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BECAUSE FILMING IS OUR PASSION
"Alma Mater" - A DBS Film

ISSUE THREE/FOUR JUL 13
EDITOR’S NOTE

To our readers:

I am pleased to announce our final edition of the IB Herald which is the culmination of two editions that were combined in order to create this mega-issue. Although we experienced delays due to the inevitable stress brought about by the stressful exams, we have managed to triumph over this dilemma and successfully completed this issue. We hope to continue creating many more editions of the IB Herald with the support of our loyal readers.

We are also pleased to announce an expansion of writing staff for the coming year which will allow us to both increase quality and quantity of our articles through our new writers. The IB Herald staff hopes to ‘inspire brilliance’ from our younger counterparts and ensure that the Herald becomes a tradition that will be passed on for many generations.

Many thanks to our supervising teachers Mr. Vanderheiden, and Mr. Sourd for their guidance and constant support to further our creativity and ensure that we be successful. We would also like to thank our IB Coordinator, Mr. Wu, for his support and approval of our project whom without we would be unable to have the opportunity to produce the IB Herald.

Sincerely,
Yanshun Mung

LITERATURE

Get Quiet - the Book

Written by Susan Cain, Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can’t Stop Talking which argues against the present society’s favouritism towards extroverts while highlighting the unique strengths of introverts. While the book is based on a lot of anecdotal material, the author also makes use of a variety of research and it is not hard to lose count of how many times group projects are dominated by the outspoken one, even if he may not be the one who has the best ideas. One can also argue that the IB curriculum, with its heavy focus on verbal presentation, is also favoured towards extroverts, as seen in the numerous individual oral discussions, presentations, and commentaries. For example, for the individual oral presentation, two-thirds of the marks are based on the candidate’s “language” and “presentation”, while “knowledge and understanding” accounts for the remaining one-third. Is such allocation appropriate? What is the point of an attractive, attention-grabbing delivery if there is not much of worth to be delivered?

In the second part, Cain moves on to highlight the differences between extroverts and introverts, arguing that introverts are often undervalued. For example, research shows that extroverts tend to be more self-aware of their outward appearances. Confidence, self-assuredness and a gregarious nature become sought-after personalities. In contrast, introverts tend to downplay reward and are less willing to take risks. Because of their sensitivity towards rewards, extroverts may “take a quick-and-dirty approach to problem-solving, trading accuracy for speed”. On the other hand, introverts tend to be more easily overwhelmed by stimulation, which may be why they limit surprises in their schedules and avoid big, noisy social
The absurdity of war culminates in Yossarian recalling the grisly and haunting death of Snowden, and it becomes evident that there is nothing honourable about the war at all. This is perhaps why the novel was quite controversial when published. The Second World War was seen in America as a heroic resistance against the Nazis, and as a result Catch-22, which explicitly criticized war, was not well-received by readers in the US in 1961. Despite the fact that it has been more than half a century since the novel's publication, Catch-22 still carries significance in the present day. The dark side of human nature remains a place we can never fully explore. The intricate balance of power and the constant conflicts in the world, another war can break out without warning. With the relatively long period of peace we are enjoying currently in Hong Kong, some of us have already forgotten the horrors of war. Have we lost our appreciation for peace? How can we ever maintain peace if not every one of us appreciates it? Is mankind doomed to repeat its mistakes?

Catch-22 - Joseph Heller
A review by Frankie Fung

Catch-22, written by Joseph Heller, is a piece of fiction set during the Second World War and follows Captain Yossarian. He is a US bombardier who is stationed near Italy. Contrary to what you might expect, Yossarian is not the typical war hero. He does not charge into battles, risking his lives for his comrades and his motherland. In fact, he is not a war hero at all. He constantly tries to avoid being sent on bombing runs for fear of losing his life, sometimes even feigning insanity for that sole purpose. In the other words, no matter whether one is insane or not, he is stuck inside this circular reasoning and hence must complete his flying missions. This kind of circular reasoning is the eponymous Catch-22.

Bureaucracy is presented as an authoritative and vile force throughout the novel. Officers send people like Yossarian into the most dangerous missions possible and hope for a promotion while completely disregarding the value of human life. These officers, as Yossarian puts it, “had courage and never hesitated to volunteer his men for any target available.” People are proven guilty before they are even interrogated or given a fair trial. It becomes apparent that bureaucracy during the war is based on circular reasoning and paradoxes. To avoid his flying missions, Yossarian pretends that he is insane, but the doctor tells him that he must be sane to say he wants to avoid his missions. In other words, no matter whether one is insane or not, he is stuck inside this circular reasoning and hence must complete his flying missions. This kind of circular reasoning is the eponymous Catch-22.

One of the most memorable characters is Lieutenant Scheisskopf, who is obsessed with military parades and enjoys forcing his soldiers to practice marching every Sunday afternoon. The best squadrons win pendants, but according to Yossarian, “all they signified was that the owner of a syndicate in the black market. His

power and influence grow as the war goes on, and his syndicate quickly becomes international, operating on both sides of the war and even owning an entire fleet of planes. Originally seen as a harmless opportunist who exploits the war for quick profits, he is eventually revealed to be a deplorable person who would do anything for money. An example of this would be when he had a contract with both the Americans and the Germans to both bomb and defend a bridge, an incident which results in the deaths of several of Yossarian’s friends. Minderbinder is a perfect example of the corrupting effects of the war, in which profits are put before human lives.

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Review on The Hong Kong Jockey Club Series: The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia


Kristopher Wong and Felex Lau

"Mesopotamia" is a term that often appears in literature, Christian studies and history. The literal translation is "the land between rivers", including Iraq and other countries around the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. It was a civilization, like the ancient Egyptians, advanced in its scientific and intellectual achievements. Mesopotamia also saw the rise of many powerful and legendary countries of the time such as Assyria and Babylon.

The exhibition "The Wonders of Ancient Mesopotamia" showcases more than 170 artifacts ranging from evidence of the invention of writing to business tools such as "duck weights" and many other valuable pieces unearthed from Mesopotamia. Visitors can see regions' contributions to fields such as the arts, commerce, astrology and even time-telling. The exhibit hosts artifacts such as seals which depict drawings of contest and banquet scenes of that time. There were many other impressive showcases including forms of the Mesopotamian writings and drawings, and also some very luxurious utensils such as pots and bowls made out of gold and silver which demonstrate how wealthy the Mesopotamian civilization was. This in turn highlights the benefits reaped from their discoveries in various fields that still have immense influence towards modern-day technology. For instance, the Sexagesimal (base 60), was a number system and a system of numerals for telling time that there are 60 minutes an hour and 60 seconds a minute) is a system passed down to the ancient Babylonians from the Sumerians who lived in Mesopotamia.

We found this exhibition very exciting and informative because we can see how the ancient civilizations influenced modern-day society and our way of life today. The fact that some of the Mesopotamian systems are still used today rendered us awestruck at their remarkable achievements across so wide a range. Visiting the Museum of History might originally seem to be a very old-fashioned and boring event, perhaps even repetitive for some of us, but this exhibition refreshed our interest, and we hope that it will do the same for the reader as well. We would certainly recommend going to see this marvellous exhibition co-organized by the Hong Kong Museum of History and the British Museum. Our only complaint was our own lack of time to fully appreciate all of the magnificent artifacts which sadly affected our understanding of the accompanying information.

Your _______ is an Artist

"Your _______ is an Artist" is the exhibition by the Class of 2013 IB VA students, featuring works of Romario Lai, Fergus Chan and Isaac Tam. The exhibition opened 12th April 2013, and each of the students exhibited their choice of approximately twelve to fifteen artworks, in which 9GAG - Troll and 9GAG - Me Gusta by Romario Lai are artworks that have been previously featured in the art section of IB Herald.

Each student—or, as they would call themselves, artist—displayed their own style and approach to creating art, which makes the exhibition even more interesting, both visually and conceptually. Compared to the exhibition last year, this year Romario and Fergus both incorporated videos to enrich their exhibition. Fergus’ sculpture ?! also used lighting to convey his message, which is indeed one-of-a-kind. Many of the artworks also contained a sense of humor and some pieces speak to the audience. Fergus’ video commenting on procrastination, Isaac’s Hot, Romario’s Crucifixion series all immediately provoked the thoughts of the viewer.

"Please see us as new, growing artists, instead of art students", said Romario in the opening speech of the exhibition. A key theme discussed by Romario’s works is the question of identity. The name of the exhibition, "Your _______ is an Artist", allows the audience to "fill-in-the-blank" with words such as "classmate", "friend", "son", etc., reflecting the changing manner of the identity of a person. Mirrorholic is also a work that questions the identity of a person through using a mirror painted with statements such as "you look fine" and "you look inflated".

Isaac’s artwork consisted mainly of prints, which differentiate themselves from the various paintings in the exhibition. His print, Hot, was especially thought-provoking as he questions the definition of "hot" using a heat map featuring the backs of two women, one fat and the other thin. Another print draws a metaphor between balloons and the human brain. These works are very inspiring and the messages behind such brilliant and strongly attained pieces are sure to bond with our fellow students and the thoughts of the viewers.

On the other hand, Fergus’ work had a very strong conceptual sense to it, displaying a warm contrast with Isaac and Romario’s works. Fergus’ Tag was especially interesting as it intentionally mixes up the position and size of the description of the artwork and the artwork itself. A few of Fergus’ pieces displayed seems incomplete, and these works are especially thought-provoking as to why Fergus chose to take this approach to his artwork. Another shocking piece featured a video of Fergus wandering inside a room picking up random objects, as a statement about procrastination. Like many of his works, he takes a very experimental and revolutionary approach and indeed delivered a shock to the audience.

"Your _______ is an Artist" was a very refreshing exhibition and would give insight to newcomers to the art world as to how art should be approached in the 21st century context: the focus is not only on the aesthetic appeal, but also the concepts behind it. The three artists in this exhibition have wonderfully displayed the combination of both visual and conceptual elements into their artwork, making the exhibition very enriching and enlightening.

The International Baccalaureate Visual Arts Program is a Group 6 subject that uses studio work as the external assessment and an investigative workbook as internal assessment. Towards the end of the IB program, VA students would put on an exhibition showcasing their works and the exhibition itself, along with each individual artwork, is sent to the International Baccalaureate Organization for assessment each year.

Felex Lau

Above: Romario Lai’s 画瘾・徘徊

Diocesan Boys’ School Class of 2013 Visual Arts Exhibition Featuring works of Romario Lai, Fergus Chan and Isaac Tam

Kristopher Wong and Felex Lau

Perhaps one of the most renowned features of the IB Visual Arts programme is that, instead of examinations, an exhibition is held for external assessment. "Your _______ is an Artist" is the exhibition by the Class of 2013 IB VA students, featuring works of Romario Lai, Fergus Chan and Isaac Tam. The exhibition opened 12th April 2013, and each of the students exhibited their choice of approximately twelve to fifteen artworks, in which 9GAG - Troll and 9GAG - Me Gusta by Romario Lai are artworks that have been previously featured in the art section of IB Herald.

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Pranks on the Last Day of School?

Context: On the second last day of school every year, IB2’s have a ‘challenge accepted day’ in which random pranks and fun are carried out throughout the building.

For pranks

Jonathan Liu and Kristopher Wong

Rather than going into a philosophical ramble on what is considered a ‘good outcome’ and concluding that moral ambiguity exists, and that pranks are not entirely ‘bad’, I would like to take a different approach towards last day-pranks by seniors.

Intuitively, it is obvious to an ordinary law-abiding individual that breaching regulations is morally incorrect. However, another part of intuition that does not seem to appeal to the logical quarreller, is that breaching regulations, and other acts of intentional harm. Perhaps this is how many mischievous deities, such as the Coyote or Loki, justified their actions. Additionally, many bystanders, who are safe from punishment and pranks yet get pleasure from them, do not really mind these pranks’ happening. Nonetheless, most spectators would not want to have one day they may be the one who happens to sit on a chair with whipped cream. Those who perch themselves on the moral high ground are strangely concerned the pranksters whose pranks result in terrible consequences.

Similarly observe the unrest in the media after the infamous prank call: two DJs inadvertently caused the suicide of an unsuspecting nurse who gave away confidential information of a British royal. Yet, little is spoken about the prank calls that are being made throughout the years, either manually or by programmed websites. Are the impassive bystanders to be blamed for the DJs’ catastrophe as well? Killer pranks should be condemned, however harmless pranks which spread cheer should be allowed.

But enough of that tangent. My initial point was not to defeat the opposite stance, is that there exist those who happen to sit on a chair with whipped cream. Those who orchestrate the unexpected events must control them (rather than being controlled by them), if not for optimizing harm while doing crazy acts? I see that as a responsibility for the pranksters. There are many, teachers included, that simply do not care even if they are mildly annoyed by some pranks, as long as they don’t disturb too much, especially regarding the clean-up afterwards. For this condition to be fulfilled, the pranksters will have to see to that. Some seniors, showing slight signs of remorse, advised their comrades not to initiate another messy water balloon bombardment. Perhaps that act got out of hand, but it certainly was spectacular. The responsible and sensible prankster will know that his pranks should not leave permanent damage.

In judging the consequences of their pranks, and balancing between the harm to others and the pleasure to self, pranksters are actually responsible for their pranks (though this might sound stupidly obvious). Those who orchestrate the unexpected events must control them (rather than being controlled by them), if not for optimizing harm while maximizing entertainment (both for themselves and spectators). Those who plan pranks must control them to minimize harm while maximizing fun, both for themselves and for spectators. Then, at least the seniors can avoid punishment and prevent ruining future cohorts’ chances of having a shot at their own pranks. Our seniors have advised us so, warning us of missing out on this unique experience, including further water wars.

Pranks are not to be expected, but tolerated and hopefully tolerated in good humour. They test the maturity of the decisions that we, as pranksters, make. My argument is that the tolerance for pranks is not a universal standard, and should be judged individually. It is up to the masses and authority to judge whether all last day senior pranks should be deemed entirely juvenile and inappropriate, or to exempt pranksters to make arbitrarily good decisions, allow them to have a good time, and spectate with an understanding smile (or frown). It is a display of confidence for our graduating seniors. They are tolerated not to go too far so far, this trust has not been misplaced.

Against pranks

Jonathan Liu

Since the graduation and departure of the first cohort of students in the IB Diploma Programme at my school, I have come to appreciate their appropriateness; their events, an array of pranks and tricks in a ‘just-for-fun’ style on their last regular day of school. Occurrences that I have seen (or heard of) range from dress ups and striking group poses in front of photos to climactic water wars and similar carefree expressions of joy.

However, behind the apparent ‘joy’, such behavior provides no learning, and it has become a tradition that they events, an array of pranks and tricks in a ‘just-for-fun’ style on their last regular day of school. Occurrences that I have seen (or heard of) range from dress ups and striking group poses in front of photos to climactic water wars and similar carefree expressions of joy.

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First of all, from a basic disciplinary point of view, one cannot deny that no matter what ‘day of school’ it is, a school is still a school. Once a student is in school, the school rules are in force. It doesn’t matter whether it’s the first or the last day of school. Teachers have just been lenient and tolerant. But from a student’s point of view, isn’t it a basic responsibility and duty to abide by the school rules? Can’t they hold on for just one more day, given that such ‘violations’ tend to happen on their very last day of regular school? It comes to the significance of a ‘last regular school day’. This occasion is not specifically marked on the school calendar, neither is there, normally, a religious service or formal ovation to celebrate such an occasion. Lessons are still held. Indeed, a ‘last normal school day’ is still a ‘normal school day’. Students should organize their own ‘last days’ instead, which could be on any day after the ‘last normal school day’. In that way, neither would they disrupt their own lessons and schedules nor would those that wished to be excluded be innocently involved.

Obviously, the desire and urge to ‘celebrate’ such an occasion may be interpreted variously. Students feel like having finished a tedious triathlon, particularly in the IB Diploma programme, and it is absolutely justifiable that they would like to disperse their stress and tension. However, a school is not a playground. It is absolutely understandable for students to want to share the feeling of having extinguished all their other negativities, but that could easily take place in any other place, such as a campsite or playground. There would be space to ensure all the fun is not constricted, and such places are easily accessible. Therefore, camp sites and playgrounds are feasible alternatives for anyone wanting to host such ‘celebrations’.

Furthermore, I do not object to playing pranks but rather to the point that pranks take place during the ‘last day of school’. A school is a place for learning, and the positive ‘learning’ outcomes of the prank acts are hard for me to comprehend. Although it may be divinely blissful to be ‘liberated’ from the occasionally saddening school life high school students have experienced for more than a decade, this doesn’t justify their blatant actions to release themselves in the school precincts. A major problem, which I have experienced myself, is the unbearable noise levels generated by all these ‘celebrations’. They are nuisances for students of other grades, who are having regular classes while the seniors enjoy their ‘fun’. Also, seniors are supposed to be role models for
the rest of the school. Finally, a school would be right in expecting them to work consistently hard in order to achieve optimal performance in their upcoming examinations instead of loitering around the school. Senior students should remain vigilant towards the obstacles that lie ahead; this would also positively stimulate the younger grades that look up to them to work even harder. Unruly behavior may influence the junior graders negatively and cause them to learn to do something against their better judgment. In addition, judging from the past two cohorts of IB Diploma graduates in my school, the pranks and spectacles that they host prior to their departure from the school are a waste of resources – particularly in the water fight: not only is it a huge waste of water and balloons, but also a heavy burden for the janitors to clean up after the fight. The extremely long amount of time required to undergo the water fight for such a short skirmish (normally ending within minutes) highlights the waste of time in preparing, which definitely overshadows any temporary ‘moment of fun’. The water balloon fights might also cause unintentional property damage to the school, or mental and physical damage to third parties that do not actually wish to be involved in such ‘celebrations’.

Some say that filming is open only to university and above. DBS proved them wrong. In 2012, the former Headmaster Mr. Terence Chang granted funds to a group of interested students to produce a feature-length film. With the help of the drama teacher, Ms. Heather Cooper, planning of the film started in January 2012, the screenplay was completed in April, and the actual filming process then began.

Starting from the Easter holidays of 2012, the crew and cast spent sleepless nights on campus filming night shots. On one particular day the filming session had only ended at 5am, ironically capturing the sunrise even though the shot was meant to be a night scene. Some scenes required up to five retakes and may yet require more; others involved throwing mannequins off a roof or filming in dangerous locations. Nonetheless, the crew and actors stayed dedicated. The crew arrived earlier and left later than the actors in order to plan, set up, and store the materials; but the actors spent time rehearsing prior to each scene. Filming is never an easy process. Since the movie is basically set in school, the cast and crew were limited by the architectural setting of the school. In scenes that were shot in staircases, we had to try numerous times to cope with the narrow staircases, ensuring visual and audio quality without getting the equipment (or its shadow) into the frame. Fitting up to 5 crewmembers plus the cast into a dark and narrow staircase is never an easy job. Filming during the hot summer in the field while fighting against mosquitoes and the scorching heat was not easy either; after most filming sessions everyone would end up in the drama store room all exhausted.

Furthermore, every DBS boy involved also had other important commitments. In our crew and cast are members and leaders of various organizations: Choir, the Prefects Board, Editorial boards and sports teams. It was important to be careful the organizing of filming to ensure that they did not collide with the already-heavy schedule of the crew and cast, which is never easy. At times some members of the cast and crew would come to filming directly after choir rehearsal (when it was meant to be lunch time for the choristers), then return to choir rehearsal after completing a scene.

Throughout the filming process, people had ups and downs. Sometimes we would stay the night after filming, relaxing, and chatting after a day of work, at other times morale was low and everyone was worn out. Nonetheless, all the working together brought the crew and cast close to each other. On day one interaction was minimal, but since then many of the cast and crew have become friends, probably for life. In spite of ups and downs, the experience drew the team together, which no one had expected. We started as a crew, but ended up a group of friends.
I’m Going to Write a Title for this Later. - On Procrastination

Felix Lau and Yanyun Mung

Procrastination. The fiend of all fiends. The epitome of all evil. The reason for the endless tears shed after our teachers rip out our souls with a less than perfect grade. The beast which devours our time and then spits it back into our faces so that we feel drained and lifeless. The reason that you are still awake at 6am finishing that essay while sipping the energy drink that you know will eventually be fatal to your health. Oh, and yes, you still have school in the morning. This infectious disease is like a cruel and merciless addiction, which you can NEVER escape from, no matter how fast you think you can run. For all of you who say, haha I can beat procrastination, well that’s what we all say and I guarantee you won’t be able to keep your word. Please, if you haven’t been exposed to this monster, I urge you to run and hide before the big bad wolf comes crashing down and you forget all about being productive.

“Don’t procrastinate.” This is the warning we get from teachers all the time. The way most IB students cope with the massive workload is to ignore it. It is often ridiculous to see complaints by IB students on Facebook at 4am because of an essay due that morning or sacrificial statues on how beautiful a sunrise is because they had an all-nighter completing an internal assessment.

The logical question that follows is – why do the students not work on them earlier if they realize the deadline is approaching? There are two main answers: 1) there are so many assignments due that they are impossible to complete within the “normal” working hours and 2) procrastination.

What is procrastination? Procrastination, (in case the colorful metaphors and allusions didn’t help you understand) is what happens when you have to accomplish a task (such as homework), but instead of doing that task you end up doing nothing productive. Afterword common effects include the feeling of hopelessness which sinks in accompanied by the wallowing in self pity, as well as the overwhelming sense of regret and doom. To help illustrate, here are some common examples of procrastination (they are real):

- Browsing Facebook, YouTube and other entertainment websites
- “Doing CAS” (Creativity, Action, and Service, a core element of the IB Diploma)
- Having unnecessary tea breaks or naps
- Doing homework to avoid doing your other homework
- Doing absolutely nothing
- Doing your homework while listening to loud music, which basically means just listening to loud music.

Why procrastinate? The major reason is to mimic escaping the heavy workload. Despite only having to study six subjects, each subject consists of various “effort assignments” intended to reinforce classroom learning, investigations that extend the students’ knowledge as well as internal assessments that amount for up to 60% of the final IB grade. This work exerts a great deal of pressure to students, and when there is pressure, the usual “next step” is to find methods to cope with pressure.

Is there a cure for procrastination? A CURE? Really? As we understood our limbic system focuses more on the pleasures we can get, so by removing the possibility for these pleasures, we can focus more easily. For example, I often tell my friend to cut his Internet connection off to speed up his work. He ended up removing the Internet router and locking it in his father’s room and resulted in a much faster speed – working speed. The fact is that we are so preoccupied with the Internet: WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, Skype, Email (and I am just listing the applications I have turned on while I am typing this). Whenever possible, cutting off Internet access can boost work speed and minimize the possibility for distraction.

Another common method to get rid of temptations is to simply leave home. Many schoolmates would rather spend their work time in a study room or even in a coffee shop 10 minutes away from home. The environment is much more controlled and due to the limitations in a public area one cannot easily wander off and procrastinate on a large scale.

As one of the worst procrastinators in the grade I tend to give myself 5-minute intervals for every 15-30 minute work. Between these intervals I would turn off the web browser (or open a blank page) and put the computer next to me so that I would not be able to look up from my desk and see the computer screen immediately. During the 5-minute intervals I would respond to pending messages or get some food to eat.

Some people also like to listen to music while revision. This appears to be a facilitated approach and I believe it depends on what music one listens to. For a period of time I found working more efficient while listening to slow lounge music as it calms the mind and makes it easier to focus, while pop and rock songs have a strong beat and make myself hard to concentrate on the work. I also recommend putting on a playlist instead of choosing music every time a song ends because once the playlist is on one would not need to touch the computer / iPod again, which decreases chances for the devil to sneak in.

The last method for curing procrastination is the method of facing the harsh reality of your meaningless future if you don’t get your work done. This method is generally 100% effective because it involves looking into the future and then realizing the horrible consequences of procrastination, I’m talking about potential high school failure, inability to get into college, and disownment by parents. I’m exaggerating of course, but it is very important to keep in mind the potential of this disease to hinder your every move and success if it is left untreated. If you are someone who has experienced first-hand the horrors of procrastination, please take time to consider the detrimental, potentially life-threatening consequences which will take place in the future if you don’t do what your work now and reflect on this new understanding so that you can stop procrastinating. And No, please don’t do this by thinking while you are supposed to be doing something else, because then we are back to step one and the cycle begins all over again.

Procrastination is a way to get rid of pressure, but when pressure relief is completed it actually brings about more pressure. So please, take yourself for a check-up to see if you have the symptoms of procrastination which includes general laziness, inability to do anything, and bad grades. If necessary, you can always join our group therapy sessions on procrastination where we use hypnosis to help you overcome your subconscious desire to dawdle. Just kidding, we don’t have group therapy sessions for procrastination. In case you haven’t noticed, this conclusion isn’t really going anywhere. I guess all this writing about procrastination has inadvertently brainwashed me into procrastinating. But it’s ok, because I still get CAS hours for writing this article on not procrastinating. It’s the thought that counts right? All jokes aside, you shouldn’t procrastinate at all. Period. After all, if everyone in the world decided to procrastinate we would never be able to accomplish anything. Society would be dysfunctional and reduced to caviar, all because someone decided that think and invent later. So, really if you stop procrastinating you not only help yourself, but one day you may be able to bring positive change to society.
Interview with an Archaeologist

Frankie Fung

1. **Exactly what do you do as an archaeologist?**

Before archaeology was really archaeology, archaeologists were treasure hunters. The job of the archaeologist was to find beautiful artifacts and put them in the museum. But during the 20th Century archaeology became the study of the entire society, not only of beautiful objects, but also techniques of production, stone tools, construction of houses, population dynamics, health, diseases, differences between the poor and the rich, the organization of villages and cities and so on. Although archaeology presents us with a history of humanity, it also helps us in the present and the future. For example, through archaeology, we get to know more about economic crises and why empires collapse. You can look at the Mayan and Roman empires for examples. We can also learn valuable lessons from the history of the Indus civilization, which might have collapsed because of poor management of environmental resources. As an archaeologist, I mainly studied the Neolithic period (7000 BP) in China. Hunters invented agriculture along the Yangzhe river. It was the time when hunters settled down.

2. **What qualities should a good archaeologist have?**

He can’t be a specialist for everything, but he should know the possibilities of every science. The archaeologist should be able to combine the sciences. For example, we use C-14 in carbon dating. You can’t do that yourself; you need specialists. We need biologists, zoologists and botanists to interpret animal bones and plant remnants. We also need knowledge from fields like social anthropology and ecology. You need to collaborate with different people and combine all the fields. You also need to be willing to work with your hands on the field, and you need good observation skills for what you are digging. A good archaeologist is also capable of long-term thinking; he should have foresight, since projects span long periods of time.

3. **What are some of the problems you discovered about human society?**

There are many problems. The invention of agriculture led to rapid demographic explosion. The world population was around 100,000 to 200,000 back then; now we have 7 billion people. We don’t have enough food and energy to sustain such a large population. With so many people we have more stress, violence, war, diseases and so on. From social anthropology, we see that hunters used to work for only three hours a day, but now we have farmers who work all day. You may think working all day is good, but it would be better to have more free time to think, to love, to listen to music...

Another problem was social inequality. There were very few social differences among the hunters, and even shortly after the invention of agriculture, there were very few differences between the hunters and farmers. However, after a while, social differences arose. The question is why? It has been getting worse ever since.

4. **What are the ethics involved in archaeology?**

One of the most important things is that we are talking about the archaeological heritage of all our future generations. We have to preserve it, but sometimes politicians say we are working for the dead, while they are working for the living people. However, the answer is that presently, people do not live for a long time. When we destroy an important archaeological site for living people to build a factory, many times it is for the benefit of just a hundred years, but we have destroyed a part of our heritage forever.

5. **Is it unethical to dig up graves?**

It is connected to your religious beliefs. This is a difficult question, especially in the United States, because there are many historic graves. The indigenous tribes claim that the graves belong to their ancestors but the graves were 7000 to 10000 years old. When you have a grave 10000 years old, do you consider it to hold your ancestor or not? To me it is more of a scientific object than a body of your ancestor. But again it is more connected to your religious beliefs; for me it is just science. I respect the people and I understand them. We sometimes do what you call a reburial. We have to give back the remains to the indigenous people, sometimes even the tools.

6. **What do you think about the trade in artifacts? Is it unethical?**

Yes, of course it is unethical. Archaeological artifacts belong to everybody. For example, in Eastern Europe, when the communist governments collapsed, lots of objects disappeared from the museums. It was a disaster. It happened in Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, but to a lesser extent in the Soviet Union.

7. **What is the role of subjective judgements in archaeology? Is archaeology a science or is it heavily based on your opinion?**

I believe archaeology is a science. The hard sciences, like physics and chemistry, changed the way we viewed the world. For example, we learnt in physics that light behaves both as a wave and particle. I believe archaeology is a science because you can prove things and you can do experiments in archaeology to see. For example, what is the use of a stone tool: is it used to cut trees or to cut flesh, and the use of a tool through a microscope. You can also predict some results. In social sciences, it is not only about what people say. Sometimes people cannot speak because they disappeared. You can’t prove anything, because they can’t speak. There was a movement in Anglo-Saxon archaeology, called post-modern archaeology in the 80s and 90s. People could have their own opinion of the same history. It seems crazy now, but it was a big movement back then.

It seems that many young people nowadays are not interested in archaeology. Why do you think it is like that, and do you have any solutions to this problem?

That depends on how we explain archaeology. Many museums are old-fashioned, conservative and boring. It depends on how you present archaeology. If you just show some old books and old stones, it will be very boring. But if you explain the problems faced by our ancestors and archaeologists, talk about our present situation, how we might face collapse like previous civilizations, I think people could be interested.
Preparing for exams

Exams are unpredictable for students. Why? They come suddenly – any student will easily go thinking “Seriously, exams in two weeks?” It felt like two months away last week... but every student knows that this ‘surprise’ comes up regularly, twice a year. Exams are supposed to be opportunities to ‘assess students and test their potentials’. But for most students, they may be more suited to a description of a potential killer that creates stress, tearful nights, and lack of sleep.

The purpose of this article is to give a few pieces of advice on how to deal with exams. I am not a clever player when it comes to the game of exams; but still there are a few basic frequently neglected rules that you should follow to succeed in your exams.

1) **SLEEP** – this is the golden rule. More sleep, more memory capacity. This may not sound very convincing, but judging from basic physical comfort levels, one would definitely be more focused and concentrated when he/she has rested enough the night before. You wouldn’t want to lose precious time in the battlefield distracted by physical fatigue.

2) **Approach differently.** Even though the syllabus is fixed, the ways to learn the syllabus, or more robotically, to shelve it into your mind, should always be varied. Instead of simply reading off a textbook, think about something more interesting and creative to remember the crucial information. A most remarkable example I once saw was when an AP tutor rewrote the lyrics to a pop song with economics material.

3) **Past papers.** Past papers act like navigational charts for seamen. They are a source of solid, trustworthy information that is extremely reliable. A common example would be the conventional textbook. However, some people suggest that it is this division between secondary and primary sources that limits the scope and our absorbability of information when we learn. Although this is not something that would be effective when implemented only a fortnight before exams are approaching, since exams are meant to test knowledge, one can actually deal from the ‘knowledge’ standpoint – making good use of primary source materials in the process of learning is likely to generate much higher efficiency in learning as a whole and hence improving the understanding of the student on a certain subject matter.

After exploring possible tactics students should consider adapting, we will shift our focus to teachers. Here are some real-life suggestions that students hope that their teachers can do to help on their examinations:

4) **Peers!** Peer pressure may come to mind when talking about peers; but try to view peer pressure as a positive stimulant to encourage you to work harder. It is similar to competition in the modern-day world economy: as long as competition is not unfair, it is highly regarded as useful in promoting economic growth. In the same way, if you carry a goal of self-improvement and strive for the best, it does not hurt to account peers into the process of tackling examinations. You may also support one another and that would definitely provide emotional assurance to one’s feelings prior to an examination, which may also lead to more stable examination conditions and higher grades.

5) **Goals to achieve.** Set goals for yourself and reach for it. A little reward proves effective as well. Of course, don’t work hard for an exam simply being material-obsessed, but the psychological enjoyment in overcoming or fulfilling a goal should serve as an ideal stimulus to work hard in exams. However one must pace their own feelings well so that this does not lead to excessive pressure and stress.

6) **In the long run – Primary Source Materials.** In the course of our ‘studies’, we always tend to use secondary source materials. A common example is the conventional textbook. However, some people suggest that it is this division between secondary and primary sources that limits the scope and our absorbability of information when we learn. Although this is not something that would be effective when implemented only a fortnight before exams are approaching, since exams are meant to test knowledge, one can actually deal from the ‘knowledge’ standpoint – making good use of primary source materials in the process of learning is likely to generate much higher efficiency in learning as a whole and hence improving the understanding of the student on a certain subject matter.

8) **Free up last periods.** Students are very appreciative of teachers that halt classes as they approach the exam season, allowing students to have more time to study instead! Students have also reflected that such doing makes them less fatigued and more able to efficiently absorb information to prepare for their examinations.

However, there is a saying that goes, “no pain, no gain”. I am sure that many brilliant geniuses also had tough times, so there is no easy way or quick shortcut to achieving success in the exams. To conclude, exams are often tremendously stressful for students, however if you equip yourself with the proper tools then you will be able to succeed and achieve your goals for the future.
Visual Arts as Core Subject?

**Pros**

Art is currently not a core subject at school. At the Junior School, music and visual art lessons only accumulate about roughly 6% of lesson time in the curriculum, while in the IB it is an elective subject ‘group’, and currently only a small fraction of students in the programme are taking subjects from ‘The Arts’ (Group 6). Art is highly neglected as a subject compared with many other fields at school such as sciences and mathematics.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme— as frequently advertised and emphasized, provides ‘an all-rounded education’. It is this element that distinguishes Diploma Programme– as frequently advertised and mentioned. It is a one-hour session of visual arts class once per week. This arrangement provides Pre-IB students with the opportunity to understand how subjects classified as Group 6 under the IB Diploma Program Curriculum operate. In spite of the advantages that the lessons bring to students, some students in the bridging program had negative comments as well.

First and foremost, most students realize that they are not innate artists, and taking the art history lessons did not influence their view. They felt that the main aim of the Pre-IB year is for students to hone their skills in preparation for the IB Diploma course. Rather than forcing students to work on a subject they will not choose in their IB, the bridging program should expose them to more subjects that they will definitely study in Grade 11 and 12. Allowing students to choose their own elective amongst the six group of subjects is a better option because students will be more interested in their own choice than in a subject they are forced to take.

Many students also thought that the lessons were too theoretical and not as ‘introductory’ as they should be. Students learn to appreciate art through learning their history and artistic techniques. However, to the average student, some of these theories may be too daunting and abstract to perceive completely. It turns out to be quite a challenge to students if they do not have the intuition about visual arts. It would be inefficient for students to learn such complex theories if they cannot grasp them or are not interested in doing so.

Visual arts lessons provide students with a rounded character, thus fulfilling the “liberal education” mission of DBS. However, proponents of this theory should note that liberal education is in fact an ideal. While students strive to become well-rounded, they might be overburdened by the expectations from all the coursework that they are expected to complete and the theories that need to be comprehended. There is simply a plethora of subjects awaiting the attention of a Pre-IB student. Hence, students should have at least some choice of what they wish to study, even at the cost of some of the ideal well-roundedness a liberal education gives.

In conclusion, I believe that it is not a wise decision to mandate the study of visual arts in the Pre-IB year. Instead, students should have their say in choosing a Group 6 subject in order to suit their learning and better prepare them for the coming IB years.

**Cons**

People have argued, why do I have to study these subjects at school? It doesn’t apply to my future life anyway…, but the arts is the special something that does not allow this statement to be applied onto. Indeed, life may not require us to recap on our analyses on Chinese Literature, our complex calculations and memorized theories in Physics, or the chain rule in Mathematics; but we will definitely come across many different parts of ‘The Arts’ in our lives, such as music, visual arts, film and theater. Art is culturally connected to and indeed positively enhances our quality of life, something highly desired by everybody. Therefore, arts should be implemented and integrated thoroughly into the present-day secondary school curriculum.

Jonathan Liu

Graduates from other students graduating from various different education systems such as the A-Levels, which are more vocationally geared and academic. Students should make good use of the opportunities offered by their curriculum and therefore the ‘Group 6’ subjects should not be opted out (which is currently allowed) for an additional subject from Groups 1-5 to be studied in lieu of them.

An important characteristic of art is that it allows appreciation of many aspects of life – for example, visual arts and music widely cover the visual and auditory senses of humans, while theatre also equips us with knowledge regarding to physical movement of the human body for appreciation too. If students study these lesser known subjects, they will be much more widely exposed to appreciating the world around them, which they currently only experience in a limited field – literature, in Group 1. Art subjects may not be as essential for further studies in terms of their content, but it greatly expands the breadth of knowledge one acquires in a limited two years in the diploma program.

Students are mistakenly misled by their subject choices in other groups that limit the range of courses they can elect to study at university, if they do not even try to get a taste of what Group 6 art subjects have to offer, potential talent and ability in students may have been lost in vain. Structuring arts as a core subject in school curriculums offers a greater chance of increasing the possibility of establishing a more concrete and assured career or life path for students, heightening the aims of the International Baccalaureate or secondary education as a whole. If students do not try, they will never know. Hence, arts should be of a greater portion in the education curriculum so as to guide students to their future more suitably and definitely.

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Theory of Knowledge

You Chuan Jin

How do you know?

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) encourages critical thinking: asking good questions, arguing coherently, making sound judgments, and supporting your ideas with evidence. TOK is designed to help you reflect on and further develop the thinking skills you have acquired in other classes. Since TOK is concerned with the question ‘How do you know?’, we naturally need to spend some time talking about the nature of knowledge.

Knowers and Knowing

“Common sense consists of those layers of prejudice laid down before the age of 18.”

Albert Einstein, 1879-1955

Ways of knowing – Reason

“You are not thinking. You are merely being logical.”

Niels Bohr, 1885-1962 to Albert Einstein

As the Chinese proverb proclaims, “even without leaving his house, a true scholar can know everything [if he studies enough and reasons well]” (秀才不出門，能知天下事). Through reason, we can acquire knowledge about the world that exists far beyond our immediate perceptions. In the following, we will look at three kinds of reasoning: deductive reasoning, inductive reasoning, and informal reasoning.

On one hand, deductive reasoning moves from the general to the particular. For example, from “All metals expand when heated” and “X is a metal”, we may deduce that “X expands when heated”. On the other hand, inductive reasoning moves from the particular to the general. For instance, from “Apple A is sour”, “Apple B is sour”, and “Apple C is sour”, we could state that “All apples are sour”. Thus arises a trade-off between information and certainty: deductive reasoning is more certain, but less informative than induction; induction is more informative, but less certain than deduction.

In addition to some fallacies associated with deduction and induction, such as hasty generalisations, informal fallacies crop up frequently in arguments and discussions in our everyday life. These ‘deadly fallacies’ of informal reasoning include:

- **Argument ad ignorantiam**: claiming something is true because it cannot be proved to be false, e.g. “Nobody can prove that there is not a china teapot revolving in an elliptical orbit in the solar system, so the teapot exists” (Russell’s teapot).
- **Equivocation**: using language ambiguously, e.g. “Margarine is better than nothing” and “Nothing is better than butter”, therefore “Margarine is better than butter”.
- **False analogy**: assuming two things are alike in some respects because they are alike in other respects, e.g. “The model of the solar system is similar to that of an atom, with planets orbiting the sun like electrons orbiting the nucleus. Electrons can jump from orbit to orbit, so we should study sightings of planets leaping from orbit to orbit”.
- **Loaded question**: a biased question due to built-in assumptions, e.g. “When did you stop being a lousy student?”
- **Post hoc ergo propter hoc**: confusing correlation with causation, e.g. believing that the rooster’s crowing causes the sun to rise (Rooster Syndrome).

Hence, it requires an element of judgment to determine whether or not one of the above fallacies has been committed. Conversely, one of the most common fallacies is to falsely claim someone has committed a fallacy!

In the various ways of knowledge – mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, history, religion, ethics, and arts – we again raise the question ‘How do you know?’, and consider the role played by perception, language, reason, and emotion in the subject in question.

Areas of Knowledge – The Arts

“Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates life.”

Oscar Wilde, 1854-1900

Since the arts have traditionally claimed a right to our thoughtful attention, we need to spend some time exploring their nature and value. Hence the question “What is the purpose of art?”

Art as imitation: The copy theory of art says that the purpose of art is to copy reality, which seems to be plausible considering that we naturally expect an artwork to be of good likeness, such as Michelangelo’s (1475-1564) statue of David. Nevertheless, it could be argued that art is not so much a slavish reproduction of reality as a creative interpretation of it. For instance, Pablo Picasso’s avant-garde art questions traditional ways of looking at things and gives us new ways of experiencing the world, including his cubist Three Musicians (1921).

Art as communication: A second theory sees art as a means of communication for us to imaginatively project ourselves into new situations and communicate emotions that lie beyond everyday language. Indeed, the sense of triumphant joy in the last movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony goes beyond anything that can be expressed in word.

Art as education: According to a third theory, the arts have a moral and educative role. In their finest hour, they broaden our awareness, develop our empathy, and sharpen our moral intuitions. For the ancient Greeks, Homer’s Iliad played a key role in a young man’s moral education. At a more general level, it could be said that great art challenges us to question our assumptions by giving us a different perspective on things in life.

Typically great works of art make the familiar strange or the strange familiar. At their best they can perhaps help us recognise truths we were previously unaware of and reignite our sense of wonder at the world. Despite the obvious differences between the art and sciences, reason and emotions play an important role in both of these areas of knowledge.
Food for Thought

TOK thinking is thinking about what you think and knowing about what you know and how you know it. Try out the following questions on reason and arts!

1. Two boxers are in a boxing match (regular boxing, not kick boxing). The fight is scheduled for 12 rounds but ends after 6 rounds, after one boxer knocks out the other boxer. Yet no man throws a punch. How is this possible?

2. A landscape gardener is given instructions to plant four special trees so that each one is exactly the same distance from each of the others. How would you arrange the trees?

3. According to a well-known saying, ‘The camera never lies.’ Do you agree or disagree with this?

4. When Picasso (1881-1973) was told that his portrait of Gertrude Stein (above) didn’t look like her, he said, “Never mind, it will!” What do you think he meant by this?

5. How is music similar to a language and how is it different from a language?

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