushed me into the sea. I had to use my mouth to breathe under the water. When I opened my eyes, I saw through the swimming goggles a colourful, fantastic world. All kinds of fish were shuttling between coral reefs of



The bravest thing that I've ever done

different shapes. What surprised me most was that those fish were not scared by me; they even swam towards me!

We stayed in the underwater world for about half an hour, and then came back to the ship. It was a wonderful experience. At first I thought the world under the sea was mysterious but scary. But after the scuba diving, I think that it was not as horrific as I thought. In fact, I plan to go back again next summer. I could even hear my heart beating quickly! In the beginning, my father even told me that I could choose to give up, but I didn't do that. And the 'gift' that I got from this courageous decision was an unforgettable trip.

Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

Franklin, this is a fantastic part of our world that many of us will only experience on film. You accepted the challenge to experience it for yourself, and as a result there is a whole new part of the planet that is real to you in a way that it was not before. What other challenges can you imagine that would give you such a wonderful new perspective on our world?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

5thW Jeremiah Olarte Baguisa, Jerry

When I was in primary school, I remember there was in my class a beautiful girl whom I had a crush on. I would stare at her to appreciate how beautiful she was. At that time, I had a feeling that she liked me too because she was always looking back at me or smiling at me. So one day, I decided to ask her to be my girlfriend.



I was young. I had absolutely no idea what love was. But I took the courage to ask her anyway. When I approached her, she was smiling at me as usual. I remember that my hands and legs were shaking from nervousness. But her beautiful smile made me feel less nervous. And I just stood there, frozen. I didn't know what to say. Or at least, I forgot what to say. But before I was ready to speak, she said 'Hi' to me first. Like the awkward person I was, I couldn't say anything, but a few seconds later, I replied, "Hey, how's it going?" She said, "Nothing much, how about you?" At this point, I was so nervous that I didn't know what to do or say, so like the idiot I was, I said without thinking straight, "Do you want to be my girlfriend?" With my fingers crossed, I was hoping that she would say yes, but instead she stood up, pulling a face of disgust and walked away.

I remember my heart felt like it had dropped into my stomach. I saw her run out of the classroom, and she completely tried to avoid eye contact with me the whole day. I was extremely embarrassed. I was angry at myself, but at the same time, I was proud of myself.

At only 7 years of age, I had the courage to ask my crush to be my girlfriend. And it was really one of the bravest things I've done in my entire life. How about now? Ironically, I don't have the courage to ask any girl at all to go out with me now. I think that because of my childhood experience I have a fear of talking to girls. Comparing my older self with my younger self, I think the younger 'me' was a lot braver than I am now, at least in this area.

Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

Wow, Jerry! You did that at the age of 7? This whole boy – girl thing is so hard to navigate, isn't it? Most of us wait a lot longer than that before plucking up so much courage! I'm sorry to learn that your experience has had such an inhibiting effect; I'm sure you will find a girl who will be kinder to you eventually, so don't give up

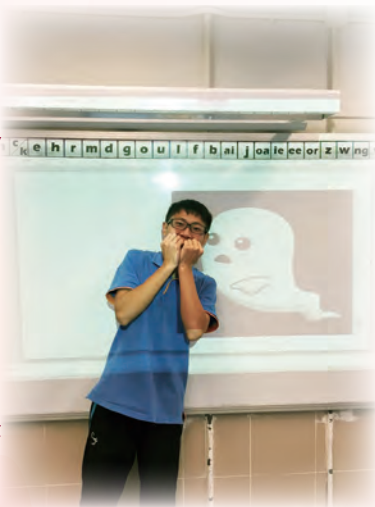
The bravest thing that I've ever done

5SC Qiu Guang Hui, Fred

Good morning everyone, I'm Fred from 5SC. Today, I'd like to share my story about the bravest thing I've ever done. It's about a ghost. Honestly, I am afraid of ghosts. However, I've never seen a ghost and I don't think there are any ghosts in the world, but I'm still afraid of that. Anyway, let me tell you my ghost story.

The story happened when I was ten years old. In the night time of a summer holiday, everyone was sleeping peacefully in bed except me, because I saw something strange after I lay on my bed. When I lay down, there was no light and everything was in darkness. But suddenly I noticed that there was something staring at me. By the moonlight, I could see that it only had one eye, and it hid itself in the corner. I was extremely scared. It was about one metre tall, and I couldn't figure out its body shape in the dark. It just kept staring at me and everything was in silent. I felt sick; it was hard to breathe. I firmly believed that it was a one-eyed ghost.

I feared that the ghost might catch me, eat me or even kidnap me. I started to pray. I prayed that the ghost would disappear at once. I prayed with my eyes opened, as I thought that if I closed my eyes, the ghost might attack me in a second. Suddenly I remembered a movie. In the movie, ghosts would fade out in light. That gave me an idea. My plan was to sneak to the switch and turn on the light. So I took a deep breath and started to sneak, all the while looking straight at the ghost. After just one step, my legs started to shake and my heart beat faster and faster. Being so scared, I stumbled and fell on the floor. I wanted to cry, but I remembered what my mother said: "No matter what happened, try to overcome it and I am always on your side." Magically, I was full of power. I stood up, ran to the light switch and turned on the light. The room turned bright - and the ghost wasn't a ghost at all; it was just a marble, which was placed on the cabinet. I sweated and laughed out loud.



The bravest thing that I've ever done

This story sounds stupid, but at that time I really thought it was a ghost. I guess without my mum's advice, I might just have sat on the floor and cried. Most people have a fear of the unknown. When we face uncertainty, we can try to think of the one who always supports and encourages us. It will give us courage and energy again to face the distress. Overcoming my fear is the bravest thing that I've ever done.

Thanks for listening!

Teacher's comments:

Fred, the dark can be a scary place, even for adults; who knows what is there when we can't see it? Writers of horror stories are very good at imagining nasty things happening at night, and somewhere in our minds we don't like, and don't trust, the dark. I haven't ever seen a ghost, either, but I have met people who say they have, so I'm not prepared to rule them out. That doesn't mean I am at all keen to meet one, and I'm not sure I would react well if I did. I think your account certainly shows courage. Well done.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

5SY Ng Yan Cho, Joanne

Good morning Principal, teachers and my fellow schoolmates. I'm Joanne from 5SY. Today I would like to share a story about 'The bravest thing I've ever done'. I suppose all of you think that confessing our faults is difficult. I agree; I also think that admitting our faults is very difficult, and thinking about how to say sorry to others is annoying. I have experienced this embarrassing situation before. But I think if we can confess a fault, it means we have courage to face our wrongs.

On a day of my primary school life, I confessed my fault. The story was about me and a girl who studied in my school. That day was rainy and windy. I forgot to bring my umbrella. Luckily, a kind girl asked me if I wanted to borrow her umbrella. She said that her home was near and the road to her home had a roof, so she didn't need to walk in the rain. I thanked her and used her umbrella. The umbrella looked new. 'I must use it carefully,' I thought.

Suddenly, a strong wind blew and the umbrella was destroyed because of the strong wind. I tried to fix the umbrella, but it didn't work. I went home quickly. When I arrived home, I ran to my bedroom quickly. Because I didn't want my mum to know that I had broken someone's umbrella, I tried to use some superglue to fix the umbrella. But when I finished, the umbrella looked even worse.

The next day, I went to school. At recess time, I saw the girl who lent me the umbrella. She smiled at me and asked me for the umbrella. I told her I forgot to bring it. And I promised her I would bring it to school the next day. I felt ashamed when I told this lie.

When I went home, my mum came to me and asked me, 'Why is there a broken umbrella in your bedroom? And the umbrella isn't ours!' I told my mum the truth. My mum said, 'You should tell her the truth. You broke her umbrella, so it's your mistake. You should say sorry to her. It's wrong that you want to conceal the truth and your fault.'

The next day, when I saw the girl, I ran quickly to her and said, 'Sorry, I told a lie to you yesterday. I broke your umbrella. I will buy a new one for you.' She smiled and said, 'Never mind. I forgive you.' From that day, we became friends.

Saying sorry really needs a lot of courage. Being brave doesn't mean that

The bravest thing that I've ever done

you have to do a bungee jump or climb on the cliff, but you must be brave enough to confess your wrong deeds. Saying sorry can be embarrassing, but we can't escape from it. Confessing and admitting our faults is also a profound step of our life, and gives us power to walk forward. So I think it's the bravest thing that I've ever done.

Thank you.



Teacher's comments:

Joanne, sometimes it seems that almost anything is better than facing up to the truth, but as your story shows, we can only put off the moment; sooner or later we have to acknowledge what has happened – and the surprising thing is that so often, when we do that, we find that everything turns out well after all! What we feared would happen doesn't. Instead, good things come of bad. You made a good friend from an accident that you thought would cause a rift.

What a good moral lesson! Thank you for sharing it.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

5CT' Tsui San Yuet, Steffi

Good morning teachers and schoolmates. I am Steffi Tsui from class 5CT. Today I would like to tell you the bravest thing I have ever done. Do you remember the English Drama Night?

In 2013, I was a F3 student. I joined the English drama with Kiki Li. It was a musical drama named "Fame". I was the dancer in the show. After thousands of rehearsal times, it finally came to show time.



I was so scared, because I needed to perform in front of nearly a thousands of people. We all stayed in the backstage area and waited for the show to start. There was a TV in the backstage, so we could see what the audience saw. When I saw the name of our drama in the TV, I was crying. I had many feelings at that time. I felt scared, happy, touched and sad. Finally, the show started. I was scared about standing on the stage, but I felt that when I stood on the stage I was not scared anymore. Our show had a wonderful ending.

And now I know that when I face a problem, I should not be scared of it; the scariest thing is not really too scary for me. When you face scary things, you just need to think: "I am not scared of you", and then you will feel better, and solve the problem.

Teacher's comments:

Steffi, I remember watching "Fame", and I can tell you that the audience could not tell which of the people on stage were nervous and which were not; in fact, I think we took it for granted that all of you must be nervous! I was told as a youngster that any time I don't feel nervous I should consider giving up – because nervousness indicates that I care about the performance and the audience; no nerves: poor quality! Other teachers have given similar advice to your final sentence, so there must be truth in it. Well done.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

5CS Shum Mei Suet, Chloe

Good morning. I am Chloe from 5CS. Today I'd like to tell you about the bravest thing I have ever done. When I was a form 4 student, I joined my house committee and I became a cheerleader. I had a great experience in that year.

Many people think that being a cheerleader is an easy job: just dancing, leading a team to follow my dancing steps. Not everyone had been a cheerleader before, so they didn't know how difficult it is to lead a team. Being a cheerleader, you need to think about what steps can be used in your dancing, as well as how to perform better than other houses.



Second, being a cheerleader was not only about dancing; sometimes you need to have great leadership and communication skills; for example, you need to be skilful in building up team spirits. There were many problems I had to solve. Sometimes a team could have different ideas, so we should have communication. We also want to have a wonderful result, so I should lead my teammates to compromise and communicate.

In my experience, I had solved many problems when the cheering team members were arguing. I had to talk with both sides and clear their misunderstanding towards each other. When my team members did not listen to my instructions then I had to persuade, or sometimes compromise.

After the cheerleading team competition, I suddenly found I had grown up, and was proud of who I was. It was hard, but by the end I could lead my team to great memories; we won the championship in the competition. Although there were a lot of frustrations, I never gave up. When you look back, you will be proud of yourself, just as I am. Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

Chloe, it sounds as if you didn't realise at first the responsibility you had taken on, but you worked out what was necessary, stood up to the task, and in the end did a remarkable job. Often we may think "surely there is someone better placed than I to do this?", but if no-one else steps forward, then someone has to do it! In this particular case, you showed your ability to learn, to mature and to lead. No wonder you are proud of yourself!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

6CL Li Yuen Ying, Circle

Good Morning everyone! I am Circle Li from 6CL. Some people may think I am a courageous person by looking at my body shape. But in fact, I am a timid person who is scared of many things such as small insects, ghosts and even small animals. Before I became a secondary student, the scariest thing to me was coming up to the stage to perform. I was afraid of seeing all the eyes looking at me. So, you may know what I am going to share with you would be about my experience on stage. When I was in Secondary 1, I was so fortunate as to have been chosen to dance on the stage of Yuen Long Theatre, and I regard this as the bravest thing I have ever done.

Secondary 1 is the most memorable year of my life so far. Apart from having spent a lot of delightful time with my classmates, joining the Latin Dance class, which wasn't at all based on my choice, also contributed to making my time in Form 1 unforgettable. In Form 1, we all had to choose one Co-curricular activity from among the five choices—magic class, computer class, Latin dance, gymnastics and fitness. We had to give priorities to these five activities based on our interest. At the end, I was shocked to know that I was assigned to the Latin dance class, since I had no actual interest in Latin dance at all! - but I had to join it anyway.

The Latin dance class started, and I told myself that it only lasted for one term. So I just had to follow the orders of the coach, learn how to do the steps, and time would just pass quickly. Unfortunately, the school was going to hold a show in Yuen Long Theatre, and required us to perform what we had learnt in different Co-curricular activities. The coach then chose me and my seven classmates to perform in the show. As I was really afraid that some of my classmates would make fun of me, I told the coach that I didn't want to perform, but the coach abruptly rejected my request. I therefore had no choice but to practise dancing after school every Wednesday and Friday for more than a month, just to prepare for the show. When my classmates heard I was going to perform Latin dance, they all looked very surprised and thought it would be very funny to see me dance on the stage. I was really anxious until the day finally came.

On that day, we went to Yuen Long Theatre 5 hours before the show and had a rehearsal. I still remember exactly what happened in the changing room on that day. We all changed into the dancing costume provided by the school, because we only perform once. However, the costume was too small

The bravest thing that I've ever done

for me and I could hardly zip it up. I was very embarrassed and couldn't think of any solution at that time. Luckily, Miss Carly Chan came to me with some double-sided adhesive tape in her hand, and helped me to tape the cloth together.

After my costume had been fixed, it was time for us to perform. All the audience clapped their hands to welcome us. My heart beat so fast that I felt it was going to come out. We walked onto the stage and danced what we had practised. To my surprise, nobody was talking or laughing. I could only hear the background music, which made me relaxed, and I just kept dancing. I was really exhilarated when I finished the last step. Although I wasn't the best dancer in the performance, I had already done my best with no regrets.

Even now, when somebody hears I have performed Latin Dance before, they will look surprised and ask me why I joined such a class. Actually, sometimes I regret having participated in the class. However, because of that experience, I know that I can do everything as long as I try. Prior to that performance, I was too shy to come onto the stage, but now I am not shy anymore. Although I am scared of the DSE, I WON'T escape from it. Just as the lyrics of the song 'The Impossible Dream' say: 'Still strove with his last ounce of courage to reach the unreachable star'. The stars of DSE seem unreachable, but I believe if we have enough courage, we can reach the unreachable star. Let's fight for the DSE together!

Thank you.



Teacher's comments:

Well done, Circle Li – and well written, too! There were many reasons why you might not have succeeded, and obstacles placed themselves in your way, but you overcame them. You took care to take us step by step through the story; the details help us understand your experience, what it meant to you and how it felt. Now you can say that you overcame stage fright – at least once, even if you never do such a thing again.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

6LC Choi Ho Yi, Chloe

Because Hong Kong's society is so competitive, many students get frustrated - or even suffer from depression - because of poor academic results. Have you ever had such an experience? Indeed, I once got very depressed because of my academic study, telling myself that I would never be able to succeed in anything I did. The experience was real torture and so, after suffering from this pain for three years, I finally decided to do the bravest thing in my life — to change schools when I finished my Form three study.

Leaving my previous school is the bravest thing I have ever done. My previous school is one of the top schools in Tuen Mun; 75 percent of its graduates enter university. When I was a primary school student, I made great efforts and achieved band one level. I was very fortunate to have entered this elite school. However, after just a few weeks, my nightmare began. I put my best effort into my studies for every exam and test but, no matter how hard I tried, I was always one of the last twenty in my form. As time passed by, I became a person with very low self-esteem and no confidence at all. I thought that whatever I did was always wrong. So in those three years I never tried to give any advice to my friends; I was never involved in any school activities or duties, and never took part in any competitions. My sense of belonging to the school was so low that I finally decided to change schools.



The bravest thing that I've ever done

That decision was difficult to make. At the time, lots of people advised me not to leave that school, as they thought I might have a better chance of getting into university if I could survive there. In other words, they thought I would get poorer grades in public exams, and thus have a gloomy future, if I chose to study in any other school. But in spite of all these objections, I had already made up my mind, and that's how I came to continue my studies in Form Four at Chinese YMCA Secondary School. From the very first minute I came to this school, I have never regretted making this decision.

Once I joined this school, I was given a lot of opportunities to take up different duties and participate in various activities. I had never imagined that I could join the musical performance and perform in front of 1000 people in Yuen Long Theatre; I had never imagined being appointed Student Leader - and what surprised me most was that my teammates and teachers even nominated me as the vice - head student leader a year later. All these opportunities and recognitions are giving me back my confidence, which had been lost six years ago. These experiences have proved to me that I am not a useless person. I can also contribute my talents and skills to help others who are in need. These experiences have also taught me that if I work hard, I can do well and get good grades in exams too. I understand now that every effort I make is worthwhile.

My dear schoolmates, every single decision we make may lead us to a different road. We don't know anything about our future now. However, if you believe that something is the best for you, you should be brave and go for it. As long as we are bold enough to follow our hearts, there can be a brand new world waiting for us out there.

Teacher's comments:

What an inspirational story, Chloe. We can all be very glad that you made the choice to come and join us here, and only sorry that you had to go through such an ordeal beforehand. Thank you for sharing your account.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

6LP Chan Kei

Hello, I am Kei from 6LP. When I look back what I have done over the past 17 years of my life, I can surely tell you that I have done quite a lot of brave things, such as singing in front of a large group of people, playing exciting rides in the theme park by myself, standing up to a bully - and many more.

Among all these, I would like to share with all of you this morning the one which I regard as the bravest. The bravest thing I have ever done is to cosplay with my friends, when I was in secondary 4. It may not be a big surprise to you but I consider it as one of the most unforgettable memories.

As many of you may know, I very much like Japanese Anime culture. I like watching Japanese animation, reading Japanese comics and drawing different characters. I started to love Japanese animation when I was in primary six. At that time, I was very confused and had no direction in my life because of the everyday pressure. The Japanese animation called 'Katekyo Hitman Reborn' encouraged me and woke me from my lethargy. Although you may think it is overstated or unreasonable, I was really inspired by this line spoken by the main character: 'You will grow up because of making mistakes, so don't say you can't before you try.' This line made a very strong impression on me, and touched me a lot.

The character who said this never gives up his dream, and he has given me strength to move on. I think the characters in the comics are like heroes, who always bring positive energy or messages to cheer us up - especially when something has made us downcast and sad.

Another thing I think is important in life is to have a great hobby. Having a hobby can make people relaxed, and more optimistic. That's why I fell in love with the anime culture and made it my hobby. I have collected different figures and some limited goods or comic books for some years. Even now, as a secondary six student, I still feel glad, and extremely excited, when I see all of my collectables.



The bravest thing that I've ever done

As we are all stressed because of our studies or other duties, I think cosplaying is a good way for us to relax and recharge ourselves. In cosplay we can imitate our favourite character, and imagine ourselves to be as brave as they. No matter who you are, you can forget your real identity and be absorbed into the character's life at that moment. I see a lot of smiles on cosplayers' faces, which guess shows how much they enjoy being their ideal hero.

Cosplay may seem weird in most people's eyes; even some of my friends were astonished by my photos; they could not believe that I was cosplaying. That's why I didn't tell my mother when I first started to cosplay; she found out when she saw some photos on my Facebook. I am happy that she did not object my hobby. Actually, cosplay is not weird and it is a great hobby. It takes time, money and passion for people to decorate the costumes and prepare all other accessories, such as wigs and weapons of the characters. So all cosplayers take this hobby very seriously.

Now, you may wonder: what character did I cosplay? I cosplayed a handsome boy, from a famous game. It is hard to pose exactly as the character does, and I spent a lot of time thinking about how to do it and practising. At last I was happy with my own performance and I think I have overcome my fear too. I believe these experiences are going to be one of the craziest things I have ever done in my life.

As DSE is coming, I have to concentrate on my study and cannot spend time on cosplay any more. Still, I will remind myself not to give up easily when I face difficulty. I hope you find meaning in my story; good luck in your DSE.

Teacher's comments:

That is fascinating, Kei. I had not come across cosplay before I came to Hong Kong and to CYMCASS, but I think that many of us imagine being someone else, and I can see the attraction of getting fully into the role, for which costume is obviously an enhancement. I see also that it is a culture that is still new and unfamiliar, so that you have to pluck up the courage to enter it in the first place. So congratulations. May you gain inner strength through your experience.

The bravest thing that I've ever done

GLW Andre Ng

What are you afraid of the most? Spiders? Stormy weather? Forgetting to write an essay for your teacher? Everyone has something they are afraid of, but have you tried overcoming your fear?

I used to live in a village where there were lots of trees and bushes. I always walked to the door in trepidation. Snakes were found around the village. Among the things I fear, snakes were the only things that send chills through my spine. The way they slither is just petrifying. When I was a kindergartener, I once peed in my pants because I saw a picture of a snake.....in a flip-book.

Unfortunately, I wet myself once more when I was a Secondary 2 student.

It was Monday, half past six in the morning. I woke up as usual for another fresh start at school. Just before I set down my feet on the floor, I caught a glimpse from the corner of my eye of something moving. I assumed it was just my imagination until I put on my glasses; there was a small, yet long snake lying right on the bedroom floor.

My jaws dropped once I had a clear sight of what was in front of me. I blinked furiously to make sure I was not just dreaming. But the illusion darted its eyes at me. The snake stared at me for a long while. I could barely move my body as I was terrified. I feared the snake would jump on me and bite me - or it might strangle me. Before I totally panicked, the snake slithered away to the living room, and I slowly fell into a state of relief.



I was aware that the snake was still inside my house. I took a deep breath and poked my head out of my room to search for the snake. There it was, curled up and sleeping on the living room floor. I started to regain my nerve;

The bravest thing that I've ever done

I knew I must do something. I tiptoed near to the snake, thinking how to take care of this dangerous serpent.

I looked around, but could find nothing of real use except my student handbook, which soon would become a "murder weapon". I snatched the handbook to my arms and held it tightly by the sides. My hands were shaking nervously." Come on Andre! There's a reason that you have a pair of balls." I closed my eyes and whacked the handbook at the snake. The snake didn't survive the impact and died instantly.

I couldn't believe what I did! I actually overcame my fear! I killed a snake by myself! I became hyped up and.....

Just before I cheered for my victory, a cold and breezy sensation interrupted the celebration - a cold and wet feeling from my pants.

Although I successfully overcame my biggest fear, I also successfully wet my pants; - again.

Teacher's comments:

How embarrassing, Andre! Fear of snakes is a very common phobia; there is certainly something about them that we human beings don't like, even though they help us a lot by keeping down the numbers of other pests. It's the same with spiders; many people fear them, but would we really want more mosquitoes? I hope your other fears don't have the same effect. Otherwise your laundry bill will be out of control!

The bravest thing that I've ever done

6PL Yeung Hiu Ying

Hello, everyone! Today I want to share with you the bravest thing I've ever done. Before I do that, I want to ask you two questions: Have you ever travelled to another country? If so, with whom did you travel?

Yes; the bravest thing I have ever done is that I went to Canada by myself when I was 16 years old. Before that, I only went travelling with my family and friends. Also, I had never visited Canada before. It was a strange place for me.

When my dad told me that he wanted me to go to Canada to visit my uncle, aunt and cousins, I really wanted to say no, but he already bought the flight ticket for me. That meant I had to go.

I'm a timid person, and I need someone to keep with company even when I go to other regions of Hong Kong, so going to Canada was a quite big challenge for me.

I felt really nervous about this trip; I imagined a lot of troubles I would meet before the trip. For example, will I get lost in the airport? Will my baggage get stolen? Will I be detained by the customs officer? Will I have an accident on the plane?



On the day of setting off, I contained my anxiety and departed from Hong Kong. Actually, the thing that I most worried about was my poor English. How can I communicate with others in my crappy English? In Canada, if I don't understand what people are talking about, I can let my cousins translate for me, but before that who could help me? Luckily, I could understand what the stewardess and custom officers asked. Upon arriving at the airport of Toronto, I just followed other people. And without any problem I passed the customs of Canada and met my uncle and cousins.

This was an unforgettable experience for me. Not only was it my first time to go travelling by myself, it also made me realise that once you take the first step in doing something, even if this step seems extremely difficult and challenging, everything else will be much easier for you. Also, when you have a problem, if you don't face it and overcome it but just evade it, you will never

The bravest thing that I've ever done

know how brave you are - just like me. I had not imagined that I could go travelling alone to a foreign country before, but I just did it. I used my bravery to overcome my fear. Nothing is impossible. Everyone has this ability to overcome their difficulties.

Teacher's comments:

Hiu Ying, it sounds as if you did really well on your first solo trip. Has the experience helped you with your confidence? Can you now travel less anxiously without someone to accompany you? And have you found that you are more interested in travelling now that you've managed such an expedition?

The bravest thing that I've ever done

64C Chung Pui Yee

Have you ever stepped out of your comfort zone? In my life, I had never left my parents for more than five days, whether it was camping or travelling. But I broke this record in my form four summer holiday; I left my parents for over half a month, and I think this is the bravest thing that I have ever done.

Three months before that summer holiday, I had applied for a trip to mainland China, as my friend Jocelyn asked me to travel with her. After two months, I received the e-mail saying I was admitted, so I called Jocelyn immediately, only to find out that her name was not on the list. Therefore I had to go on the journey alone.

On the first day, I slept on the train overnight; this was my first time to travel on a train that has a bed. I was excited to sleep in the middle bunk. I had been away from my mother and father for sixteen hours since the morning. I missed the time they travelled with me, helping me to carry my luggage and having family meals with me. At home I'm used to hearing my parents talking to each other, but that night I slept alone in a silent carriage. I tossed and turned in the bunk, waiting for the morning to come. I tried to WhatsApp my mother, but my sim card didn't work, so I lost contact with my parents from that first night, and I felt upset about that. This was a big challenge to me, as I had to take care of myself from then on!

I needed to keep wearing the same T-shirt, so I repeatedly washed my clothes by hand. How exhausted I was! I realised then that the washing machine is one of the most practical inventions. I ate dust and dirt every minute when I walked through the desert in Dunhuang. That made it even more difficult to wash the clothes in the middle of the night. I walked about restlessly in the room. I thought the clothes wouldn't be fully dry, as there wasn't enough time. If I were not in the correct costume it would be difficult for my team leader to locate me. I tried to solve the problem by looking for a hair-dryer in every hotel. Unfortunately, no hair dryer was provided in most of the hotels in this non-developed area of China. I faced so many problems each day during the journey

I feel brave and mature since coming back from the trip, because I had stepped out of my comfort zone to have an adventure, and solved thousands of problems in learning to be independent. To me, this is absolutely the bravest thing I've ever done.



Teacher's comments:

You certainly make it sound, Pui Yee, as if you had to be brave to cope with the difficulties. I wonder whether you would have felt less brave if Jocelyn had been able to go with you. Was she jealous that you made the trip and she didn't? Will you now feel more confident of your ability to travel to a new place?



**The Thing that
I am Proud of**

My Heroine

1CL Yau Chi Hau, Chantal

When I was young, I was alone at home all the time. I felt bored because my mother was not with me. I wanted to play with her but she didn't have any spare time to spend with me. Every night I waited for my mother to come home, but she told me she was busy at work so she would come home late. She always asked me to sleep early.

One day I waited for her for a long time, as she had promised me that we would enjoy a story-telling time before bed that night. However, she got caught up at work so she came home late again. I was so disappointed and angry that I shouted at her. I locked myself up in my bedroom for the whole night crying. I kept grumbling and mumbling.

My mum was very patient and she didn't get angry with me for being unreasonable. Instead, she was very worried about me so she tried to cheer me up. She decided to bring me to her shop and show me what she did at work.

My mum is a wedding planner. Her duties are to plan the best weddings for loving couples, and sell wedding dresses. During my visit to her shop, I could see that she was very busy but she was very efficient. She enjoyed good relationships with her colleagues. All her clients were satisfied with my mum's service and they all left with beautiful smiles.



After this visit, I realised that my mother brings happiness and joy to others. She gives her blessings to her clients by doing her job well. I am so proud of her. She has promised me that she will spend more time with me. She loves me so much and I love her too.

Teacher's comments:

Chantal, it is lovely that you and your mother are so close, and good that you have had the opportunity to see what it is that your mother does that has been keeping her away from you. I hope that you will get more time together. In any case, you will find it easier to forgive her lateness when you know what she is doing.

Colouring my life

1LT Ally Chung

Hello, everyone. I am Ally Chung from 1LT. Today, I would like to share with all of you the thing I am proud of. To many of you, it may just be something ordinary, but it means a lot to me.

Since I was 6, I have had a passion for drawing and crafting. I always find creative ideas come easily, and I always take any opportunity I have for artistic creation. My mother is a passionate painter too, and she owns a gallery – maybe that's why I love drawing so much.

One day, I was painting as usual at home. It was just another ordinary day. Suddenly my mother passed me a leaflet. I took a glance at it; it was a poster about an annual drawing competition organised by Po Leung Kok. My mother gave me an encouraging look. I signed up for the competition right away. It was my first time.



Every day I thought about the draft. My mother would give me some ideas about it, but I knew it would be my painting. I was the master of it; I was the artistic creator of it. The image soon came to me and I painted it. It took a lot of modifications to arrive at its final look, but I enjoyed improving it, the process of creating it.

Soon it was time for submission. My mother sent my work to the organisation and I was very nervous waiting for the results, because I had never entered any drawing competitions before. After half a year I received a letter from Po Leung Kok about the result.

'Yeah! I got an award!' I said excitedly.

'Oh Ally, I am so proud of you,' my mother said.

I was proud of myself not just because I did very well in the drawing competition, but because I had a taste of artistic creation. I learnt a lot from the creative process and, however challenging or demanding it might be, I did not waver one bit. Of course, I couldn't say I am an accomplished artist, but I am willing to improve myself artistically.

That's it! That's the thing I am proud of. What about you? What proud things have you done? I cannot wait to be inspired.

Teacher's comments:

Well done indeed, Ally. You have obviously discovered a talent. Your writing about it was done mostly in short sentences, which is a device writers often use to let us know they are telling us something exciting.

My bravery

1CM Wong Chung Yao, Kevin

Good morning, everyone. I am Kevin Wong from Class 1CM. Today I would like to share with all of you the thing I am proud of. It is not something visible in the air, but I am sure it is what everyone longs for. And now, I am proud of owning it.

It was a PE lesson and it was the first time I tried trampoline. I felt nervous and scared, because I had never tried that before. After getting changed, we headed to the playground.

Standing right in front of the trampoline, I got butterflies in my stomach as I saw my PE teacher, Mr. Mak, giving a demonstration to us. After that, my classmates who were in front of me tried. Now it was my turn. My face turned pale and my heart was beating very fast, because I was very much afraid of heights. After Mr. Mak and my classmates encouraged me, I put on a brave face and stepped forward. While I was jumping on the trampoline, my classmates kept encouraging me. Even though I didn't perform any skills, I felt a sense of achievement after giving it a try. I am proud that I have overcome a big challenge in my life.



After that PE lesson, I have realised that I own a very important personal quality – courage - and I am proud of being brave enough to challenge myself and make changes. This is the end of my sharing; thank you!

Teacher's comments:

Well done, Kelvin. A fear of heights is certainly not helpful when attempting trampolining! It was great that your classmates and your teacher were so encouraging. The result certainly confirms your ownership of the quality of courage.

My Football Story

1LC Lam Hok Hin

Hi everyone, I am Hin Lam from 1LC, today I am going to tell you the thing that I am proud of.

I started playing football when I was in Primary 2. I am not good at playing football, and my skills are not good, but I want to have better football skills, so I practise three times a week. My coach always tells me "Keep playing football and maybe you will be number one day".

The next year, we were to have a competition, but the coach did not choose me. The coach chose the seven best football players. I felt unhappy because I was not chosen, but I said, "Don't give up! I want to be the best. I will win. I will take the medal one day."

Two years later, I can take part in the competition because I have worked hard. Finally I got the medal, and became number 1. I felt so happy and so proud. This is the thing I am proud of!

That is all for my presentation. Thank you!



Teacher's comments:

Hin, you stand as a living example of perseverance: "If at first you don't succeed, try; try; try again." It seems to me, though, that at least now you would have to rewrite one of your sentences; you must presumably admit to having some footballing skills?

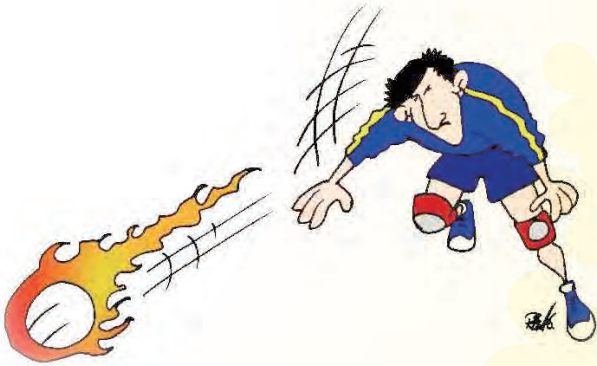
I scored a point!

1LC Chan Man Shing, Micky

Hello, everyone, I am Micky Chan from 1LC. I think everyone has their own strengths and shortcomings. Today I am going to share with you the thing that I am proud of. I have always loved playing handball since I was in S1. I am not the best handball player, but I always try my best to train four times a week. I think I can play handball quite well, so I work hard for my dream to become one of the elected members of the handball team.

At last the day came when I could go to the competition and join my team. In the competition, I scored one point! I felt so happy because I could join my team. I feel so proud of myself, for I have worked hard for my team. I did not give up, and kept training until that day came.

That's all for my presentation. Thank you!



Teacher's comments:

Micky, you stand as an example of perseverance, training to refine your skills until the day arrives when you are called upon to demonstrate your ability. One point does not sound much, but "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." Now your training is with an eye on a second point!

The thing that I'm proud of

1LS Chow Kwai Tung, Happy

Good morning everyone. I'm Happy from 1LS. Today, I'd like to share with you all my story about the thing that I'm proud of; that is being the head prefect at school.

When I was in Primary 4, I was asked by my teacher, Ms. Tam, to join a prefect training camp. After that, I became a prefect. I was quite nervous at the beginning, because I didn't know if I could do the job well.

One day when I was carrying out my duty in the covered playground, Ms. Tam saw that I looked sad. She asked, 'What happened to you? You don't want to be a prefect?' 'No! No! I'm just worried that I can't do my job well', I said. Ms. Tam then gave me a gentle touch on my shoulders.

Since that day, I have tried my best to serve my teachers and schoolmates at school. My parents and friends showed me great support, too. On the day of my graduation, Ms. Tam said to me, 'Well done, Happy! You've been a great prefect!' I felt very touched by her words, and at that moment I was really proud of myself for having faced the challenges as the head prefect bravely.

That's the end of my story about the thing that I'm proud of. I hope you enjoyed listening to it. Thank you!



Teacher's comments:

My opinion is that very often those who are anxious about whether they are doing the job properly are the ones who do a great job; complacency is an enemy to good work. Your worry that you might not do the job well drove you to improve, until ultimately you were told you had been a great prefect. Well done!

The thing that I'm proud of

2CW Lau Cheuk Hei, Cliff

Good Morning! Do you feel proud of yourself? Have you ever encountered a moment of excitement that makes you feel as if you are standing in the centre of the world? I do! I would like to share with you my own story, which will absolutely amaze you.

The first time I swam in the sea, I felt extraordinarily terrified, since what is under the sea was totally unfamiliar to me. There were fierce sharks, giant octopuses, poisonous jellyfish and various terrible creatures that I never knew. I was extremely frightened and my face turned completely white. Who could help me get out of this hopeless plight?

Suddenly, something shiny came into my sight. It was a pretty fairy! "Don't be scared, my darling; I will protect you until the end of the world," the fairy comforted me gently. I then kept calm and continued my race attentively, neglecting all the scary creatures under the sea. This was the first time that I felt unprecedentedly delighted and proud of myself. With bravery and perseverance I overcame my fear.

I hope all of you will remember whenever we encounter something we are scared of, we should keep our spirits up, and I believe that courage does prevail. But I would also like to thank the pretty fairy. Ha! Ha!



Teacher's comments:

Ha! Ha! indeed, Cliff! It is not clear what you are proud of; is it that you have a pretty fairy to take care of you? If so, you should perhaps remember that fairies' powers are considered to be limited, so you may need help from other sources, and to build up your own inner resources.

The thing that I'm proud of

2KT' Han Tong Fei, Cindy

Good morning, everyone. I am Cindy Han from 2KT. Today I will talk about "The thing that I am proud of". The thing that I am proud of is my painting. When I was only a five-year-old, I often stayed in my bedroom alone and drew for a whole afternoon. I like drawing. I can draw how I see things and record them on paper.

Not only do I like drawing, I can also draw better than other people my age. I often sign up for painting competitions, and I have received many awards. I am very proud of my ability to win prizes for my painting, and my heart is filled with a sense of honour.

When I was in primary school, my paintings were often pasted on the wall by the teacher. Whenever I heard my classmates acclaim my pictures, I would be very proud and cheerful. I usually discussed painting skills after class with my classmates. I learned more about painting in order to perfect the imperfection in my drawing.

Although I don't paint professionally, or really exquisitely, I try to get still closer to the perfect painting. In future I will love painting more, and let painting be my life.

This is the end of "The thing that I am proud of". Thank you.



Teacher's comments:

You certainly sound an impressive young artist, Cindy. I am a little confused as to whether you prefer drawing or painting, as your sentences move freely from one term to the other. You also don't tell us what sort of subject-matter you draw, or paint, and I would like to know!

The thing that I'm proud of

2CW Li Hoi Lun, Helen

Good afternoon, I am Helen from 2CW. Today I am going to talk about the thing that I am proud of, which is baking.

I love baking very much. Usually, I bake something once a week. And whenever my friends' birthdays arrive, I prepare cakes for them. They always praise me, for my cakes are very yummy. One day it was my class teacher's birthday, and we wanted to give her a surprise, so we prepared a cake and a hand-portrait shopping bag for her. My classmate came to my home and we made the cake together. It was so much fun that day. I was very proud of myself.



My mum supports me a lot in my baking. Sometimes I make chocolate cookies, or cakes, if I am bored at home. Every single time my mum gives me lots of comments on my work. Most of the time, she says it is a waste of money, and that my cakes do not really look nice. However, when she eventually tastes them, she is always satisfied with the beautiful taste. Thanks to her I can keep baking as my luxury hobby.

Teacher's comments:

Baking is a great hobby, and one that ensures you will always have friends – the people who want to taste what you have baked! It does need money, though, to buy the ingredients, so it is important to have your mum's support. It sounds as if you may be quite a creative baker, trying new recipes and new ideas. Yum!

The thing that I'm proud of

2LT Fung Ka Lok, Kelvin

What are the things that you are proud of? Your achievements in life? Awards? Money? For me, I dare not to boast any of those. But I am proud of myself that I have a group of nice teachers and friends.

As people, we always make some mistakes, but teachers and friends always help me go back to the right path. They won't let me be alone; they won't let me do wrong things; they won't let me be upset. I am really proud of myself that I have a group of people who will take care of me. They can always accompany me.



However, achievements, awards and money can't always accompany you, so I am really proud of my friends and teachers.

For example, my class teachers Miss Lau and Miss Tong are always teaching me life lessons. They are kind to me. Although I always forget what they say, they grow up with me and I know that the life lessons are meaningful.

There are many things in life that don't last. Only true friends and teachers are able to stay with us to the end. So I am really proud to have a group of nice friends and teachers. I hope you can treasure your friends and teachers as well. Do you have something that you proud of? It does not need to be something great; it may be something around you. Thank you.

Teacher's comments:

Kelvin, I would see that as taking pride in your community, and I would add that those who take pride in their community are often those who put most effort into improving and enhancing the community. Thank you for sharing your thought with us; may you continue to be proud of your community of teachers and friends for a long time yet!

The thing that I'm proud of

21T Chu Yan Ting, Cherry

What are the things that people are proud of? As an ordinary person, I do not have big life accomplishments yet. But the most meaningful thing that I can boast of is a happy family.

The thing that I proud of is that I have a happy family. I am so grateful for my family members, who love and care for me a lot. Every Sunday, we will go to the park and play sports games. We always have a great time there.

Once, we got tired of playing in the park. I decided to go to the supermarket to buy ingredients and bake a cake. Everyone agreed with me. After going to the supermarket to buy the ingredients, we started. We didn't know how to bake a cake, so we read the recipe. We felt very excited, because it was our first time to bake a cake together. In the end, we successfully baked the cake. It smelt so good that we could hardly wait to eat it.



As we were eating the cake, we found that the cake tasted a bit strange. "Oh, we forgot to put the sugar!" my mother said. We laughed crazily together. Although the cake didn't taste very good, we felt satisfied, for this was our first cake!

I feel proud of my happy family because happiness is precious. I want to tell everyone how proud I am of them, and how much I love them.

Teacher's comments:

A happy and loving family is certainly a special gift, and one to take pride in. There is a saying that you get to choose your friends, but you get no choice in your family, so to love one another within the family is important. It is a pity the cake didn't quite work out; did you try spreading honey on it, or jam? Good luck with the next attempt, anyway.

The thing that I'm proud of

2TT Law Tsz Lung

Everyone has something that they are proud of. I have something that I am proud of, too.

The proudest thing I have ever done was getting the highest score in mathematics last year, and getting a prize for it. I had never got the highest score and a prize before; however, I got it last year and I am very proud of it.

When I was in primary school, I liked mathematics very much, but I was poor at it. Therefore, I worked hard at maths; I did a lot of maths exercises, and I started to love maths.

Everybody knows that winning a prize is difficult, and maths requires a lot of thinking to solve the questions. Furthermore, there were about one hundred and fifty students in school, and I got the first place in maths.

To conclude, my proudest thing is that I got the highest score in mathematics at school last year, and got a prize for it.



Teacher's comments:

I think the key to your success is in the statement "therefore, I worked at maths." At school, if you work at a subject you can generally improve your marks. It undoubtedly helped that you already liked the subject; it is much easier to work at a subject when we find it enjoyable – and you grew to love the subject, which must have helped even more.

The thing that I'm proud of

2TT So Ping Ping

Many people have their own sources of pride. The thing I have done which made me proudest is getting the highest score in my Chinese group. I love Chinese very much.

Everybody has their best subject, and my favourite subject is Chinese, because Chinese is my mother language, and it is very interesting. We learn many different skills during our Chinese lessons. During the Chinese exam I was very nervous, because I thought the exam would not be easy.

However, when the teacher gave the paper back to me, I had got the highest score in my group. I think the reason I got the top mark is that I studied. I will keep studying for the next exam, because I want to get a good score again. I hope I can continue to be the best in my Chinese group. I am happy that I got the highest score in my favourite subject.

To conclude, the thing I am proud of is getting the highest score in my Chinese group. If you study, you will get a high mark and maybe you can get the highest score.



Teacher's comments:

Ping, that is very good advice at the end of your piece: "If you study, you will get a high mark." I think that is generally true of work at school, regardless of which subject we choose to talk about. I also think the fact that you find Chinese interesting is a key to your success at it. We all tend to do better if we find the subject matter interesting; it is very hard, even with the best will in the world, to study well if we find the material dull.

The thing that I'm proud of

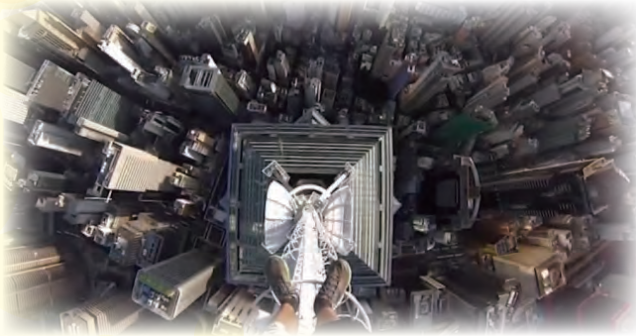
2TT' Ng Ka Hang

Different people are proud of different things and I am going to introduce my story.

The thing I am proudest of having done is going to the top of a skyscraper. The reason why I am proudest of it is that I have been scared of heights since I was small. Last year, my friend fell down and he died, so I was even more afraid of heights.

However, when I was on the way to the top of the tall building, my family gave me a lot of encouragement. Hence I discovered that the view was extremely fascinating and spectacular.

To conclude, I am very proud of this, as I was very scared of heights. However, I still stepped out of my comfort zone and faced my fear. I am very proud of it. In the future, I hope I can do more things that can make me proud.



Teacher's comments:

Well done! I also am not good at heights, so I can fully understand the step that was required for you to achieve this feat. We all have the choice most of the time to stay in our comfort zone; it is our comfort zone precisely because we feel comfortable there. If we are content merely to stay there all the time, though, we will always wonder "What if...?" and will probably never achieve some of the things we were born to achieve. In your case, we can now wonder instead "What else will you achieve?"

The thing that I'm proud of

3EW Cheung Yuen Kei, Esme

Good morning everybody. Today, I am going to share the thing that I am proud of. I am very proud of having a strong, all-round mum.

My mum helps me deal with all the things in my daily life. For example, she washes my school uniform and makes breakfast for me every day. Actually, I should be able to do these by myself, but she wants me to focus on my studies and take some rest after school. She takes care of all this tiny little stuff without asking for rewards. I love her so much. More importantly, I can share my worries with her. She will always help me solve the problem. A week ago, I went home after the volleyball training. It was already 11 o'clock at night. I felt so tired, because I had done a lot of fitness training on that day. She prepared clothes for me to take a shower. I know she was tired, and wanted to go to sleep too, but she insisted on helping me and making sure I went to sleep. I feel she is so great; it impresses me a lot.

AMAZING
LOVING
STRONG
HAPPY
SELFLESS
GRACEFUL

Apart from taking care of me, she always supports and encourages me. Two years ago, I had an English exam. After the exam, I realised that my writing was off the topic. When I came home, I felt so sad that I cried. My mum comforted me; she said, "This time you made a mistake. Never mind. But you should remember this experience and don't make the same mistake next time." Her support made me feel safe.

Now I have started to share responsibility, and help her with the housework, in order to ease her burden. We should feel grateful for having our parents, and thank them for doing so many things for us. They are truly treasures.

I am proud of having my mum. What about you? Thank you so much.

Teacher's comments:

What a beautifully written, well-reasoned, tribute to your mother! She sounds a very caring, loving and sensible woman. I sense that, knowing that she cares so much about your studies, you in your turn take care to study hard, so that her sacrifice is not wasted.

As children, we may sometimes take our parents for granted; as we mature, we understand more completely what their role is in our lives, and how large and complex a task it is to do the job well. In the process, perhaps we in our turn become better prepared to be good parents ourselves?

The thing that I'm proud of

3TW Pang Chun Yeung, Jimmy

Good morning everyone! I am Jimmy Pang from class 3TW. Today, I am going to talk about the thing that I am proud of. First, let me ask you a question: Do you have anything that you are proud of? Getting a high score in exam? Making some new friends? For me, the thing that I am proud of is being a member of our school's Rugby Team. Although I have left the team, and the CCA has been cancelled, I am still proud of that. When many people hear the word 'Rugby', they may be thinking it is very dangerous and it is easy to get hurt. Yes, it is. It is very dangerous and it is easy to get hurt because we will have much tackling during our practice and competition.

However, I want to talk about the advantages of being in our rugby team. The rugby team makes me become braver. I still remember the first day I joined my team. On that day our senior team members taught me how to tackle. Do you know what "tackle" means in Rugby? At first, I was afraid that I would hurt others or get hurt by tackling. But now, when I look back, I am not afraid of having body contact with others when I am playing rugby, because I am able to advance and defend skillfully. It makes me very confident.



Also I have also joined some rugby competitions. When we lost the competition, we would reflect together; when we won the competition, we would celebrate together. I believe these experiences surely benefit me a lot!

Above all, I had lots of happy memories from my time in this team. We even celebrate birthdays together. I remember an interesting and funny special thing we did when we saw other team members in our school: we would tackle others as a way of saying hello! Do you think it is very cool? Therefore, I am proud that I have been a member of our school rugby team.

Thank you for your listening!

Teacher's comments:

Jimmy, one of the benefits of any team sport is considered to be the team spirit – the sense of togetherness in a common purpose. You have clearly observed this and felt the rightness of it, though I imagine being tackled as a way of saying Hello takes a bit of getting used to! There is also a widely-held belief that many of us perform better under pressure, in which case a rugby game against a tough opponent should be a occasion for real success.

The thing that I'm proud of

3BC Cheung Le Ru, Irene

'I am a Black American. I am proud of my race. I am proud of who I am. I have a lot of pride and dignity.' These are the powerful words spoken by a great man, Michael Jackson. Through his statements, we can understand that Michael was truly brave and he was not afraid to tell people that he was proud of who he was. So, no matter what, there is always something to be proud of about you. As you can see, I have short hair now but I used to have long hair. There is a story behind why I cut my hair short, and I'm going to share it with you all.

It was in the first term of this year when I cut my hair short. I did it because I felt that it would reflect my personality better. After cutting my hair, my days felt more realistic and amazing. I also noticed that my short hairstyle was reflecting my girlish grins and smiles, while my long hairstyle showed my mature side. I think most girls would prefer to have long hair but I personally like to look more childish, and that is probably why all my friends disagreed with my cutting my hair short.

**...Always be proud of
yourself and
understand that it's
your individuality that
makes you beautiful.**

Mark Feehily

However, I wasn't going to let them stop me from cutting my hair, so I secretly cut it without telling them. The day after I cut it, I felt so delighted that I jumped around the whole day. On the other hand, my friends were so shocked that their mouths hung open in a weird angle (Oops... I hope they didn't get a heart attack).

Basically, the whole reason why I shared this story is to tell you all that I'm proud that I am not so easily persuaded by what others think, or want me to do. I think being you is what makes you unique and beautiful, and this is something that everyone has. I want to tell everyone that you should start loving yourself more, and criticise yourself less. You are all amazing human

The thing that I'm proud of

beings and I hope you will treasure yourselves more. Think back to a time when you suffered from a lot of things, but you are still alive! God has given you a life to enjoy and not to waste on hatred – towards self or others. 'Proud' is a word that can be used to praise someone, so everyone should be proud of themselves.

Thank you for listening.

Teacher's comments:

Certainly being able to make up your own mind, and go against the flow, is something you can take pride in, Irene – especially since, as teenagers, we all feel great pressure to conform; you have decisively broken free from that culture. As a fan of long hair myself, I might mourn your lost tresses, but I do agree that there can be a charm in short hair as well. The core of your message: "love yourself more and criticise less" is certainly something we should all bear in mind.

Achieving a Breakthrough

3LW Wong Man Lok

Good morning everyone. I am Wong Man Lok from Class 3LW. Today, I would like to share with all of you the thing I am proud of. It is not something visible in the air but I am sure it is what everyone desires. And now I am proud of owning it.

When I was ten years old, I had the first taste of riding on the roller coaster with my friends. I can still remember that I felt anxious and terrified because I had never tried that before. After queuing, we headed to the roller coaster.

Riding on the roller coaster, I was so nervous that I kept screaming. Even though I sat at the back of the cart, I still felt very afraid. I looked at the sea from the roller coaster; I guess I was about 20 storeys high. When I noticed that I was reaching the highest point, my face became pale and I got butterflies in my stomach. I took a deep breath and tried to calm myself down. I can hardly recall how I reacted when the cart descended sharply. Maybe I simply lost consciousness at that moment? Anyway, after the ride was over, I discovered that riding on a roller coaster is not that frightening.

When I left the roller coaster, I was confident because I had overcome my fear. I am proud of being brave enough to try new things and make a breakthrough.

That's the end of my sharing. Thank you for listening.



Teacher's comments:

That's all very well, but you still won't get me to ride on one of those things! Getting on a Hong Kong 'bus is quite scary enough! It can certainly be good to try new things and leave your comfort zone every so often, but I'll stay with things that are less potentially life-threatening!

The thing that I'm proud of

4LY Yeung Hoi Ching, Natalie

I'm proud of myself for knowing four languages. The reason I know four languages is that I have lived in different countries before. My mum moved to the Netherlands when she was young, as did my father to Germany. My parents speak Cantonese at home, so my mother tongue is Cantonese. When I was little, I studied in a Dutch school, so I got to know Dutch. I was born and raised in the Netherlands till I was ten. My mother wanted me to have a better education and learn more languages, so she was planning to move back to China for good. At first my mother was worried that I wouldn't get used to my new environment, because the people, language, culture and school are so much different from the Netherlands. But in the end, we decided to move.

In the beginning, I couldn't speak or understand any Mandarin or English, and unfortunately my teacher couldn't speak any Cantonese or Dutch either, so we could use only sign language to communicate. After 2 months, I started to understand a little more of Mandarin and English, so I started trying to communicate with them with my vocabulary. After a few years of practice, I can communicate with them easily now.



Although knowing four languages is the thing that I'm proud of, the most important thing is that I'm brave enough to live in a new environment.

I hope everyone enjoys my story. Thank you!

Teacher's comments:

Brain theorists tell us that learning a new language is important for our brains, as it builds and strengthens connections within the brain that are otherwise unused. For you, Natalie, it would seem important to continue learning in all your languages – reading, listening to songs and watching films in all of them. If you were to add a fifth language, which one would you choose? One of my professors at university spoke 19 languages – well enough to lecture and write articles in all of them. When I expressed admiration, he told me that his wife spoke 21!

The thing that I'm proud of

4IH Woo Nga Man, Bella

Good morning everyone! I am Bella from class 4IH. Today, I want to share with you my story about the thing that I am proud of – that is, overcoming failures.

Since I was born, I have experienced a lot of failures. For example, I have got poor results in examinations; I have lost some good friends; I have made wrong decisions, and so on. All these experiences could be frustrating and depressing.



To me, however, the process of overcoming failures is encouraging and inspiring. It makes me feel stronger. So you may be curious about how I deal with obstacles; right? There are actually a few steps. First, I keep reminding myself to think positively. Second, I reflect on the mistakes I make in the failure. I will then come up with solutions to correct my mistakes. I sometimes seek advice from others. Finally, I sit back and try to understand the changes in my emotions as I have gone through the process.

Let me also share with you an instance: this year I got very poor results in the first term examination. It was the first time I had a few 'F' grades in the report card. Although I felt sad, I kept telling myself to stay positive. 'Let's move on! Tomorrow is another day!' With my positive thinking, I could finally stay calm. This is the way I handle difficulties and overcome failures, and this is what I am proud of.

Thank you!

Teacher's comments:

An encouraging message, Bella, and very well written; I had very little editing to do to produce the finished version. The question we will all be asking, of course, is "Does it work?" Does your calm, rational and analytical approach produce improved grades the next time around? Are you able to improve your circumstances through the method you have adopted? If so, then you have valuable advice for us all, and should be much in demand as a wise counsellor.

The thing that I'm proud of

4CT Chan Tsz Yat, Hero

Good morning, everybody. I am Hero Chan from 4CT. Today, I want to talk about the thing I am proud of. I'm sure, to many of you, it may seem ordinary, but it means the world to me.



Since I was young, I have had a passion for music, especially playing the piano. I would practise the piano regularly and take different sorts of piano exams. I still remember that when I was in Primary 4 there was a music theory exam; I was really scared about it. That was the kind of exam where I had to sit in the hall for at least two hours. Not only was that boring, but it also meant a lot of pressure.

However, I mustered the courage and tried my best to get ready for it. I went to a cramming class to learn about music theory. I didn't know what the teacher said; I didn't understand what the book was about. I was very lost. One day, I burst into tears because I was under a lot of stress. It's lucky that a teacher saw that and made me feel better.

On the day of the exam, I revised and revised for a long time. I was worried about it, but I knew I had practised and revised long enough. There was nothing else I could do – I just had to be myself. When I arrived at the venue, I said to myself, 'You must try your best and you must not disappoint those who have trusted you'.

Of course, in the end, I passed the music theory exam. I was very pleased with it not only because I tried my best to finish something difficult, but also because I didn't give up and didn't let my teachers and family down.

That's all for my sharing. How about you? What is the thing you are proud of?

Teacher's comments:

A good message, Hero, and well written; I had only a little editing to do to produce the final version. I imagine that playing the piano gives you far greater pleasure than studying theory, but a good grounding in music literacy enables you to decipher the code and learn new musical pieces largely by yourself, without needing anyone to help you decipher what Pete Seeger called "hen scratches and fly specks".

The thing that I'm proud of

4th NC Dovano Bacani

My insistence is what I am proud of. I was born being curious about a lot of things. As I grew up, I tried many new things - and I have learnt a lot from them. During the process, I have gained experience through a lot of success and failure. Failures were in the majority, of course, but everything usually turned out well in the end.

Once, in the summer holidays, I joined a table tennis course. I was not the top student in the class, because it was the first time I had table tennis training. Whenever there was a competition among the students, I was neither the best nor the worst player. Still, I was not satisfied with my performance at the game. This was when my insistence drove me crazy. Whenever I had time, I tried to book the tennis court to practise on my own in the stadium. If no court was available, I would still practise at my home, repeating the same moves over and over again. All the time, I demanded of myself that I become faster and more powerful.



I believe that there is no (so-called) 'best', but only 'better'. I keep telling myself that I have to reach my limit, and when I reach it, I am determined to break it. This is how improvements are made. After a month or so, I finally saw improvements in myself. Although I was still not the top player, I felt joy from this.

I treat almost all things the same way. I know that improvement requires practice and time. That only leaves, as a key ingredient, insistence, which I am good at. I always set a high target for myself. So when I do not reach my goal, all I can do is improve. That is how I do things better than others. That is the thing that I am proud of - my insistence.

Teacher's comments:

My father wrote in my autograph book the following rhyme:

"Good, better, best.
Never let us rest
'Til our good be better,
And our better best."

It sounds as you've worked out the same philosophy for yourself, Dovano.

One of my teaching colleagues posts this as her motto:

"Do your best, be your best, and never EVER settle for less than your best!"

The thing that I'm proud of

4CW Lau Chun Hong, Leon

What does “proud” mean? I think being “proud” means that you have something to tell others and that you feel honoured and glad. How about me? I’m proud that I am a 4CW student.

In 4CW there are many unique things. Such uniqueness makes us who we are, and brings the class together. The first thing that I should proudly present to others is our class band. Other classes don’t have a band. Our band started in early September. Band members include Choy Kam Ho, William and John, as well as our class teacher Mr. Chiu. I play drums in this band, while others have their special roles too. The birth of this band came about because of the hobby that we share - we all like music. The very first time for our class band to go on stage was in the Chinese New Year Fair. We had a band show at the Love Platform. We all dressed in our class tees, and our classmates cheered for us too. Although we did not have sufficient time to practise, we were not scared; rather, we were very excited.

Apart from the class band, I am the recreation officer in my class, and am always organising class activities. Last year we ate chicken pot together at night as a gathering. Although it turned out that Mr. Chiu couldn’t join us, because something happened, and we were a bit disappointed, everyone enjoyed that night very much. It has become a good memory for us all. When I see everyone in the class feeling so much part of it, I am proud of my achievement.



The thing that I'm proud of

I know that 4CW is not the best at studying, but I'm still proud that I am in this class. I hope that all of us can find our roles and be involved in the class. Also, I wish to see us improve in our studies in the days ahead!

Teacher's comments:

You make a strong case for taking pride in your class, Leon, though I imagine all teachers – and especially Mr. Chiu! – will agree with your last sentence. One of the fascinating things that happen in a school is just this, that twenty or so students are put together who have, at first, nothing in common other than their being around the same age, and by being grouped together for a year they form bonds based on their shared experiences. Some of those bonds may be lifelong. So look around you; all of the people in your class have a special relationship with you – a relationship from which everyone else on the planet is excluded!

The thing that I'm proud of

4WW Yuen Chui Ping, Helen

Good morning everyone. I am Yuen Chui Ping, Helen from 4WW. Today I would like to talk about 'The thing that I am proud of'. Before I start my sharing, I would like to ask you a question: Have you done anything that you feel proud of? Being a champion in a race? Being good at playing sports, or musical? As for me, I am proud of being helpful.

Half a year ago, it was a rainy day and the sky was dark. People walked fast, and there was a crowd of people at the bus stop. After I left school, I quickly took the bus home. Luckily, I found a seat on the bus. A few minutes later, I saw a granny. She had got wet because of the rain. She looked tired and she was carrying a lot of things. At that time, the bus was crowded and there was no extra seat.



No one saw the granny standing there alone. People were just playing their mobile phones, talking with others or taking a nap. No one offered a seat to the granny. I felt sad. When I saw this situation, I asked the granny to come to me, because I would like to offer her my seat. She looked so happy and surprised. She slowly walked towards me. She sat down and said 'Thank you' to me. The others were surprised and ashamed. I was happy that I had done something no one else was willing to do.

After I got off the bus, I felt happy that I had given help to a person in need. I had just done something meaningful. I think that all of us can help other people by doing something small. I am so proud of being helpful. You also can help people in need; lending others a helping hand in everyday life is actually very easy.

What is the thing that you feel proud of?

Teacher's comments:

You are right, Helen; it is neither rocket science nor brain surgery. Yet you are rare firstly because you noticed the granny and secondly because you acted to remedy what you saw. You are special, and your parents can be proud of having raised such a considerate daughter; your school can also take pride in having at least one student who not only practises thoughtfulness but turns her thoughts into actions.

The thing that I'm proud of

SCL Ngai King Yin, Kenny

Good morning everyone. Today I want to share the thing that I'm proud of. Before that, let me ask you two questions. What kinds of person are you? Are you a careful person or a carefree person? I think I'm the careful one and I'm proud of this personality when I face problems.

One day, our class needed to do a group project and the deadline of it was two weeks later. After one week, I found that our progress was too slow, so I told my group mates that we had to speed it up, but they just asked me to be relaxed. They thought they would finish the project on time and there was no need to be in a hurry. But I am a serious and careful person; I didn't see that we had much hope of handing in the project on time, so I tried to work faster and shared some of their work to get it done. On the last 3 days, they finally realised that we might be late handing in the work, so we all hurried up to complete the task. In the end, we were able to hand in the project before the deadline. At that point I was very proud that I am a serious and careful person. If I hadn't evaluated our progress carefully, and tried to solve the problem earlier, we would probably have submitted the project late.

Being careful and well-planned helps me assess the situation accurately. Because of this, I can always foresee the worst consequence, think of the solutions in advance and solve the problems without delay. Being alert can also help me get away from the problems too. So I'm proud of my careful personality when facing difficulties and challenges. Thank you.



Teacher's comments:

Well spoken, Kenny – and very well written; almost no editing was required. There is a well-known saying “Prevention is better than cure”; it can be interpreted here as meaning that if you see the difficulty coming in time you can act to make sure that it never becomes a difficulty in the first place. Careful people are very necessary, and we should make sure we listen to them.

The thing that I'm proud of

SHW Wong Wai Leung, William

Good morning everyone. May I ask you a question? Do you have the courage to change yourself and become a person who loves others and cares for others? In Hong Kong, people are busier and busier, and it can be hard to see them treating others with care. So I am glad that I can learn to understand others more and more, and be a more caring person in my secondary school life. This determination to change is the thing that I am proud of.



In the past, I was a selfish boy. It was hard for me to connect with others. I did not like to share my stories. Just like a ninja, I wanted to have a reclusive lifestyle. However, as I have grown up, I have found that everyone needs to communicate with others. This put me under pressure at that time; I was struggling to see that it was necessary to do that. And I wondered if others actually shared themselves on purpose?

Luckily I experienced a wonderful life transformation, just like a miracle. In form two I became a Christian. From life associated with church, I tried to understand myself. I found that everyone in this world needs love, and I started to open my heart to them. All of us have a side that needs others' comfort. After that day, I told myself: "I need to change!" I wanted to be a good listener, and listen to others whenever they feel upset or disappointed. So I began to communicate with my schoolmates, because I was curious about what was in their minds.

One day, I remember, my sister was crying because of her heavy workload. She cried softly under the sheet where she was supposedly sleeping. I gave her a bar of milk chocolate and chatted with her without hesitation. I did not know whether she ate the chocolate or not; nonetheless, I was happy about my action. I realised that I had changed; I am a different boy. God gives me the power to comfort others.

Usually people get satisfied from accomplishments such as awards, certificates, fame and money. These are the criteria of becoming successful; however, they fade away easily. You cannot get anything deeper through

The thing that I'm proud of

these things. Nevertheless, the resolution to love others can express warmth, and this feeling can influence others too. Recently, I have been trying my best to love others. Since I am still a pupil, I can have much more time than adults to express my happiness to others. Love someone who is in tears; listen to their stories with sympathy. Can you imagine how awesome it is that I have determination like that? It changes my life totally. I am really proud of my change.

Teacher's comments:

That is great, William. Not only are we Christians specifically instructed to love one another; we also gain benefits ourselves from doing so. The joy you find in your discovery shows both in what you write and in how you write it. Now you may look forward, calculating reasonably, to at least half a century of demonstrating your love and care for those around you! Your immediate world will be much the richer for your presence in it.

The thing that I'm proud of

5SC Chow Yee Kwan, Michael

Good morning, I'm Michael from 5SC. Today I'd like to tell you the thing that I am proud of. First, I want to ask you a question: What do you think about "proud"? It means feeling pleasure and satisfaction because you or people connected with you have done or got something good. So in your life I'm sure you must have a few things to make you feel proud. To me, I am proud of being a member of the trampoline team coached by Mr. Chung.

When I was a form 1 student, I joined the trampoline team. And Mr. Chung, my coach, taught us attentively and well. At that time we were very naughty; he always felt troubled, angry and annoyed because of us, but he still taught us. Anyway, he trained us to be elite, and we won many awards. So, it makes me feel very proud.

The way to success is not always easy. When my coach asked me to try an advanced posture, I feared to do it; I was afraid I would be injured. However, my coach encouraged me to do it and said, "Nothing can hold you back, only forward". Because of this sentence, I felt inspired. In the end, I can do a lot of advanced posture and I never felt scared. Because of this breakthrough, I am very proud of joining the trampoline team.

In conclusion, I'm most proud of being a student of Mr. Chung. I want to become like Mr. Chung. I will become a model for others. And I hope I can teach the others, just as Mr. Chung has taught me - excellently. So I hope you can share what you have learnt with your friends. Thank you!



Teacher's comments:

Michael, you have learned a very important lesson from Mr. Chung. Teachers often do feel "troubled, angry or annoyed" because of students who are "very naughty"! The reason they don't just give up is that they see beyond the naughtiness and see an image of what you may become. Mr. Chung felt that his dedication and perseverance could make you "elite", and he stuck at it. In your last paragraph you acknowledge his patient hard work in the best way you can, by voicing your commitment to follow his example. There is no greater tribute to your teacher.

The Proudest Thing I Have Ever Done

5SC Tsang Kai Yin

I think everyone is proud of something they have done, so am I. It is scoring a winning goal during a football match.

I remember that it happened last year. My school was hosting a football match, and I joined this game. Eighty-eight minutes into the game, both teams had the same score. Everyone was very anxious. However, I scored an almost impossible goal during the last few seconds of the match. I was very happy, as I took the shot from long range. Furthermore, my teammates were happy, too.

I am proud of this because I led our team to victory. It felt very special to me. I had never thought I could score such an important goal; hence I am satisfied with my accomplishment.

If I could do this again, I hope I can do it in every single match, because it is a great feeling.



Teacher's comments:

Kai Yin, I have to tell you that unfortunately it is highly unlikely that you can pull off the same feat very often, let alone regularly. There are players in professional football who train specially for the specific task, and their success rates are mostly well below 50%. The "great feeling" is a magnet that draws them on, just as it draws you; the best advice I can give is to treasure those moments when they come, because they will never come often enough to satisfy your wishes and dreams.

The thing that I'm proud of

5SY Chan Yuk Fan

Good morning everyone. I am Fanny from 5SY. Today, I would like to talk about something I am proud of. Two years ago, when I was a Form 3 student, my friend invited me to join a volunteer program called 'Junior Rainbow'. I didn't have too much work to do at that time, and I was not busy, so I promised to join the volunteer team.

Against my expectations, it became something I am proud of. The reason why I think being a volunteer is the thing I am proud of is because, to be a volunteer, you need to sacrifice a lot of time to attend and organise meetings. We need to have meetings every week and every holiday. The serving targets of our volunteer team are mainly children, so we need to design a lot of different activities for them to join, such as a study camp or a Christmas party. I remember that I once organised an event all by myself, which was something I never imagined I was capable of. I think it is not an easy thing, because you need to think about every detail, such as the date, venue and facilities. Also I need to do all the things that no-one else did.



After being a volunteer, I think I have grown up a lot. I think to be a volunteer, you need to have patience, love, and the most important thing - responsibility. I think I have made a lot of progress in all respects. At that time I would balance my life and study so as to finish my voluntary job, even when I had a lot of tests and homework. To be a volunteer, you might use a lot of time to design different activities. But I always thought that to be a volunteer was meaningful, so I will keep doing volunteer work in the future.

Finally, after being a volunteer, I know how to assume responsibilities in team work. I believe that I will have a better life as a result of becoming a volunteer. This is the end of my sharing. Thank you for your listening.

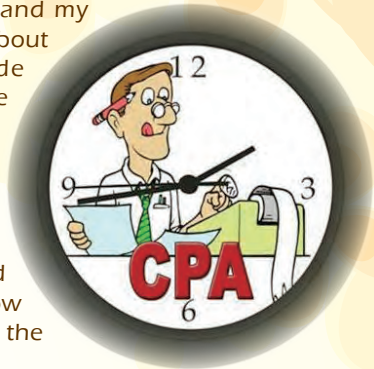
Teacher's comments:

Fanny, I have certainly been aware of the love, patience and responsibility in you, and I am not surprised that it has stood you in good stead as a volunteer; if on your journey you have discovered organisational abilities that were previously unrealised then, as you say, you have grown. You have made voluntary work at least a part of your vocation. Congratulations!

The thing that I'm proud of

SCT Chan Chun Yu

Good morning Principal, teachers and my fellow schoolmates, I am going to talk about something I am proud of: my attitude towards my dream. My choice in life is to be an accountant. Although it is ordinary, it can push me to keep updating myself until I can achieve it. There are many conditions that must be fulfilled for my dream to come true - for example, having a good educational background, having good communication skills, and so on. Maybe now I am not totally qualified, but I still have the motive to improve myself.



There is another reason why I am proud of it. It is because I am learning how to face a challenge, through trying my best to achieve. When I was a F.1 student, I was curious about everything and was willing to try many different things. However, when they became difficult, I usually gave up very easily. I am such a coward that I did nothing and achieved nothing in F.1 and F.2. In F.3 we had to choose different elective subjects. Then, I knew about accounting. The first feeling that I had towards accounting was surprise. After that I faced the same problem; I started thinking about giving up accounting. Luckily, I went to a career talk; I got information about accounting - for example, information about employment as an accountant. And I knew that I will need to work hard on study and not give up; otherwise, I couldn't have any change.

After that I started to train myself to keep trying when I face challenges, and this affects every aspect of my life. People around me suddenly find I have changed into someone who is persistent and optimistic. I am proud of who I am now!

Teacher's comments:

Chun Yu, some people do discover very early in life what their path will be, and it sounds as if you have a clear sense of direction. Your calling has certainly given you inspiration to work hard and be persistent in your effort. There is a saying "When the going gets tough, the tough get going", and you seem to be telling yourself that; it gets you through the difficult moments when you are tempted to give up. So congratulations on finding your goal, and good luck!