

LEAP POST

From the Editor-in-Chief



Michele Lai, founder of Kids4Kids, with our G3-5 students holding the Kids4Kids books they are responsible for selling.



Our G1 students role-playing as book sellers to practice their sales pitch.

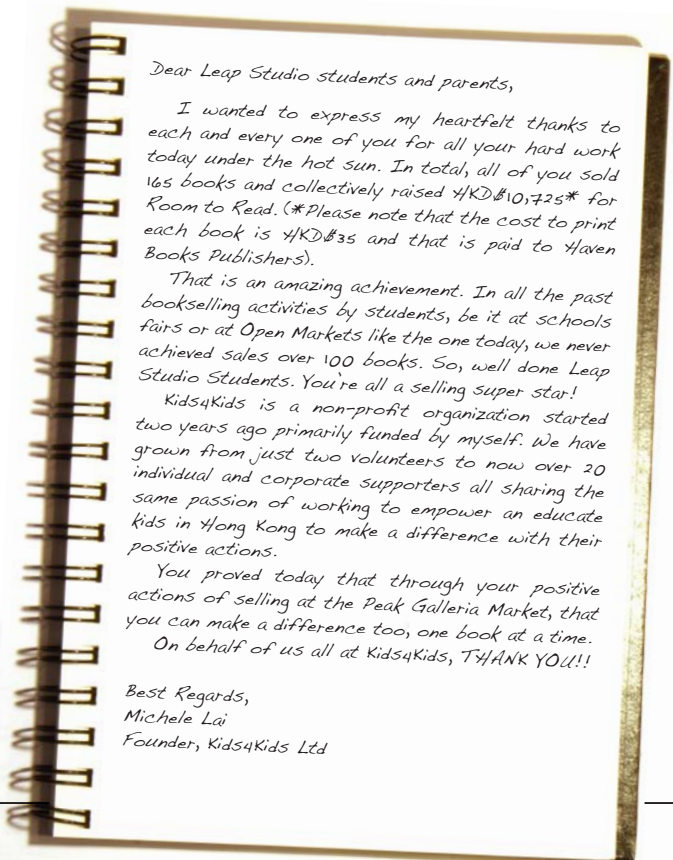
We would like to congratulate our students on their phenomenal performance and accomplishments in the learning module - "Meet Kids4Kids: Take Action and Make a Difference". Co-developed with Michele Lai, founder of Kids4Kids, this module educates, empowers and engages our students to become young philanthropists through planning and executing a book-selling event to raise funds for Room to Read, a charity that builds schools and libraries in the poorest parts of Asia and Africa. After four preparatory classroom sessions, our students participated as volunteers in Kids4Kids' book-selling event at the Peak Open Market on March 21st. Over a day of proactively soliciting, continuous pitching and sweating under the sun, our students achieved record sales of 165 books and raised net proceeds of \$10,725 for the charity! More importantly, teachers and parents were proud to witness how our students persisted through difficult situations and transformed from shy individuals easily frustrated by rejections to eloquent, graceful salespersons by the end of the day. We all went home with fun, enlightening stories to share and a nice tan!

Our fourth issue continues to publish student outputs that combine their newly acquired topical knowledge and writing techniques, making the articles relevant and interesting both to write and to read. In this module, younger students studied the techniques of narrative writing (e.g. use of dialogues and expressive verbs, use of a personal theme) and produced personal narratives recounting their unique first-hand experience as volunteers. As the class discussed and reflected on the book-selling event, our teachers were amazed by the level of enthusiasm and engagement shown by the students as they

excitedly delineated every single detail of the event. With the



opportunity to apply classroom learning in real world situations, each student came out of the experience with a unique personal reflection — from recognizing the value of money to overcoming the fear of public speaking or rejection. Our older students helped to develop writing themes for Kids4Kids' 2010/11 "Writing for a Cause" competition, and produced research articles on children's rights and youth problems to support the writing themes. By illustrating the gravity of each issue with evidences and statistics, our students strengthened their critical thinking, analytical and writing skills while participating in a meaningful initiative to promote awareness of these social issues in the school community.



Dear Leap Studio students and parents,

I wanted to express my heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you for all your hard work today under the hot sun. In total, all of you sold 165 books and collectively raised HKD\$10,725* for Room to Read. (*Please note that the cost to print each book is HKD\$35 and that is paid to Haven Books Publishers).

That is an amazing achievement. In all the past bookselling activities by students, be it at schools fairs or at Open Markets like the one today, we never achieved sales over 100 books. So, well done Leap Studio Students. You're all a selling super star!

Kids4Kids is a non-profit organization started two years ago primarily funded by myself. We have grown from just two volunteers to now over 20 individual and corporate supporters all sharing the same passion of working to empower an educate kids in Hong Kong to make a difference with their positive actions.

You proved today that through your positive actions of selling at the Peak Galleria Market, that you can make a difference too, one book at a time.

On behalf of us all at Kids4Kids, THANK YOU!!

Best Regards,
Michele Lai
Founder, Kids4Kids Ltd

In the classroom, our students prepared for the book-pitch, and role-playing as sellers and customers after meeting with

Come buy books to help the poor children!

KIDS4KIDS

What is Kids4Kids?
It is a charity that empowers kids in HK to help unlucky kids in poor countries through their own actions.

CHARITY BOOK SALE

The proceeds go to the poor kids through Kids4Kids.

What is Room to Read?
It is a charity that provides educational opportunities for poor kids in developing countries by building schools and libraries.

Come buy the books!


- **Children authors and illustrators**—these books are all written by kids in Hong Kong
- **It teaches a life lesson**—each book has a meaningful plot
- **Limited quantity**—half of the books had been sold
- **Good gift**—even if you don't have a child, you can give the book to another friend

Date: 21/3/2010
Time: 09:30-17:00
Venue: Level 3, Peak Galleria Market

By Richie Lai (P4, St. Paul's College)

BY RICHIE LAI (P4, ST PAUL'S COLLEGE PRIMARY SCHOOL)

Buy Books To Help Children In Need!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **What is Kids4Kids?**
Kids4Kids is a charity to empower fortunate kids to help less fortunate kids.
2. **Why buy the books?**
 - The money from the book sale will go to the charity Room to Read.
 - They are written and illustrated by kids and they put in enormous effort into the project.
 - You can pass on to relatives and friends, it makes a good gift.
3. **How will the proceeds be used?**
The proceeds will be donated to Room to Read.
4. **What is Room to Read?**
Room to Read's mission is to provide educational opportunities to children in developing countries by constructing schools, educating girls and building libraries.


Date: March 21st, 2010 Time: 2-3pm Venue: Level 3, The Peak Galleria

BY JUSTIN TAM (P3, SIS)

BUY A BOOK WRITTEN BY KIDS

Date: March 21st, 2010 (9:30-5:30pm)

The money that you pay goes to Kids4Kids and they give it to Room to Read.



Room to read is a charity that helps poor kids in poor places such as Africa to have educational resources.

Kids4Kids is a charity that collects money and then passes it to other charities to help poor kids.

These books are written by kids. You can pass the books on and let other people know about Kids4Kids.

Venue: Level 3, The Peak Galleria

By Name Loraine and Max

BY LORAIN KUK (P4, ST ROSE OF LIMA'S) AND MAX LAU (P4, RENAISSANCE)

BUY A BOOK FOR A GOOD CAUSE!

Frequently Asked Questions

KIDS4KIDS

1. **What is Kids4Kids?**
Kids4kids is a charity that empowers more fortunate kids to help less fortunate kids through writing books and other actions.
2. **Why buy the books?**
 - These books are **interesting reading materials**.
 - It is for a **good cause** because the money helps unfortunate kids.
 - It can make a **good gift** because you can pass to friends and relatives.
 - These books are **written and illustrated by kids**.
3. **Where do the proceeds go?**
The proceeds go to a charity called Room To Read.
4. **What is Room To Read?**
Room To Read helps provide educational opportunities to the less fortunate kids in developing countries by building libraries and schools.

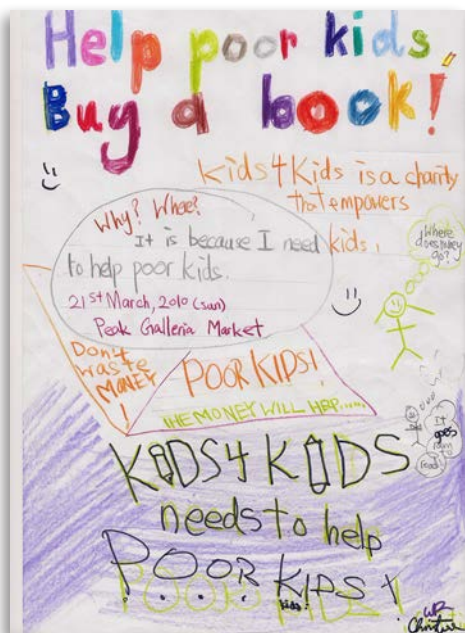
When? March 21st, 2010
9:30-5:30pm
Where? Level 3, The Peak Galleria



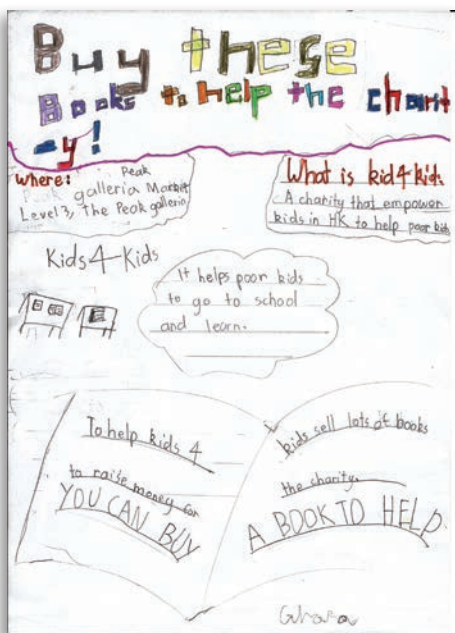
By Joanne Fu (P3, SIS)

BY JOANNE FU (P3, SIS)

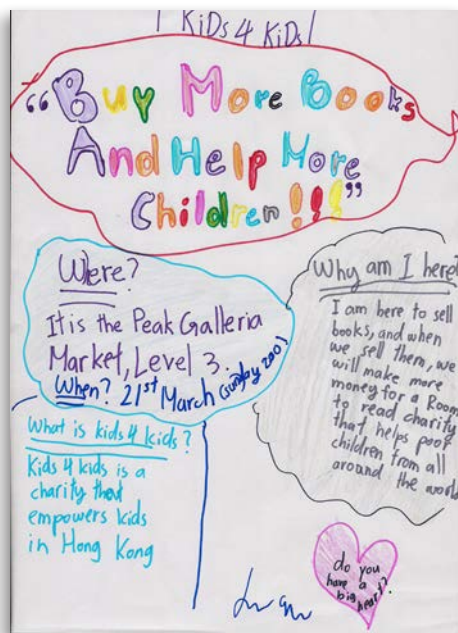
selling event by designing flyers, writing their own Q&As & sales Michele to learn more about Kids4Kids...



BY CHRISTINA LUK (P1, ST PAUL'S CO-ED)



BY GLORIA ZHANG (Y3, PEAK SCHOOL)



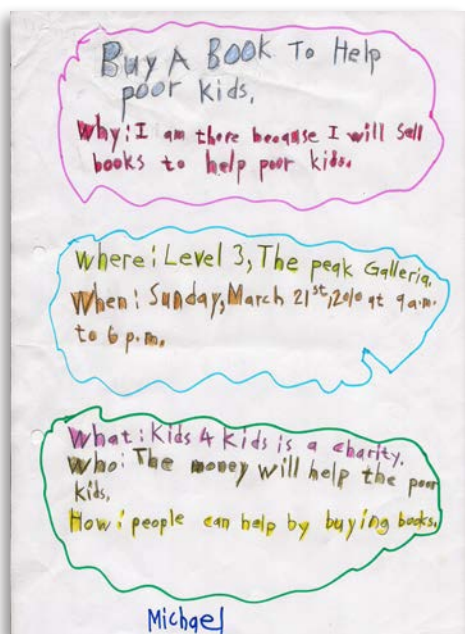
BY JASMINE TAM (P1, SIS)



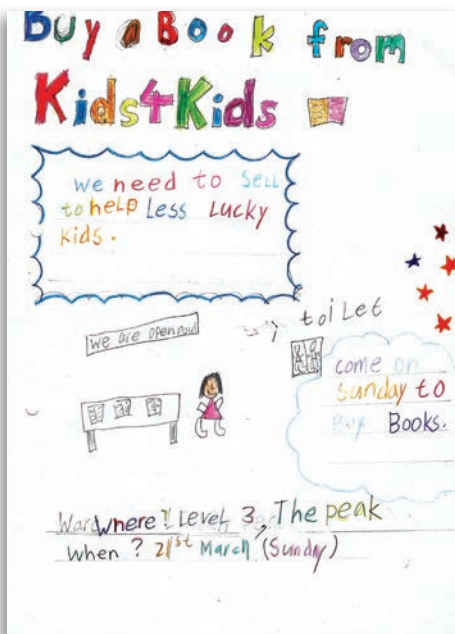
Michele prompting our students to think about answers to frequently asked questions by customers.



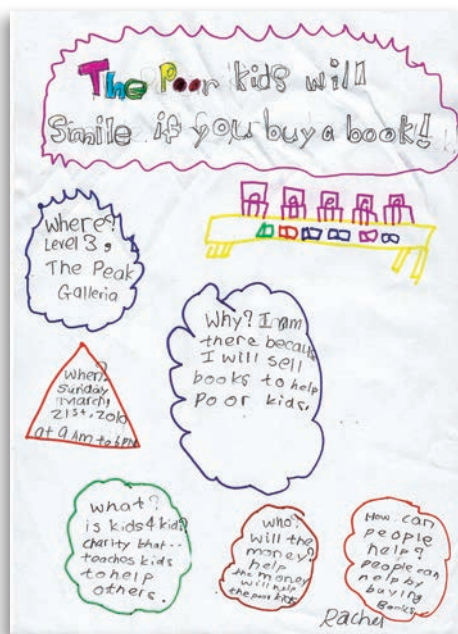
Two G1 students role-playing in the classroom as book seller and customer to prepare for the Peak fund-raising event.



BY MICHAEL MA (P1, SKH KEI YAN)



BY NADIA HO (K3, BRAEMAR HILL)



BY RACHEL WONG (K3, ST CATHERINE'S)

At the Peak Open Market on Sunday March 21, 2010, our classroom to real-life situations by selling books for Kids4Kids. They then



Sunday Fun

By Jasmine Shek (P1, SIS)

Last Sunday was a fun day because I sold some books at the Peak Galleria in the afternoon. I went with my mum and my dad. I went there because I needed to sell books to help poor children in Africa to go to schools. The books that we sold were Where are you, No ordinary dog, Badminton for book, Sweet work, Paint the sky blue and You're never too young to help.

Before the event, I felt extremely happy! In my dream the night before, I dreamed about selling only one book. When I arrived at the Peak Galleria in my dream, I asked my mom, "Where am I going?" My mom replied, "Are you dreaming?" Then I said, "Oh it's just a dream."

When we arrived at the Peak on Sunday, I needed to sign the code of conduct form. Then I put on a volunteer tag. My target was to sell about 20 books. The first customer I met was a man with a blue shirt. I said to the man, "Do you want to buy one of these books?" He replied, "Let me take a look." Then I gave him a book that I liked. Then he said, "It's quite interesting!" He took out 100 dollars and gave to me and took the book that I recommended to him.

My most memorable sale was to a couple and when I asked them, "Do you want to buy a book?" The couple replied, "Tell me where your booth is. I will come back later." Then I said, "Thank you for listening to what I said about a book." A while later when I was almost leaving, the couple still didn't come to our booth. Then I felt a little angry. But I still kept trying. When I asked another couple, they said, "I will buy one." Then I felt a little better.

I learned from this event that even when people did not want to buy the books, we should still be gracious. I would want to sell books for charities again. It was very fun even though some customers didn't want to buy a book.



My First Time Selling Books!

By Sean Meng (Y2, CIS)

Sunday was a memorable day for me because I took part in a book selling event for Kids4Kids at the Peak. I was involved with my Leap classmates. I was there to raise money for Room to Read, a charity to help poor kids to go to school.

Before the event, we met Michele Lai, the founder of Kids4Kids, to learn about her charity. We also designed flyers in class and role played as sellers and customers to prepare for the sale. I felt very nervous during breakfast on Sunday morning. I only ate 1 cornflake and then I walked all over the house. I thought I couldn't sell any books. My dad comforted me saying, "Philip, me and mommy will be there the whole time to support you!"

When we arrived at the Peak Galleria at the Open Market, the weather was super hot and sunny! My teachers asked us to sign a "code of conduct" form and gave us our volunteer badges. Then I started selling books. My first customer was an English man with a baby girl. I used all my courage and walked up and said, "Would you like to buy a book? These are written by children in different schools." In a thick British accent, he asked, "Where is the booth?" I pointed it to him. He said he would come back. To my surprise, he came back after my third customer. He asked me which book I recommended. I said Paint the Sky Blue. He took out his purse. He bought the book! I was surprised. I felt happy for the poor children. I sold at least 7 books during that day. I learned that if we try hard, we would eventually succeed!

The Happiest Day

By Getty Li (P1, DGJS)

Sunday was a fun day for me because my sister, brother and I went to the Peak to sell books for Kids4Kids.

Before the event, I felt happy but nervous. I also could not eat my breakfast and I said that to my mum. My mum said, "Do not be afraid! Maybe I will help you silly Getty." I was still afraid.

When we arrived at the Peak Open Market, I saw a lady that was really fat and I smiled. I thought the lady would say, "Why are you smiling at me?" and I would say, "Because you are so fat."

My first customer was my cousin and I said, "Can you help me buy a book? It is written by kids and \$100 each and the money will go to a charity called Room to Read." So my cousin bought Where Are You. I was so happy that my cousin bought a book and then my mum said, "You did it!" I felt happy. At last I sold 3 books.

After the event, I felt hungry but I was very encouraged. I learnt that selling books is not easy.

students applied what they have prepared and practiced in the had to write a personal narrative recounting this unique experience...



Hard to Raise Money

By Kathy Fong (P1, SIS)

Sunday was a nice day for me because I went to the Peak Galleria and I went there with my mum and my sister to sell books for Kids4Kids' fund raising event.

Before the event, I felt super nervous and sick and I didn't want to do it but my sister said, "Don't worry, I'll say the script and you will sell the books." Then I felt relieved.

When we arrived at the Peak Open Market, I started to feel sick from the night before. I was sick after my friend invited me to her home.

My first customer was an American lady and I asked shyly, "Would you like to buy a book? These books are \$100 each. Would you like to buy one?" She replied kindly, "Maybe later." Then the rest of the customers ignored me. But finally I sold books to a customer. Guess who it was? It was my mother! She asked, "Who was it written by?" I replied, "These are written by kids and they are \$100 each. Would you like to buy some?" She bought three books. She made me happy! My heart was beating. I felt braver after I sold my books.

After the event, I felt a bit happier because I wanted to sell books again. I learnt that it's hard to raise money!

My bad day turns good

By Yi Ying Quah (P1, SIS)

Last Sunday, I was super scared because I had to sell books for Room to Read, a charity that helps to build schools. I went to the Peak with my family.

Before the event, I helped put the flyers and books on table. I felt scared at the beginning and I didn't want to talk to anyone. But my dad said, "You can do it!" So I tried and tried until I sold a book. I did the same to others. In the end I sold 8 books.

My dad wanted me to sell one more but I didn't want to. After that, I had lunch. I ate fish burger. Then, I had to go for ballet. Mom thought I should go home first, but I didn't want to.

After the event, I felt happy about how many books I've sold. I learnt not to be shy. I also learnt that I do not need to be next to an adult to do something like selling books. I want to sell books again!

My Learning Day

By Christina Luk (P1, St. Paul's Co-ed)

Sunday was an exciting day for me because I went to the Peak with my sister to sell books for Kids4Kids.

Before the event, I felt shy and excited because I was scared talking to strangers. I was quite happy too because it was my first time to sell books.

When we arrived at the Peak Open Market, we started to sell books. The weather was hot and sunny. I forgot what the first customer looked like. The second customer was a dad with his child. I walked up to him and said, "Good afternoon, would you like to buy a book? They are one hundred dollars each, would you like to buy one?" He said, "OK, can I buy No Ordinary Dog?" I replied, "Ok, you can buy No Ordinary Dog, thanks!" I was happier than ever! My last customer was a child. I said, "Hi, good afternoon, would you like to buy a book?" She exclaimed, "Sorry, I'm not interested in books!" My heart dropped.

After the event, I felt happy because I'm not shy anymore. I learnt that I can talk to strangers.



How to be Brave

By Jenny Zhang (P1, SIS)

On March 21st, it was the happiest day of my life because it was my first time selling books. The event was for Kids4Kids, a charity that helps poor children. My classmates and I should be selling at the Peak market.

Before the event, we learnt with Michele Lai about her charity. On that day, I wanted to watch T.V. and I also did not want to dress in my Korean dress. My mom pulled me out of the house.

After an hour, I was at the Peak. I saw children trying to sell books. That made me very nervous. So I decided to practice on my aunt. I showed her "Where are you" and said, "This is my favorite book. It is 100 each." She gave me 100 dollars and bought the book. I was worried because now I had to sell books to strangers. Just when I was about to escape, Miss Chu introduced me to her friend. I was nervous to sell books to her friend. I covered my head with the book and asked shyly, "Would you like to buy a book? It is 100 each." She said, "Of course I will!" Then she bought it.

For the event, I learnt to be confident. I was proud that I can help poor kids. If I sell some books again, I will be braver and will sell to more people.



My First Time Selling Books!

By Jasmine Tam (P1, SIS)

This past Sunday, I woke up in the morning and remembered that today was the book selling day! And then I went into my mom and dad's room because it was only 7:30, and by 8:48, I had to go to church with my family. After church, I went to swimming class with my brother. After one hour, I suddenly realized that it was time to sell some books! I had some lunch and then went to the Peak Open Market. At first, I was embarrassed but I remembered that I was well prepared. I felt more confident as I recalled my meeting with Michele Lai and my well-practiced sales pitch.

Before I knew it, I found myself in the middle of the action. I felt a nudge from my teacher and felt encouraged. So I grabbed some books and approached the Canadian woman. I said softly and

confidently, "Would you like to buy a book? These books are written by children." So she asked me where the booth was and told me that she would come back later. She came back to the booth after five minutes. I was excited to see her because I was not sure if she would come back. She recognized me and walked up to me and said, "I've decided to buy one of your books. Which one do you recommend?" I said, "I recommend the book "Where are you" because it's about a girl that lost her hamster and found her hamster in her cornflakes." In the end, she bought it and gave 100 dollars to me. My heart was filled with joy! Finally, I sold my first book!

My most memorable customer was a man who bought a book and wanted to take one photo only but he took twenty photos of me and Mavis!

I learnt that I don't have to be afraid of rejections because I can always try again. It was my first time selling books and I would love to do it again. I am confident I will be able to sell more books next time!



My best field trip

By Mavis Fu (P1, SIS)

Sunday was my exciting day because I could sell books at the Peak Galleria. I went with my mummy, my sister, my brother, and my dad. I was there because I was helping Room to Read. Room to Read is a charity that helps children in poor countries to go to schools.

Before the event, I felt excited. In class we prepared how to sell books and I designed flyers. We also met Michele Lai, the founder of Kids4Kids. I targeted to sell 100 books.

When we arrived at the Peak Galleria,

I signed a sheet called "code of conduct". My first customer was a Chinese lady with a baby. I walked up to her and said, "Would you like to buy some books written by kids?" She said, "I need to ask my husband." She walked away and came back and gave me twenty dollars.

My first successful customer was a couple. I walked up and said to them, "Good afternoon! Do you want to buy some books written by kids?" And the couple said ok. They bought two books. One was called "Where are you" and the other was called "No ordinary dog". I felt very happy because they bought two books.

I learnt from this event that I don't have to be nervous in front of strangers. Before when I started I was shy but I overcame my nervousness and I became more confident.

EARNING \$\$ IS HARD

By Justin Cheng (P4, St Paul's College Primary School)

Earning money was a piece of cake --- or so I thought. I never knew it was hard to earn money, until last Sunday.

Last Sunday, I went to the Kids4Kids bookselling event at The Peak Galleria with my whole family. When I woke up I was already so excited that I started yelling and woke up the whole house! When I got there I wanted to sell the books but I was interrupted by Miss Chu.

"Hello Justin," Miss Chu said. "Are you ready to sell some books?" "Yes!" I exclaimed.

After completing the code of conduct form, a boy and his father came over to take a look. That was my first customer. "Hello, would you like to buy some books for Kids4Kids?" I asked. "Which books do you like best?" the boy asked. "The green one over here," I said as I passed the book called "Where are you" to him. "Would you like to take a look?"

"OK!" he replied. "How about the red one over here? What is it about?" I told him about what happened in the book. He bought both of them straight away. One customer down! It was my first successful sale. I rushed to the teacher to tell her the good news.

My first unsuccessful customer said the books were too expensive, but I thought a hundred dollars wasn't too expensive. Then I had second thoughts. Or maybe it was expensive to him but not to me. After an hour I sold 9 books (5 to myself). When my shift ended, I kept beckoning people to help buy books for a good cause.

From that day onwards, I appreciate having money - even just ten dollars can already make me happy. So when I buy snacks or eat dinner I always pick the dishes that are enough to fill me up.

My Special Day

By Isaac Yuen (P1, SIS)

Sunday was a special day for me. I went to the Peak Galleria in the afternoon to sell books. I went with my mother, father and my sister. I was selling books to help a charity called "Room to Read". Room to Read is a charity that helps poor places to build schools such as Africa, China and India.



Before the event, I felt I wanted to vomit. My mom comforted me and said, "Just dance and shake your butt!" In my dream the night before, I thought I role played with a lion and the lion said, "Can I eat your body and your flyer?" I didn't sell any books.

When we arrived at the Peak, the first thing was to sign a "code of conduct" form. Then Miss Kong gave me a volunteer badge. Afterwards, I went to sell books. The first customer was an American lady. I said, "Would you like to buy a book written by kids?" She smiled and said, "Yes, I think it is good to help children." She took money from her purse and gave me \$100. I felt very happy!

The most memorable customer was a couple. I was very polite and said, "Good afternoon, do you want to buy books written by kids?" It was memorable because they bought two books. I felt excited because I might help poor kids! I got sunburnt but I didn't give up. I sold 10 books.

I learn from this event that I don't have to be shy and scared in front of strangers but still be careful when talking to them.



A Realization

By Hugo Chan (G4, ISF)

Everything just comes to me. Food, clothes, toys..... I don't need to move a muscle and I can have the things that I need in my daily life. I don't need to fight for anything. It was until this fund raising event that I realize that you must be proactive to achieve your goals.

Last Sunday as I finished swim-a-thon, my mom reminded me, "It's time to go to the Peak." I was surprised. "To do what?" I said. My mom gave me a suspicious look, "To sell books for Kids4Kids of course." I hesitated. "Do I have to?" Next thing you know, I was holding a few books and waiting for people to come. No one came until my teacher told me, "Look, the man is looking at our booth, go and help him."

When I approached the Caucasian man, I said, "Good afternoon, would you like to buy this book?" He asked, "Why shall I buy these books?" I told him, "Because it is special, these books are all written and illustrated by children and 35% of the money you pay goes to the publisher and the rest goes to a charity called Room to Read." He asked, "How much does the book cost?" I replied, "Each costs 100 dollars." His eyes SUDDENLY became wide. I told him, "It is quite expensive, but the money you pay goes to the poor children in developing country." And then he asked, "Can you explain these stories to me?" I explained to him the three stories. After I explained to him, he thought for a moment. He said, "Thank you for explaining but I don't think I am interested." My heart sank. I felt a sword stabbing my heart. My teacher came to me and tried to comfort me, "It's okay, and you did a great job. You will get rejected more than once."

My most memorable moment was when I sold the two books with JaQ. JaQ and I told them the summary of all the books, including the ones from 2008! He thought for a moment and asked me and JaQ, "Which is your favorite book?" I pointed at the book "Paint the Sky Blue" and JaQ pointed to the book "You're Never Too Young to Help", so the couple bought two of our favorite books.

After this fund raising activity, I realize that it is easier to achieve your goals by being proactive. If you are more proactive you will become more confident. I was very happy that I sold nine books. I think this event is very fun. I was very happy that I helped other children in developing countries and enjoyed the feeling of changing the children's lives.

Learning to take rejections

By Richie Lai (P4, St. Paul's College Primary School)

I can get everything I want, until one day I went to a toy shop and saw a toy. I asked my mum, "Mum, can I buy that toy?" "No, our house is full of toys," Mum replied. "No! I need to buy it! I need to!" I shouted loudly. "You need to learn how to take rejections," Mum replied. At first, I didn't know what it meant until last Sunday.

Last Sunday, I went to the Peak Galleria Market with my mum to sell books for Kids4Kids, a charity that empowers kids in HK to help less fortunate kids in poor countries through their own actions. The night before the book selling event, I was so excited that I couldn't sleep that night. When I arrived at the Peak, it's very hot and sunny. I was scared that people would reject me and I wouldn't know how to respond. My first customer was an American man, I went up to him and said, "Hello, would you like to buy some books from Kids4Kids? Hmm... These books are written by hmm... by kids." I thought he would say NO because I was stammering. "Yes. I'll buy one." I felt surprised and happy. I felt it was easy. The second customer was an American man too. I asked him, "Hello, would you like to buy some books from Kids4Kids? These books are written by kids." I thought he would buy it because my sales pitch was improved. He didn't say anything and went away. I started to feel sad because he treated me like I was invisible. Suddenly, Miss Chu asked me, "Hello Richie, Why are you so sad?" "Someone treated me like I was invisible," I replied. "Oh! Firstly, if someone treats you like you were invisible, try to use Chinese instead because they probably don't understand English. Secondly, if they still don't say anything and go away, just treat them as if they bought one already and don't forget to say thank you."

The third customer was an American man too, I asked him the same question and he said no too but I still graciously said, "Thank you."

At last, I sold 5 books and I felt happy that day. I learnt that when someone rejects you, don't always put on a temper. There can be many reasons for people to reject you, so, don't focus on the bad side.



Is Life Really a Breeze?

By Justin Tam (P3, SIS)

Life is very easy for me. Before this past Sunday, I had an experience. I was doing my homework when I came to a question which was very hard. I was tempted to skip that question. When my dad walked in and saw me hesitating, he asked, "Justin, what is the matter?" I told him all about me tempted to avoid that question. Then, he said, "Try your best and do not give up. Always try again!" I did not fully understand my dad until this past Sunday.

This past Sunday, I was involved in my first book selling event. As an adventurous boy, I was very excited and looked forward to the event. I went with my mother, father and sister who is 6 years old. It was at the Peak Galleria and I was supposed to sell books for Kids4Kids' fundraising event.

As we were in the car, I urged my mom, "Hurry up mom! I do not want to be late!" My mom turned around and shouted "Come on, we're almost there!" and nearly crashed into an ambulance. As I arrived, I noticed other children were already selling books to passer bys. I felt nervous. I felt like my stomach was full of butterflies. I walked up to the booth and picked up the books. I was not sure if I would sell so I partnered with Justin Cheng, hoping that as a team I would be more confident. After a few attempts, I still could not sell any books. Then I remembered what my dad told me to never give up, so I kept on going.

Finally it happened! A man came up and said "Can I buy those books?" My eyes lit up and my jaws dropped. "Yes please!" I shouted. I grabbed the \$500 bill and almost forgot to give him the books. I waved the \$500 dollar bill in the air like crazy because it was my first sale of the day!

That day's bookselling event taught me how to be persistent. Now when I do my homework question that I don't know I will think and think until I can think of the answer. If I really cannot think of the answer, I will ask my dad. I realize that life is not so easy. It is important to be persistent in all aspects of my life such as sports and school.



Learning to plan

By Max Lau (P4, Renaissance College)

I did not appreciate the importance of planning until the Kids4Kids' book selling event on March 21st.

Before the event, Michele came in to talk to us because we needed to know why we were there. We also practiced the sales pitch so we would know what to say. We also pretended to be the customers and sellers to build up more confidence.

The big day finally came. "I am a little nervous," I muttered when we were setting up the stall at the Peak Galleria. Loraine and I were putting some of the flyers on the booth table. Even though I sold things last year, I was still nervous. Soon enough, I was looking for customers so actively that I forgot I was scared.

"Good morning madam," I said timidly to the first customer. "Would you like to buy one of these books? The money you pay will go to Room to Read. Each book is \$100. Would you like to buy one?" "I will think about it." The customer replied. As the customer walked away, I felt proud of speaking up and being braver even though I was rejected.

I decided to look for another customer. Then, my dad brought over a customer from the soap stall. That customer was a really difficult customer to persuade because he always asked the same question, "What's the purpose?" That customer wasted quite a few minutes. My patience paid off when he finally bought a book.

My most memorable moment was when I approached this English man. I did not even finish speaking to him and he said, "I want to buy the book." This was a very easy sale! I announced to the others about this experience.

Speaking to strangers used to be a little difficult to me. From this event, I discovered that strangers are really nice to kids, especially when we sell them things. I am slightly better at talking to new people now. The most important thing I learnt was that you have to plan what you are going to do. You need strategy! You have to be aware of where you are standing and how you talk. For example, you should stand near the pet store because there were a lot of customers there. I also experienced that knowing other languages is important because there were a lot of people who did not understand English. I was very confident by the time I was speaking to the last customer. I felt great because I achieved my goal of selling 5 to 7 books.

Being a Leader

By Joanne Fu (P3, SIS)

I always think that being a leader is a daunting task until this Sunday.

On 21st of March (Sunday), my sister and I went to the Peak Galleria to sell books for Kids4Kids, a charity that empowers more fortunate kids to help less fortunate kids through writing books and other actions.

Before the event I was so excited that I nearly wanted to skip church and go there earlier to sell books. I was so anxious that I skipped lunch.

When I was there, Miss Kong greeted me with a warm smile. "Hi Joanne, are you ready to sell some books?" Then I had to sign my name and I went off to sell books. I paired up with my sister Mavis so I could lead her.

Our first customer was my brother because we wanted to practice on him. I was the only one who spoke. My sister just stood beside me holding the books. My brother bought the book. Where are you from me.

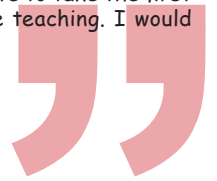
My second customer was a Chinese lady with a baby. I took initiative to talk because my sister was too shy to talk. I said, "Good morning. Would you like to buy some books? These books



are written and illustrated by kids. They are \$100 each. The money goes to charity. Would you like to buy one?" The lady said that she would consider buying one. She went to her husband but her husband refused. I think she really wanted to buy one but her husband probably thought it was too expensive. After that I think she felt bad so she came back to give me \$20 for my good sales effort.

My first successful sale was to a man with gray hair. He bought two books from me. I felt very encouraged.

I learnt that being a leader is not so hard. The qualities of a good leader include being proactive which means I do something before other people do it. For example, if Mavis does not talk, I have to take the first step and talk. Another quality is teaching people who are younger or less experienced. That means if people don't know how to be brave and talk, you have to teach them and you have to be patient with them. If they mess around, you just have to be patient and teach them all over again. So that is why being a leader is not hard. You just have to take the first step and be patient with the people you are teaching. I would love to have this experience again!



Building up Confidence

By Rachel Ng (G5, ISF)

Usually, I'm very proactive when it comes to selling books, but not from the very beginning. I don't know why. Maybe it's because I'm tired of selling. I had sold things a couple of times in my life. Still, the proceeds never went to a charity.

Last Sunday, I finally had the opportunity to participate in a fund raising event for Kids4Kids, a charity that works with Hong Kong schools kids to empower them to help less fortunate kids. Somehow, I wasn't excited. Maybe, I was not ready for it.

That afternoon, I went to the Peak Galleria. I stood beside Kids4Kids' book selling booth. At first, I wasn't really willing to sell. I wasn't ready. After a while of wandering around, Ms. Kong finally dragged me to a group of people. Unwillingly, I introduced the books to them, but I left in the middle of the conversation and let Ms. Kong finish it.

After a few practices, I grew more and more confident. I walked up to some people and said, "Excuse me, would you like to buy some books? These are written by children and the purchases go

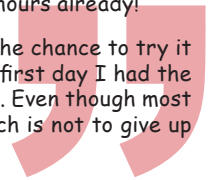


to a charity called 'Room to Read.' " Some responded, "No thanks." Some people made an excuse and never came back. Still, I kept trying, and finally, someone said, "Oh, really? I heard of this charity 'Room to Read'. Okay, I'll take two," and handed me two hundred dollars. Fascinated, I handed the dollars to Ms. Kong. She said, "Wow! You're becoming very good at selling! Keep it up!" I was really excited, and wanted to go on.

I became more eager in selling books, but the best time was when I sold three books to a man with his son beside him playing Lego. I didn't need to explain the books,

and when I told him that the books were written by children and the proceeds would go to a charity called Room to Read, he just said 'sweet!' and bought it. I was so proud of myself that I continued until I couldn't sell anymore! I was exhausted by the end of the day. My shift was only for one hour but after selling, I looked at my watch, I was there for three hours already!

Selling books is not my favorite, but having the chance to try it gave me a lot of confidence. Sunday was the first day I had the chance to partner with someone to sell books. Even though most people just ignored us, I learnt a lesson which is not to give up that easily.



The Funny Sunday

By Tyler Weisberg (P1, Kiangsu & Chekiang)

Sunday was an excellent day for me because I went to the Peak Galleria with my brother, dad and mom to sell books.

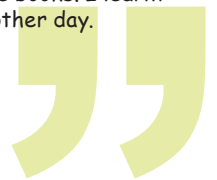
Before the event, I felt excited because this was my first time selling books.

When we arrived at the Peak Open Market, I was happy because my dad bought me an ice-cream. It was cookies and cream.

My first customer was an English man with black hair. I decided to sell some books to him because he looked like a dad and he

could give the books to his kids. In a loud voice, I said "Excuse me! Do you want to buy this book? The money goes to a charity called Room to Read. The books are written by kids." The man exclaimed, "I do not want any books!" and he said it rudely. I was unhappy until my dad bought one book and I was having fun.

After the event, I felt happy because I sold five books. I learnt how to raise money and I want to sell books another day.





Public Speaking is Scary!

By Michelle Lai (P5, St Paul's Convent)

Speaking to strangers or talking in public can be a daunting experience. I still remember my first time on stage, presenting my oral topic "Precious gift" to the whole class. My face went all red, my legs were trembling, my hands were shaking. I was so scared that I could not remember what I should say. I will never forget that painful one-minute speech which seemed to last for an entire hour. I hate public speaking, I dislike speaking to strangers! I have always been afraid of so many eyes resting on me. However, I know that public speaking can help me build up my confidence and I finally had an opportunity to overcome my fear.

It was a sunny Sunday. I woke up very early in the morning. It was the day to sell books! I had volunteered to go to the Peak to sell books for Kids4Kids this afternoon. I was really nervous although I had practiced many times with my parents. I was afraid that no one would buy books from me and I could not talk to the customers confidently.

After my mum and dad brought me to the Peak Open Market, my teacher gave me a form to sign and a volunteer badge to pin on my T-shirt. I was sweating not because of the hot weather but because I was very scared!

I began to sell books to the passer-bys. At first, my teacher had to push me because I was so shy. The first person I sold to was a fat woman. I asked softly, "Good afternoon miss, these books are written by children. They are published by Kids4Kids. They are \$100 only. The money raised goes to charity. Would you like to buy one?" The woman asked her daughter and they rejected me. After a few more rejections, I became very distressed.

My teacher encouraged me and paired me up with Rachel. Having a partner built up my confidence and we began to find customers. Then, we did it! A nice American [lady or man?] with a one-year-old baby bought a book from us. I felt so delighted that I jumped and ran to my teacher. The next sale happened without my teacher's pushing. I proactively sold a book to a Chinese man and his son. I hailed with joy!

After selling to this man, I sold two more books to my dad. I was very happy as I had overcome my fear of speaking to strangers. I have always been scared of public speaking in school, but after this Sunday, I learnt that it can be a natural thing that comes with enough practice. I also learnt that earning money is hard. I know that even a little kid can also help others. I would love to do this again.

Practice makes perfect

By Hannah Szeto (P3, DGJS)

"So the most outstanding choir of this year is U34 Diocesan Girls' Junior School..." the judge announced. As soon as the judge announced it, the air was filled with applause and shouts of excitement. This was the best day of my life. My school had won. All the hard work paid off extremely well.

Three weeks before the final competition, Mrs. Chiang, my chair instructor approached us every day to hear us sing the songs. Even though she was really picky, she also knew our mistakes and told us how to correct them. Step by step, we improved a lot in just one week. You know how hard we worked? Sometimes we didn't even have time to eat lunch, and we always sang the same phrase over and over again. Believe me, it was a

LOT of hard work.

As the day of the finals drew near, my heart pounded with anxiety. When the day of my life was finally here, my mouth chattered with excitement. As soon as we (the Junior, Intermediate and Senior Choir) entered the auditorium, my legs shook with exhilaration. After all the schools performed, all the schools waited nervously for the results while I muttered under my breath, "My school has to win. DGJS has to..." And then the judges came out. The whole auditorium was filled with silence that you could hear heartbeats.

Knowing that we had won first place, all that practice seemed worthwhile. I learn that even though the process might be frustrating, if we have the right goal in mind, we can achieve what we want.



Stop Giving Up!

By Ian Chu (G5, ISF)

"I give up! Why do I have to do this anyway?" This was what I shouted all the time before the bookselling event. For me, there is always an easy way out and money always comes to my hands without working. If I want to buy something, I always get it.

My perspective changed totally after this Sunday. This Sunday, my mom took me to the Peak Galleria to sell books for Kids4Kids. I didn't expect much because I sold things before and it was very hard. When I arrived, my teacher asked, "Are you ready to sell books?" "Maybe," I answered timidly. Reluctantly, I got three books and started selling. The first customer was a tall Chinese guy who resembled Yao Ming. I talked fluently and explained meticulously to him.

As he was studying through the books and testing my patience, I stood there silently awaiting for his response. I realized that this time I couldn't just throw my hand up and say "I give up!" So, I continued waiting and after a while, he told me he would buy a book of every kind. I was very excited and I immediately got the money and gave him the books.

If I just gave up, I couldn't have sold 12 books. I learnt that to do anything well, you have to keep doing it and not give up. At the beginning, I was very nervous with the first customer and I didn't know what to do. Because of my mentality of not giving up, I became better at selling and successfully sold 14 books in total. I would really want to do this again in the future because it allows me to feel free and I also became a good salesperson.



Don't Give Up!

By Loraine Kuk (P4, St. Rose of Lima's)

I want to give up. This is the best way to go. This has always been a good way until this past Sunday when I took part in selling books for Kids4Kids. Kids4Kids is a charity for helping poor people.

Last Sunday, I went to the Peak with my dad by tram. When I arrived at the Peak Open Market, I felt butterflies in my stomach. I was very nervous because I was going to be a book seller.

First, my teacher told me to sign a code of conduct form after she gave me a few of the books. And then, I started to sell books. I walked around and saw a woman reading one of the books. So I slowly walked to her and said, "Would you like to buy one of the books? These books are written by kids. The money you pay will go to Room to Read. They will use the money to help the poor children. Each book costs one hundred dollars. Would you like to buy one of the books?" The woman thought for a few seconds and nodded. At that moment, I felt great. I took the money that she paid me and ran to the teachers. They said, "You did a great job! You are the first one to sell a book!" I was surprised to hear that.

The most memorable moment was when I sold a book to a worker of the other stall. I spent a few minutes talking about those books when my hat started to fall off. It covered my face and it covered my voice too. So I needed to repeat what I said before. At last, the worker bought one of the books. I was over the moon!

I was tired but felt great. At the end, I had learnt how to speak well and how to sell things. I would like to be a seller again. My persistence paid off.



Earning Money? NO WAY!

By Vicky Fong (P5, S1S)

"Mom, can I buy some new pens? The ones I got are so outdated," I mentioned casually.

"I thought you just bought some new pens a few days ago?" questioned Mom, annoyed.

As you can see here, I love spending money. I can think of a hundred ways to spend money. All the money either comes from my mom or dad. I also like receiving red packets during Chinese New Year because it makes me feel like I have my own money without actually doing anything at all. I know that one day, no matter what, I'll have to earn my own money. I am definitely not a person who knows how to make a living. A bookselling event last Sunday made me realize that making money was not as easy as I thought it would be.

Sunday was a hot day. I could feel the sunlight shining through my bedroom window burning on my skin. I tried to stay in bed but then I realized that I couldn't sleep anymore because I had to sell books at the Peak Galleria. It was for Kids4Kids, an organization that raises money for charities like Room to Read. Room to Read is a charity that helps build schools and libraries in developing countries.

I knew it would be sunny at the Peak, but it was hotter than I expected when I arrived at 11:30am. Kids4Kids' stall was in the middle of the Peak Galleria, with no shelter, and the sun was shining right on us. There were loads of books filling the table, and volunteers like us helping out. I signed a "Code of Conduct" form and received my volunteer badge to start work. I was afraid. I knew what to do, but my nervousness was giving me a stomachache.

I was walking around, trying to find a target to ask. Everyone seemed to be in a rush and I had difficulty trying to get people's attention. I finally managed to find someone that seemed interested in the books. She was strolling around with a young boy. I took a deep breath and walked up to ask her if she was interested in buying any books. Since she expressed interest, I showed her the way to our stall. My heart was racing. She took a quick look at all the books and decided to buy the 3 books from the 2009 series. I was overwhelmed! This was my first customer and she bought three books straight away.

I really didn't expect selling books to be such a hard job, especially for charity. I thought that since this was for charity, people would be more eager to buy these books, but I was wrong. People kept on making excuses such as "I'll come back later", "I'm very busy" etc. But they never showed up again. Luckily, some kind people would take some time to look at the books, even though they didn't buy any in the end. I also encountered a lot of rejections during the day.

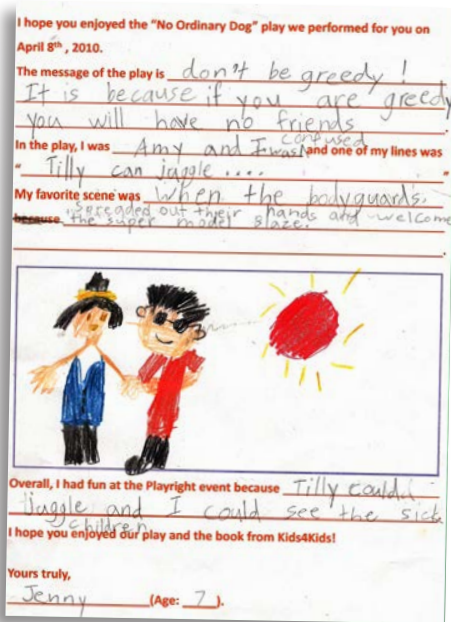
At the end of the bookselling event, I sold a total of 6 books. I learnt from this bookselling event, that making money is very hard and I appreciate what my dad does - earning money to raise a family.

Easter Workshop

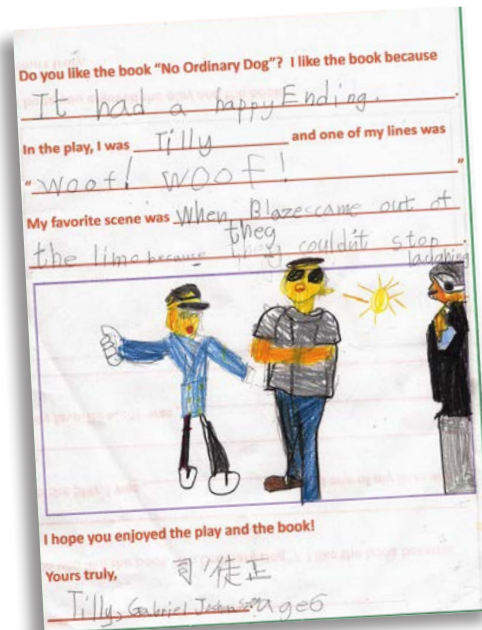
April 5-9, 2010

Meet Playright: Spread Love to Suffering Children

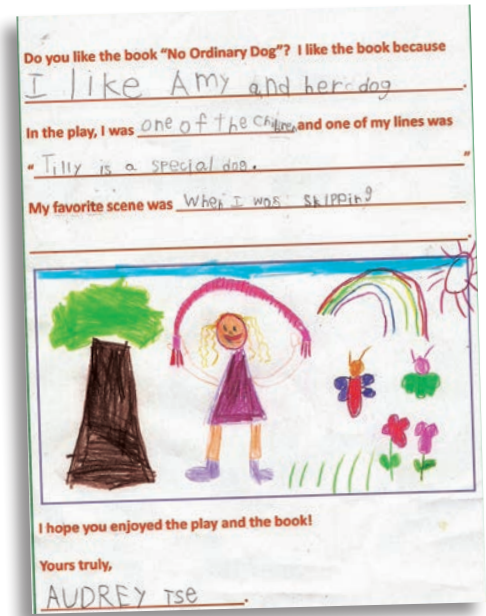
This Easter has been exceptionally exciting at LEAP Studio as we prepared and performed a skit based on one of the Kids4Kids books "No Ordinary Dog" for the sick children at Princess Margaret Hospital. Our students spent three classes preparing the script, props and stage backdrop, and rehearsing for the skit. On April 8th, we performed at Princess Margaret Hospital and through Playright, a charity that seeks to enrich the life of every child through quality play, and their Playright Channel, our skit was broadcasted live to the children wards at Caritas Medical Center and United Christian Hospital as well. It was a gratifying experience for our students to see how they can use discourse to improve at least their corner of the world – that they can brighten up a child's day through their own actions!



BY JENNY ZHANG (P1, SIS)



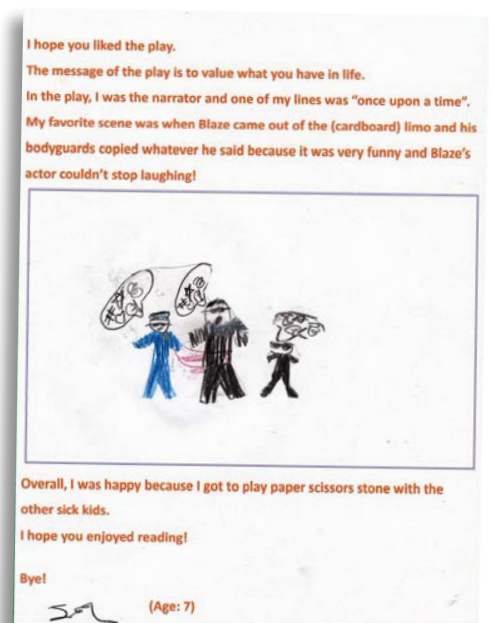
BY GABRIEL SZETO (K3, CCKG)



BY AUDREY TSE (K2, SHENG KUNG HUI)



BY QUERIDA LAI (K2, ST CATHERINE'S)



BY JAQ LAI (Y1, CIS)

Dear Playright,

Thank you for organizing a meaningful event to give us an unforgettable experience.

On Thursday (8/4/2010), I followed the teachers to Princess Margaret Hospital to act out a play for the sick children with my classmates. It was called "No Ordinary Dog". It was quite a funny story for the sick kids. Actually, I think we enjoyed acting in this show. In the drama, I played the role of Blaze Sinclair, an evil character and a famous model. I discovered that being an evil character is the most challenging.

During our practices in class, I laughed and laughed all the time for no reason. I was really afraid that I would laugh in the actual performance. This was my first time spending Easter for a meaningful purpose. I think it was an important event in my mind because I could bring entertainment to the permanently sick kids. I could also make them laugh during their stay in the hospital.

During the drama, I learnt the importance of collaboration. A person can't do much but a team can do any work that you can imagine. After this drama, I also learnt the technique of speaking English in front of a large group of people. I think this was a great learning experience. I hope I can have more chances to perform in a big stage to build up my courage. However, I think Playright should improve the quality of the programs and the taping technology. You can try to ask for subsidies from the government and donation from the public.

Thank you once again for giving us an opportunity to perform.

Yours truly,

Justin Lai
F1, Wah Yan College



Students prepared the stage backdrop and props in the classroom.



Group photo of our acting crew, Playright staff, and children from Princess Margaret's Hospital who watched our show.



Our K2 and K3 students playing the roles of kids playing in the park.



Group picture of all actors, actresses, narrator and Abigail How, author of the Kids4Kids book "No Ordinary Dog".



Two main characters in the skit - Amy (played by Jenny) and Tilly the dog (played by Gabriel).



Scene with Blaze Sinclair (played by Justin) and his bodyguard (Max) and limo driver (Michelle).

Dear Playright,

Thank you for organizing a meaningful event. It gave us the opportunity to act out a play which brought happiness to the sick kids.

On the 8th April, 2010, LEAP Studio went to Princess Margaret Hospital to help Playright perform a play called "No Ordinary Dog". There were about 12 students involved in the play. We helped by practicing our roles 3 days straight and creating props such as flowers for the backdrop. In the play, I was the bodyguard and I needed to repeat what Blaze said. I felt kind of embarrassed wearing black clothes all over and wearing sunglasses. I liked the whole play because it was quite funny.

On the first day of the rehearsal, Ms. Chu and Ms. Kong actually wanted me to be Blaze. I was very shy and I could not even say my lines, so we decided to switch characters to see if Blaze's part would fit someone better. Justin did really well at being Blaze so he stayed being Blaze and I became the bodyguard. Playing the part of the guard on the first day, I could not even take one thing out of my pocket, but the more we practiced, the better I became. On the

day of the play, I did not drop anything and did not need any help from Ms. Chu or Ms. Kong. I also acted out my role correctly.

I think this event was quite meaningful because positive emotion (which means happiness) is important to people. That helps control your mood and your actions which affects people who are around you and care for you.

I learned that practice makes perfect. I discovered that eye contact is very important because it allows the audience to know that you are speaking and it makes your voice louder too. I think Playright Channel can be improved by doing something else rather than plays, like a song, magic tricks or jokes.

This Easter has been meaningful because I helped someone in the hospital and brought joy to them. This is my first time actually spending some time during the holiday helping someone in need.

Yours truly,

Max Lau
P4, Renaissance College

Our Grade 7-9 students wrote supporting research to support the writing themes for Kids4Kids' 2010/11 "Writing for

Poverty and Illiteracy in China

By Cameron Zeluck (Y9, CIS)

"Education can be the difference between a life of grinding poverty and the potential for a full and secure one." — Nelson Mandela and Graca Marshall.

Living in a city like Hong Kong where the youth literacy rate is as high as 99%, we can easily be unaware of the gravity of this global issue that has been affecting countries for so many years. Throughout the world, around 100 million children don't have the access to go to schools to learn how to read and write. Poverty is the main reason for lack of education in countries around the world. Poverty is a vicious cycle that is hard to break out of and education is the key route out of this issue. If we put a stop to illiteracy and give people more opportunities to learn and be educated in school, we could essentially be able to solve many of the problems in the world such as poverty, unemployment, delinquency and many more. . . Give people more chances to access education and start the path to make the world a better place.

I. What is Illiteracy?

"Hatred, intolerance, poor hygienic conditions and violence all have roots in illiteracy, so we're trying to do something to help the poor and the needy" — Abdul Qadeer Khan

Illiteracy [ih-lit-er-uh-see], a word which Webster's New World Dictionary defines as "The lack of ability to read or write; the state of being illiterate, lack of any education".¹ For many people living in Hong Kong, we take education for granted as we have an effective education system in place that can afford us the opportunity to learn to read and write. Have you ever thought about those who are less fortunate to be given this chance? Though the problem of illiteracy has improved from years before, it still serves as a huge threat, particularly endangering third world countries such as Bangladesh, India, and China. Illiteracy is mainly caused by poverty as the countries don't have the means or resources to pay for education for children to learn and go to school. With less and less people being able to read, it results in more people being unemployed and hence unable to provide for the country. This also negatively impacts the country's productivity and income. Without sufficient income in a nation, the government cannot provide educational support which creates a never-ending viscous cycle

II. Why should we Fight Illiteracy?

"In this world, there is no literate population that is poor, and no illiterate population that is other than poor." J.K. Galbraith

Illiteracy is a problem that our world has been facing for decades. Though the situation is improving, there is still a long way to go and before we can eradicate this problem. Currently, there are approximately 860 million people in the world that are illiterate, 61% of those are in Bangladesh, India and China. Around 115 million children in the world don't have access to education or the opportunity to learn. However, some governments choose to prioritize other things over a child's future. In general, the governments of the world spend US\$780 billion on military defense, in contrast to the US\$6 billion that is concentrated on education.² If we want our world's economy to prosper in the long-term, then why are we investing money on a short term basis? Our world's future is in the children's hands and if less and less people have the ability to read, then how can the next generation help shape the world to become a better place?

Children cannot choose the families and lives they are born into. It is not fair that they are prevented from achieving their full potential due to their family or ethnic backgrounds. If we give them the chance to learn to read and write, they could possibly become leaders of tomorrow, or at least someone who they couldn't possibly become without given this chance in the first place. If we can help these children to access educational opportunities, then they can acquire skills to secure jobs, earn money and help their families; and eventually apply their knowledge to help their countries resolve political

and economic issues. If these issues are solved, then poverty within the countries can be prevented and the problem eliminated. Education not only breaks the poverty cycle of an individual, it ultimately equips the society with a skilled and productive labor force to build a sustainable, competitive and job-creating economy.

The persistent problem of illiteracy is a threat to the health and growth of an economy. In the world's least developed countries such as India, Rwanda, Uganda, literacy rates are at a staggering low 60%³, not to mention the majority of the African countries with a literacy rate of under 50%⁴. How can a society flourish when only a little more than half of the population can read? Studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between income and literacy. No country has ever achieved economic growth without reaching a critical threshold of about 40% in its adult literacy rate⁵. A society can only be productive and competitive when it has skilled, knowledgeable and informed citizens. With the problem of illiteracy being solved, we can go on to tackle other problems in the world caused by illiteracy like unemployment, delinquency etc. The choice is ours to make. Solving illiteracy is only the first step to helping our world to become a better place.

III. Solutions

"If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people" — Chinese Proverb.

Organizations throughout the world are being established to stop illiteracy and educate children. Non-profit organizations such as Room to Read are located in countries such as China and Africa to provide libraries and books to schools so students can have more access to reading materials, thus giving them better opportunities to learn. With a literacy rate of 93.3%,⁵ China should look up to countries such as the United States, where literacy rate is one of the top at 99%. What the US government has done is to make education compulsory so that people are guaranteed means of education e.g. going to a public school to learn. This policy makes it much easier for people to gain access to education hence the high literacy rate in the United States. I think that if all of these other third world countries adopt the US's educational model, then it would already be a great start to attacking this worldwide issue. As more people become aware of this issue, they would also be more willing to donate to these non-profit organizations that provide for children in countries in need, to go to school.

Ultimately, literacy does not just mean reading the word, but reading the world. It means understanding concepts and responsibilities. It involves understanding others and diversity. Education will help bring together and promote better understanding among individuals, cultures, and even nations. Illiteracy is a global issue that should be a priority not only for countries who are suffering from this issue. If illiteracy can be solved, who knows what it may lead to? Less poverty, less unemployment, less delinquency; the world is full of opportunities for improvement - the question is: Are you willing to help?

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¹(Webster's New World Dictionary, 2008)

²(A Day to Celebrate the Power of Education)

³Education and World Bank

⁴United Nations Development Program 2009

⁵(Literacy Rates in Countries Around the World)

Youth Suicide

By Carol Chan (G8, ISF)

Background

According to World Health Organization's statistics, one person commits suicide every 40 seconds around the world. This is frightening. Suicide rates have increased from 5% to 62% globally in the last two decades. Many people think that suicide is the ultimate and simplest answer to relieve their agony and stress. However, it may be easy to them, since they no longer suffer, but it is a terrible burden for the family. Do you know that for every suicide, it will create negative impact on at least 6 to 10 family members?¹ It also appears to trigger other suicides within groups such as school or the community.²

The Problem

Adolescence is the journey from childhood to adulthood. It is a complex and challenging period with lots of dramatic change. Teenagers often feel heavy pressure at school, at home and in social groups. Moreover, they don't have sufficient life experiences to know that the difficult situation/ problem will not exist forever. Therefore, they solve their difficulties and cope with their emotions in a variety of ways. Some of them ignored the fact that it can be solved, and they took the easiest way out- committing suicide.

Suicide is an important public issue in many countries. Globally, according to the "World Health Organization Mortality Database", the number of young people that committed suicide in 2005 was 132,423 among 90 countries. It means that in every hour there were 15.1 young people committing suicides. Youth suicide problems can fall into two categories: attempted suicide or committed suicide. Both are caused by similar reasons: victims trying to escape the feeling of rejection, hurt, lost, unwanted, unloved, victimized or even ashamed. Youth suicide rates have tripled since 1970.³ However, not many people are aware about the gravity of the issue.

Hong Kong's teenager suicide rates are lower compared to other countries, but that doesn't leave room for complacency. In 2008's Hong Kong Coroner report, there were 20 suicides committed by teenagers in Hong Kong. The most common way to end their lives is jumping off from height. Although, there are a few organizations in Hong Kong (like The Samaritan Befrienders and The Suicide Prevention Services) providing help to these troubled youngsters and their families, I still personally think that the centers should do more to increase awareness of the public on their work and missions. Teenagers are still unfamiliar about what these helping centers have to offer. In 2007, only 6% of the

callers among the 24,154 hotline calls in Hong Kong Suicide Prevention Services are teenagers.

Solutions

Personally, I believe that helping centers are not the only and the best way to help teenagers with suicidal plans or thoughts. Although the only person who can stop a potential suicidal act is the person himself, friends or family can actually change their thoughts and influence their behaviors.

According to the Chinese Cultural Home Ground, 90 percent of suicidal teenagers believed that their families did not understand them. Communication among family members can help these troubled youngsters to reconsider and seek other solutions. Counselors and helping centers can also help these troubled youngsters develop a better family relationship, which will definitely minimize the chances of the teenager being depressed and run off for a suicidal act. Parents should pay more attention to their children's emotional behavior.

Not only can the helping centers increase the awareness to the public, they should also provide a variety of programs to counsel people, since one particular way would not best fit people of different age groups and genders. Here is an example: Girls think about suicide about twice as much as boys, and tend to attempt suicide by overdosing on drugs or cutting themselves. However, boys commit suicide about four times as often as girls; maybe it is because they tend to use more lethal methods, such as firearms, hanging, or jumping from heights.⁴ Based on this observation, perhaps there should be different counseling programs designed for boys and girls so that they can be approached early enough to stop such suicidal acts.

As a conclusion, youth suicide is an issue that we should pay more attention to as the physical and emotional impact on the victims and their loved ones can be irreversible. We should know how to help suicidal teenagers by listening to them, taking them seriously, and trying to untie the knot in their hearts.

¹<http://www.sps.org.hk/bless.php?cid=4>

²<http://www.yutopian.com/religion/theology/teenagersuicide.html>

³<http://www.yutopian.com/religion/theology/teenagersuicide.html>

⁴<http://kidshealth.org/parent/emotions/behavior/suicide.html>



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