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THE DOMINICAN TORCH

STUDENT NEWSLETTER

"vincit omnia veritas"

Truth conquers all.



Issue No. 1 2017-18



St. Catherine students with their Chinese couplets.

Happy Chinese New Year!

By Ms. Chanting Lee



St. Agnes happily showing off their Chinese couplets.



Ms. Susan's Chinese students for G9 St. Rose (left) and AP Chinese students (right) also wrote Chinese couplets.

The hallways of DIS are decorated with Chinese couplets and lanterns as we welcome the year of the dog this Chinese New Year.

The Chinese couplets are written by our very own Middle and High School students, courtesy of our Chinese teachers: Ms. Susan, Ms. Lillian, Ms. Katherine Cheng, and Ms. Samantha.

From the DIS Student Torch Newsletter team, may all of you have a joyous and safe year ahead!

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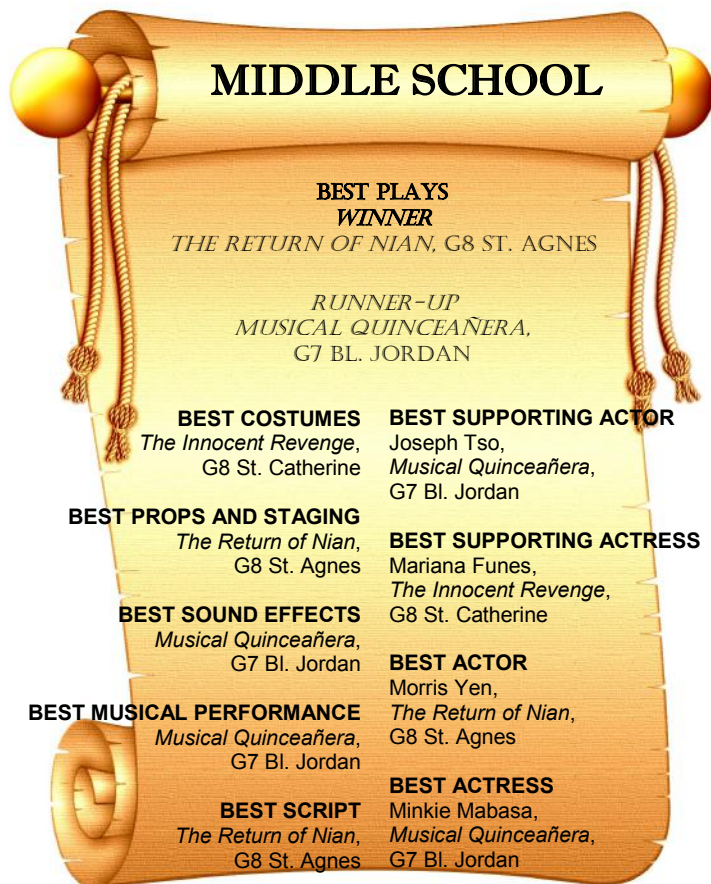
Celebrating 60 and 10 Years

Congratulations to all winners of our annual Young Shakespeare Competition, 2017!

By Ms. Chanting Lee

2017 marked not only 60 years of excellence at DIS but also 10 years of the Young Shakespeare Competition (YSC). Thus, the theme of this year's YSC was, quite appropriately, celebrations. YSC is managed and put together by the efforts of our English Department teachers, Music and Art teachers, and our very own Middle and High School students. In celebrating this tenth year and the spectacular show put on by our students, a YSC Showcase was held for the winning classes of our YSC Middle and High School winners — in our very own gym — on January 10, 2018. A huge congratulations again to all the students for putting on plays that moved us, touched us, or made us laugh!

YSC Middle and High School Winners, 2017-18



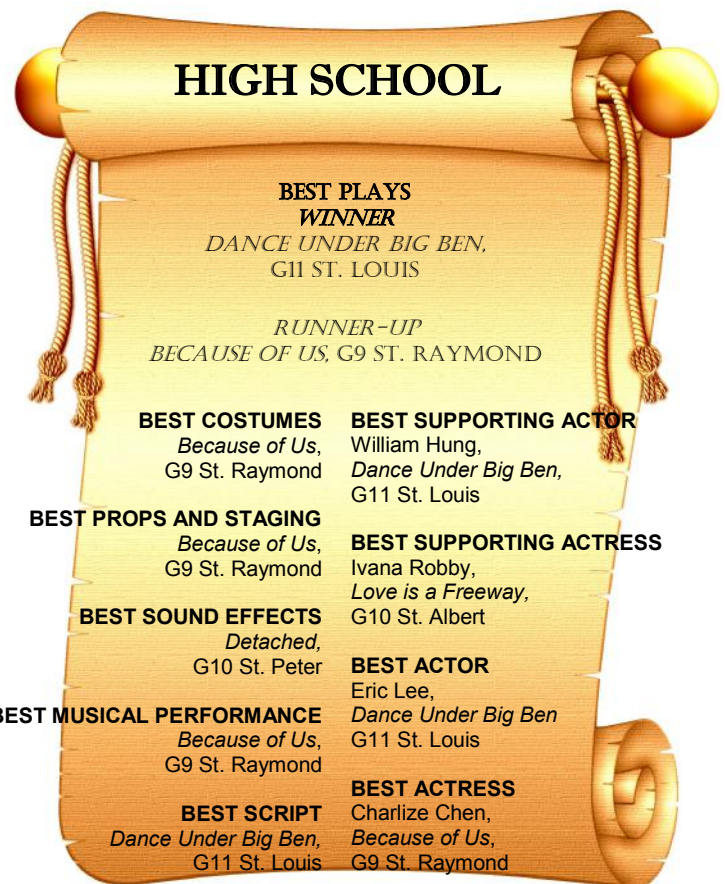
MIDDLE SCHOOL

**BEST PLAYS
WINNER**
THE RETURN OF NIAN, G8 ST. AGNES

RUNNER-UP
MUSICAL QUINCEAÑERA,
G7 BL. JORDAN

BEST COSTUMES <i>The Innocent Revenge</i> , G8 St. Catherine	BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR Joseph Tso, <i>Musical Quinceañera</i> , G7 Bl. Jordan
BEST PROPS AND STAGING <i>The Return of Nian</i> , G8 St. Agnes	BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS Mariana Funes, <i>The Innocent Revenge</i> , G8 St. Catherine
BEST SOUND EFFECTS <i>Musical Quinceañera</i> , G7 Bl. Jordan	BEST ACTOR Morris Yen, <i>The Return of Nian</i> , G8 St. Agnes
BEST MUSICAL PERFORMANCE <i>Musical Quinceañera</i> , G7 Bl. Jordan	BEST ACTRESS Minkie Mabasa, <i>Musical Quinceañera</i> , G7 Bl. Jordan

BEST POSTER
The Innocent Revenge, G8 St. Catherine



HIGH SCHOOL

**BEST PLAYS
WINNER**
DANCE UNDER BIG BEN,
G11 ST. LOUIS

RUNNER-UP
BECAUSE OF US, G9 ST. RAYMOND

BEST COSTUMES <i>Because of Us</i> , G9 St. Raymond	BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR William Hung, <i>Dance Under Big Ben</i> , G11 St. Louis
BEST PROPS AND STAGING <i>Because of Us</i> , G9 St. Raymond	BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS Ivana Robby, <i>Love is a Freeway</i> , G10 St. Albert
BEST SOUND EFFECTS <i>Detached</i> , G10 St. Peter	BEST ACTOR Eric Lee, <i>Dance Under Big Ben</i> G11 St. Louis
BEST MUSICAL PERFORMANCE <i>Because of Us</i> , G9 St. Raymond	BEST ACTRESS Charlize Chen, <i>Because of Us</i> , G9 St. Raymond

BEST POSTER
Love is a Freeway, G10 St. Albert

DIS 60th Jubilee Week—Sports Day!

DIS celebrated its 60th year with a week of academic activities and sports from December 4—December 8, 2017. Mr. Mark Gajardo reports on the first day of athletics, December 5.

By Mr. Mark Gajardo

Tuesday December 5th, 2017 is a day to be remembered as one of pure exhilaration, fun, and excitement. There were many sports that our students could participate in. One sporting event that our dedicated and enthusiastic coaches, Mr. Gustl Pido and Mr. Erwin Descaya brilliantly planned, happened to be the morning basketball sessions. We saw G8 students compete against G7 students on the basketball court.

I had students line up and prepare to compete to get the jump ball. There was an air of excitement! The audience enjoyed students running, jumping, and making their shots go perfectly into the hoops. Swoooosh! The audience members cheered in sheer delight as these two grades battled it out. The excellent 8th graders came out on top in this skirmish.

Another key highlight happened to be the relay races. Coach Erwin organized each run and kept track of all the runners' times. Our math teacher, Mr. Mick Chang was kind enough to be a crucial record keeper of each run. He was also in charge of recording who came in first, second, and third place. For each scheduled run, Mr. Gustl shot the gun for each runner to begin:

"Pow! Zoom! Kabaaaam! And the runners are off!"



All of the runners pushed their bodies to the limits. I remember one unique event. One of our track runners who also happens to be on the basketball team, asked if he could run without any shoes and sans socks. Once he had permission. He swiftly took off his shoes and socks. He was about to run barefoot! There were some gasps by audience members. They were thinking:

"How could Ian run without any shoes and socks?"

Ian ran like the wind. Ian was as swift as lightening on his bare feet. He impressed everyone by gaining ground and running quickly! The crowd cheered him on when he got to the finish line!

Overall, the Sports Day was a memorable and exciting event where students could play sports, enjoy the friendship of their classmates, and bond with their teachers. The students could see their teachers in a different light. We saw our G12 English Teacher, Mr. Bill Wolfe, magnificently being the scorekeeper for the basketball games. We saw our fantastic Ms. Janice help motivate the runners on the track and field, and we viewed our Curriculum Coordinator, Mr. Joe, encourage the students to go for the gold!

Celebrating Jesus during Morning Assembly



Dominicans offered a dance number to the Child Jesus during the regular Monday Morning Assembly. Courtesy of Sr. Leticia's Religious Studies Class- Grade 4 St. Margaret



My favorite animals

By Gr. 6 St. Hyacinth students
ELL—Animal Poems

Tiger

I love the tiger

With uncountable lines
they don't eat spiders!
they have a big size

I love the tiger
they are very fast
they are a good fighter
they never are the last



I love the tiger

Maybe you have to run!
they COULD eat you for dinner
they would have a lot of fun!

I love the tiger
Maybe you just know that
you should be tired
but with that animal, get off my hat



Rosario Cases

By Rosario Cases

A Question

By Michelle Hsu, Gr.10 St. Albert

why, mankind?

Birds chirping,
Kids playing,
Sun shining,
In my mind I'm whining.
What have we done to deserve this planet?
As innocent as a new born.
A trillion things wrong with us
But we continue without a fuss.
The clock is ticking,
Ice melting,
animals dying,
and our tears falling.
What have we done to deserve this planet?
As fragile as a child's sand castle
One day we will fall
There will be no one left to recall.

My favorite animals

By Gr. 6 St. Hyacinth students
ELL—Animal Poems



 MICHELLE
 chang



 roof







I have a puppy
I call him yuppie
he's very naughty
but he let me happy

He has a doghouse
and it's outside my house
he is not alone
cause he live with the mouse

He like to bite meat
and also my feet
he sleep on my bed
and sometimes on my knee

It's funny that he know just how I feel
when I'm happy he's yippee
and when I'm glumly he's slumpy
so this is why I love my puppy

By Michelle Chang

The First Runner Who Ran Around Taiwan

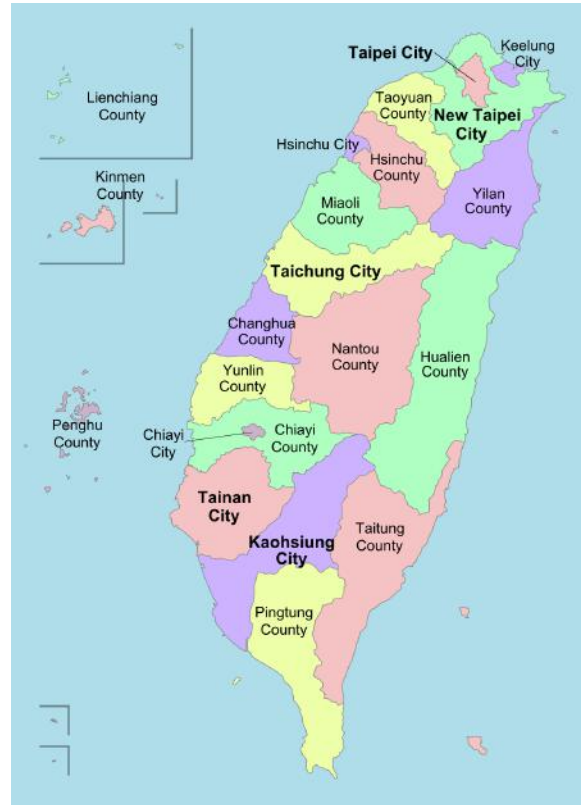
By Elizabeth Liu, Gr. 8 St. Catherine
Language Arts—A Tall Tale

Kealy felt a little bored after traveling around the world. She was now living at her friend’s house because she sold her house for the world trip. She was a 22-year-old girl who really enjoyed challenging herself and breaking records. She was one of the best marathon runners in the world and also a freedom fighter. She trained herself by jogging around the 1000m track 10 laps a day, 200 push-ups, and 200 sit-ups every day.

One day, Kealy received a letter from the underworld boss. He said that if she could run around Taiwan in a week, he would give her a million dollars. But if she failed, she will need to work for him. After a minute of silence, she started packing immediately. While she packed, she was also thinking of eating all kind of staples around Taiwan. “Are you insane!?” her friend looked at her as if she had four legs. “No, of course not. I’m just going to earn some money. Don’t worry!” After leaving that sentence, she rushed out the door like a gust of wind .

She started to run from Taipei, all the way down to Kaohsiung. She bought 5 packs of peanut candy in Taoyuan, and she ate 10 plates of rice noodle in Hsinchu. She saw lots of wind turbines while she ran to Miaoli. The Zhuifen Station at Taichung was also amusing, because Zhuifen Station meant ‘chase your scores’ in Chinese. After eating 8 bowls of chicken rice in Chiayi, she arrived at Kenting on the third day. She thought that she still got some time so she took a rest beside the beach and watched the sunset.

She started to run back by the other side which was the East side. But suddenly, she got a better idea. She thought that this whole trip was too boring for her, so she would like to challenge herself by running up and down among the mountains. Running up the mountains was hard work, and it took her 3 hours to run all the way up to the top of mountain Jade, which is the highest mountain in Taiwan.



But she really enjoyed running downward. She took selfies every time she reached the top of each mountain. When it was time to go down, she used only 60 percent of her strength and enjoys the speed of the gravitational force.

“Everyone ran for their lives, but Kealy just ignored them and kept on running.”

But nothing went right while she wanted to run. When she almost reached the top of the second mountain, a stranger came to her and told her that there was a typhoon which would cause a landfall. In the twinkling of an eye in an instant, the sky turned dark as if someone turned off the light. One drop, Two drops. The rain started in

a sudden. Everyone ran for their lives, but Kealy just ignored them and kept on running. As she ran, her speed got faster and faster. Fast enough to change the direction of the typhoon. Everyone who saw this amazing act was surprised...

Students make an Advent Wreath for Christmas!



Grade 6 students were filled with joy and anticipation for the celebration of Christmas. They prepared an Advent Wreath weeks before Christmas to fill their waiting with Peace, Hope, Joy, and Love!

– Mr. John Erick S. Moje

Rainy Day Survival Kit

By Rose Lee, Gr. 12 St. Vincent

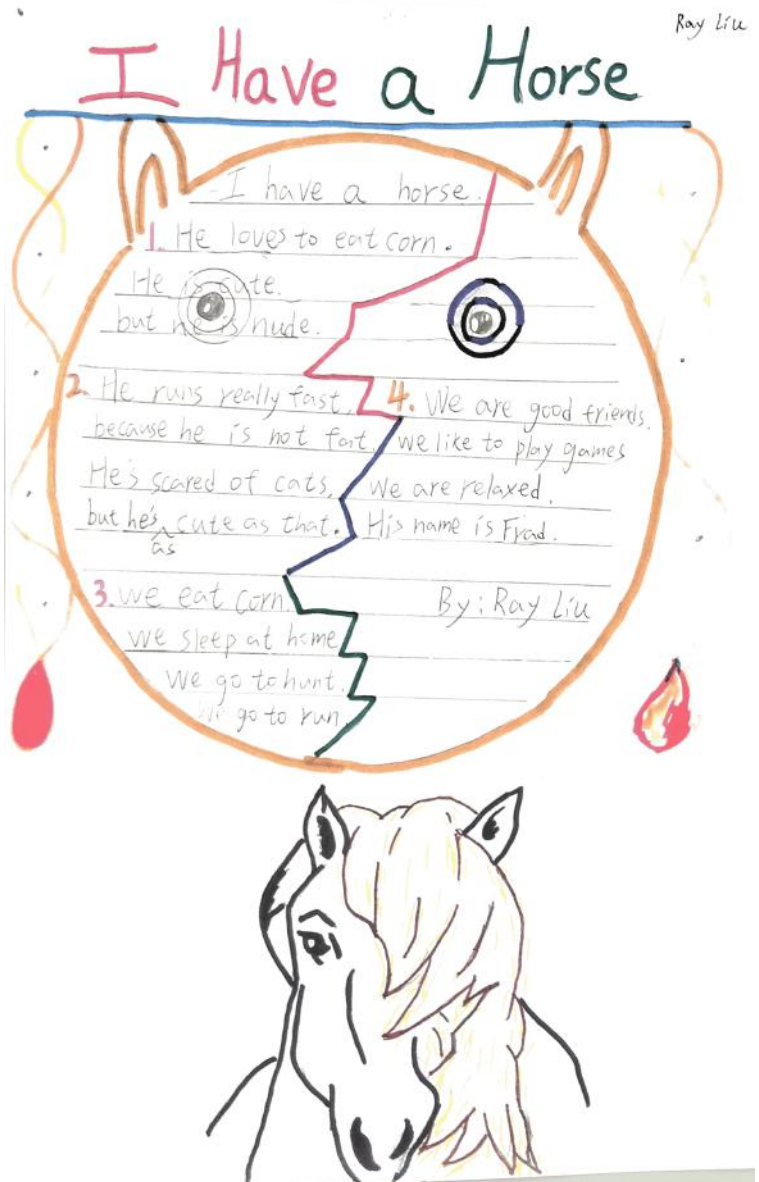
You will need to...

- * Curl up with a book that makes you drown in it and tugs you up from the dark waters all the same, such as *Milk and Honey* by Rupi Kaur.
- * Create a playlist—not an awful collection of mainstream pop but something you can put on repeat and never get tired of. If it's what you struggle with, anything from *The 1975* and *The Neighbourhood* works perfectly fine.
- * Make yourself a mug of hot water that won't burn your tongue, because believe it or not, you're better off with it. (Optional: a tablespoon of honey and some essence of lemon)
- * Bring blankets, even if it's still summer. You can turn on the air conditioner.
- * Now lock the door, because everyone deserves some alone time while listening to the sound of raindrops colliding onto the windows and hatching a personal pipe dream.



My favorite animals

By Gr. 6 St. Hyacinth students
ELL—Animal Poems



By Ray Liu

My favorite animals

By Gr. 6 St. Hyacinth students
ELL—Animal Poems

Animal Poem



Koalas are cute,
I imagine them in suits,
Their ears are big,
Kind of like a pig.
They stay on trees,
Sometimes they hug with knees,
They keep close to their babies,
They are sometimes very lazy.
They feel very fluffy,
And use claws to scratch their tummies,
Their claws are really sharp,
They tear their food apart.
Koalas eat eucalyptus leaves,
A fact hard to believe,
Those leaves are poison for us,
So we better just eat nuts.

By Mia Tsai

Mia Tsai

The First Runner Who Ran Around Taiwan

By Elizabeth Liu, Gr. 8 St. Catherine
Language Arts—A Tall Tale

...yet thankful because she stopped a lot of damage from happening. On the fifth day, she arrived at the rugged, bumpy Suhua highway. She looked at the azure coastway for a while, even though the sea was covered with rainstorm, she still enjoyed it.

She ran all the way up till Yilan, passing central mountains. She brought back a whole pack of "ox's tongue cake" and some grass she picked while running. She took a selfie at Taipei 101 to prove that she did it in

six days. This trip took even less than one week. After an hour, she got a phone call from the underworld boss. "You did it really well," said the boss with a low and deep voice, "I had already transferred the money to your account. Please check." He hung up the phone in no time. Kealy looked at her phone speechless. She received a message



of one million income transferred into her account.

The next week, she saw herself on the TV. She looked at it with full of surprise and excitement. She was on TV! She turned the volume up to the highest. The anchor described her as crazy but full of strength. Also, she set a new world record. However, the part which surprised her most was that the person who gave the photo to the TV station was the stranger who told her that there was a typhoon which is going to cause a landfall!

Students interpret the mysteries of the Holy Rosary

Middle and High School students depicted the mysteries of the Holy Rosary after learning about them in Religious Studies class.



First year at UBC from 2017 Alumnus: Timmy Chang

By Ginny Hwang, Gr. 11 St. Louis

Please give us a brief introduction of yourself, the school you currently go to, and your major (area of study) in college.

"I'm Timmy Chang, a graduate from the DIS class of 2017 and a freshman at the University of British Columbia, majoring in International Relations and minoring in Law and Society."

How does college life compare with your initial expectations of it?

"College life is a lot different [from] my initial expectations. It definitely [makes you more] independent as you have to maintain your own schedule across all subjects. However [among all the different changes], what was for sure beyond my expectation is the social life. I originally thought that making new friends [would] be a lot more difficult, [but it] turns out that people are a very friendly [and] I ended up making numerous friends since orientation."

What is the best part/worst part of college life?

"The best part of college is the social life and the amazing campus. The [UBC] campus is huge with amazing seasonal scenery (maple leaves!) You are also given the opportunity to [make] friends across the world and make your own decisions when it comes to lifestyle. On the other hand, the worst part will be the academic pressure. Exams take more than half of your average, and some professors have very high standards [when it comes to grading]. I guess [having to walk] over 10 km per day [around campus] is another bad part of college too!"

How has your high school education affect your life in college?

"High school definitely gave me a good basis for my academic life in college and helped me in writing research report and references (yes, Senior Project is just the tip of the iceberg of any college papers), since I found it easier to [write these papers] compared to my fellow classmates. AP subjects have also given me an introduction of what college classes will be like AP's also [allowed] me to waive off some mandatory subjects, [giving] me extra time to take courses that I am interested in such as criminology!"



What advice or word of encouragement would you like to give our current Dominican students regarding their preparation for college?

"Enjoy high school life [while] you can, because college is definitely more [stressful] than you'd expected! Make sure to also keep in touch with your high school friends [in college] because no matter how annoying you [may] think they are now, you will no doubt miss them a lot in college! Finally, college is not [just] about [your] academic life, but finding the area you are passionate in, so don't be afraid [of] joining any [new] club or [taking] classes that you haven't taken before."

What's a random fact about your school (eg. the best restaurants, school activity, myth, etc)?

"UBC has [a] rivalry against another college in Vancouver called Simon Fraser and [has been] in a Facebook meme war against them since [last] September! Our campus and the city also have the best Asian (and Taiwanese) food across Canada, and probably the States as well, so you will never be homesick from food! In addition, UBC is a famous place for filming [various shows] such as 'Man in the High Castle', so there is a huge possibility that you'll meet celebrities on the streets!"

The YSC Experience—From Students

Middle School—Grade 6s

YSC: Very tiring but I am proud of us!

By Clio Leung, Gr. 6 Bl. Ceslao (YSC Play: A Second Chance)

I've seen a lot of Young Shakespeare plays in my life. We see it every year, performed by Middle and High School students. Finally, this year it's our turn to perform. I was excited at first but I didn't know that it was a very difficult job. Our grades for Quarter 2 depends on how much effort we put into this group work so everyone did their best. I volunteered to be the writer and it was a tough and tiring job.

The first time I wrote the script alone and it sucked, so I rewrote it all again. The second time was when I went to Heidi's house, we spent eight hours doing the script. At school, Ms. Janice helped us with the script and our classmates gave suggestions as well so we were finally done. But it was nearly the performance day and we were quite behind. As we went through the play, the director taught us how to act and to speak louder. We also edited some lines until it was nearly perfect. Then, we started to practice in every single LA class, we made props and acted. We stayed almost the whole week to make the AED and to practice. But some people were just sleeping backstage and it took us 10 minutes to finish the play. Some of us didn't speak loud enough, didn't have emotions, or didn't have eye contact. After all the shouting from our two helpful teachers, finally everyone was on task.

One of the hardest things preparing the play was the song. We couldn't think of any lyrics that fit the moral of our story. Ms. Zoe helped us with our song, we organized it, but we still couldn't do it. We didn't give up, everyone practiced and practiced until Ms. Janice and Ms. Jenny was satisfied with us. Playing the role of a doctor was also another hard thing, because I couldn't

“One of the hardest things preparing the play was the song.”



match my actions with the beat of the AED. It worked on performance day, but I hope I didn't do the actions for the AED wrong as I was acting.

After lunch, we moved our props to Shi-Chien University. When it was our turn to perform, we went backstage to get ready. I was nervous backstage, but when I got up on stage, I had no feelings at all. I thought that it would be scary but no one seemed to panic, which I thought was very courageous for all of us. Everyone worked well as a team. We were panicking about the time at first, because we couldn't finish our play in 10 minutes during

our practices. A miracle happened – though I don't think it was a miracle, it was because we cooperated together as a class – we managed to finish the play in 10 minutes!!! After the play, the only thing I wanted to say was thank you to the people that helped us throughout the play and my classmates.

We heard lots of compliments from the teachers and we were happy about that. For the future, I would like to give some advice to the Lower Schoolers – plan the play earlier. Otherwise, you will have to rush and have lots of pressure at the end. Overall, I think that it was quite fun, but also tiring. I learned not just the moral of our play, but also group work and cooperation. I am very impressed with our class's cooperation!

Props: Broken and fixed, broken again!!!

By Ethan Hsieh, Gr. 6 St. Hyacinth (YSC Play: A Christmas Adventure)



When the teacher first told us that we have “YSC Class”, I was wondering, “what is YSC?” Why do we need to do it? After the teachers told us it was a play and we need to do all the props by ourselves, I was scared but also happy because this is the first time I will do this. I have never done this before! We decided who would be the writer and when they would write the scripts, and some people will change the song lyrics.

When we finished changing the lyrics to our song, we asked Ms. Zoe to help us with the music. In PSD class, Ms. Marie let us practice and in ICT class, Mr. Ian also let us practice. Mr. Jofil helped us to finish our slide in Art class. We also stayed after school to work on our props. However, only four people stayed after school. A week later only a few props were finished, Ms. Chanting was very angry, she said we needed more people to stay after school to stay after school, and not always the same people. When we were finally finished with all the props, Hien broke the magic door!!! Although our props were finished, there was no color on them, so we bought some spray paint. It was the first time I used spray paint and it smelled very bad! Ms. Janice and Ms. Chanting were helping us to practice, but many people were playing backstage, so they were very angry with us. We couldn’t use our props too, because we had some parts that need to be fixed. Many people didn’t help with props, I felt bad because I worked very hard, but it means I have learned something new.

“I was scared but also happy because this is the first time I will do this.”

On the day of the performance, I was very nervous and happy. While we were moving our props to Shih Chien University, it fell and broke! We had to use Ms. Chanting’s double-sided tape to quickly fix it. After we finished our play, we wanted to keep the props but G12s told us to put them outside and they just destroyed it. The jail prop was the only one we saved. To G5 students, “Go! Go! Go!” It is very tiring and you need to have a lot of confidence! You also need to prepare a lot for props and costumes.

To all the teachers who helped us, thanks for helping!



Having YSC on my birthday

By Kimi Chen, Gr. 6 St. Hyacinth (YSC Play: A Christmas Adventure)



When I first heard about Young Shakespeare Competition, I was very happy and excited. I wanted to be the main character for the first time! Ms. Janice told me I could be the main character and one of the writers. The writers were: Hien, Chelsea, Yuka, and I. Hien already had the idea of the play, but he never gave us the idea until the night he wrote the first part of the script. Hien and I went to Google Document to add some words and fix our script. Our writers had to change a lot of the script because the teachers pointed out many grammar mistakes, our script was too long, or the props were impossible to make.

My classmates and I started to stay after school to make props. In the beginning, a lot of our props didn't work or couldn't stand properly, so we needed to redo them very often. When we were practicing, many of the props weren't finished either. We started to rush, staying after school to finish making the props but only a few people were staying after school, so we didn't finish props fast enough. We always practiced with just some of the props. That wasn't the only problem we had, other people didn't remember the script or they were busy playing backstage. Some of them don't have gestures or didn't speak loud enough. Once we practiced more, everyone started to have more gestures.

On November 15, 2017, my birthday, we went to Shih Chien University after lunch to perform our play. I was very nervous when the play started, but later on during the play, I felt better. But Hien!!! Spoke too softly! I think we had a very good script, but we unfortunately had to change the script many times. We almost messed up our play, because we made one of the props just a day before the play after school. It was made very quickly so it wasn't taped together tightly. On our way to Shih Chien University, it was almost ripped apart! We had to quickly put it on the floor and use double sided tape that we had on hand to stick the pieces together and make it tight again.

After we performed our play, we sat down and watched other classes perform their play. Grade 7 BI. Jordan unfortunately didn't finish their play because they ran out of time. We told the Grade 12's that we wanted our props, but they forgot and recycled our props. It is okay. Overall, I think Young

Shakespeare Competition is a good practice for acting. I also think we did a great job on Young Shakespeare since this is our first time.

If you are doing Young Shakespeare for the first time, remember these tips:

- 1. Speak louder.***
- 2. Remember your lines well.***
- 3. Don't play backstage!***
- 4. Finish the script early.***
- 5. Finish the props early and quickly.***
- 6. Try not to be nervous.***

That is all the tips I have, I hope you can win the Young Shakespeare Competition next year!

“I also think we did a great job on Young Shakespeare since this is our first time.”

A Difficult Duration—YSC

By Nandita Chennakrishnan, Gr. 7 St. Thomas
(YSC Play: Don't Lose Me)

Just when the school year began, our class- especially the girls-was excited about YSC. We started getting competitive that Bl. Jordan had already started on their script on the third week of school. When I was first introduced to the theme in Language Arts class, I thought it was very wide and there were a lot of options to choose from. The theme was celebration, since the school was turning 60.

I wanted to be director at first, but I became a writer instead and let Tonia be director. One problem that we faced was that Mir, who we thought was sound-effects transferred to America. Soon, Justin agreed to be sound-effects. I prepared by scribbling down ideas and sharing them to my classmates later. We also had a lesson to plan and discuss our topic. As soon as we came to a decision, the writers started writing the plan and soon, the script. We stayed after-school every Friday to work on the script and I worked on it whenever I was free at home.

After the script was done, we practiced in class and after-school. I stayed from Tuesday to Friday to make props, act or dance. I faced many problems. I soon realized that the only way was to give in or else our arguments wouldn't end. Some teachers gave us time to practice. Most practices were chaotic and some people weren't cooperating well. It remained like this until the day of the performance.



We also had very little props. We somehow made more at the very last minute. We were also getting very competitive with Bl. Jordan. I realized that I have to focus on my class's play and not worry about them. During practice in Language Arts, it took a few tries to get between 8-10 minutes. Once we did, we were extremely happy and I knew we had to keep the transitions of bring

props off and on stage very smooth. During dress rehearsal, I was very exhausted and it wasn't our smoothest practice. Our dress rehearsal was much better than our first practice.

On the day of YSC, I was shaking in the waiting room. But the whole play seemed to finish in seconds.

At the end, I was very embarrassed because the music didn't play. But Angela made it work and started singing without music. When we all came on stage, the audience started clapping and I felt more courage. When we sat back down, I was very upset about the music. Overall, I think that YSC was an unforgettable experience and I learnt that not everything goes the way you want it to, but you have to get on with life. I think this experience will help me become a better person later on in life. If I could give advice to future MS classes, I would say that they MUST finish their props as soon as possible so you can start practicing with them.

*Most practices
were chaotic
and
some people
weren't
cooperating
well.*

My Last Young Shakespeare Experience in Middle School

By Laasya Portharaju, Gr. 8 St. Catherine
(YSC Play: *The Innocent Revenge*)

I have been waiting for the Young Shakespeare Competition to arrive ever since school has started this year! Unlike many other classmates, who moaned out loud, I was excited about the play! Now you might be wondering why I am so happy. The reason was that it is... fun (not to mention that we wouldn't have to take our grammar and collections lessons anymore)! Unlike all the other years I experienced doing YSC, the teachers chose the writers of the script this time and I was one of the lucky ones!

The class gathered around together to choose the topic. First, we listed down topics we might be interested to do a play on, and one of them was the coronation. Many people wanted to do coronation as our play and so we had our "celebration" ready. At the same time, we also decided to pick our story. All of us consented on going with a story where a baby princess gets kidnapped right after she is born and is taken into a forest where she is brainwashed and told that her mother, the queen, liked her twin sister better than her so she was banished.

Since we had the plan, it was time to start writing the script. It didn't take a lot of planning to write the script because most of the planning was already done in class. Even though it didn't take a lot of planning, it took a lot of time because we also had many tests *cough* including Language Arts *cough* in the same week of the deadline for the script! We eventually made it through. After we were done with the script, we started working on the props. We had a lot of props to make and they had to be finished ASAP. Two days after the script was done, Michael brought in three swords that he made and all of the props team were so thankful for starting the 'prop making era'. Our hope didn't last long; Tommy, from the other class, broke the sword. The same thing happened with our throne! Right after we were done with the throne, Bob from the other class sat on it and after realizing it couldn't hold people, he shouted "Sorry!" and ran out of the class! And now we had a throne with a dent! it took us ages to fix the dent!



We were almost done with the props and we started the Dress Rehearsals. The rehearsals went quite well! People memorized their lines and acted pretty well too! But, we were WAY over time. We did know that it would eventually get below time. Hopefully.

“The rehearsals went quite well!”

But we were WAY over time.”

Few days after the dress rehearsals, we realized that we were way behind with the props. So we sat after school on the day before Young Shakespeare making a fountain, which by the way turned into a cake, and fixing other broken props.

On the day of Young Shakespeare, we were excited and nervous at the same time. At least I was. Overall, we did really well, but I noticed that we went over time during the play. In the last scene, I noticed that the judges started clapping just before the crowning and I knew that we were over time. Thanks to the audience, they thought that the judges were clapping because of the crowning and I suspect that the judges noticed that too. But for some reason, they let us end our play even though we were over time!

Future Middle Schoolers, remember this: If you/ your classmate ever make any mistake during the play, just go with the flow because no one in the audience would know unless you freak out. Speaking of freaking out, freak out as much as you want before the play. Let it all out, but when the play starts – show them your best. Turn into the character you play.

2017 YSC—Something we will never forget

By Athena Chuang, Gr. 8 St. Agnes

2017-2018 YSC Best Middle School Play: *The Return of Nian*



When I first heard about this year’s Young Shakespeare theme, I didn’t really have any feelings. I never liked doing YSC because the last two plays we did back in Grade 6 and 7 were disasters. Not to mention that YSC was still three months away when we first heard of the theme. We started to plan about three weeks after.

For planning, everyone had to choose a job, and I chose to be a prop maker. We got into groups to discuss what we needed to do for our job. I listed down the props we needed and we all sketched down the designs for props. At first, we didn’t know how to make some of the props, such as stalagmites and buildings, but we searched for tutorials on YouTube and solved the problems. I think we definitely made the right choice, but we could have asked other people for some help.

Then, we started to have practices. At first, people were always screaming for props and forgot their lines, however; the Dress Rehearsal was really different from the first ones. The props were almost perfect and we tried our best to remember the dance steps and lyrics. We did face some problems though. Before our first practice, people in our groups were saying that they couldn’t find the materials needed for our props, and they think they are not responsible for making props. So, some people ended up blaming Irene and me because we were the leaders.

Then, Ms. Marie told the class that all of us should be included in making props. So many people stayed after school every day to make props, and we were really happy with our class. Also, many people stayed after school to practice the dance. The Dress Rehearsal was really a sign that shows our class’s hard work and teamwork. And finally, it was the day of our play competition.

On the day of YSC, I didn’t feel nervous because I thought everything will go well. But our dance was messed up during the performance, so all of us were really disappointed. After the play, some guys were really mad and started to be sarcastic about our play, because they were mad that all the hard work we paid off was ruined by the wrong timing of our dance performance.

In conclusion, we all worked really hard this year, and we will definitely win awards. Although our play was a bit messed up, and we were annoyed by the practices sometimes, YSC will always end up being a memory that we will not really forget. I suggest the classes from next year to always work together as a team. Because it takes two to tango. You won’t be able to achieve anything without someone else’s help.

“The Dress Rehearsal was really a sign that shows our class’s hard work and teamwork.”

Sports and School in South Africa: Mr. Joe

Andre and Justin had a chat with our Academic Curriculum Coordinator, Mr. Joe, about growing up in South Africa and the student life he had before coming to Taiwan and DIS.

By Andre Hirakawa, Gr. 12 St. Vincent and Justin Tseng, Gr. 12 St. Pius V



Andre: Mr. Joe, please describe where you grew up.

Mr. Joe: I grew up in South Africa. I was... up until grade 2, around 10 years old, I lived on a farm. My mom was the school bus driver so we had to get up very early in the morning. Get on the school bus, pick up all the kids from the different farms and go to school near a power station. We then moved to the closest town, not very big, it was about maybe 150,000 people. I graduated from high school there, and I went to a big city for university.

Andre: Johannesburg or?

Mr. Joe: Pretoria. It was about an hour and a half drive, so it's close enough for a quick visit home, but far enough for being away from the people you know.

Andre: Please describe the high school you attended.

Mr. Joe: My high school was one of the four high schools in town. Three of them were Afrikaans and the other one was English. We were, I would say, a thousand and two hundred pupils. That's from grade 7 to 12. We had 5 sections per grade level... But it was fun, it was an enjoyable time. You can't compare it to what you guys are going through, but it was an enjoyable time.

Andre: Do you have any funny high school stories you would like to share?

Mr. Joe: Funny stories? Well...

Andre: We can come back to this later. A lot of the teachers have trouble with this one. Have you ever mistreated your teachers as a student? Did you break any school rules?

Mr. Joe: Yes, many times. As a class, you can't really say it's a tradition, but when you reach Grade 9, so your third year of high school in South Africa. In my school, on Fridays after lunch you always had Music class... the campus was rather big, so it was possible for us, as a class, to sit around the corner and not go to the room. So, we can basically skip the whole period, as a class. It wasn't just me and two other buddies, but the whole class. So, yes. Breaking rules! I was never really in trouble as such...

Andre: What was the worst thing you ever did in high school?

Mr. Joe: The worst thing I did was to basically skip school. Not just skip a class, we went to school in the morning... Well... maybe not that. The worst thing was we broke into the gym... on weekends.

Andre: How did you do that?

Mr. Joe: We basically copied the key. We asked the gym teacher... We said that we forgot something in the lockers. When he gave us the key, we looked at the number and went to buy a key. And then...but we didn't break in to do bad things, we broke in to play basketball.



***“We didn’t break
in to do bad
things, we broke
in to play
basketball.”***

Basketball is not a big thing in South Africa, so we didn't have basketball courts outside. So, a couple of friends and I, started playing basketball. We put up nets in the gym for that purpose. But it was not a school sport so that's why we went in to play during the weekends.

Andre: How were you caught?

Mr. Joe: Actually, the principal came around one afternoon, it was a Saturday. And he heard the noise inside the gym. He knocked on the doors, we tried to hide, but he eventually came in and found us there. Because we were not doing anything bad, we just had detention for quite a long time, but it wasn't like the police were called or anything.

Andre: Did you have a teacher you hated? If so, what was he or she like?

Mr. Joe: Yes, I had a teacher that I disliked. In my senior year, we had a Chemistry teacher that was new. Being a senior and feeling that you have been in this school for 5 years, and this person was new... our personalities didn't get along that well. It wasn't a fun class at all. Can't say I was rude with him. I just didn't interact with him...

Andre: What was your favorite subject?



Mr. Joe: My favorite subject was Geography. By far, yes. My Geography teacher made it fun. We always had fun activities to do...

Andre: Field trips?

Mr. Joe: Never had a field trip. We learned about geography. He took us outside. A lot of activities outside the classroom, not off campus, but outside the classroom. We could apply what we learn, so it was my favorite subject.



Andre: Did you pursue that interest in university?

Mr. Joe: Not at all, no.

Andre: So what was the major in university?

Mr. Joe: Education. I did Education and Psychology. dual degree in my first four years.

Andre: Did you play sports in high school?

Mr. Joe: I did. I played rugby, I did track and field. I wasn't very fast, but I was considered to be a little more powerful than my classmates, so I did javelin, discus throw, and shot put. I did those... Rugby was my favorite. That was the sport that took me places.

“Rugby was my favorite. That was the sport that took me places.”

Andre: So where did you go?

Mr. Joe: Rugby matches, sometimes you'll tour the Cape Province, which is about 1000 kilometers from our school. We would go on tours... to other provinces as well.

Andre: So, you would just leave school and go on this trip?

Mr. Joe: Usually it was during the holiday time. In South Africa, the holidays were very... it's actually by province when I was there. Now it's probably synchronized. But when I was there, each province had their own dedicated time for the holidays.

Give or take a week. So, we would have our holiday week earlier and go on a tour, so we can meet the other schools while they're still in school...

Andre: Have you ever traveled out of the country for anything? When you were in high school?

Mr. Joe: Never. When I was very small, when I was seven or eight years old, we traveled to South West Africa, now it's Namibia. But it was considered part of South Africa then... My uncle was in the military, so we traveled there by military plane. I went to visit two or three times. The actual time I went abroad was when I came to Taiwan!

Andre: Was that a cultural shock?

Mr. Joe: Yeah, of course! I didn't know anything about Taiwan before coming here. We got on the plane and arrived at Tao-Yuan airport expecting... because in South Africa, if you drive out of any city, 30 minutes, then it's just fields and mountains. When I arrived here, when driving, there are buildings the whole time. My friend and I assumed that we were in one big city this whole time...

Andre: I'm not sure if this would be a sensitive question. How did the apartheid affect you as a child or your family?

Mr. Joe: As a child... Let me say it like this, growing up on a farm, my friends were, of course, the farm workers' children. So, my friends were the... black kids on the farm. As farmers, you never really have that segregation. Yes, you lived in different houses, but we were encouraged to make friends with them. We knew all of them and they knew all of us. We learned their language. Only at university I really felt the effects of the apartheid. That's also after Nelson Mandela came into power, where at university you get a lot of propaganda. Then you realize, yes, my history book was very biased and when you think back... Only until later in life did I realize how terrible it truly was.

“We were known as the ‘frozen yogurt class.’”



Andre: So back to the previous question, what is a funny story you're willing to share? Or anything memorable?

Mr. Joe: ...My class, one of my homeroom teachers, always sold frozen yogurt out of the room. There was a big fridge in the room and we sold frozen yogurt. Up to now, I never knew where the profits went. Did it go to the school or in the teacher's pocket? We didn't have a class fund for what I knew. But that was our duty, and we were known as the “frozen yogurt class.” People place orders before lunch because some flavors are more popular than others. People would meet you on campus and they would say I want three of this flavor or three of that flavor.

Andre: Did any other classes sold things?

Mr. Joe: No! Just our class. We were the frozen yogurt class... That was the most memorable thing...



Can you find Mr. Joe?

The multicultural and multilingual childhood of Mr. Beck

By Andre Hirakawa, Gr. 12 St. Vincent



Andre: Please describe your hometown.

Mr. Beck: I grew up on an island. The place is very touristic; it is a place filled with hotels, swimming pools, beaches. The Canary Islands is a volcanic island, so it's very high and at the same time it's close to the coast. Less people than Taiwan.

Andre: And how about the size of the Canary Islands?

Mr. Beck: Mine is the biggest. It's ... from one point to another, Tenerife's [the name of the island] around 100 km, more or less. And the landscape changes a lot. The North is very green, where I'm from. And the South is like a desert. It's like you're in Nevada or Arizona... And it's very mixed...

Andre: You mean the people?

Mr. Beck: Everyone is Spanish, but there's also a lot of Europeans, British, and Germans. People who buy property and retire there.

Andre: So it's a pretty aged community there then?

Mr. Beck: A lot of people there are retired and buy [property], because the weather there is cool and it's close to Europe.

Andre: A lot of the students are curious if you were naughty as a student. Have you ever been scolded as a child?

Mr. Beck: Ah! I was expecting this.

Andre: Yeah! All the teachers are asked this same question.

Mr. Beck: They might be disappointed, because I was a pretty good kid. I was not in trouble a lot. Of course, little things always happen, because you follow the mass, no? But I would say I was quite a good boy. I studied. I was responsible. I was not the naughtiest. So I might disappoint them with this answer!

Andre: What did you want to be as a child?

*“When I was
a child I
really wanted
to be a private
detective.”*

Mr. Beck: First, when I was in Lower School, of course, a detective! Then you know, you change. Architecture... Never a Spanish teacher! When I was a child I really wanted to be a private detective.

Andre: How about later when you enter high school?

Mr. Beck: Later, because my parents' business is hospitality, I wanted to study Business Administration and Hospitality Management... And that's what I did later.



Andre: Are the high schools in Spain very different? Or on the Canary Islands?

Mr. Beck: You mean compared to here?

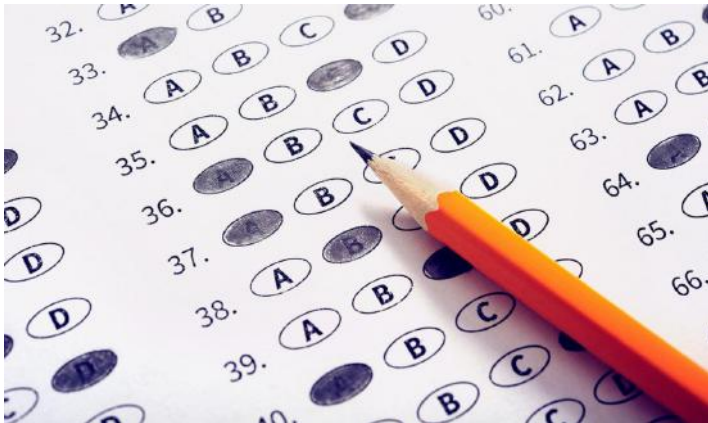
Andre: Yes, compared to D.I.S.

Mr. Beck: You mean the characteristics? Or?

Andre: Yeah, the students and the teachers.

Mr. Beck: Yes, I mean culturally, of course it's different. But there are also things that are the same for high school all around the world. It's also a bit different. I'll say, when I was in high school, the last year was tough, because you have to get into college. We have to pass an exam.

Andre: So there's a Spanish version of the SAT?



Mr. Beck: Kind of like SAT. But there's also History and different subjects. You have an exam from the government, so it doesn't matter where you come from, you all do the same exam. So yeah, I would say high school was a bit stressful. But I see here, people work very hard with the APs. I never had these. And the [work] load. I had less load too. So that was different from here. I feel that here, it's more tense. You know? People work very hard... We also finished class at two o'clock.

Andre: Two o'clock?

Mr. Beck: Yeah, that's very different.

Andre: How about the students there? Were the students there culturally diverse?



Mr. Beck: My school was, like DIS, a private school. It was very mixed. Majority of the people were Spanish, but like my background, I was born in Spain, but I'm German. There were many people like me. There were British, German, Indian. From Asia, not a lot. Europeans and Indians had big communities. So we are Spanish but with foreign background, that made it multicultural, but at the same time we were all Spanish. Spanish was our first language. So yeah, my school was very mixed.

Andre: What was the most embarrassing thing that happened to you in high school?

Mr. Beck: Let me think...

Andre: No problem. We can go back to this question... Did you have any nicknames when you were small?

Mr. Beck: No, in high school sometimes people just call me Beck. Not Señor Beck, but Beck! Like my surname. I don't know why.

Andre: Isn't that common in...

Mr. Beck: It is common in Spain. In the Canary Islands, it's very common to have nicknames. But because my name is so uncommon, Philipp and Beck, they use "Philipp" or "Beck" [as a nickname]. But if your name is David or Jose, or any other common names, they tend to give nicknames. Especially on my island,

“In the Canary Islands, it’s very common to have nicknames.”

it's like a tradition. But in my case, my friends still just call me "Beck" or my first name. So it's not really a nickname, no?

Andre: Did you grow up learning English as a child? If not, when did you start learning English?

Mr. Beck: No, my school followed Spanish curriculum. In kindergarten we had a bilingual program with a British teacher. Of course, I had English as a subject. But when I really learned it was when I went to Germany for a year. It was an English-speaking university. I also went to Holland for work, so I used English a lot. I lived in Canada for a year also. That's when I really improved my English. When I was in college, I wanted to speak good English, so I watched a lot of movies in English with subtitles. And I started to read books in English. I forced myself to learn. So I think all of these together helped me to learn and speak English.

Andre: So how many languages can you speak in total?

"I speak Spanish, German, English, and Chinese."

Mr. Beck: I speak Spanish, German, English, and Chinese... you know, very very basic. Take a taxi. Buy food. Very basic. Not fluent.

Andre: Did you know you were going to be a teacher? How did you become a teacher at D.I.S.?

Mr. Beck: I never thought that I would be a teacher. So, you know, life is so unexpected, no?

And I never thought of teaching in Taiwan alone, but I moved to Taiwan and I wanted to try here. I studied business, economics, and one of the things... how can I get a job here? What can I offer to the market? What do the Taiwanese need? And one thing was teaching. So that's what I started with. I started with small groups and I started to get my teaching credentials online. And later I got my Master's...



Andre: Where do you think you would be now if you did not come to D.I.S.?

Mr. Beck: I think I would be in Canary Islands. I would be in my parents' business probably. My parents' have restaurants and bakeries. I would be probably working there...

Andre: Ok, how about back to the question about the most embarrassing moment?

Mr. Beck: I was in kindergarten and I wet my whole pants! As a child that was very embarrassing! When I was walking in school and my whole pants are wet...but in high school... I remember, maybe, during soccer tournaments, I was the goalkeeper, and I made some stupid mistakes. I had the ball go between my legs. My team lost because of me. I felt that the whole school was laughing at me, no, not laughing, but the pressure you know? And I even cried. I think it was maybe middle school. I felt really embarrassed and sad. But I think the pants was the worst! I will remember that day. I will never forget that...

Andre: Wow you remember so far back!



Can you find Mr. Beck?

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