



Welcome to the second edition of **BRavo!** Blangah Rise's very own student newsletter.

Since July 2021, the team of 23 APEX students drawn from P4 - P5 have been meeting regularly to put this together.

It's a bumper edition with 17 pages. We have combined serious stories (such as our research on gaming and its consequences) with practical ideas from our team (making the most of covid confinement!). We also have a sense of humour (hence our proposal for Fun Fridays), as well as a sense of idealism (our wishes and hopes).

We're also delighted to showcase 15 splendid photos, as well as the thoughts of the young photographers who took them.

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## The Ups and Downs of Gaming

Are you a keen gamer? How much time do you spend playing games every week or every day?



**BRavo!** wanted to find out so we conducted a survey. Read our findings and recommendations!

## Coping with Covid

It just seems to go on and on, doesn't it? So how are you coping with all the time at home? Are you bored silly most of the time - or have you found ways of keeping active, curious and thinking positively?

### What else is in this issue?

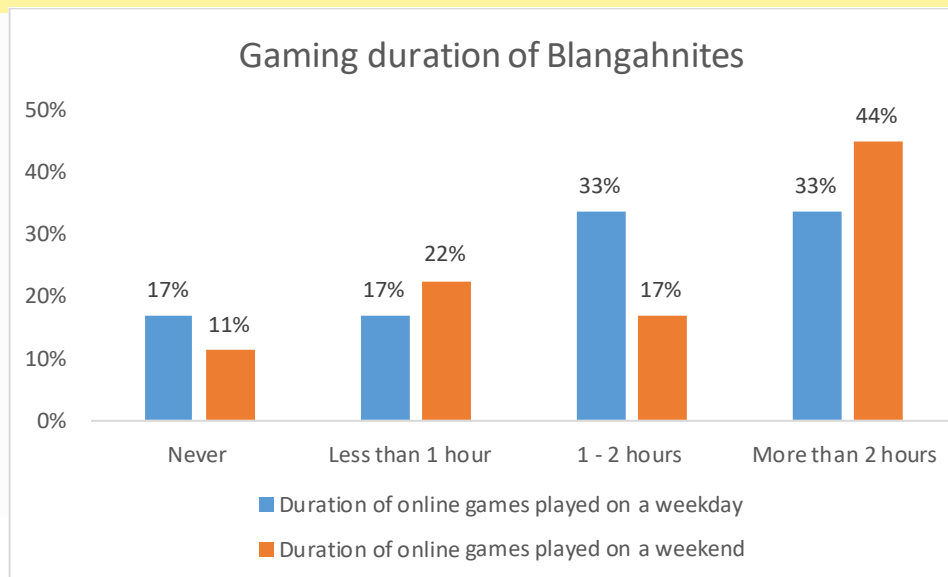
- We continue our series of interviews with teachers as we speak to Miss Esther, Mr Zaini and Miss Teo Mui Li.
- Bravo presents an unusual idea to make school less predictable with Fun 1<sup>st</sup> Fridays.

**BRavo!** is produced by members of the APEX English Language programme, mentored by Singapore Literature Prize winner, Roger Jenkins. It aims to challenge the students to tackle a variety of writing styles and work collaboratively from conception of an idea through drafting and editing their writing for publication.



# How much time do you spend gaming?

We examine the pros and cons of time spent on online gaming at the expense of other things - such as homework, hobbies and family time. It is clear that quite a large number of us spend from 10 to 15 hours a week on gaming, even during term time.



We conducted a survey with some 30 students in order to find out what the amount of time spent on the screen playing games by different levels is and what the students felt were the possible benefits of and drawbacks to gaming. We share our findings and our recommendations!

**Randy** and **Jun Yong** report that:

- 33% of the students who took the survey said that they spent more than 2 hours of screen time playing online games on a weekday. This means that these students play from 10 to 15 hours per week, even on days when there is school!
- 44% of those who took the survey said they spent more than 2 hours of screen time playing online games on weekends.

**From the survey, we learnt that many students feel there are benefits to gaming.** The survey data tells us the top three benefits to gain from gaming.

- It is true that gaming can help us strategise and play better in a team. This will improve our rapport with friends.
- In addition, the survey pointed out that gaming can help us to be better problem-solvers. This is definitely useful as we face many challenges along the way in our daily lives.
- Gaming helps us to relax and this is especially true at the moment, when we are not allowed to play outdoors. It is a fun way to pass the time during the pandemic.

Having said all the above, we have to prioritise our studies over gaming. Let's put first things first by completing all our work and doing our revision before we start on our games.

## Confessions by students who requested to stay anonymous

- I was addicted and studied less. Sometimes, I will forget my homework. There was once I played too much and forgot to do my homework.
- I stayed up late and was late to school the next day.
- I rejected my parent's phone calls as I was in the midst of playing a game. In the end I was severely reprimanded by them.
- I forgot to do household chores.

## A TEACHER's Perspective

I play online games with my friends to de-stress. Although I enjoy the games, I spend minimal time on it as I have to make sure I have enough rest and be ready for work the next day! - **Ms Thong**

## A NEW Blangahnite's Perspective

Since starting school in BRPS, I spend 30 minutes playing online games. My time is used more meaningfully daily. An important virtue that I have learnt is commitment. I learnt to put homework and revision before playing games. - **Nathan**

## A PARENT's Perspective

Though I do not play games, my children like it. We will draw up a timetable for homework and gaming. When the examinations are drawing near, no online gaming is allowed in the family. Instead, I will bring my children for a walk in the park so that they can take a break from their revision! - **A parent**



# What are the pros and cons of gaming?

## PRO CON

### Video games can increase our brain's gray matter.

Gaming is a workout for our mind. Studies have shown that playing video games regularly may increase gray matter in the brain and thus boost our brain connectivity. We are able to link ideas and concepts more easily. (Gray matter is associated with muscle control, memories, perception, and spatial navigation.)

### Gamers may develop better social skills.

Past researches involving children found that those who played more video games were more likely to have good social skills. Maybe it is because they discuss the games they play during their free time, henceforth better relationships are established with their peers.

### Games can teach you to be a better problem- solver.

For example, multi-level games are like complex puzzles which would take several hours to solve. Learning to think on the spot and think of a solution within a few moments is a skill that can translate to the real world and is applicable to our lives where we face challenges daily.

- Nathanael

### Video games can make people more violent

According to *The Telegraph* (a leading UK newspaper), researchers have found a direct link between violent video games and an increase in aggressive behaviour. This applies particularly to fighting games and games that simulate firearms. People may get obsessed with violence and may turn their fantasies into action.

### Video games may decrease players' ability to concentrate

There is a correlation between the length of time individuals play video games and their ability to remain focused. We will be able to remain focused if we spent less time on video games.

### Video games can become addictive

Always thinking about the game that you are playing? If the answer is yes, you have to do something about it. Being addicted to games means you get frustrated if you don't play that game, or you refuse to do anything else other than playing. You won't even shower or eat! You will just be sitting on your chair, playing video games all day. That's right! You won't even feel like sleeping!

- Mikhael

## BRavo! RECOMMENDS

Here are some recommendations on healthy management of gaming experience by **BRavo!**

1. **Do not use your devices before you sleep.** You will not be able to focus during lessons and you may fall asleep when the teachers are teaching.
2. **Try not to use your device for more than 1 hour** because you might forget what you have learnt at school.
3. **Try to play educational games that are related to your studies** because you will be able to gain more knowledge.

4. **Do not play violent games** because you may be influenced to cause trouble at school when you resort to the same methods in real life.

5. **Play games in groups**, so you can learn teamwork. When your teacher asks you to work in groups, you will be comfortable collaborating and sharing ideas with your group members.

6. **Do not use games as a way to calm yourself down** when you are angry. It may cause an addiction as you use games as the only way to escape from your emotions in real life. Learn healthy ways to release your anger and stress.

- Anika



## Sick and tired of being stuck at home?

Are you willing to do anything to get out of the house? What did you do during this pandemic? Have you learnt any new skills? Have you taken up some new hobbies? **BRavo!** explores ways you might cope with these tough times at home.



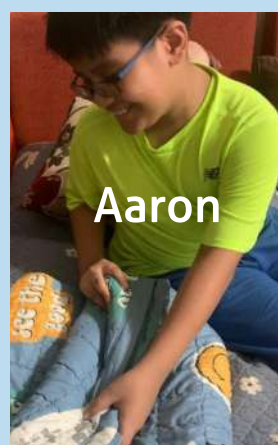
Are you bored? Have nothing to do? Then **set yourself a goal!**

You could make one for the family (like doing chores together), or going out to do sports to keep you fit and not staying in your house and playing online games.

Some goals I set myself:

- 1) Trying to in-line skate three times a week (I succeeded for two weeks but reduced it to once a week. )
2. Trying to do a handstand (it was unsuccessful as I was too scared to touch the wall!)
3. Tidying up all the mess I made when doing homework and packing my bag earlier so I don't have to rush in the morning (Goal achieved!)
4. Sleep at 8:30pm so I can have more sleep (Occasional success!)

What goals will you set for yourself?



The seven days of HBL, followed by the June Holidays, were extremely daunting to me. I had nothing to do. My routine was: wake up, lunch, nap, sleep. The next 20 days were the same.

How boring! Virtues like responsibility and self-discipline are applicable daily - even at home! I help my parents with the household

chores such as keeping my bedroom neat and making my bed. I return my utensils to the kitchen, and sometimes, I even wash them. Life can be hard with COVID, but we can get through it with a little patience, thoughtfulness and commitment.



During the June school holiday, all I did was play computer games and binge eat. Probably not the healthiest things to do...

I realised I was being a couch potato. Every day I woke up, ate, played games and then went to bed. It was an endless cycle. I was telling myself a lie each day. "After I finish my game, I'm going to exercise!" I reassured myself. As you would have guessed correctly, this goal was not achieved for the first two weeks of the holidays. I began searching for more productive things to do, such as board games, handicraft, yoga or even online courses! You can see I had an exciting time playing board games with my family - which made me rich with something more than Monopoly money! We can choose not to do anything or do something productive and meaningfully daily. It's all up to us!



I have learnt many new skills such as baking cookies and cakes and making pancakes and waffles. I have learnt how to use the oven and rice cooker!

I learnt that it is important to learn new things as we can overcome new challenges.

# How could we spice up our term routine? What if our school had a **Fun 1<sup>st</sup> Friday** every month?

We asked **BRavo!** reporters what might happen on such a fun day?

## **SOPHIA'S SCHEDULE for a FUN FRIDAY**

### **TIMETABLE:**

7.30am - 8.30am: Talking with friends  
8.30am - 9.30am: English lesson  
9.30am - 10am: Recess  
10am -12pm: Funday!  
12pm-12.30pm: Mathematics  
12.30pm-1pm: Movie Time!  
1pm-1.30pm: Library  
1.30pm: Go home

You must be wondering what the first period is, 'talk with friends period', is all about.

It's a time to talk with our classmates about anything under the sun. Except for recess which is about 30 minutes, we are not allowed to talk to our friends during lessons.

How can we strengthen our friendship when we are not given the opportunity to talk? How can we be a positive peer support for others? I think all my friends will want this 'special' period I am proposing!



**If Alara was your teacher . . .**

she would plan the following Fun Friday activities for you:

- board games
- word search competitions
- house games
- treasure hunt
- sharing about our cultures with a tasty cultural food fair!
- book day
- outdoor cinema
- class competitions (e.g. P4 Sapphire vs P4 Topaz or boys vs girls)
- art and crafts (stalls displaying different art pieces)
- Lego day - where we build things with Lego

### **If Jayden was your Principal:**

- 1) No Uniform Day
- 2) Fun Fair: We can have a fun fair where we appeal to the students to donate their used/ unused books/stationery for the prizes at the fun fair.
- 3) Card Games: Students can bring their own card games to school or the school will provide card games. Students can only take it out during recess and play with their friends. Recess might be increased to 45 minutes so students will have sufficient time to play card games.
- 4) Classroom activities: Students who are good in drawing/playing guitar/piano etc can get a chance to perform for other classes
- 5) **Play charades in class**, get 1 volunteer from the class and the volunteer will perform some actions in front of the class and the class will have to guess what action that is.



# Can we really learn through games and play?

**BRavo** takes a serious look at the benefits of play - and how a **Fun 1<sup>st</sup> Friday** might be seriously worthwhile educationally!

## The benefits of having 1<sup>st</sup> First Friday Fun Day are:

- to create a bond among the students. This is the best time for students to have conversations with their friends and classmates about things besides schoolwork. We would get to know more about our friends too!
- To help students be more interest in all subjects.
- It would add variety and create a sense of play. For example, one *Fun Friday idea* could be a Readathon Day, where students will spend their English lesson engaged in storytelling and reading time! Students could even dress up in their favourite storybook character to school. This will definitely spark students' creativity! Light snacks such as biscuits and popcorn will be provided in class. Through this activity, we can also raise funds through donations for the needy in the community!
- Give students more energy and less stress.

Report by 'Principal' Jayden (see his suggested activities on page 5!)

## Fun Fridays would make use of games as a learning tool.



E-learning would create a more interesting study environment. Slightly different from HBL, every game will be linked to a specific subject.

I think these activities would help develop students' interest in the subjects and engage them in the learning process.

**For English**, teachers can allow students to either watch a movie for 2 periods, or use an iPad for e-learning. Students can also use an iPad to play online games that are relevant to English, such as riddles or vocabulary games.

A **class debate** can also help students to have fun while learning English! It can help students practise their oral skills and have a flexible mindset. While debate might be scary for some students, it's still a fun exercise for all of us. When preparing for a debate, students can stretch their minds to have broader or different viewpoints - and they will have to think of strong arguments to support their cases. Students can

also have an enjoyable time 'roasting' their friends, and defending their own team.

There are two teams in a debate: one side agrees with the motion and the other team opposes it.

A '*motion*' is the proper name for what is being debated; the *house* is the name given to the group (eg your class) that is having the debate. Some interesting examples of motions are:

- This house believes super-heroes should follow the law.
- This house would ban homework.
- This house would like to live forever.

**For Maths**, students can play games such as Bingo, The Ladybug Game, UNO or Math Dice Jr. Or Math quiz. Teachers can use Kahoot for quizzes with their students after teaching the topic.

**In Science** lessons, teacher can allow students to conduct fun Science experiments such as, crystallizing their own rock candy, repelling glitter with dish soap or learning about capillary action.

**During Mother-Tongue periods**, teachers can bring the students to the library to read the most interesting and wonderful mother-tongue storybooks or have storytelling sessions.



## Our Teachers Up Close

**BRavo!** reporter Uthaila continues our series of going one-on-one with some of our teachers in order to find out more about them as individuals - not just as our teachers. Say hi to Miss Esther Teo, Mr Zaini and Miss Teo Mui Li!

**Miss Esther Teo**



### What is your favourite food?

I am not a picky eater. I will eat anything. Thus, it is difficult to pin-point what my favourite food is.

### What do you remember fondly when you were a student?

Friendships. I still keep in touch with my friends especially friends from polytechnic to university. That was the time when we had to do a lot of projects together. With the time spent with them, we shared many wonderful experiences as well as forge stronger friendships.

### Why did you choose to be a teacher?

This is a dream of mine since young. I started teaching children with special needs. I fell into teaching. Subsequently, I applied teaching in Ministry of Education (MOE) and I got in.

**Mr Zaini**



### Did you get into trouble when in school?

There was one occasion in Primary Five. I wanted to surprise my teachers on Teachers' Day, so I drew a huge Donald Duck and Mickey Mouse on the canteen wall. My Discipline Master was so angry when he found out! I was reprimanded by him. My Vice-Principal was a kind lady. Instead of being angry, she encouraged me to draw on another wall in the canteen. I guess my love for drawing started from there.

### What is a typical Saturday night for you?

I will take my son fishing and cycling. The longest distance for us is 8km.

### What sort of morning routine do you have to get jazzed for class?

A cup of *Teh Tarek*. This "magical" tea sends energy to my blood and makes my day.

**Miss Teo Mui Li**



### How do you spend your school vacation?

I used to travel overseas. I love to learn more about the history and culture of the countries that I travel to - and tasting their local delicacies. Due to the pandemic, I cannot travel overseas. I go for nature walks. One of the most interesting was in Clementi Forest with my colleagues.

### What are your hobbies?

Watching movies, travelling overseas (can't do so for now), attending concerts and watching musicals.

### Of all your years in teaching, what was your happiest moment?

Seeing my students improve in Chinese Language. The glow on their faces really makes my day, knowing that they have tried their best.

## **Bravo!** gets busy WISHING (and hoping)

If there was a machine you can invent, what would it be? Has something you wished for come true? **BRavo!** explores our schoolmates' wishes and hopes. What are your own wishes?



I wish I had a magic wand because life would be much more convenient if I had one!

There was once I lost 4 dollars. I was praying to find it, but nothing worked.

If I had a wand, I could summon it.

There are other uses for a wand too. I can conjure water when I need it. Singapore is a hot country where it is very easy to get dehydrated.

Of course keeping my things in place will prevent me from losing my things, definitely! But if I had a ward ...



I would invent a time machine and change the fact that I spent an absurd amount of my daily allowance on things that I never needed.

When I was in P1-P3, my parents gave me an allowance in case I needed something to eat or drink.

However, I always spent it on snacks from what I used to call the 'one dollar shop.' Everything was so cheap. A bag of potato chips cost only fifty cents!

Looking back, I wished that I had saved up my money. Also in P3, I went to a carnival and saw a toy that allowed me to control a hand-like figure. I thought it would be useful but I discovered it was a scam as I was not even able to move the "hand". OK – so the machine that helps you time travel doesn't exist! What can I do to avoid making silly mistakes in future?

**I don't want to be like Athan and Michael when I look back in 2051** (I will be 41 then!) and say-ing "Oh I wish I could go back in time and change . . ." Here's what I want to do **now**.

Picture this: You are walking to somewhere and it is unbelievably hot. You just drank the last sip of water from your bottle but you still feel thirsty. You wish that the weather would be cooler but it gets worse! That is what global warming is.

I always have to stay at home because it is so hot and my mother would not let me to go outside unless the temperature drops. I can't imagine how people in other countries can even take the heat! If only there was something that could change this.

By taking steps to reduce for example your energy intake, you'll contribute to a healthier and happier world. My family and I try to save electricity (and money) by turning on the fan instead of the air conditioner.

Therefore, I would invent a device which it can provide a cool temperature at home, without having to burn a hole in our pocket. Most importantly, it does not worsen the problem of global warming. My device will be popular with many people.



**- Melody**





**I wish I could make a time machine to go back in time to stop global warming.**

Global warming is the moderate heating of Earth's surface, oceans and atmosphere. Global warming makes the world hotter. Ice in the North and South pole are melting. When ice melts, it raises sea-levels and causes flooding.

Extreme events, including wildfires, floods and hurricanes, have become a frightening new normal. Hotter temperatures, air pollution and violent storms are leading to immediate, life-threatening dangers for us, including difficulty of breathing, and higher risk of infectious diseases.

**I am concerned with the impact from global warming as my grandparents live in America and of hurricanes happen there is quite often. It is very dangerous for them.** Therefore, my parents and I will always stay in touch with them, reminding them to be better prepared before hurricane strikes.



**To my surprise, my wish for a water-filtering straw invention has come true!**

I can proudly say my wish is not unrealistic.

Water is the most abundant resource in the world. If I had the straw, I could drink water anywhere I travel. I would not need to buy mineral water which comes in a plastic water bottle. This will reduce the waste of plastic made by the world. Plastic takes ages to degrade, and it also spreads toxin as almost all most plastic is made from chemicals.

This straw can help people who are dehydrated due to the lack of clean water. They can avoid getting sick from drinking contaminated water.

So it is not true that wishes can't come true.

**- Hanbyul**



Like Michael, I wish I could go back to the past as I did not do well for some of my tests and examinations. If I had revised, my results would have been better. I would make my parents proud.

I also want to go back to change my careless mistakes, for example, dropping a glass cup and getting scolded for it.

I also want to go back because I don't want to have scars. I sustained a cut on my right calf when I dropped the cup. It was painful as blood was oozing from the wound. I will always remind myself to hold any glass objects with two hands.

How I wish there was such a time machine!



# PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

## BEST PHOTO STORY

Earlier this year, the school announced its first ever **PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR (POTY)** competition.

The rules were simple: to take a photograph that represents ***what Home means to you*** - whether that is your family, your neighbourhood or our country. From many wonderful entries, the school chose 5 winners (pages 10-12) We have also included some **BRavo!** favourites too (pages 13-16).

You may be wondering what the school hoped to achieve through this competition? Behind the scenes reporting by **BRavo!** has discovered the following:

Firstly, POTY is intended to encourage us to look more closely and thoughtfully at the world around us, instead of simply taking things for granted. When you see the photos we've showcased here and read the comments, it is obvious these young photographers are responding sensitively to their world.

Secondly, the school wanted to encourage students to become aware of what makes a good photograph - after all, most phones now come with excellent cameras built in. What is composition? How do you frame a shot so as to give emphasis to your subject, or get rid of a distracting background? Can you use the rule of thirds, or the principle of contrast, to improve your picture?

It's an eye-opener to see how some students have used their photos to express an abstract idea - by taking crayons or books or an unusual point of view. This is highly creative!

Finally, the competition has enabled a broad cross-section of students - from Primary 2 - 6, to make a statement about what home or Singapore, means to them, or to express their appreciation for their family, their neighbourhood, or their country.



### Two Homes

**Shaikh Darwish Muhammad Bin Muhammad  
Haekal Mattar** (2 Opal)

A spider formed a web in my neighbourhood.

It can be interpreted in a negative way - that our homes are often neglected because everyone is so busy with school and work, and we are not spending enough time to notice many things.

Or it can be viewed positively - that the environment is peaceful enough for other creatures to make their own homes among us. With the current pandemic, we stay home much more with our families and notice more nature and everything around us.

We can use this time to appreciate our home and respect the homes of others by being responsible and good human beings.





# PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

## BEST PHOTO STORY



**Ruby Sky,  
Peaceful Waters**  
Phua Ser Yen (3 Opal)



Buildings, Plants, The sunshine.  
It reminds me of my beautiful home.  
Different colours and different shades of  
the sunshine represent the shelter that is  
covering us under it. Different houses with  
their own unique decorations and plants  
remind me of how diverse our culture can  
be. It reminds me that if we work together  
as one, we will fight the pandemic and  
gain freedom. It also reminds me that if we  
tell ourselves that the day is awesome, the  
day will be just  
as awesome as the different  
shades and colours in this photo.

### **Growing Together**

**Ban Xuan Yu, 6 Opal**

The blue sky and the greenery from the  
trees represent Singapore, as people call  
it 'a garden city'. And Singapore  
represents our home as it is the place  
where we stay, live, work, study and play.  
Singapore is also the country that supports  
us as we are growing  
up.





# PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

## BEST PHOTO STORY



**Lim Ghim Suan**

**4 Topaz**

### **Lights up**

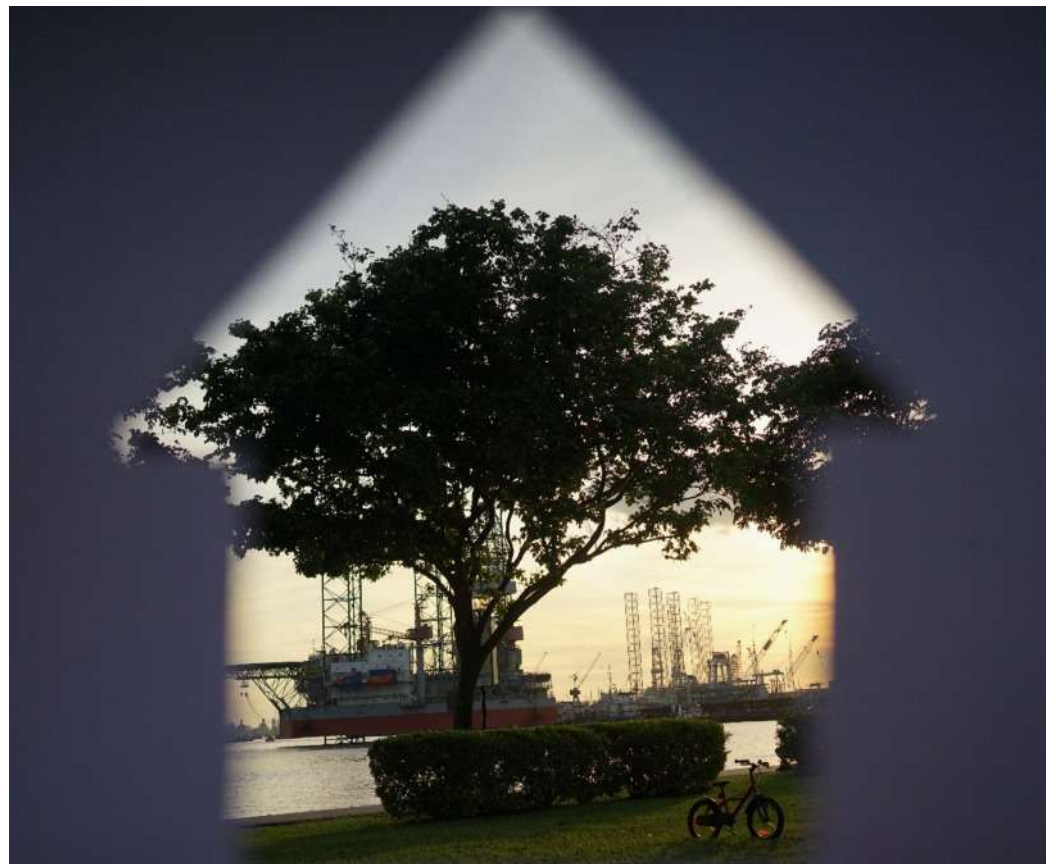
When the night falls, everyone goes back to their warm home and reunite with their loved ones. You can see their lights go up and different coloured lights fill up the building with joy. It makes me think of the different races contributing together to make our nation stronger and brighter. I used the Rule of Thirds technique in taking this photo.

**Tan Shuan Lee**  
**Melody**  
**(5 Sapphire)**

### **Tree House**

A home is a place where we used to play and relax. But after the coronavirus came in, a home is where you work, play and relax, all at the same time.

People now can bond better at home, with work a few steps away.





# OUR PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY



## Pride of Our Nation

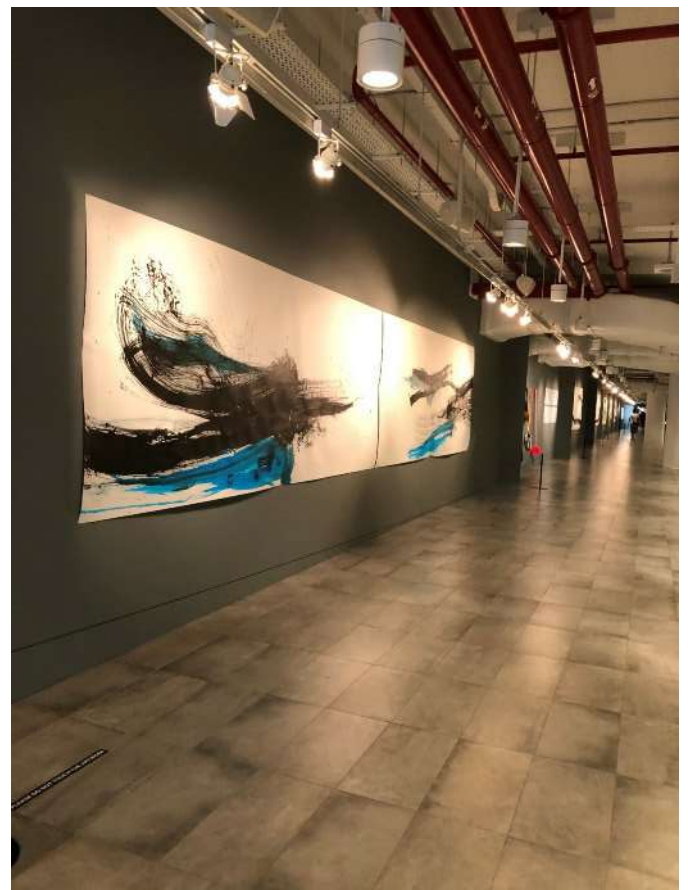
Athan Puah (4 Topaz)

This is the picture of the national flag flown by the helicopters during the NDP. I have used the rule of thirds in this picture. This picture symbolizes pride of our nation and how developed we are now.

## Amazing Gallery

Ban Xin Ru (6 Opal)

Singapore is a home for the Arts. Many artistic displays can be found in Singapore. Although Singapore is filled with concrete structures, there is always space for the Arts too. From statues to paintings on walls, it is not difficult to see them around us. To bring out this aspect of Singapore, I used leading lines to showcase the stretch of artwork on display at the Tunnel in Esplanade.







# OUR PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY



## Green Nest

Saathvika (2 Opal)

The Nest is home for birds and their little ones. The birds build the nest to take care of the little ones. Let us thank our parents and teachers who love and care in every part of our life to create a better future for us.

I used contrast as a composition technique when taking this photograph.

## Family flower

Andy Aloysius (6 Sapphire)



Humble as a flower,  
Clutched as a fist,  
We pray together as a family  
for the people of the world.  
Praying for protection  
from the covid-19 variants and  
mutations, and that our human race  
will have peace.

## Every Leaf Speaks Bliss To Me

Chua Yuan Xiang (4 Sapphire)

It represents us a green nation together. Greenery is important. Without it, there will be no oxygen. Plants represents peace to us. This may not be the most beautiful to look at, but it is useful to everyone. It has friends to talk to like us.







# OUR PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY



## One multi-racial Singapore

Richie  
(5 Sapphire)

Singapore is our home! I used the colour pencils to show that Singapore is a multi-racial country! It's not only the four main races in Singapore, but there are also more!

A pack of colour pencils can have 24/36/42 colours. The pack will look really nice with those colourful pencils. Singapore is also the same. It will look more colourful and brighter when many races live together. We stay UNITED as one. People care, trust and love one another!

It is like the pack of colour pencils, no matter what colour the pencil is ... black, white, brown, yellow ... it will still look amazing and colourful in its own way!



## Colourful Differences

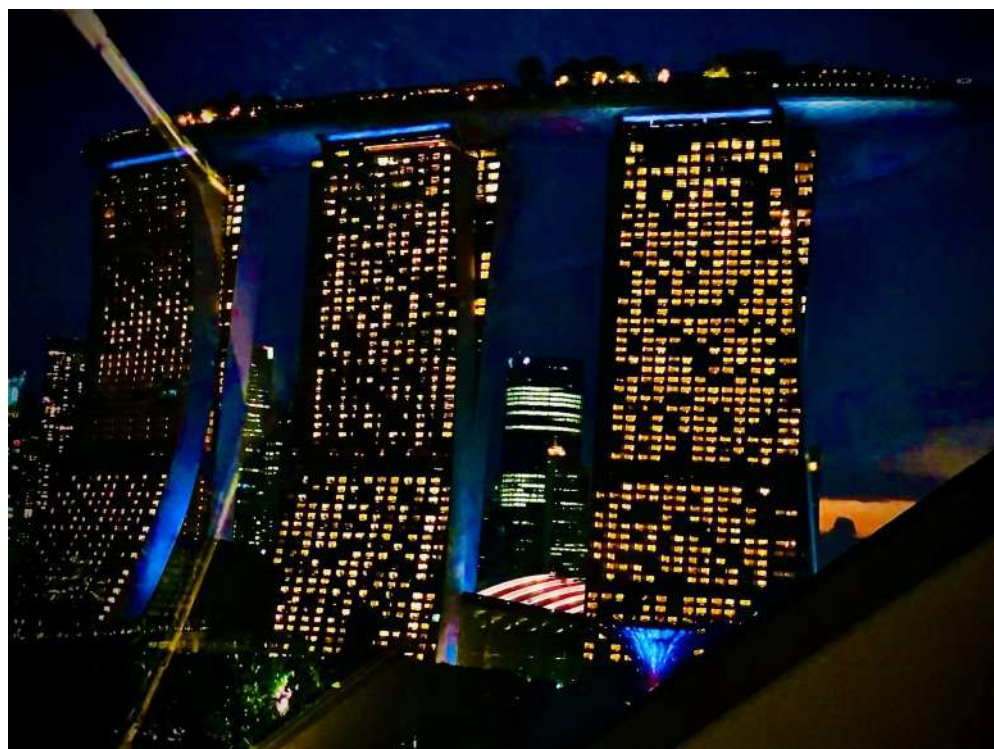
Rian Hong (4 Sapphire)

Books are like people - they can be similar and different in many ways. For example, they can be big or small. They have different colours, languages, meaning and more! We have to respect books as much as people. Books need shelter so they don't get wet, just like us. Everything needs respect. So that is why I took a picture of books big and small, with different colours and in different languages.





# OUR PHOTOGRAPHY GALLERY



## Dazzling Lights

Gail Lien (4 Topaz)

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic period, the lights are shining brightly for visitors to Gardens by the Bay and other viewers. This is our "Home" shining brightly like a beacon in the sky.

Whether people are on a staycation, or if the rooms are simply lit as a sign of beauty, it reminds me of when Singapore was full of tourists.

## Cosy Kazuki

Teo Kai Xiang from 2S

Everyone needs a home. We need a home, even animals need a home. Home is a safe and comfortable place where we live, play and sleep well. My picture of Kazuki, my dog, shows you how comfortable his home is. It is where he feels safe.



## Reflections at Telok Blangah Heights

Jayden Tan (5 Sapphire)

**This picture represents home.**

People will look out of the window after a hard day's work. The national flag makes us remember we are very fortunate that we have a home to stay. In other countries, some people do not have a proper house to live in. Every kid in Singapore is given an opportunity to attend school, but elsewhere, some kids have to start work at an early age to support their family.

## Meet some of our *BRavo!* writers

After the intensive work on portraying our *Singapore Sports Heroes* in the first half of the year, the team took a break from writing factual prose in order to play with more poetic writing.

The task was to *use similes to describe oneself* - comparing oneself with something else using *I am like . . .* or *I am as X as a Y*.

It is interesting to read that several say they are very quiet, or compare themselves to small things: yet when they write, their voices are clearly heard and their presence clearly felt.

This is one reason why writing - and, in this case publishing, - is important for some young people: it gives them a space to be heard.

<p>I am as quiet as a mouse: I'm very quiet. I am as kind as a collie: I am kind. <b>- Josephina</b></p>	<p>I am as wise as an owl as I get high scores for my subjects. I am like a rose because when I am embarrassed or happy I turn red. <b>- Alara</b></p>
<p>I am as quiet as a hush of evening I don't speak a lot in front of a crowd. <b>- Hanbyul</b></p>	<p>I am like a fire-breathing dragon When I am calm, I don't attack, But when you anger me - you are a goner! <b>- Athan</b></p>
<p>I am like a rubber-band I am very flexible. <b>- Gail</b></p>	<p>I am like an ant. I am small and tiny But I will always try and lift heavy things if people need my help. <b>- Jayden</b></p>
<p>I am like a durian, some people like me while others don't. I am thorny and I will protect myself from others if needed. <b>- Nathanael</b></p>	<p>I'm as lazy as a toad at the bottom of a well. I do not like doing housework. <b>- Melody</b></p>
<p>I am a firework Bright and colourful. <b>- Aaron</b></p>	<p>I am as fast as light. I can run really fast. If you need me, I will be there for you. <b>- Gareth</b></p>