

TEACHERS' REFLECTIONS OF 2020



Mr Michael Lee: One thing that 2020 did not fail to deliver was surprises. In April we entered into a full lockdown known in Singapore as a Circuit Breaker. Instead of sulking at home and being glued to the TV, I decided to pursue my hobby, photography. I set up a makeshift mini studio at home and did some commercial product shoots. It was a good opportunity to play around with the lighting condition at home and see how best I could utilise it for the benefit of the shots. Photography is never complete without editing. Post-production photo editing is equally challenging and time-consuming. It is needed to complete the workflow and eventually produce a satisfactory result.

In Project 1, I did a setup for a commercial Tissot watch shoot. I used some rocks as the backdrop to showcase the outdoor nature of the product. The total time taken was 3 working days. In Project 2, I did an advertising shot for a beer bottle. The total time needed from setup to production to post-editing was about 4 working days. In Project 3, I did an Ironman Head Unit Display scene. The production shoot was much simpler compared to the other two. I did a production shoot of my face that was gently diffused with red light for some special effects. The post-production editing however required more effort. The total time taken for project 3 was about 5 working days.



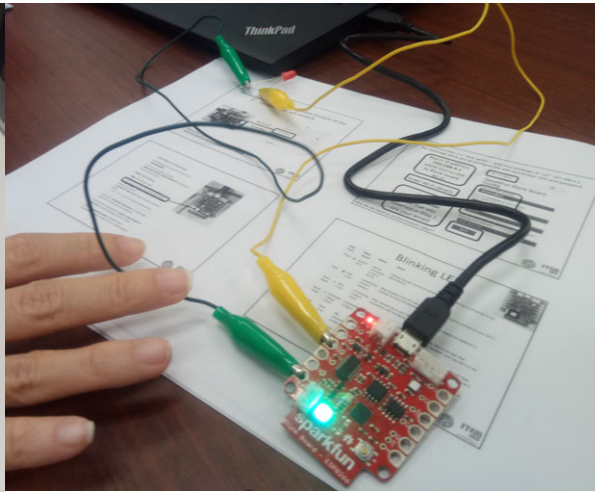
Mdm Teo Soh Hwa: One thing I am grateful for during the Circuit Breaker is forging stronger bonds with my younger daughter. We spent a lot of time trying out new dishes for my family such as Murtabak, Abacus, Chee Cheong Fun with minced meat and prawns, Bunga Telang Roti Jala, Nasi Lemak, Salmon Pie, Guo Tie, Purple Sweet Potato Buns, Soon Kueh and my favourite breakfast snack, Peanut Pancake. All of these were hand made and from scratch. I find gardening very therapeutic so I made time to plant vegetables such as kangkong and cai xin as well as bean sprouts which I used in all of my fried noodles. I experimented with fermenting red rice wine and though I succeeded after the second attempt it was still not good enough. It wasn't as sweet as it was supposed to be. My son was happy when he got to eat his favourite cheese cake which I made for his birthday. In between cooking and cleaning, I made time to sew batik masks for family and friends and decorated the masks given by Temasek Holdings with batik appliqué as I enjoy sewing.

Mdm Noorlizah Osman: Can you believe that I actually did not step out of my house for the whole two months of the Circuit Breaker period?! I cannot believe it myself either! Despite the busy mornings and afternoons checking on my students' online assignments and making my morning roll-calls, I managed to explore interesting and fun things to do.

When Dalgona coffee was in-trend then, it got me curious. I whipped out my old but sturdy whisk to experiment with instant coffee and sugar. It was really amazing how coffee and sugar turned out to be creamy without the cream, like whipping egg whites to make meringue! Since I don't drink coffee anymore, I got my helper and son to try this "exotic" drink, which got them sleepless the whole night! Oops! I might have used too much coffee I guess! No wonder my beloved hubby refused a sip!

Then the creative side of my brain tingled and I decided to inspire my 3NA Art students by painting an orange that I had for afternoon tea. This somehow, made me reminisce the time when I was a student in Outram Institute struggling to paint nature drawings. The painting turned out well and I shared the photo of the watercolour painting with my dearest students.

Another fun thing that I continued doing is exercising! I did power walking at home with my favourite "personal trainer", Leslie Sansone, on YouTube of course.



Mr Manoj Kumar Dave: One of the things I did during the Circuit Breaker was an art and craft project using paper mache and a balloon. It is a tray to hold nuts, sweets or tidbits when there are guests over. Next I tried my hand at making a DIY a fixed selfie stick that can rotate 180 degrees using only the tools at home. I needed one but all of the shops were closed. My version only cost \$2 while it was being sold at Challenger for \$15! I also made a battery operated fan using a computer fan and 9V battery as my air conditioner broke down. I played around with an electronics kit called Sparkfun and tried to program it to get the lights to blink. Moreover I attempted to set up an indoor herb cutting nursery to hang on my window ledge. Finally I tried some origami from watching YouTube videos.

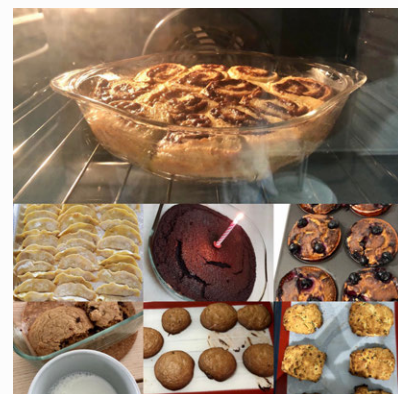
Ms Dawn Lim Sing Lean: During the Circuit Breaker period, it was tough to juggle work with an active toddler. Training Julian to water the plants helped in diverting his energy into something useful. Anything to do with water is always fun, in Julian's perspective.



Mrs Anusiyah Thiruchelvan: The Circuit Breaker was a good opportunity for me to do two of my favourite things – bonding with my children and trying to make new food items – at the same time! We tried making Dalgona coffee since it was trending and because I love coffee. We were really quite amused when after much whisking, the coffee and sugar mixture became beautifully creamy and fluffy. It was an added bonus that it tasted as good as it looked! We also tried to make our own bubble tea pearls, also known as boba, from scratch. It was indeed a challenge and a test of patience handling the tapioca starch and shaping the tiny balls so that they are nice and round. We felt that all of the effort was worth our time when we bit into the deliciously chewy brown sugar boba in our brown sugar milk. However the unanimous decision was that in future we'd just buy bubble tea if we wanted to drink it!



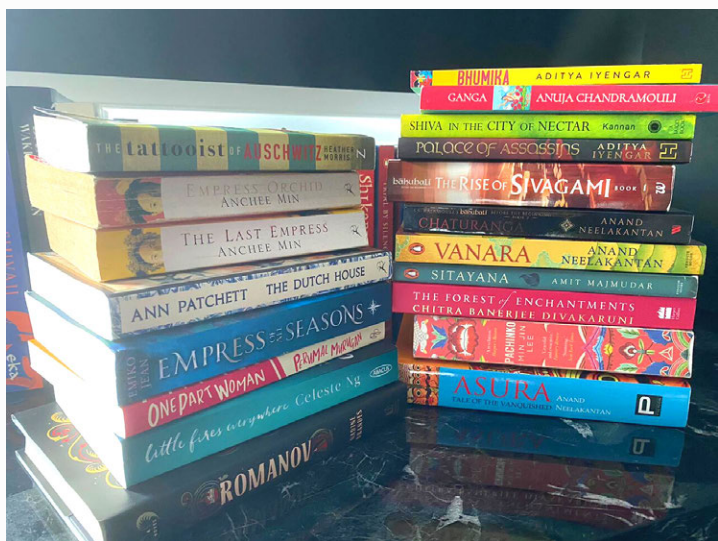
Mrs Ng Qian Hui: During the Circuit Breaker period, I picked up baking again. However, they did not turn out like the beautiful pictures in the recipes. Hence, I call them my 'yugly' baked goods – yummy but ugly.



Ms Caroline Murty: I dabbled in baking during the Circuit Breaker period. It was really therapeutic to knead the dough and then wait for it to rise was fascinating. I enjoyed the fragrant aroma and taste of the bread, scones, and mini quiche I had baked! Yes, I did share these with my family and friends! I had time to enjoy walks around my estate too!



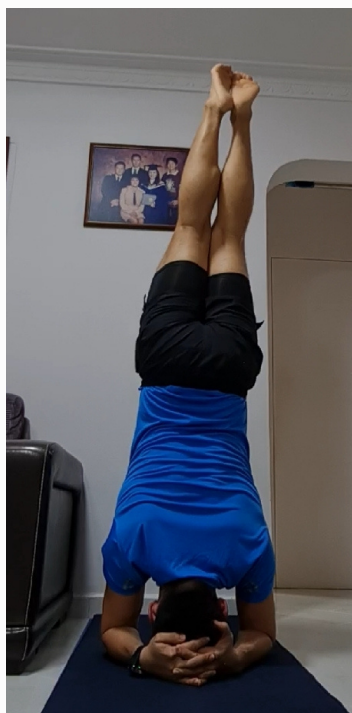
Mr Glenn Tan Cheng Hai: I have always been an extremely lazy person whenever it comes to cooking or preparing meals, ever reliant on my Mum, buying food back or using online delivery options. However, during the Circuit Breaker period, I did get inspired by some YouTube videos to experiment with making sandwiches, home-made popcorn and Dalgona coffee! Most of these attempts were successful (in my humble opinion) but apart from having some yummy treats, I think it was more fun to create these with my family. I remember the pure unadulterated joy when we saw the corn popping for the first time, as if it was something totally amazing even though it was to be expected!



Ms Shamini Subramaniam: It was during the circuit breaker that I found time to actually read my never-ending collection of books. I think during this time period I was able to read approximately 5-7 books. I was grateful for this circuit breaker as I was able to get back into my hobby of reading. I also found that I enjoyed new genres such as historical fiction, crime fiction. It widened my horizon on the perspectives of several societal issues. I was also able to understand the sequence of certain historical events better. It was truly an experience that i would keep close to my heart as it allowed me to appreciate the notion of standstill and I was able to pursue my passion for reading at a greater extent. It was also enlightening to find friends who had read similar books and we sometimes would spend our nights discussing the depth of the book and what the author truly meant to encapture through it.

Mr Theodore Tan Rui-Yuan: During the circuit breaker, I decided to use the sudden abundance of free time I had to do two things I felt I wasn't spending enough time on – running and reading. I ran 3 to 8km every other day, often to places with nice sunset views such as Lower Peirce Reservoir (picture attached). I also started reading about a book a week, with a good mix of both local and international titles. My favorite book I read during this period was All The Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr.





Mr Eric Choo Guan

Kiat: COVID-19 and the Circuit Breaker had turned most of our lives upside down. During the Circuit Breaker, I took the opportunity to deepen my yoga and mindfulness practices. These have taught me to see things in a different perspective and appreciate the things that I do not usually appreciate.

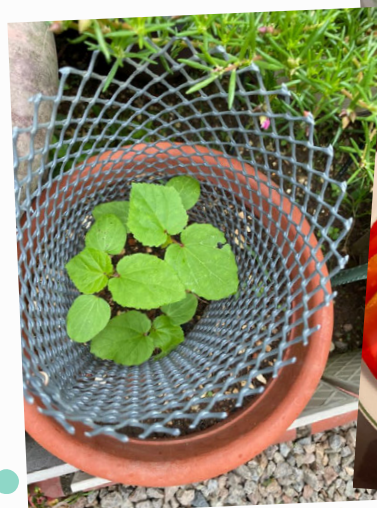
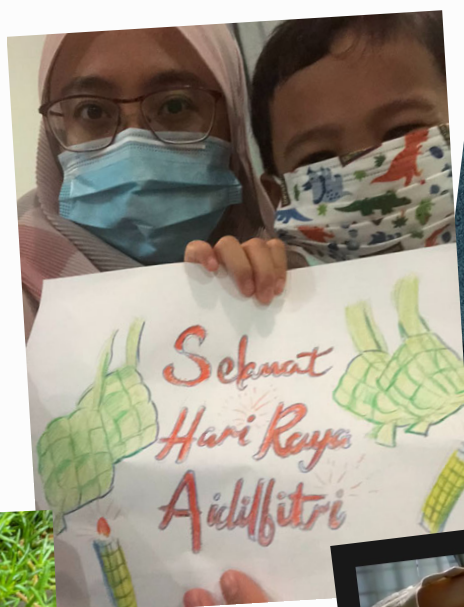


Mdm Nasyitah Abu Bakar: Hari Raya Aidilfitri 2020 was very memorable for me. It happened during the Circuit Breaker and we had to celebrate it nowhere else but at home. However, my family and I did not let the situation hinder us from celebrating the joyous occasion. We kept our spirits high by sending hand-made cards to our family and friends. On the day itself, we were busy Zoom 'visiting' our relatives and close friends from the comfort of our own home, clad in our traditional clothes, no less. The celebration was not massive like in other years but it was certainly the most meaningful for all of us.

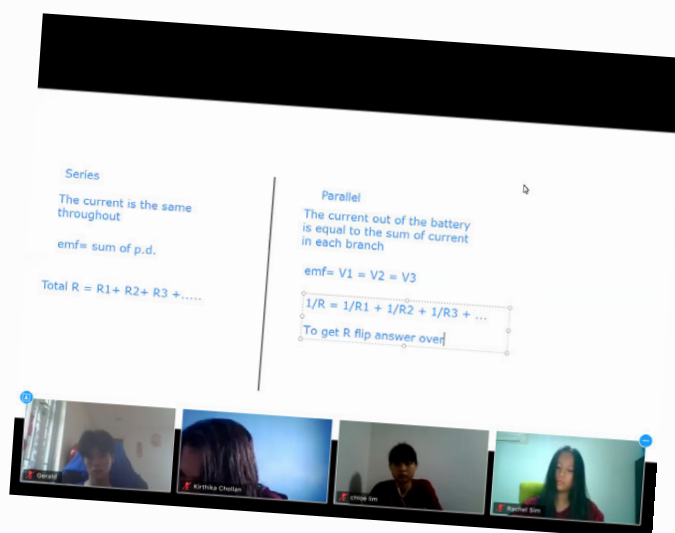


Mdm Noor Aisyah

Ahmad Sharif: What we did to pass our time during the Circuit Breaker - trying our hands on gardening! Oh boy, some plants really require such high maintenance (and tested our patience) but it was definitely a joy watching them grow day by day!



Mr Tay Guangyu: During the circuit breaker period, I conducted my very first online face to face lesson over Zoom with my students. It was an unforgettable experience and it really caused me to be innovative and resourceful. An hour before lesson, my child's room was transformed into a temporary work station. Multiple devices were used to conduct the lesson – a laptop to run the slides, a handphone attached to the study lamp to act as a visualiser and an iPad to monitor students and the lesson. During the lesson, students were attentive and actively taking down notes. This made all the efforts in setting up the temporary work station worthwhile. In general, it was a memorable learning experience for both my students and me and definitely something that we can all look back on.



Mr Lee Chen Siang: One of the subjects that my daughter missed from having to be at home during the Circuit Breaker period was her PE class. Thankfully her PE teachers uploaded some interesting workout/dance videos on SLS and my daughter enthusiastically dragged me into her room to do the workouts with her. Even though those workouts could not fully replicate the entire PE experience, which is much more than just physical activity in itself, they were nonetheless good workouts and created father daughter bonding time. I am thankful that we have moved out of the phase and are able to enjoy some form of PE in school. Hopefully we will see further easing of the SMMs in schools soon so that we can go back to our usual form of PE lessons.

Mrs Charmaine Tan:

During the Circuit Breaker, I spent some time trying out new and simple dishes as well as tried my best to support various local food stalls by talking walks out (a form of exercise) to go out to buy (bringing along my own containers of course!)

HOME-COOKED LUNCH: GUESS WHICH WAS MY HUSBAND'S AND WHICH WAS MINE?



STUDENTS' REFLECTIONS OF 2020

This year has been a wonderful year for me. Despite Covid-19 and FHBL, I have learnt a lot from Bendemeer Sec and hope to continue studying here. The teachers teach us how to approach our mistakes and handle the problems that are faced by students of my age. I am grateful to all the teachers who have encouraged me to achieve beyond my limits and to pursue my dreams. **Sadayan Ehsan Ahmed, 1C1 2020**



Personally I think that secondary school is different from a primary school as everyone seems to be more mature. On my first day, I was worried that I would not be able to fit in. However, I was soon warmly welcomed by my form teachers and the Student Council. The orientation camp allowed me to grow closer to my classmates and the seniors also helped us. This inspired and motivated me to become a student councillor and I am proud to say that I am one now. **Sasmeta D/O A Ravindha, 1C1**

During the circuit breaker, I had thought that it was a time for both students and teachers to relax. What I did not know was that the teachers had to work even more to ensure that their students are constantly learning from home. This experience taught me how to be more responsible in having to wake up early to check in and complete my online homework on time. **Mohamed Azhar Bin Mohamed Ne, 1C1**



When I first stepped into Bendemeer Sec, I was worried about making friends. The teachers helped students like me to overcome this fear by holding one to one sessions on alternate days to build on fostering relationships. As a result, I got more comfortable with my classmates and the environment. I started to make many good friends which made my 2020 a joyful one! **Seah Qi Zhen, 1C1**

My siblings had always told me that secondary school life would be extremely fun. Although I knew that it would be exciting to meet new friends and teachers, I was nervous as it was to be a whole new experience. Fortunately, when I entered my class, I felt truly welcomed by the warm smiles of my form teachers. I felt comfortable in class and after this one year, I am now ready to achieve greater heights and continue with my adventure in Bendemeer Sec. **K Saleema D/O Kuthubudeen, 1C1**

My experience in Secondary One has been amazing. I did not think that I would have the chance to make good friends. Then suddenly Jeff and Joe appeared and opened my eyes to the joys of friendship. As they say, all good things must come to an end. Jeff and Joe decided to head back to their own country and I was left devastated. However although time has passed, our friendship is still going strong. This is the best experience I obtained from Bendemeer Sec this year. **Yoo Jun Hui Jovan, 1C1**

