



EAST SPRING SECONDARY SCHOOL

TERM 1 2021 E-NEWSLETTER



QUESTION OF THE TERM: CAN OTHERS RECOGNISE YOUR SMILE BEHIND A MASK?

The world does not seem as friendly when it is filled with people wearing masks.

We gaze at everyone's faces to gauge their intentions, but when the nose, mouth and chin are concealed, many clues are hidden.

If a person is friendly, will you recognise it? If you smile, will people know it?

The answer is yes — it is still worth it to smile while wearing a mask. Important information shows up in the eyes and the eyebrows. With true happiness, we see it with the wrinkles on the sides of our eyes. Smile, East Springians. Your smile might just make someone's day.

WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

Dear East Springians, we hope you had a good start to 2021. We would especially like to welcome the Secondary Ones and their parents to the East Springian community. As March draws to a close, we would like to feature highlights from the past three months.

NEW BEGINNINGS, NEW OPPORTUNITIES



Tentative, nervous, but excited – such were the steps of our new Secondary One students as they entered the school when 2021 began. Whilst starting secondary school amidst the uncertainty of the pandemic might be daunting, our Secondary One students showed their resilience from the get-go in building bonds and making new friends despite safe distancing measures.

Our heroes were, of course, the form teachers of the Secondary One classes, who welcomed the students with such enthusiasm and made them feel at home so quickly. They went the extra mile this year in shepherding the students from place to place, conducting lessons to familiarise students with the school rules, school values, as well as the CCAs in the school. They also facilitated bonding games in the classroom and guided the students in their preparation of the class item! Thank you, Secondary One form teachers!



The first recess that the Secondary One students had was the next highlight. Students had to adapt to sitting in groups of 8, and following safe distancing measures in queuing for their food! Our Secondary One students really showed responsibility in how they followed the queue markings, kept their masks on when needed, and wiped down the tables diligently after their meal. For some, it was the first time they saw the smiles of their new classmates when they removed their masks to eat!

Scaffolding the entire Secondary One orientation programme was, of course, the Secondary Four Core Leaders. They had worked online tirelessly during the school holidays, thus overcoming safe distancing measures with such creativity. They put together introductory videos to welcome the students, and recorded instructions for the games to aid the teachers. In addition, they also planned exhilarating station games to engage the Secondary One students! Their unflagging enthusiasm and admirable leadership could really be seen in how they facilitated the games for the new students, helping them have fun and develop synergy in a new class. It was not easy to keep up with the indomitable energy of thirteen-year-olds, but they did it!



The Secondary One orientation culminated in a virtual campfire on Zoom that Friday, 8 January 2021. Whilst different from the original physical campfires that distinguish the Secondary One orientation camps, it was nonetheless educational and uplifting as students and parents alike heard the Principal's address. The virtual campfire was entertaining as we all enjoyed the class performances put together by the Secondary One students. What an end to a different, but enjoyable, Secondary One orientation!

JOURNALISM CLUB PHOTOS: KELVIN JOBEE (4E4), NAOMI TAY (3E1)

SPEAR AHEAD



We welcomed East Springians to the new academic year with our school's signature SPEAR Ahead programme which aims to set positive expectations, attitudes and relationships for all students. Two days were set aside to empower East Springians to start the year right and set expectations in the curriculum and co-curriculum areas. Despite the Safe Management Measures in place, students participated actively in the customised level programmes and games during SPEAR Ahead. The various activities provided opportunities to foster class spirit, develop student-student relationships and strengthen teacher-student relationships. This helped in creating a positive school tone and shaping students' attitudes and behaviour towards meaningful learning.

A DIGITAL YEAR OF THE OX: HOW TECHNOLOGY TRANSFORMED OUR CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS



The festival of spring is upon us again, and this year is the Year of the Ox! We are welcoming this new year with a digital twist this time, streaming the celebrations from the hall to the classrooms via Zoom.

The atmosphere was already visibly brighter in the morning with East Spring staff and students dressed in red to spread the New Year spirit. Classroom decorations put up prior to the day added a festive flair to the atmosphere as students gathered in their classrooms to enjoy the celebrations in their form classrooms.



Notice board decorations like these added a festive atmosphere to the classroom!

We ushered in the spring festival celebrations with an array of activities, starting off with a Chinese New Year lesson package filled with thoughtful and educational content crafted by the Chinese teachers. We learnt about how previous generations similarly showed resilience in adapting to adverse circumstances, and we even learnt the background story to a Chinese New Year song, *Gong Xi Gong Xi*, which added so much depth and dimension to our appreciation of it!

From our respective classrooms, every class in the school then participated in the Zoom concert. The Zoom concert began with an interpretation of the Chinese Calendar, including why each year is named after a specific animal and the importance of a person's birth in a particular year. If you were born in the year of the Ox, for example, you are known for being dependable, patient, and kind.



The next segment of the concert was a sing-along session. East Springians' voices echoed around the school in unison, singing the Chinese New Year song loudly and joyfully. The grins on the faces of the students and teachers stretched from one end of the room to the other. Some students had practised long and hard to showcase their talents in wushu and Chinese opera! Others were given the opportunity to participate in the concert and dance live to the Chinese New Year songs. I was so impressed by the students in the Art Club who went above and beyond to create Chinese New Year cards for the whole school to send to their loved ones. As is customary, everyone was given mandarin oranges to wish all luck and prosperity for the new year.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic for each of us and our families, this has really shown us how East Springians have displayed such resilience and positivity!

*JOURNALISM CLUB PHOTOS: JAIPREET GILL (4E4), KELVIN JOBEE (4E4), HARITH DANISH (3E2),
DANISH DARWISY (4N1)*

CYBER WELLNESS WEEK

Cyber Wellness Week was celebrated in conjunction with Safer Internet Day, which was held on 9 February 2021. The aim of the week was to promote the positive use of the internet and raise the students' self-awareness and self-management of online behaviour.

The theme for this year's Safer Internet Day was "Together for a Better Internet" and the students had multiple activities lined up for them. Thematic Cyber Wellness lessons were conducted during CCE lessons where the different aspects of Cyber Wellness were discussed and taught in class by the Form Teachers.

There were also posters pasted and rotated daily on the canteen tables, where students can view the posters with their friends over a meal. The students were also encouraged to log on to SLS to type in their reflections.

Lastly, the Cyber Wellness Awareness Competition was also held, where students from all levels were invited to create a multimedia piece to advocate for Cyber Wellness.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: FATINISSA (1T1), JASON (4E4), RUQAYYAH (1N2)

TOTAL DEFENCE DAY

On 15 February 1942, Singapore fell to the Japanese. Hence, our nation marks Total Defence Day on 15 February every year as a reminder of what could happen to us if we cannot defend Singapore ourselves, and to strengthen our resolve to keep Singapore safe, secure and sovereign.

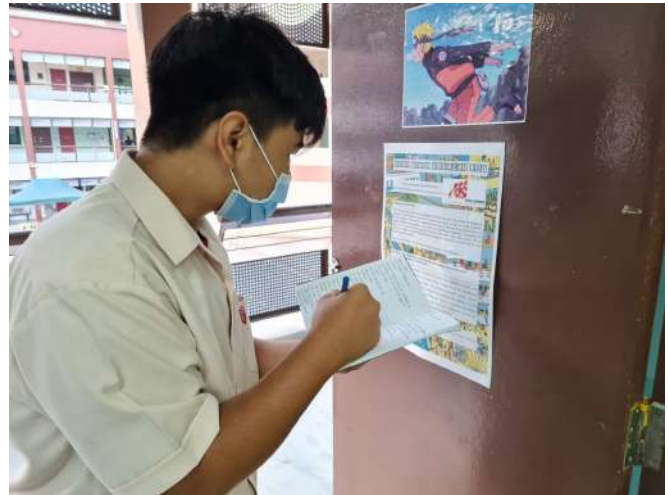
This year's theme for Total Defence Day 2021 is 'Together, we keep Singapore strong'. The lower and upper secondary students embarked on discussions on contemporary issues such as food security and social responsibility. This touches on Civil, Psychological and Economic Defence, which are some of the pillars of our Total Defence.

The topic of Digital Defence spans across both topics as we talk about the pervasive use of social media, where media posted by members of the public may be misconstrued, leading to unnecessary widespread panic. As responsible citizens, we should take the lead to positively influence our family and peers to verify the sources of our information before spreading such information.



The NCDCC also shared about the importance of Civil Defence through the use of the myResponder mobile app, which encourages all Singaporeans to act in the face of danger.

In addition, the Humanities Department came up with posters on Total Defence Day and the Japanese Occupation. Students were encouraged to share their responses as they read through the perspectives of the different groups of people involved.



Secondary Two students also had the opportunity to try out the Guardians of the City card game, a Total Defence Strategy card game designed to help youths develop a deeper understanding of Singapore's security threats and the part all of us play in keeping Singapore safe and secure.

ENGLISH AND LITERATURE WEEK



East Spring Secondary's English and Literature Week kicked off with a bang with Ms Jillian Chen sharing the beautiful song, "True Colours" with us!

In Tuesday's performance, Daryl Wong, Wesley and Tze Ching (all from 3E1) shared with us hilarious ways to skirt around the eternal question "does this make me look fat?"

On Wednesday, Sameeha (4E4) represented her Literature class to recite a hauntingly beautiful poem titled "Caged Bird" by Maya Angelou. The solemn tones in her voice conveyed the pent-up frustration of the caged bird, reflecting the emotions of the African Americans who were victims of discrimination during the American Civil Rights Movement. This poetry recital was then followed by a book review shared by Sofia (1E3) who shared her favourite book, Skyward. Her enthusiasm for reading was definitely evident, and extremely infectious.

Finally, the week ended on a humorous note! The corridors were filled with chuckles as we watched a light-hearted performance by Aniq (4E1), Ethan Chai and Jasper Tan (4E2) who demonstrated how the use of correct English can even help us make friends.

Students were also treated to fun activities created by English and Literature teachers. During English lessons, students excitedly competed in a Spelling Bee on Kahoot, played Taboo, and performed Choral Reading and Reader's Theatre.

Lower Secondary Literature students demonstrated so much creativity in crafting Twisted Fairytales and coming up with thrilling alternative endings to classic fairy tales! The Upper Secondary Literature students used symbols, colours and art to create Blackout Poetry, demonstrating such insightful understanding of the poem “Foreign” by Carol Ann Duffy. It was really astounding to see how much originality and ingenuity our East Springians have!

From the sombre to the light-hearted, EL week has definitely brought us through enriching experiences to demonstrate the kaleidoscope of ways English and Literature applies in our daily lives.

What an interesting way to discover language!



A big thank you to our Principal, Ms Susie Ho for her insights. Also, thank you to our Vice-Principals, Mr Johnny Ang and Mr Tan Shin Eik for their support, Ms Faizah, Mr Hafiz, Ms Clara Sng, Ms Jessica Ser and Mrs Jelena Phey-Chua for their contributions, and Ms Daphne Ng and the Journalism Club for their reports and photographs. This newsletter is indeed our collective effort.

The Publications Team: Mr Shaiful, Mdm Khalidal Huda Sukaimi and Mr Aaron Low.