

Having grown in the metropolis of Hong Kong, I am not only able to experience the hustle and bustle of city life, but also the serenity of the countryside. As a nature enthusiast, I often go on weekend hiking trips with my friends. I have always been fascinated by the city's evolution from a quaint fishing village to an international financial hub, yet also being able to striking a balance between urban development and nature preservation. This unique blend of urban development and natural beauty has triggered my interest in Geography.

My passion for hiking has naturally led to my involvement in my school's Geography Society, where I participated in several field trips in Hong Kong. The most memorable experience was a trip to Mui Wo, a region once known for its agricultural activities. The fieldwork focuses on the transformation in Mui Wo's agricultural system, where I gained hands-on experience conducting soil analysis and water sampling in nearby farmlands. This also introduced me to modern agricultural practices, such as hydroponics. This experience went beyond hiking as a hobby, it solidified my ambition to pursue a career focused on sustainability and environmental management.

As a Peer Counsellor, my role was to provide a safe zone for new students to assimilate to a new environment, while listening to their hardships and provide advice as a peer. This has taught me how to be empathetic and mindful while actively listening to others. I was also elected the Vice President of the Orienteering Society. The nature of orienteering blends navigation and collaboration, which greatly enhanced my ability to communicate effectively. These skills are crucial for conducting successful geographical fieldwork, especially when working as a team.

Since moving to London, I became a keen reader of National Geographic, which gifted me an opportunity to see the world without travelling abroad within the confinements of my bedroom. One article called "The Future of Rail Travel in the UK Looks Bleak. Here's why" stood out to me the most. It mentioned the complexities of public transportation in the UK, especially how high-speed rail projects like HS2 were eventually abandoned. The article stressed that the lack of coordination between government policies, rail privatisation and investment disparities has resulted in one of the most expensive and inefficient rail systems in the world. It also deepened my understanding of how transportation systems shape a city's mobility and social equity.

Being wary of the stark difference of commuter's experience between Hong Kong and London, the article solidifies my ongoing EPQ project about revitalising London transport. With my yearning for a better-connected London, I investigated the impact of urban development on transportation in both cities in my EPQ project, aided by insights from the National Geographic article. In my findings, Hong Kong's "Rail + Property" model made its transport system stand out the most, compared with the UK's fragmented and privatised system, which the UK can learn from. My EPQ research, combined with my background in Computer Science, allowed me to delve deeper into data analysis, comparing how Hong Kong and London conquer urban challenges through transport. I proposed potential

solutions for London's transport issues, such as better utilisation of Tramlink and the derivatisation of railway companies. This research process has sharpened my time management, critical thinking and disciplinary skills, blending Geography, Computer Science and Urban Planning.

Geography allows us to understand ongoing world problems and plan for a sustainable future accordingly. My personal experiences, combined with the global perspectives I gained from National Geographic, drive me to study geography at a deeper level. I look forward to contributing to a future where cities grow sustainably while respecting the natural world.