

# inews

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TEACHING  
RUNS IN THIS  
FAMILY

24  
BAKING  
FOR GEEKS!

**CELEBRATING  
EDUCATORS OF TODAY**



**MORE  
ONLINE**



An Institute of





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Interested to contribute articles or share feedback with the editorial team? Get in touch at [news@nie.edu.sg](mailto:news@nie.edu.sg).

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*Central to the job of a teacher is the difficult task of nurturing the next generation of youth towards achieving their full potential. We might think some people are born teachers, but most teachers I have met told me that teaching is hard work and a craft to be honed over time.*

While Singapore's teaching professional is recognised as one of the best in the world, we still need to continually improve ourselves to prepare for a constantly changing and uncertain world. Educational Research (ER) is a core course offered in NIE's Enhanced BA/BSc (Education) programme to prepare and equip pre-service teachers to become action-oriented and evidence-based teachers, capable of conducting their own studies to design lessons and curricula that suit their classes. We have featured some interesting ER studies conducted in this issue.

As pre-service teachers are being mentored during their stint in NIE, our alumni are continuing the good work mentoring their juniors in schools. Lead Teacher Tina Kishore Sajnani and Senior Teacher Tyrus Chua Chin-Lung from Evergreen Secondary School share their experiences as both mentees and mentors as well as some very useful mentoring tips which you can find online.

Finally, have a fun read about how teaching runs in some families with the feature on Jo-Anne Seet and four generations of teachers in her family as they bear witness of the change in teaching over time, moving from chalkboards and overhead projectors to Internet, social media and other new forms of media to engage students. Be inspired by their conviction that teaching is a high calling and an opportunity to build character in students.

To all teachers, **Happy Teachers' Day!**



Asst Prof Loh Chin Ee



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September 2019

### Director's Address 2019

📍 LT1, NIE

NIE Director Prof Christine Goh will share her key messages for the new academic year at the annual Director's Address.



September 2019

9/10

### 3rd Annual CATL Colloquium 2019

📍 NIE

The Curriculum, Assessment, Teaching, Learning (CATL) Colloquium 2019 features a series of workshops, seminars and presentations on curriculum, assessment, teaching and learning for classroom teachers and key personnel. They are offered by faculty members of the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (CTL) Academic Group, drawing on their rich and diverse teaching and research expertise in these areas.

14

September 2019

### Singapore History Day Competition 2019



Themed "Encounter and Exchange in Singapore History", this competition seeks to cultivate greater appreciation and understanding of history among secondary and junior college students in Singapore through historical research and the development of historical skills. It will also enable the students to learn about the past and appreciate the relevance of history in understanding present-day contexts; cultivate the necessary historical skills that allow students to interpret and construct knowledge about the past; encourage active learning by emphasising investigational and problem-based approaches to history; and develop dispositions and attitudes that encourage students to relate to the past on its own terms.



4/5

November 2019

### Rethinking History: Singapore and Global History

📍 National Museum of Singapore

The conference seeks to give Singapore history a global context and sets out to explore re-appraisals of Singapore history, regional Southeast Asian history, Asian history and global history. The focus is on global events that have influenced Singapore's development over 700 years since its early founding as a port city in 1299 by Sang Nila Utama. The conference assesses some of the most significant turning points in the modern history of the Asia-Pacific and the world.

In this section, we highlight NIE news and events over the last quarter. Read the full articles in the latest issue of NIEWS online or scan this QR code.



## Inaugural International Practicum Summit

The inaugural International Practicum Summit organised by the Office of Teacher Education was held from 1 to 2 August 2019. Participants included 12 representatives from our 10 partner universities, who were given the opportunity to network and share good teaching practices from their respective countries. Highlights of the summit included a keynote address by Prof Lin Goodwin, Dean of Teacher Education, University of Hong Kong; the launch of a book titled “*Inquiring Into Practice: Learning For Teaching, Learning From Teaching*”; and visits to Qihua Primary School and Jurong Secondary School.



NIE Director Prof Christine Goh (centre) and the organising team welcoming the representatives from our partner universities.

## Student Services Centre Reopens With Improved Services

The Student Services Centre (SSC) has relocated to NIE Block 1 since 16 April 2019. Students, alumni and others who have visited the new space were pleasantly surprised to find that the centre features high cocktail tables in an open, welcoming and friendly transaction environment instead of the traditional service counters.



The SSC team (from left) Tan Zhi Qian Edwin, Samerah Bte Tunot & Nur Sofeana Binte Werah.



Scan QR code to discover what your new student service centre has to offer.

## NIE Introduces Singapore Declaration On Research In Education For Sustainable Development



Speakers and Advisory Board Members at the sixth Singapore Sustainability Symposium.

The Singapore Declaration on Research in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) seeks to establish an international research agenda for ESD and identify the context and guiding principles to drive future ESD research. The declaration was introduced by NIE’s Chief Planning Officer, Assoc Prof Chang Chew Hung, at NTU’s sixth Singapore Sustainability Symposium on 8 May 2019.



## Rediscover The NTU Campus Art Trail

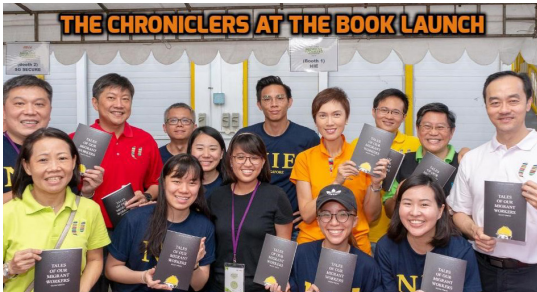


NTU is the first and only university in Singapore to have a campus art trail. Since its launch in October 2018 by the NTU Museum, the number of highlights on the art trail has risen from 42 to 57. This year, the trail has been extended to include selected artworks from the NIE art collection.

Check out the 2019 edition of “*Campus Art Trail: Nanyang Technological University*”, a 190-page eBook detailing the artworks found along the trail.



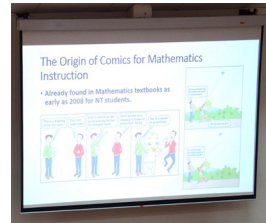
## NIE’s GESL Project Gives Voice To Singapore’s Migrant Workers



Parliamentarians Ms Josephine Teo (in orange), Mr Ng Chee Meng (in red) and Dr Koh Poh Koon (in white) were present at the book launch last year.

Following the success of “*Silent Voices: Tales of Our Migrant Workers*”, the book that spun-off from a 2018 NIE Group Endeavours in Service Learning (GESL) project, the student teachers behind the effort have continued to create opportunities for Singaporeans to appreciate migrant workers better as individuals with hopes and dreams. Besides staying in contact with the Migrant Workers’ Centre, the student teachers have continued to promote their book, and as a result, MWC has recently gotten Ben & Jerry and Unilever on board to contribute towards the Migrant Workers’ Assistance Fund.

## MAGICAL: Bringing Mathematics To Life Through Comics



Dean of OER, Prof David Hung, presenting a certificate to one of the participating teachers from the project.



MAGICAL and SUPER-MAGICAL refer to “MAtematics is Great: I Can And Like” and “Scaling UP the Education Research: MAGICAL”, two research projects funded by the Office of Education Research (OER) that involve the trial of teaching mathematics to low-progress learners through the use of comics. A Comics Symposium was held on 11 April 2019 to share the findings of the two research projects. The symposium was hosted by the Academy of Singapore Teachers, and organised by Assoc Prof Toh Tin Lam from NIE’s Mathematics and Mathematics Education Academic Group.

## Explaining The Impact Of Environmental Design On Learning

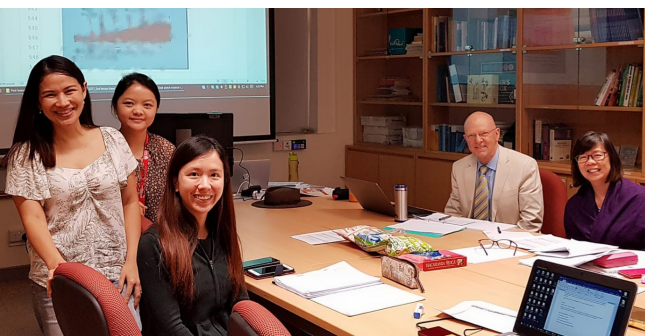
The Office of Education Research, in collaboration with the National Library Board (NLB), held its seventh Education in the City lecture on 31 May 2019. Addressing the theme of learning environments, speakers shared on how design thinking and purposeful layouts can improve student motivation and educational outcomes. The programme, which included a presentation by Asst Prof Loh Chin Ee from NIE's English Language and Literature Academic Group, was rounded off with a lively Q&A session.



The lecture on learning environments attracted a full turnout at NLB.

## NIE Welcomes Prof Len Unsworth As Visiting Consultant

Prof Len Unsworth, an English and Literacies Education professor at the Australian Catholic University, is NIE's visiting consultant for a research project titled 'Toward Effective Multimodal Meaning-Making with Visual Data in Geography through Productive Classroom Talk'. During his time in Singapore from 3 to 7 June 2019, Prof Unsworth worked with Dr Tricia Seow and Asst Prof J.J. Zhang from NIE's Humanities and Social Studies Education Academic Group, as well as Dr Caroline Ho from the English Language Institute of Singapore.



Prof Unsworth reviewing the analytical framework and coding structure with the research team.

## Graduation Day For First Batch Of Tamil Language BA (Ed) Students



Mr Satheeswaran Mathiyazakan (L) and Ms Nashima Banu.

Mr Satheeswaran Mathiyazakan and Ms Nashima Banu have become the first to graduate from NIE with a BA (Ed) degree with a Tamil specialisation in July 2019. Offered by the Asian Languages and Cultures Academic Group's Tamil Language and Culture Division, the programme features modules such as Translation and Singapore Education, as well as Singapore Tamil Literature among its curriculum.



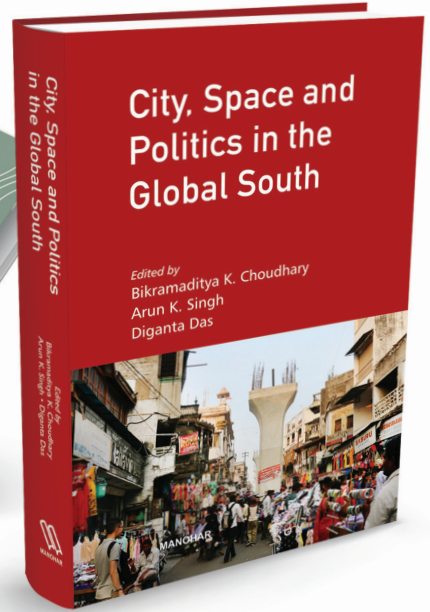
## New Titles By NIE Lecturers

Two faculty members from the Humanities and Social Studies Education Academic Group have done NIE proud with their respective publications. The first is a book by Assoc Prof Kevin Blackburn entitled “Decolonizing the History Curriculum in Malaysia and Singapore”, while the second publication, “City, Space and Politics in the Global South”, was co-edited by Asst Prof Diganta Das. Check out both books at the NIE Library.

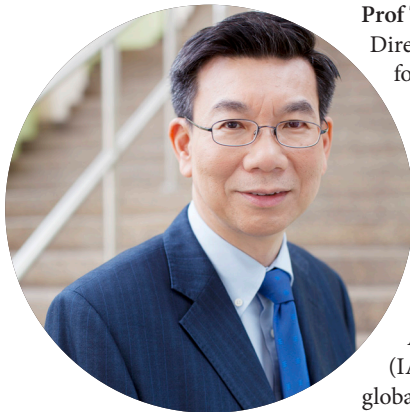


“Decolonizing the History Curriculum in Malaysia and Singapore”  
Call No: LA1236 Bla

“City, Space and Politics in the Global South”  
Call No.: HT384.14 Cit



## Prof Tan Oon Seng Elected Fellow Of The International Academy Of Education



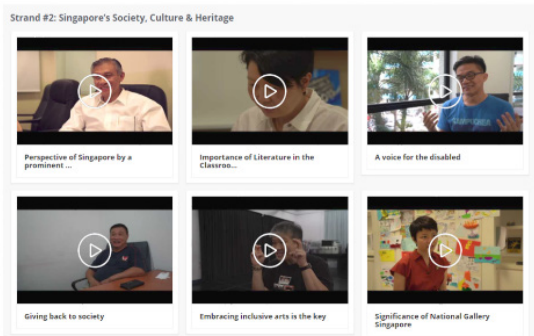
Prof Tan Oon Seng, Director of NIE’s Centre for Research in Child Development, has recently joined the ranks of a select group of distinguished professors worldwide as Fellow of the International Academy of Education (IAE). The IAE comprises globally renowned scholars who aspire to foster scholarly excellence in all fields of education.



Fellows of IAE: NIE’s Prof Tan Oon Seng pictured with Prof Bridget Long, Dean of Harvard Graduate School of Education.

## New Videos To Boost Values-Based Education

The Singapore Kaleidoscope (SgK) team from the Humanities and Social Studies Education Academic Group has successfully completed the production of 15 outsourced video vignettes with funding from NIE’s Incentivising ICT Use Innovation Grant (i3G). The videos were completed in March 2019 and have been incorporated into the SgK course website.



Screen capture of the SgK Perspectives on Singapore page showing some of the newly produced videos.

Scan QR code for more information on the SgK programme.



## NIE Proudly Presents **The Class Of 2019!**

NIE's Teachers' Investiture Ceremonies (TIC) were held on 2 and 3 July 2019. Amongst the 975-strong cohort, 44 graduands received prizes and awards for their outstanding achievements while 16 made up the inaugural batch of school counsellors from NIE's revamped one-year Diploma in School Counselling programme. Ms Indranee Rajah, Second Minister for Education, was guest of honour at the first ceremony, while Assoc Prof Muhammad Faishal Ibrahim, Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Education, officiated at the second.



a. Class of 2019 graduands taking their Teachers' Pledge.



b. A group of graduands celebrating.  
 c. Ms Indranee Rajah and Prof Christine Goh striking a post with graduands outside the Nanyang Auditorium.  
 d. Ms Indranee Rajah and Prof Christine Goh with TIC Ceremony 1 award winners.

## Alumni Revisit NIE After 20 Years

Alumni from the Class of 1994 and Class of 1999 were invited back to NIE campus at separate homecoming events held on 13 and 20 July 2019. The alumni toured the NIE Visitor Learning Centre in the afternoon and spent the evening catching up with one another at an NTU Class Reunion dinner joined by NIE Director Prof Christine Goh.



Alumni from the Class of 1994.



Alumni from the Class of 1999.



Alumni taking a leisurely tour of the NIE Visitor Learning Centre.



# It's Time For Taiwan (& NTNU) Now!

Founded in 1922, the National Taiwan Normal University (NTNU), fondly known to the locals as 师大, is among Taiwan's top institutions of higher education and an NTU partner university.

Steeped in tradition and renowned for innovation, NTNU's commitment to the pursuit of academic excellence and strong character (誠正勤朴) is evident in the many influential scholars and researchers it has nurtured over the years. It has won numerous awards for its achievements, including the 43rd place in the 2019 QS World University Rankings in Education.

NTNU is internationally celebrated for its Mandarin Training Centre and its Library, which has the most extensive collection of educational books in Taiwan. The strategic location of its main campus in the cultural hub of Taipei City, has enabled the university to imbue and enrich its college experience with the arts and entertainment.



Photo credit: NTNU



Wen Huei Hall, on the main campus, boasting over 90 years of history, is located right after the administration building, and is listed as a historical site in Taipei.

Photo credit: Liu Hsuan-Lung



Liberty Bell, on the Vienna forest of main campus.

Photo credit: NTNU

Take in the beauty of Gaomei Wetland during dusk in Taichung.

Photo credit: Liu, Hsuan-Lung



If you are visiting or studying at NTNU, don't miss the opportunity to discover and indulge in Taiwan's rich cultural heritage and tradition. Here are some itineraries to get you started.

- Located in Xinyi District, TAIPEI 101 was the world's tallest building when it opened in 2004, and it received a Platinum LEED rating to become the world's tallest and largest green building in 2011. It has a multi-level shopping centre and an observatory on the 89<sup>th</sup> floor that boasts the best panoramic view of Taipei.
- Eslite Bookstore (诚品24小时书店) provides innovative cultural services, and is the first local bookstore to stay open the whole year round.
- The spectacular topographical landscapes, stunning mountains, and beautiful coastlines. You can enjoy the many parks and scenic areas that preserved Taiwan's best natural ecological environment and cultural sites, such as Yangmingshan that is famous for its volcanic landscape, Taroko that is known for its sheer canyons and breathtaking Liwu River, and Kenting that is popular for its sunshine and tropical environment.
- Participate in the various folk festivals, religious practices, traditional skills classes, local cuisines and modern arts to enjoy the endless cultural and artistic wonders offered by Taiwan's 14 indigenous tribes.

NTNU has long been recognised as one of Taiwan's elite institutions of higher education. NTNU not only boasts an active academic climate but also embraces cultural diversity. The internationally renowned Mandarin Training Center at NTNU draws around 1800 students from over 70 countries each quarter and in the summer with its distinguished language courses. NTNU and NIE have been in partnership for semester exchange and international practicum since 2013.

More information  
at this QR Code,



*The iconic Taipei 101.  
Photo credit: Liu, Hsuan-Lung*



*Catch the spectacular sunrise  
in Taitung.  
Photo credit: Roc Y P Chen*



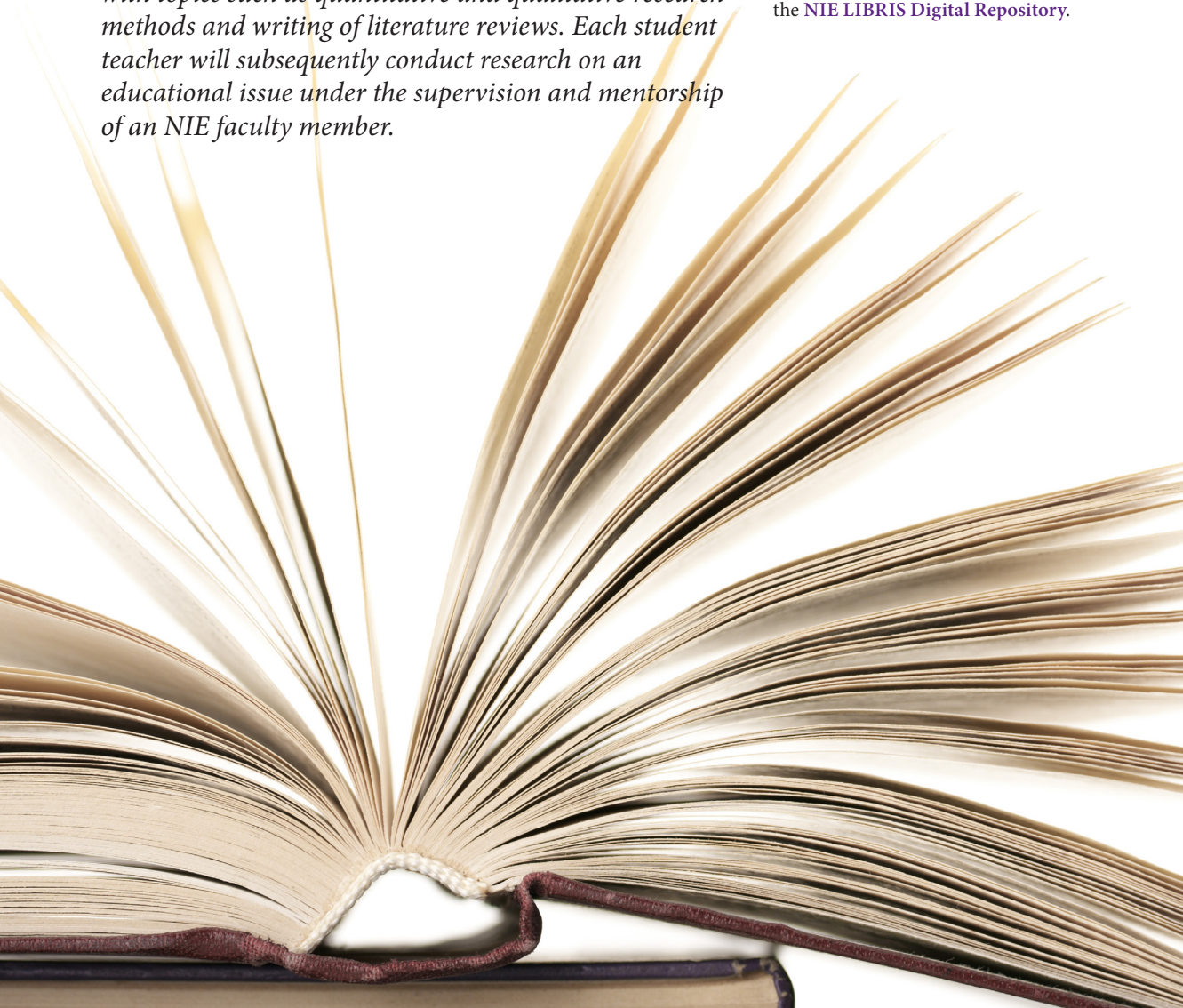
*Take a walk in the Salt Fields  
of Tainan.  
Photo credit: Roc Y P Chen*



# Educational Research Highlights

*Educational Research is a core course in NIE's Enhanced BA/BSc (Education) Programme where student teachers are introduced to the research process, with topics such as quantitative and qualitative research methods and writing of literature reviews. Each student teacher will subsequently conduct research on an educational issue under the supervision and mentorship of an NIE faculty member.*

Showcased on the next page are three out of 10 outstanding projects that have received the Dean's Commendation award this year. The full research papers can be found in the [NIE LIBRIS Digital Repository](#).



## Optimising the School Library for Reading: An Exploratory Case Study of Students in One Singapore Primary School

Choo Mei Fang, Jul 2015 intake

Supervisor: Asst Prof Loh Chin Ee

Research shows that school libraries have a positive impact on student literacy and learning because they encourage reading among students. As previous research done in Singapore was mainly focused on secondary school libraries, there is a dearth of knowledge about the literacy impact of libraries in primary schools.

The educational research examines the reading habits and behaviours of students in one primary school library to understand what books they are reading and how to encourage more reading through the school library. It used an exploratory mixed methods case study approach

by collecting data from observations, focus groups and interviews.

The findings showed that the students' reading interests and habits would change as they became older. Lower primary and upper primary students had different reading needs and behave differently in school libraries. The study recommended primary schools to attend to the library collection and space design with this difference in reading needs in mind so as to foster greater reading habits among students.

## A Qualitative Study of Cluster Superintendents Using Schwartz's Theory of Human Values

Neo Qing Hao, Jul 2016 intake

Supervisor: Asst Prof Hairon Salleh

Much can be learned from leaders who have reached the pinnacles of their education careers. Many of them would start their career as a teacher before taking on middle leadership positions, like subject or department heads, and senior roles, like vice-principals and principals. Some of them would move on to become cluster superintendents or equivalent senior leadership positions in MOE. Their leadership, experiences and career paths could provide invaluable lessons in knowledge, skills and values for aspiring education leaders.

The research aims to identify the values that these pinnacle leaders hold dear as they fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Six retired cluster superintendents were

interviewed in this qualitative study. Being retired was an important criterion for the subjects as it minimised self-censorship of data deemed current and sensitive. Using Shalom Schwartz's Theory of Human Values (1992), different values were coded to the transcribed interviews.

The study found that cluster superintendents prioritised the value types "universalism" and "benevolence" in their management and development of principals, and "self-direction" in their professional development. It also revealed unresolved tension between the ranking and the development of school principals. The study provided useful insights to guide the selection and professional development of future cluster superintendents.

## Mediated Learning Experience: Facilitating Students' Learning Cognitively and Affectively

Siti Shahirah binte Samad, Jul 2016 intake

Supervisor: Dr Chua Bee Leng

Oral communication, which involves the process of expressing ideas through the medium of speech, plays a crucial role in the life of students (Lucanus, 2017). In 2011, MOE proposed using video clips instead of line drawings as stimuli for oral examinations to provide a more engaging and realistic context to stimulate conversation. In 2017, the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board implemented video stimuli as part of the primary school oral assessment.

The research paper conceptualises how the Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) can be used to enhance the Kipling Method utilised by teachers as a strategy to teach the Video Stimulus Response (VSR) component in Malay Language Oral examinations. MLE is a theory

by Reuven Feuerstein based on the Structural Cognitive Modifiability, which proposes all cognitive deficiencies can be developed. MLE focuses on the quality of interactions between the learner and the environment through a mediator. These interactions, underpinned by the parameters of MLE, are designed to develop specific cognitive functions.

Through literature review and mapping of cognitive functions needed to complete the VSR assessment at different stages of the mental act, the research study proposed a lesson plan that would incorporate the parameters of MLE for effective teaching of oral lessons using VSR in Malay Language.



# Five Inspirations To Get Children To Compose Music



by Assoc Prof Tan Ai Girl, Early Childhood & Special Needs Education (ECSE)

*Bring out the sense of rhythm and confidence in every child by teaching them to explore the world around them and compose musical notes with five simple ECSE inspirations.*



Composing is a synthesis of vocal or instrumental sounds to produce harmony or expression of emotion. To compose is to make up a whole—to compile, to create, to write, to calm (down) or to make quiet. In this way, composing is life.

Composing creates beauty, harmony, and wellness. With some creative imagination, we can create the sound of rain by dragging our fingernails across the surface of a desk or the sound of wind by scratching a piece of paper. There are numerous inspirations to teach children with or without special needs to compose music. Here, we share five simple methods that teachers can use to bring the “Mozart” out of every child.

### 01 Stimuli

Children create rhythms as a way of expressing and making sense of what they see in the world around them. They are naturally curious and external stimuli can help to arouse their interest to compose. Teachers already know about the importance of taking their young students outside of the classrooms to listen to birdsongs, immerse in nature, and socialise with other children in the playground. These are great examples of exposing children to external stimuli. Lin shared how young children naturally compose in singing, chanting, rhythmic, speech, playing and moving, like her example of a five-year-old walking home with his father humming about the traffic on the road: *doo doo chic chic chic, stop by red, go by green, car is coming, car is coming* (Lin, 2019, p. 65). The song was impromptu; a spontaneous response to the boy’s immediate experience in his everyday life.

### 02 Tradition

Provide opportunities for children to compose and perform music at cultural and traditional music festivals. As they sing and dance to the music, the children will experience moments of collaborative or distributed creativity. Nakamura and Kosaka (2019) suggested that exposing children to traditional music during cultural festivals without framing their minds of creative imagination can be beneficial for the children to compose their own songs freely and uninhibited. Nakamuar and Kosaka (2019) examined how communal space was created when young participants in the Song of Inari sang and wandered in groups during the festival. Musical creativity, being unpredictable and unconstrained, is distributed (Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009, p.82) with the ability to cross boundaries of emotion, ideology and culture.

### 03 Soundscape

Sometimes, a simple piece of paper can do wonders. Imada (2019) suggested two activities for children to participate in soundscape—creating sound using paper. In the first activity, the children pass a piece of paper from one person to another in silence as they observe and contemplate the rhythm of their body movements. For the second exercise, the children are given a stack of papers to produce different sounds. By varying the thickness and folding the papers, a wide repertoire of sounds can be generated. Their movements create a beautiful kinetic rhythm integral to the sounds they are composing.

### 04 Improvised Conversation

Koma (2019) suggested using simple instruments, like triangles, drums and tambourines to develop confidence and musical creativity in children. Her study showed how children were able to initiate improvised conversation with their tambourines as they explored the sounds of the musical instruments individually and as a group. As they generated the sounds by moving and beating the tambourines against their palms and other parts of the body, like knees, elbows and arms, the children were encouraged to assimilate and expand these sounds discovered by themselves and their groups (Koma, 2019).

### 05 Fusion Pedagogy

Music composition crosses the boundaries of cultural semiosphere as well as non-semiosphere of animals and objects. This *musicosphere*, while divergent, is a unified mechanism of music (convergence, see Noeth, 2006). A fusion pedagogy is a teaching and learning process that can be created by joining two or more social (inter)actions among the teacher and student participants in the *musicosphere*. A fusion pedagogy is life-enhancing as teachers and children cross all boundaries during music composition. For example, a teacher initiates a song with the children: *One, two, three, four, five. Once I caught a fish alive*. As the song is sung repeatedly, the teacher changes the gestures and lyrics, and the children move along with their fingers and their bodies according to the lyrics. Singing along is imaginative. The fusion of bodies and music is evident in the gesture of reeling in an imaginative fishing rod, among other actions. Composing the images of objects and numbers is meaningful creativity. The smiles on the children’s faces and the actions of their bodies endorse the lesson. As their minds and emotions move in tandem with the music and lyrics cross the biosphere, e.g. fish and fingers, and semiosphere, e.g. numbers and metaphorical expression, the children’s creative imagination flourishes in the *musicosphere*.



# My Mentor, My Mentee

*Two teachers from Evergreen Secondary School share their memorable mentoring experiences, first as a mentee and later as a mentor.*

All NIE pre-service teachers are mentored by their cooperating teachers and supervisors. When they grow and eventually become experienced teachers, they will mentor junior colleagues, helping these beginning teachers to learn the ropes of teaching and settle in the new school environment.

NIEWS got hold of two mentee-turned-mentor teachers, Tina Kishore Sajnani (Lead Teacher, Literature) and Tyrus Chua Chin-Lung (Senior Teacher, English Language), from Evergreen Secondary School, to give us an overview on the ins and outs of mentoring.



*Mentoring is a social partnership in which a more experienced member of staff guides a colleague towards meeting desired personal development outcomes. As mentoring does not aim to achieve specific standards or performance targets, it alleviates some of the stress junior teachers might face opening up to the more senior mentors.*

*Mentoring is especially useful in the smooth transition of beginning teachers from training to teaching by providing them assurance and moral support, and helping them navigate the many roles teachers have to play in schools. As such, mentors need to be sensitive to the experience and needs of the mentee so as to offer appropriate, timely and constructive guidance.*

*I used to have a mentor who was a great inspiration to me. She was able to simplify complex ideas into bite-sized chunks that her students could easily learn and absorb. More importantly, she was kind and always accessible to me. I felt I could ask her anything and never had to worry about appearing silly. She was very reassuring, and would encourage me to experiment with new ideas. I now realise that both my teacher and mentor personas are closely modelled after her.*

Tina Kishore Sajnani





*Mentoring is a process of professional and personal sharing between a mentor and a mentee. As the pair of mentor-mentee is usually teaching in the same faculty, mentoring has the effect of expanding the community of teacher collaborators. As the mentees gain confidence and become better teachers through mentoring, the overall quality of teaching and innovation in the faculty will also improve.*

*My first mentor was not only a brilliant sounding board whom I could get constructive feedback on my teaching ideas, he would constantly encourage me to try out these ideas in the classroom, and direct me to other teachers specialising in different teaching methods. These pedagogical experts would inevitably become my unofficial mentors and role models as I tapped on their expertise and experience for my professional and personal development.*

*Now that I am a mentor myself, I find that sharing my thoughts with my mentees has not only helped them formulate their teaching philosophies, it has helped me crystallise mine. There is so much knowledge and insights that can be gained learning from my mentees. Truly, just as I am a mentor to them, they are mentors to me.*

Tyrus Chua



### Resources



Practising teachers who are interested to learn more about mentoring can consider the two-day “Coaching/Mentoring Course” conducted by NIE.



There are also plenty of books on mentoring at the NIE library. Here are some good examples:

- 1 *How to be a brilliant mentor: developing outstanding teachers (E-book)*
- 2 *Mentoring preservice teachers through practice : a framework for coaching with CARE*
- 3 *Mentoring student teachers and interns : strategies for engaging, relating, supporting, and challenging future educators*



If you are considering implementing a mentoring programme in your school, you can contact [Inservice@nie.edu.sg](mailto:Inservice@nie.edu.sg) for advice and guidance.

Read more here:



Mentoring: Unleashing the Full Potential of Tomorrow's Teachers in NIEWS 105.



**9 Good Mentoring Tips from Tina & Tyrus. Scan QR code to unlock!**



# Teaching Runs In This Family

*As we celebrate the role of educators during Singapore's bicentennial year, we met with a family of teachers who shared how classrooms and pedagogies have changed over three generations.*

## Brenda Seet, 22

Jo-Anne's sister  
NIE student, BA (Ed) Year 2

"The late well-known criminal lawyer Subhas Anandan was one of Grandpa Oliver's notorious students. Grandpa recognised his potential and made him Chairman of the Literary, Debate and Drama Society. This story inspired me to take up teaching. If I can learn to believe in my students and see their potential, they too can grow up to become so much more."

## Derek Seet, 18

Jo-Anne's brother  
Currently serving National Service

## Dr Oliver Seet, 82

Jo-Anne's paternal grandfather  
Retired Associate Professor, NIE  
50 years in teaching and teacher education

"The most important thing in teaching is the ability to connect with your students. I like the metaphor of a teacher as a gardener who provides the right conditions for growth. As good teachers prefer to listen and ask questions, they are the ones who can get students to talk in class, think for themselves and use their imagination."

## Mrs Grace Seet, 50

Jo-Anne's mum  
Former Teacher  
St Margaret's Primary School

"Teaching is a high calling. It's a great privilege to be able to journey with students for a season, to seize every opportunity to impart values and nurture potential, especially in leadership and character. Watching as students grow into responsible young adults, I think, has been the greatest reward for me."

## Dr Irwin Seet, 54

Jo-Anne's dad  
Director of Student Development  
Singapore Sports School

"Besides academic grades and CCAs, I encourage my daughters to focus on values and character development in class. The prevalence of new media has changed the way interactions take place in the classroom so as teachers, we need to re-think our role as educators and how we educate our students presently."



Meet Jo-Anne Seet, an NIE graduate who comes from a family with four generations of teachers. She has two younger siblings who will be following in her footsteps, while her parents, paternal grandparents, maternal grandmother and two great-grandparents have been teachers as well. NIEWS visited the Seets at their family home to find out what it's like growing up with parents who are teachers, and how teaching styles have evolved with each generation.



Scan QR Code for our exclusive video interview! Hear from three generations of the Seet family and discover what keeps their teaching passion alive!



**Jo-Anne Seet, 23**

BA(Ed) and Teaching Scholar Programme, Class of 2019  
Currently English & Literature Teacher  
St Gabriel's Secondary School

“Believe me, we are always getting our grammar and pronunciation corrected at home! Despite growing up in a family of teachers, it was during the evening wakes of my paternal grandma – when I met hundreds of her ex-students whose lives she had touched – that I realised I wanted to teach. I hope to make a positive impact in the lives of my students, just like her.”

**Mrs Rosalind Seah, 80**

Jo-Anne's maternal grandmother  
Retired Primary School Teacher  
40 years in teaching

“I remember having to draw maps on a chalkboard and look for pictures in newspapers and magazines to mount on vanguard sheets to illustrate my lessons before the arrival of the OHP and film projectors. I'm truly proud of my children and grandchildren who have taken up the challenge to teach.”



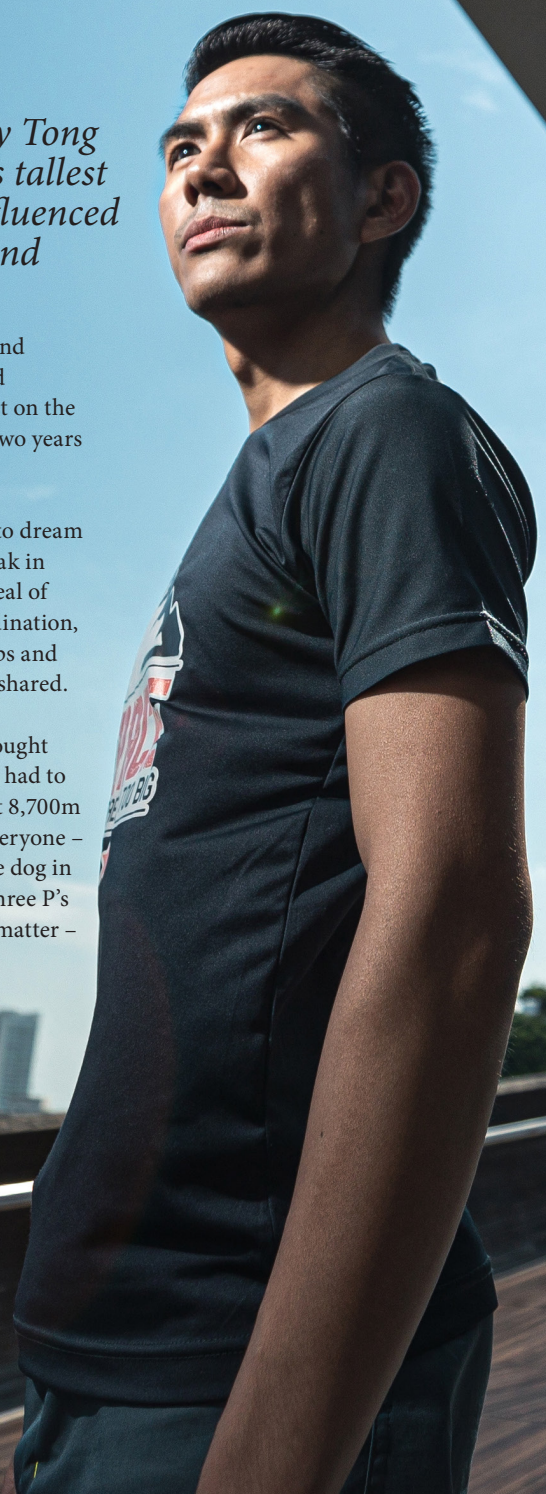
# Conquering Everest

*NIE NTU, Singapore alumnus Jeremy Tong recounts his epic ascent to the world's tallest peak, and how the experience has influenced his outlook on patience, persistence and mental power.*

Jeremy Tong, who graduated with a BSc in Sports Science and Management in 2016, has been in the news. The 29-year-old adventure consultant had successfully scaled Mount Everest on the morning of 22 May 2019, doing Singapore and NIE proud two years after a failed attempt in 2017 due to hypothermia.

“Although I’ve been climbing since I was 14, I only started to dream about Mount Everest after summiting the 7,000m Lenin Peak in Kyrgyzstan in 2015. A challenge like this requires a great deal of commitment – not only in terms of the planning and coordination, but also the two years it has taken to secure the sponsorships and another three months spent on intensive training,” Jeremy shared.

According to him, the second attempt at Mount Everest brought with it new challenges. “The fear of failure was something I had to overcome, especially as we approached the south summit at 8,700m where I turned around two years ago. Fear is inherent in everyone – and the experience has taught me that it’s not the size of the dog in the fight, but the size of the fight in the dog. This, and the three P’s of the expedition – pace, patience and power of mind over matter – was what kept us going in the end,” he added.



Remember, there are no shortcuts to the top of Everest. It has taken almost 15 years since I climbed my first mountain before I stood on the summit of Everest...

On the physical front, the journey uphill represented just half of the battle. Jeremy confessed that there were no summit cheers when he got to the top. “Rather, we were just relieved to have reached the 50% mark and the first thing that crossed my mind was ‘Let’s not spend too long here!’” he recalled with a laugh.

When asked if he’s ever felt that the challenges of an educator might be akin to his experiences at Mount Everest, Jeremy replied, “Sometimes you’ve got to believe in the things you’re saying before you can convince your students. This time around, even though I was afraid to fail, I had to dig deep into my experience in 2017 and muster the confidence to face my fears. I had to believe that I was going to summit Mount Everest, even before I took the first step,” he shared.



On a softer note, Jeremy revealed yet another important lesson for teachers: “Be patient with people with less experience or are slower in their processes. During this trip, I encountered two climbers – one on the way up and the other on the way down – who were extremely slow and jamming up the entire route. I believe there are moments where educators might feel the same way. My advice is to be patient – with yourself and with those who require your help. This may sound a bit cliché, but no dream is ever too big. Keep practicing and stay persistent in your approach. Don’t just settle for contentment – be grateful for life. Be uncomfortable!”

There were definitely times when Jeremy had been tempted to give up. Having to balance family, work commitments and sponsorships while planning for the expedition caused him to confront his priorities. “I kept asking myself whether I really wanted to go back and I did. So I kept reaching out to sponsors even though it was already late 2018 and I only managed to raise a quarter of the funds required to return to Everest,” said Jeremy, recounting the mental anguish.

“Remember, there are no shortcuts to the top of Everest. It has taken almost 15 years since I climbed my first mountain before I stood on the summit of Everest. If you want it as much as the air that you breathe, you will be successful,” said Jeremy, with deep personal satisfaction.



# Professional Learning & Continuing Education



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Looking for a good read but not sure where to start?  
Check out these book titles available at the NIE library.

## It Won't Be Easy: An Exceedingly Honest (and Slightly Unprofessional) Love Letter To Teaching



TRENDING

By Tom Rademacher

The author, who has taught for a decade and won the Minnesota Teacher of the Year in 2014, writes about major and familiar issues, like “how to teach in the age of Internet” and “choosing the battles to fight in classroom control”, in this witty and no-holds-barred love letter to Teaching. As Rademacher recounts the things that have made teaching a difficult profession to court, he also confesses to the valuable lessons in failure and the wonderful joy of small victories in the classroom, before resolutely affirming his love for teaching.

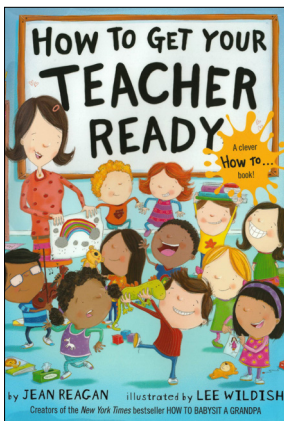


Call No.: LA2317.R25 It

## How To Get Your Teacher Ready



By Jean Reagan



An amusing children's book that gives readers a different perspective of teachers. Reagan turns the tables by encouraging children to welcome their teachers, look out for them, and treat them with care and respect the whole year round. Through fun and engaging tips, she encourages children

to empathise, support and learn together with their teachers. Teachers will find many of the endearing illustrations in the book relatable.

Call No.: PZ7 ReaJ

## A Teacher's Race Course: Ruminations And Reflections

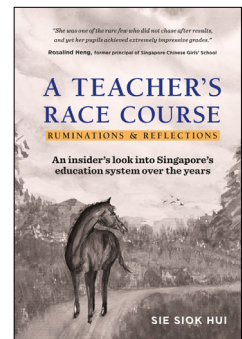


By Sie Siok Hui

The heart of Sie's posthumously published debut illuminates the essence of being an impactful educator within a result-oriented education system.

Weaving personal stories with student correspondences, Sie reflected on the necessity to treat learners with respect, compassion and patience

in order to nurture them and develop in them a sense of purpose that would go beyond the boundaries of standard assessments. This inspirational book—the product of Sie's lifelong passion for teaching—provides valuable insights on teacher development for a better education system that was based on her research and decades of teaching experience.



Call No.: LA2383.S52 S54



# Baking For Geeks!

by Dr Johannah Soo, Lecturer, Natural Sciences and Science Education Academic Group

*Baking is fun! It can even be therapeutic. However, I do know of some who seem to have problems baking a decent-looking cake. It really isn't so tough, just follow these easy tips on baking:*



## 1 Play with recipes

Some recipes can be very brief and assume certain level of skills. If you can't figure out the recipe, look for a similar one on the Internet and do a comparison. Video instructions are easily available nowadays, and these tend to be more helpful. More importantly, understand the concepts of baking and get your portions right. A pound cake uses 1 part flour: 1 part eggs: 1 part fat: 1 part sugar. A muffin uses 2 parts flour: 2 parts liquid: 1 part eggs: 1 part fat. If you prefer a denser cake, use more liquid; or if you want a cake that is less sweet, cut back on the sugar.



## 2 Use good ingredients

High quality ingredients produce good cakes, so it pays to spend a little more on better grade foods. "Food service" grade butter has a weaker flavour to allow bakers greater control over the recipes. When a recipe calls for eggs, this usually refers to large eggs of about 60 g. The eggs sold in Singapore are about 55 g, so you may need to add one more egg if the recipe calls for a large quantity of eggs.



## 3 Get your numbers right

You'll also need to know how much ingredients to prepare. American recipes tend to use the Imperial or U.S. measuring systems, while others are in the S.I. (metric) system. If you need to do some conversion, do it before getting your ingredients, so that you would have enough ingredients to start. For example, one block of butter in an American recipe is about 113 g, but butter sold in the Singapore supermarkets is typically 225-250 g per block. Some brands of unsalted butter are sold in 227 g blocks. If you are low on a particular ingredient, just scale the recipes proportionately.



## 4 No oven, no problem

Baking doesn't always have to take place in an oven, and it is possible to whip up a delicious cake using a rice cooker, air fryer or microwave oven. Ultimately, it is the transfer of hot air in a convection oven that allows the cake to be baked. As long as you place your batter in a cooker with sufficient hot air circulation, you can bake your cake.

# Happy Baking!



Turn to next page for  
Dr Soo's Goof-Proof  
Orange Butter  
Cupcakes Recipe!





*Dr Johannah Soo is a lecturer from Natural Sciences and Science Education Academic Group. Besides teaching and researching about food consumerism, Dr Soo actively promotes sustainable living through the NIE Green Clan, a volunteer group dedicated to nurturing environmentally responsible behaviours in the staff and student community.*

# Dr Soo's Goof-Proof Orange Butter Cupcakes



Scan QR Code for the video.

## Method

1. Preheat oven to 175 °C. Line muffin tin with paper cupcake cases. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour and baking powder.
2. Using a stand mixer on medium speed, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
3. Add orange zest, followed by eggs into the butter and sugar mixture, and continue to beat for 1 min. If the mixture curdles, just add 1 tablespoon of flour and continue mixing.
4. On low speed, add flour mixture in 3 parts, alternating with juice and essence.
5. Switch mixer to medium speed and beat for 15 sec, until batter appears uniform. The batter should look thick and creamy.
6. Pour batter into the cupcake cases until 3/4 full.
7. Bake for about 20 min, or until it turns a dark-golden colour. Insert a skewer or toothpick into the middle of the cupcake and make sure it comes out clean.
8. Let to rest in pan for 5 min then remove to cooling rack. Allow cake to completely cool before before serving.

## Ingredients

- 250 g plain flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 250 g salted butter
- 170 g sugar
- 3 eggs
- Zest of 2 large oranges
- 100 ml fresh orange juice
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla essence



**Addition of cocoa powder:** Remember the dry ingredients and wet ingredients must be proportionate. For example, if you add a tablespoon of cocoa powder, you need to remove a tablespoon of plain flour.

**Addition of chocolate or nuts:** Add them to the batter just before baking. Give it a quick stir but do not over-mix. As chocolate sprinkles/rice melts very fast, you are inevitably increasing the proportion of wet ingredients in the recipe. This would produce a denser cake. Alternatively, increase the baking time by five minutes or until the cake is cooked thoroughly.





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