

“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken
joy in creative expression and knowledge”

-Albert Einstein

School Staff Development Committee's Initiative



Principal's Foreword

To understand the role of an educator, one must be aware of two components of our education system –

1) Thinking Schools, Learning Nation

2) Every School, A Good School

MOE's vision of "Thinking Schools, Learning Nation" (TSLN) was first announced by then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong in 1997. The vision espouses the development of our students into thinking and committed Singaporeans equipped with 21st century skills that would help them face future challenges. Coupled with the belief of 'Every School, A Good School', the education system aims to provide every child with the opportunity to develop holistically and maximise his or her potential. At the school level, this means that we become an organisation that constantly challenges assumptions, seeks better ways of doing things through creativity and innovation and promotes lifelong learning.

At Innova, we believe in being an inspirational, innovative and inviting school where our students are champions of character, change and citizenry. In order to do that, our educators work on connecting hearts, engaging minds and igniting passions within their lessons. Every teacher in Innova believes in what the education system hopes to achieve. They have high expectations of themselves because they want to make a positive difference in every child's life.

This book provides a valuable window on the perspectives of our teachers in teaching and I am happy to share it with all of you.

Indulge in Good Stories!

**Ms Shyamala Devi Windersalam,
Principal**



Vice Principal's Foreword

Innova Primary School prides itself for embracing a caring culture for the staff and the students, taking care of their personal well-being, intellectual and emotional growth.

In our caring culture, the school is guided by the Teacher Work Management Work in looking into the professional development and the work-life harmony dimensions of the staff. Timetabled Time of one hour per week is set aside for teachers to meet, plan, collaborate and reflect on their learning. Five Day Work Week is strongly advocated and Protected Vacation Time of at least 2 -3 days of March / September and 3 – 4 weeks of Nov / Dec holidays are closely adhered to. These are strictly observed to ensure that teachers are professional developed and their emotional well-being is taken care of.

It has also been the school's culture to engage the teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents and the stakeholders at a more personal level. The constant conversations and sharing of personal life experiences among one and all make individuals feel so uniquely treasured and such quality interactions and connections make people see the purpose and meaning of staying and working together in the school. We have begun to reap the fruits of our labour as we can see that students who have graduated from the school returning to the school now to serve the school in the capacity of Junior Alumni Club members. Similarly, those parents who have served the school in the Parent Support Group when their children were studying in the school continued to serve in the school as members of Alumni Parent Support Group now that their children are in the secondary schools.

Innova Primary School is a young and promising school that has grown together with the community for the last 10 years, since 2018. The success of the school is a culmination of the myriad of personal stories and adventures of learning of all the people who have a stake in the school. The building remains by and large the same, but what really makes a difference to the school is the true spirit of the people who say about the school, stay with the school and strive for the school. And we can only achieve this through a culture of care for the staff, the students, the parents and all our stakeholders.

**Mrs Ang-Tay Gek Khim,
Vice-Principal**



Vice Principal's Foreword

I believe a litmus test for the progress of our school is the professionalism of our teachers.

So, the question I often ask myself is this: are our teachers capable of conducting themselves in a professional manner, even when they are faced with challenges that life throws at them?

Professionalism does not mean donning a suit. It means conducting oneself with accountability, integrity and excellence, and these are the pillars of our school culture.

Being a teacher is no mean feat and our teachers face many choices when they are in the classroom. Not all choices are life changing but all have an impact on the children that they teach. The pillars of professionalism provide a compass with which our teachers navigate, and make their day to day choices, in terms of how they interact with their students and also with one another.

The stories in this book are a testament that our teachers do not merely provide lip service to this belief of 'professionalism'. Instead they imbibe these qualities personally.

When teachers conduct themselves in a professional manner, by giving their best, they inspire students to do the same.

After all, teaching is the one profession that creates all other professions.

**Mr Edwin Wong Chee Wai,
Vice-Principal**



School Staff Developer's Foreword

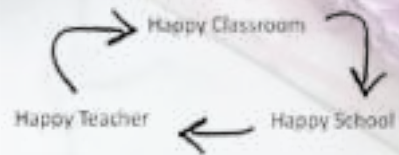
One of the questions I often ask myself as the School Staff Developer is, "How do you define a happy teacher and happy school?"

Emma Seppala, the author of "The Happiness Track," and science director of Stanford University's Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education, says that we can create and protect learning conditions in which happiness can flourish.

Happiness, Dr. Seppala explains is not something we can afford to lose at home or in our classrooms, as it forms the very foundation of deep, meaningful learning.

In my opinion, a happy teacher is a teacher who has a positive mindset and is passionate about teaching, regardless of all the ups and downs that he/she may face. This ends up influencing her classroom and eventually has a ripple effect on influencing the whole school.

After all, it is a cycle – **a happy teacher creates happy classrooms, thereby creating a happy school.**



In Innova, we have our own fair share of challenges but in order to cope with those challenges, we, as a school, have adopted a 'glass is half full' mindset. This mindset allows us to be resilient in the face of these challenges. And if we are strong in our mission, things will fall in place to help us overcome these challenges.

This book is a collection of the blessings we have cherished in times of challenges. We hope that you will enjoy reading it as much as we have enjoyed compiling it. It gives us strength and confidence to go on and it is all so worth it.

I would like to thank the teachers in Innova for contributing to not only this collection of stories but also to the teaching fraternity with their sincere efforts.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the School Leaders, the EXCO team and the SSD team for making this project happen.

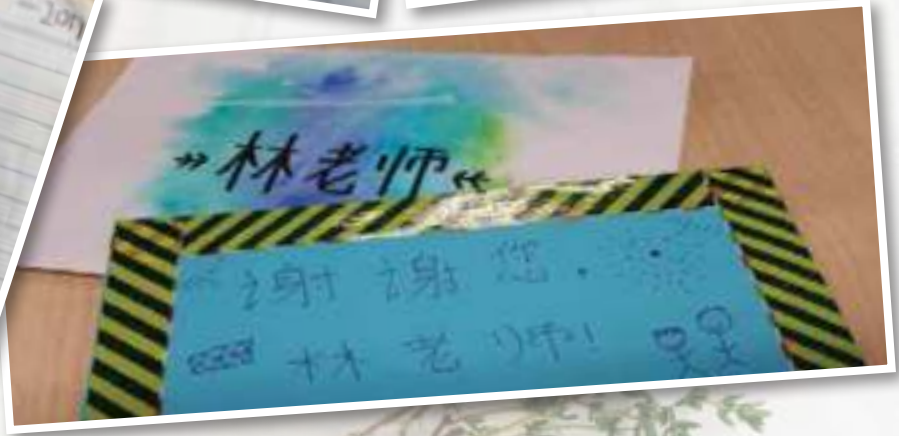
Have a Cuppa of Good Stories!

**Francisca Subash Lazar,
School Staff Developer**











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A New Chapter

By Angeline Lim Wee Keng

Joining Innova Primary School in 2017 marks the beginning of a new chapter in my teaching career.

There is a lot to learn when you come from in as an educator from a Secondary School to become an educator in a Primary School. I am glad to join the Innova family where support and teamwork exists in almost everything I do.

I am very thankful for the support provided by School Leaders and my colleagues, which has helped me to adapt well in Innova.

The learning curve in Innova may be steep but the learning process is a joyful one because of all the wonderful colleagues I have met.

My Many Blessings in Innova

By Anusuya d/o Haridas

Innova Primary School has been a blessing in many ways.

The phrase “When we stand together, we overcome all odds” resonates with me when I think about Team Innova.

I am blessed to be able to work with a team that willingly learns and achieves together.

As for my students, it has always been about...

“Everyday I teach You...and You teach Me... and WE learn how to LOVE to LEARN”

These amazing little beings with whom I cross paths with definitely teach me something every year. It's always an amazing feeling to be able to connect with that ‘lazy’ student who is lazy not because he wants to but because his situations are such. Those small heart to heart chit chats that bring about a smile on his/her face definitely brings about joy in my heart and soul!

Learning through Giving

By Chan Fong Mei Susyna

It has always been my ambition to be a teacher since I was in Kindergarten 1 and I am grateful that I am still a teacher today. Over the short span of eleven years of being a teacher, I have grown professionally, emotionally and physically (old of course!). More importantly, I feel enriched by the experience of working with the students and learning from them.

I have been conducting Food Donation Drive since 2010. It is a tedious process from the collection of donated food items to packing them and finally the distribution of the food goodie bags. However, I feel that this provides an opportunity to all the students, even the younger ones, to contribute a little to the community. It also cultivates the spirit of helping others in need and instils in them the value of sharing. Despite the type of role they played, big or small, whatever that has been donated definitely helped and warmed the recipients' hearts every year. Some of the students mentioned that they find the process of giving very meaningful, fulfilling and those are the values that are acquired beyond the classroom.

Every food goodie bag contained the sweat, effort and love from the little ones in our school – something that we cannot give a grade or a score to.

The Boy Who Hated Chinese

By Chin Jian Yuh

I am an ordinary Chinese teacher of Innova Primary School. I have a simple story to hopefully inspire you. Since the founding of this school in 2008, I am one of the few pioneers left.

My main principle as a teacher is to put in my best in everything I am tasked to do. As long as I have done my best, I find fulfilment in the experience of teaching and learning.

I have a little story to share. In 2008, I first met a boy, S. S disliked the Chinese language very much. One day, during my lesson, he did not pay attention, so I scolded him. After that, he gave me a piece of sketching paper with very huge words in English, written “I hate Chinese!”.

I accepted it and did not scold him. Instead, I spoke to him to find out about his family background and also asked him about his interests. After a few months, his family needed to move to a new home in Bedok. He bid farewell to me. He also told me that that he did not hate the Chinese language anymore. Although he still did not like the language and found it challenging, he said that he would persevere to learn Chinese. I felt that my patience had made a difference.

BR + BM = P&P

(Building Rapport + Behavior Modification = Patience & Persistence)

By Chitradevi d/o Balasubramaniam

Recently, I had an experience with one of my pupil with Special needs that made me realize the importance of building a rapport before making any changes to my pupils' learning or behavior. This pupil, whom I was working with for more than a year, was particularly challenging. He was always defiant and rude whenever I communicated with him.

However, after working with him and his parents for some time, the pupil apologized to me for using inappropriate language. I felt 'WOW', almost as if I had a breakthrough with him.

From then on, I felt that we had better rapport between us and he makes the effort to listen instead of shouting at me.

Hence, good rapport leads to possible behavioral modification which both requires **PATIENCE & PERSISTENCE**.

Reigniting My Passion

By Chong Thee Kow, Lawrence

Being in Innova Primary School has helped me to continue to believe that teaching is the most effective and enjoyable way for me to work on minds and hearts, guiding pupils under my charge in becoming empowered, literate, engaged and creative. It has also helped me to shake off my veil of shyness to socialize with my colleagues of different races.

In 2008, I was deployed to be a P1 form teacher. In all my teaching years, I have never taught P1 pupils. It was an unforgettable experience. That year I learnt to be more patient, more tolerant and more adaptable. Very often I was flabbergasted running after these rumbustious 6-year old children but the rewards and satisfaction came after seeing them graduate.

Many thanked and said their farewells before they left the school. It was a very enriching experience having taught a P1 class even for a six-month period.

My Innova ICAN Journey

By Chow Won How

It has been a fruitful and enriching experience for me as an ICAN teacher in Innova Primary.

The ICAN peer sharing and also support by the ICAN mentors since the inception of this programme has provided many opportunities for me to reflect and sharpen my teaching pedagogy. It gets me to think how to use the right method when delivering my Maths lessons to the lower progress pupils.

I am heartened to see that our ICAN team has grown bigger each year and very glad that Innova has more capable ICAN teachers to reach out to the lower progress pupils. Together I wish all ICAN teachers will make a difference to help our Innova pupils in their learning of Mathematics.

Choose a Job You Love

By Chua Sophia

“Choose a job you love, and you will never work a day in your life.” - Confucius

If you enjoy what you are doing, it will not be a chore. I am a student first then a teacher.

As a student, I get to learn from my fellow colleagues who are willing to share. All this knowledge prepares me to be a better teacher in the class.

As a teacher, I try to match the expectations from the school and the children.

When you see the sparkle in the children’s eyes and hear the laughter as they go through your class, you know that you are doing the right thing.

Learning is fun and never a chore.

My Beliefs

By Elango Hemalatha

I believe in human connection is more powerful than technology for improvement and making changes in a student's life.

Reflective practice is the ability to reflect on our actions so as to engage in a process of continuous learning. As a teacher, thinking over our **teaching practices**, analyzing how something is taught and how the practice might be improved or changed for better learning outcomes, is very important.

After all, every individual is unique. From the way we look to how we behave, speak, and act, we all do it differently. We also have our own unique methods of learning. Once those methods are identified, it can make all the difference. Students learn in a way that suits them best and teachers are better equipped to communicate, solve problems, and help students reach their goals.

I always believe that human connection is the best. It works well for me with my low progress students.

The People at Work (A Haiku for My Colleagues)

By Farah Bte Azman

The days get harder,
But you give your steady hands,
The weight is lifted.
A smile and a laugh,
Comforting words in my heart,
I can't ask for more.
Like a gentle breeze,
Your courage caresses me,
Astounds me, moves me.

Thank you my dear colleagues for all the help, the care and the laughter.
You not only inculcate the joy of learning, you teach me the joy of working.

The Learning Continues... Through Reflective Practice

By Farlinah Supaah

If this profession has taught me anything, it would be that we as teachers must not and cannot stop learning. Reflective practice is something that we must make a habit for ourselves – be it in the way we teach or in the way we lead.

For real change to happen, you must truly believe in it and not be afraid to make that first step – no matter how small that step may be. I built mine in my classroom. And I truly hope that one day, I can inspire others to do the same.

Building students' confidence to speak up is something that I have tried more deliberately in class this year. It is not surprising that when I first started; students gave me the blank look – wondering why I was not just going through the motions and just to get to the chase.

I tried many different ways – from modelling to making it my class rules before it finally dawned onto them that I really wanted to know what they were thinking.

9 months into this cause and I am proud to say that I do see change. Students no longer look for the correct answers and the joy of seeing students share their opinion or building on one another's is something that you cannot find in books that you read about engaged learning or collaborative learning.

What Love Is All About

By Francisca Subash Lazar

Since 2010 my days in Innova have been a blessing, despite the many challenges I have faced. I have had my fair share of good and bad days. Sometimes, I feel helpless. And I have been a victim of my own emotions at times.

But in all of those days, when I am at my lowest, there is always a pair of hands that feels my pain, eyes that cry for me and with me, a heart that loves me even if I was not so loveable at that point.

I know for sure, if I go to this person, I will feel better and lighter and lifted. Even though we may have our differences of opinions on work matters, this person has and always will remain a loving sister that I never had. Thank you for loving me unconditionally, Mrs. Ang-Tay Gek Khim. I am grateful.

Teaching Is More than Grades and Books

By Goh Li Yin Charmaine

Great teachers can change the lives of their students.

Similarly, wonderful students can motivate teachers. There are some students who touch my life in ways that I can never imagine.

Students who are keen to learn inspire me to do my best every day. Encouraging messages from my students give me hope and strength and keep me going when I want to give up.

From my students, I have learnt that teaching is more than just grades and books.

“Teaching is about those life altering moments you never expect. Teaching is about touching a student’s life and having a student touch yours.” – Yvette Rivera

My Decade in Innova

By Haslila Binte Tahir

10 years seems to fly fast. I've met with many batches of students, worked with colleagues who left for greener pastures, walked through the different education initiatives and I am still here because this is where the heart is.

There are no words to describe the feeling when you see your hard work and perseverance bear fruit in your students. I remembered 'Student G' very well who was with us a few years ago. He would be very tired in class because he had to get up very early to take his transport to cross over to Singapore. His absenteeism rate was also high. Every day without fail, he would doze off in class. I know that it was no fault of his but the circumstances forced him to struggle in order to gain knowledge. He was getting grades C or D for my subject. Yet, deep inside me I knew that he was capable of better results with the proper motivation. I used the school's I-STAR values to inculcate proper self-discipline and adaptability measures so that he would be driven to study no matter what challenges he faced. I prepared reading materials and other handouts so that he would use his time wisely.

When he received his PSLE results, I was so happy because this boy managed to get A* for my subject and no words or phrases can describe the feeling when the boy and his mum thanked me for the help I rendered. This was just one of the moments that strengthened my choice to remain in Innova.

A Helping Hand That I Needed

By He Jian

In my few years in Innova family, I am especially grateful for all the help that Jessica had given me.

Back when I just joined Innova, I was very unsure and nervous as my English is barely at conversational level. One afternoon before the CLE lesson, Jessica was discovered the problem I was facing. She immediately sat down to help me edit my script, and gave me advice on what to do and say in English if particular situations arise. This really helped me build my confidence to conduct the lesson, and with her help and support, the CLE lesson went by smoothly without a hitch.

This is only one of the many instances where I was given generous and selfless help from my colleagues, and it is thanks to kind and helpful people such as Jessica that I was able to integrate smoothly into the Innova family.

A Supportive and Inviting School

By Idris Bin Lekiman

My journey in Innova Primary School began in 2010. I remember it then as a nurturing school, with a well-structured mentoring programme.

Over the years, Innova has grown and I am blessed to be surrounded by helpful and supportive colleagues who readily share information, ideas and helpful tips.

*Innova Primary School,
Supportive and Inviting Then.
Supportive and Inviting Still,
Always Have and Always Will...*

Teaching through Partnership

By Imran B Mohd Said

I used to think that my 3D pupils would need more time to warm up and get to know their SAS buddies. However, most of them clicked quite easily. My pupils prepared some questions that they would like to know about their buddies based on their interests and hobbies during their first visit to our school. They also found out more about their buddies' different cultures which they found interesting. Soon, they were able to share similar interests and experiences which helped to develop their relationships.

I was also pleased to discover that my pupils were able to make a bookmark and write a thank you note to their SAS buddies. They had learnt to write a letter from the Stellar unit, "Thank you Mr T". The SAS buddies, coincidentally, also made a bookmark to my pupils and they enjoyed doing the hands-on activity together during the last session at the Singapore American School.

No Child Left Behind

By James Khoo

My teaching experience over the past 5 years has opened my eyes to the struggles of some pupils. I had a pupil who was absent very often because her family could not afford the bus fare to school. However, whenever she was able to come to school, you could see that she was trying her best in the tasks assigned to her. She was polite and would smile when you conversed with her.

This has led me to appreciate the things and people around me more. More importantly, it shaped my beliefs as a teacher. I believe that every pupil wants to do well in whatever they do, but sometimes circumstances makes it difficult for them to live up to their potential. As teachers, our role is to help them surpass these obstacles and harness their full potential.

This pupil is doing much better in the upper primary today because the school was able to help her overcome her obstacles. Let us continue to leave no pupil behind!

Learning How to Engage My Students

By Jason Goh

Learning is not only for the students, it also applies to me as a teacher.

Every day in class, I am given opportunities to learn and explore new ways to engage and motivate my pupils.

Every child is different and has to be connected in a unique way. He or she may appear to be more active than normal, but disruption is never their intention. He or she may be shouting or screaming in class, but defiance never once crossed their minds.

I learnt that finding the key to unlock their world makes a big difference to them. Giving small responsibilities to a child could mean a lot to him or her. They need to feel that they valued in the teacher's eyes, and not just a naughty name called out from the teacher's mouth.

One such instance was with Student Y. In the beginning, he liked to run around and talk loudly in class. After giving him small responsibility of taking care of the teacher's music player and keeping of equipment, he showed more motivation and discipline in class. Student Y, thank you for showing me that I can make a difference.

Cherished Memories with Students

By Juliana Binte Jamion

It has been 5 years since I've joined Innova Primary. Many friends have left and moved on but some are still here with my journey. My first batch of pupils here are very dear to me.

I can vividly remember my experience with my first autistic pupil and how I had to learn and adapt myself. My initial thought was that he would not enjoy school since he was 'different'. However, I was pleasantly surprised when I found out that he loved to come to school. Even though there were times when I felt that I was not helping much, the knowledge that he enjoyed coming to school really spurred me on. The other pupils in the class were also supportive of this situation.

I am heartened when I see these same pupils greeting me during recess and at times telling me how they missed me. Seeing them always happy makes me happy.

Even though they might not be in the top classes, I believe that they will survive and grow up to be good people. I am willing to bet on that!

He Who Taught Me the True Meaning of Teaching

By Juliana Bte Mohamed Ayob

In my first year of teaching in 2008, I was assigned to a Primary One class. It was a pleasant class, except for one student who made me re-think my career choice within the first few months. I dreaded stepping into class as I knew there will be new complaints each and every single day.

One day, I received news from my Principal - my 'terror' boy would be transferred to another school in Term 2 because his mum had wanted an afternoon session school. That was the best news ever! The class was quiet and peaceful the first week of Term 2. There were no complaints from other pupils, teachers or parents. I was happy.

Until one day, my Principal told me that the boy requested to come back to us, to me. For a moment, I thought I was hearing things. He could not adapt to his new school and class. He created so many problems. One day that he was even sent out of the classroom. I found out further that when he was sent out, he asked for me. He asked to come back to my class, and that was what exactly happened following that incident.

We accepted him back and I worked with him on his behavior closely from then on. Very soon, I realized what a pleasant boy he was. All he needed was time to adapt and I also needed to be more patient with him and to understand his needs better. It was a peaceful and joyful two years of teaching and learning after that and shortly after, he left for GEP. I am glad I had the opportunity to be his teacher as he had taught me the true meaning of tears and joy, of being a teacher.

Heart Work

By Kalaimathi d/o Krishna Samy

Teaching is a 'heart work'. I share many happy moments with my fellow teachers and my pupils. I teach, but I truth is that every day I learn from the people around me. Though Innova is a new school to me, it has embraced me with great love and care. Recently, I was not well and had to be away from school for some time.

In my absence, my Tamil department teachers rose to the occasion in taking over my lessons and looking into all the department matters as well. Thank you my dear Tamil teachers, Mrs Chandra, Mrs Subash, Mrs Elango, Ms Sathya and Mdm Latha. Many of my fellow KPs helped with other matters as well.

When I entered my Tamil class after my absence, the class board was filled with get well soon cards – all done by my pupils. They wrote meaningful notes asking me take care of myself. Their love, care and concern brought tears to my eyes. Many parents too enquired about me and asked me to take care of myself. All of this proved to me that Innova is a caring and loving school. After all, it's about teamwork and being there for each other – both in the good and bad times. God bless all of you.

Nurturing Every Child

By Karmilah Binte Khamis

Students come to the classroom with different level of competencies in terms of art making. Students at primary level are usually still struggling with skills and not sure of what to draw.

However, I took the chance to explore some skills with them. One of the skills was, 'crop and zoom with zentangles'. I even introduced artists to them and then we had a discussion about a particular artwork.

Being a teacher in a secondary school for many years, I had similar experiences where students lack both the skills and ideas when it comes to art. However, in a secondary school, students are slightly more mature.

After all the experimentation, a student, Joe (not his real name), came to me to say that he learned something new and that he realized that he could actually draw. I was amazed at his determination to follow my instructions and achieve what he wished for.

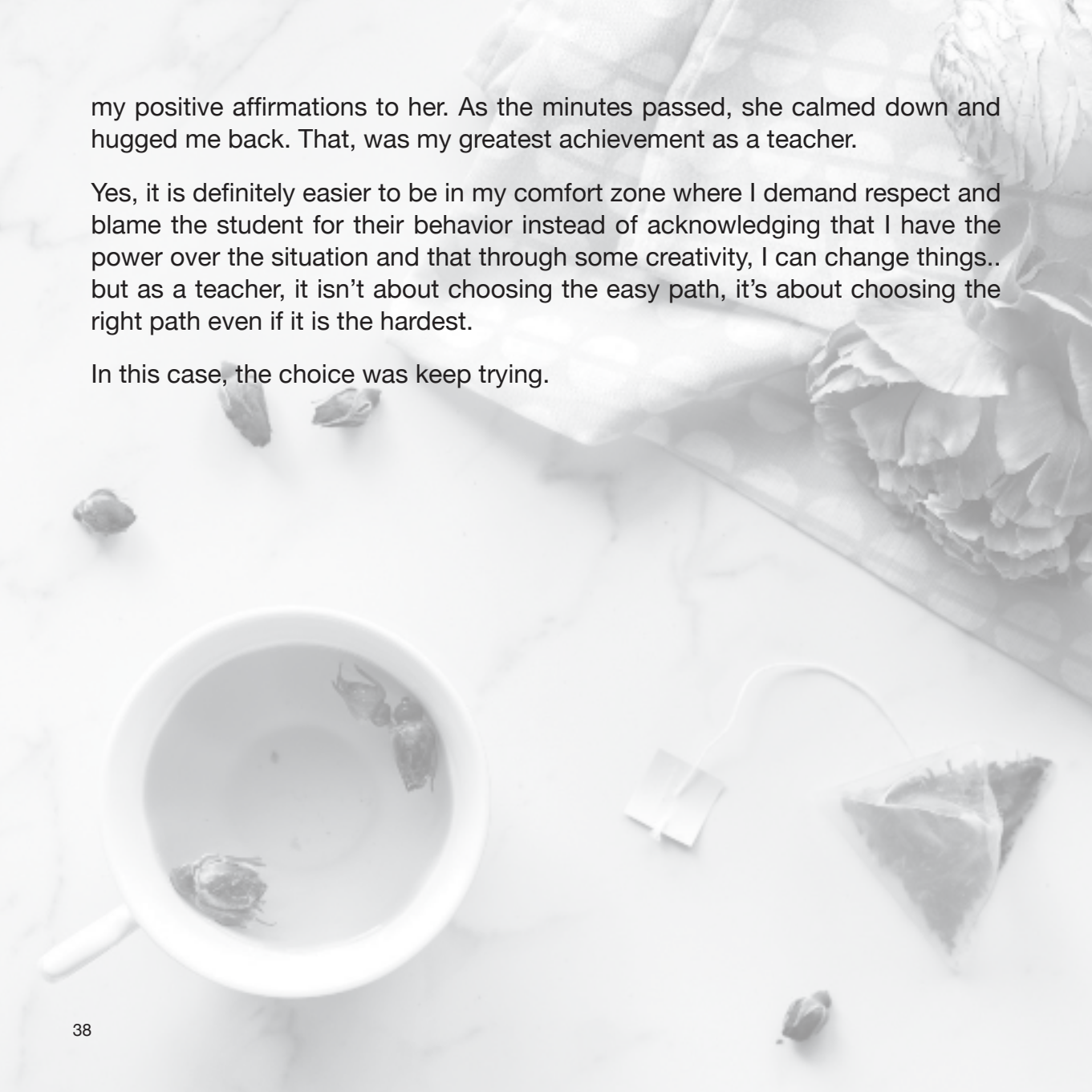
Seeing my primary students working on something that my secondary students used to do just thrilled me and reinforced in me the belief that nurturing children is part of my job and it ensures that every child goes beyond their comfort zone to achieve their success.

The Student That Made All The Difference

By Kirenjit Kaur Gill

In 2016, I came to Innova bright eyed and bushy tailed with no idea of what life had in store for me. I was assigned to a special class. I spent a long time getting used to the challenges I faced in the class. By the end of 2016, I was convinced that I had mastered the art of teaching. Little did I know how wrong I was.

In 2017, I faced my biggest challenge yet- trying to win over a very special student. This particular student, student X was a very cute and lovable child but her sporadic and frequent outbursts were difficult to understand and get used to. Initially, I fought hard to have her respect me. After all, I was brought up in a generation where respect was a given, why should she behave any different. How wrong I was -for every instance I stood my ground, she stood hers and it became a lose-lose situation. This saw me knocking on Ms Winders, Mr Wong, Mrs Ang, Farlinah, Evelyn, Chitra, Banu and even Francisca's door many, many, many times to make sense of the situation. They were patient and generous with their advice, telling me to be calm, cool and collected. They even came by whenever I needed help. I used their advice, read books, articles and tried strategy after strategy, some methods worked for a while and some didn't. She continued to scream at the top of her lungs and I would tense up. Then one day, something changed. She walked into class moody and dejected and in tears about something someone had said. I could sense an outburst coming my way. Instead of doing what I usually did, I walked over to her, hugged her told her how much I loved her, how important she was to me and that she was a good girl. Initially, she told me to "go away" and to "leave her alone" but I kept repeating



my positive affirmations to her. As the minutes passed, she calmed down and hugged me back. That, was my greatest achievement as a teacher.

Yes, it is definitely easier to be in my comfort zone where I demand respect and blame the student for their behavior instead of acknowledging that I have the power over the situation and that through some creativity, I can change things.. but as a teacher, it isn't about choosing the easy path, it's about choosing the right path even if it is the hardest.

In this case, the choice was keep trying.

The Quality of Your Thoughts

By Lee Song Lin, Sean

Someone shared this quote with me and it helped me through difficult times.

“The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts.”

There will be pupils who will get into trouble, big and small, no matter the situation and profile. I accept them for who and what they are. Being their teacher can be draining physically and emotionally, thus I watch my thoughts and feelings carefully as they influence my perceptions of them. In turn, these perceptions contribute to my mental well-being or the lack of it.

If I am thinking of how naughty the pupils will be, I will be thinking of punishments and setting controls. Then, I feel more stressed.

If I am thinking of what they can achieve, then I think of encouragements and ways to allow them to be themselves. Then, I feel happier.

So really, the choice is mine and, I choose happiness.

Zhou Hong, the Great Educator from China

By Lin Chieh, Jack

On my first music lesson with a new class, their teacher warned me about Student X, the most challenging student in the class. Surely enough, while the other students were playing their recorders in the music room, Student X decided to sit sullenly in the corner, refusing to join the class.

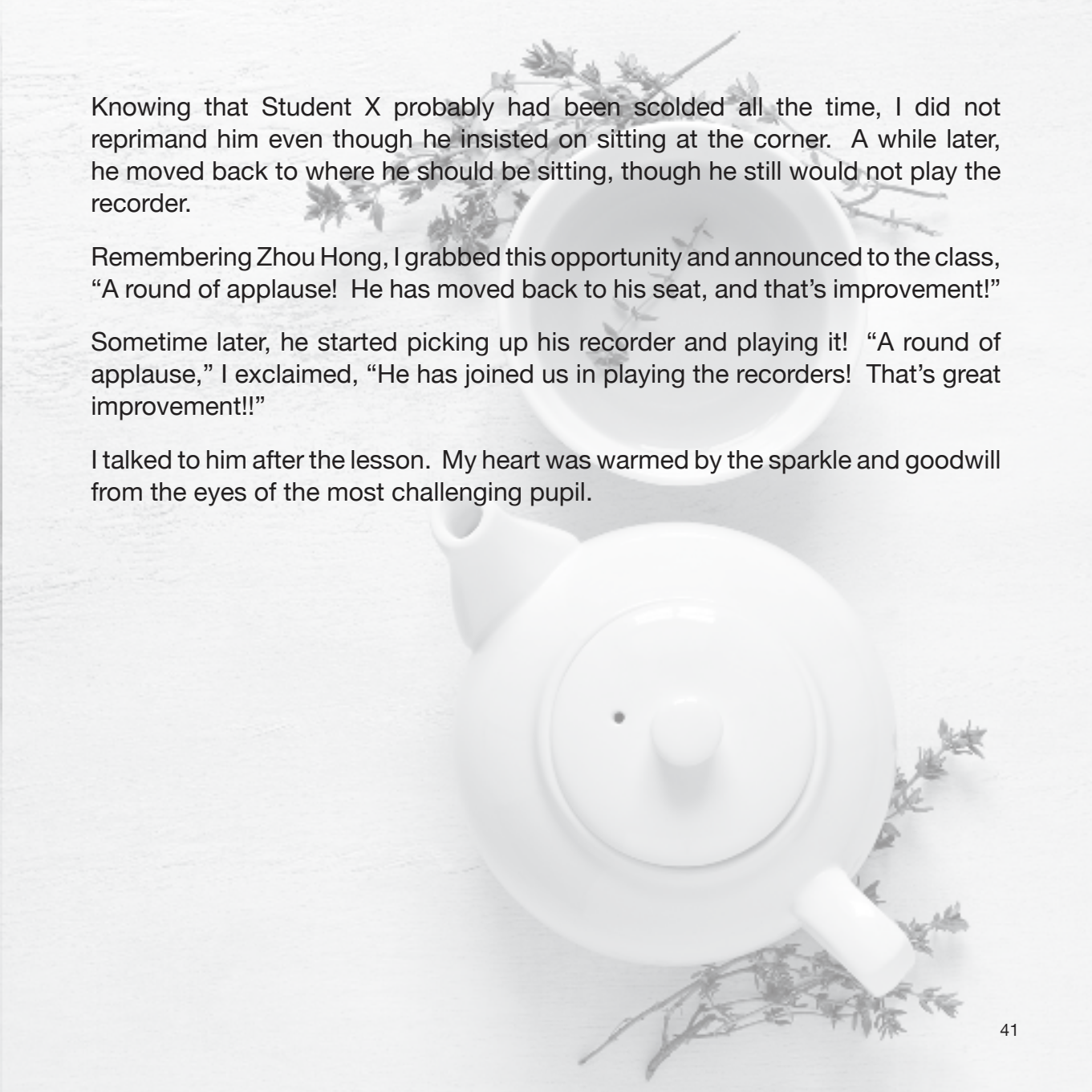
Then and there, I remembered a story by Zhou Hong, a great educator from China:

A boy who had been notorious in school made a big mess in the classroom, pushing down tables, chairs and cupboards. When the wise teacher saw it, she said to the class, "He is in a bad mood. Let's be more understanding; I believe he will restore everything. Now let's go out to play for a while and let him calm down." When they returned to the classroom 30 minutes later, lo and behold, the classroom was nice and tidy!

Three days later, this boy pushed down another table. The teacher told the whole class, "This time he pushed down only one table. Let's give him a round of applause for his improvement!" He quickly restored the table!

The third time he threw tantrums at the corridor. The wise teacher commended him to the whole class, "He did it at the corridor because he was so thoughtful and would not disrupt our learning in the classroom. This is great improvement!!"

With all the encouragement, this notorious boy gradually transformed into an excellent student both academically and in character!



Knowing that Student X probably had been scolded all the time, I did not reprimand him even though he insisted on sitting at the corner. A while later, he moved back to where he should be sitting, though he still would not play the recorder.

Remembering Zhou Hong, I grabbed this opportunity and announced to the class, “A round of applause! He has moved back to his seat, and that’s improvement!”

Sometime later, he started picking up his recorder and playing it! “A round of applause,” I exclaimed, “He has joined us in playing the recorders! That’s great improvement!!”

I talked to him after the lesson. My heart was warmed by the sparkle and goodwill from the eyes of the most challenging pupil.

Every Innovian, A Champion

By Lin Lay Leng, Linda

EVERY INNOVIAN A CHAMPION was designed and created in partnership with our Parent Support Group 2010.

Our parents were invited to design their own individual felt cloth with the resources such as buttons, colorful pieces of cloth and stickers provided. All these individual pieces of creatively designed felt cloth were then carefully stitched together to form this beautiful art piece displayed in our school hall.

Each time we look at this beautiful EVERY INNOVIAN A CHAMPION, it reminds us of the importance of working closely with our parents.

Innova - My Past and My Present

By Margareth Chen

I did my practicum in Innova,
A few years have passed
Then...

The very first batch of pupils taught during practicum graduated...

Nevertheless, they remembered whom they were taught by.

They were grateful of each and every teacher who has made a difference in their lives.

Through all these years,
Some colleagues have left us,
A few have joined our family,
There were sorrows,
There was joy.

Let's hope for the better tomorrow!

Motivation from the Little Ones

By Margart Yeo Mui Kin

A child can teach an adult 3 things;

To be happy for no reason,

To always be busy with something, and

To know how to demand with all his might that which he desires...

- Paulo Coelho

The Kindergartens are always thankful for our hospitality in welcoming them for an annual tour around our school and I often hear the Kindergarten children saying,

'I want to be in Innova Primary School, Mummy!... Because I felt so loved by the teacher!!!'

However, clueless to them that an innocent expression of genuine feedback from the little ones is such a motivation that spurs me on!

My Reason for Staying In Innova

By Mohd Azhar B M Noor

“I always wonder why birds choose to stay in the same place when they can fly anywhere on the earth, then I ask myself the same question.” – Harun Yahya

It was then that I realized it has always been about the people;

My colleagues

My team

My students

For every day, I am schooled about what matters most, positive human interaction.

As a school, we have achieved much over the years from a lean team to a big family now. We dared to dream and took on my challenges, working as a team. Each of these interactions are chapters in my book of many good stories.

My Experience Teaching in Innova Primary School

By Monalisa Binte Mohd Sudin

Time really flies. It has been an enriching and wonderful experience teaching in Innova Primary. For the past 9 and half years, I have met many great colleagues, many of whom I call friends. While others have moved on, some are still around in the school.

Nonetheless, my colleagues have been my source of inspiration, my listening ears, my mentors, my advisors, my role models and most importantly, my friends.

Thank you so much for the experience and support that you have given me these 9 and a half years.

In Peace @ School (IPS)

By Mun Choy Ling, Hilda

I remember,
July 2016 my doctor broke the news, “It’s cancer.”!
Physical and emotional heart-wrenching pain began.

To you I ran.

As always with your great heart,
You went the extra mile to be with me and by me on your part.
Showered with best comfort and safe emotional space,
I am in the best place.

You do wonders
Miss Winders.

It Takes a Village To Educate A Child

By Ng Sui Yong, Chris

It is a great joy and entertainment to see my students performing on stage. After all, it takes courage for them to showcase what they have learnt in English Drama and to perform in front of so many parents.

In contrast to education in the past, education nowadays requires teamwork and collaboration. Learning English out of classroom gives a different dimension to learning and helps to deepen the passion of students for the English Language.

Everyone Makes Mistakes



By Pang Boon Seng

“Everyone makes mistakes” is a phrase that teachers often tell students to encourage them not give up and to work harder to improve themselves.

More often than not, students give up trying, not because they don’t listen to their teachers, but because they don’t feel the support from the people that matter most to them, their friends.

I, myself, have made mistakes in Innova and have also told that “everyone makes mistakes”, but what inspires me to improve myself is the help and support of the Chinese department.

I sincerely thank every colleague of the Chinese department I have worked with for their unwavering help and support in every activity that we have embarked on.

My Supportive Colleagues

By Pang Lee Yee

I feel lucky that I have many supportive colleagues in Innova Primary. I am grateful for all the times that my fellow colleague were there to help me and listen to my problems.

I want to express my deep appreciation for Ms. Jessica Lai, my ICT mentor Boon Hing and Mr. Lim Chain Koon for guiding me on how to plan my teaching and advice on how to use ICT tools. They have always made time for me despite their hectic schedules.

Thank you for making me realize that I can be a better teacher.

Thank You for Remembering Me

By Rafeah Binte Ali

I have been teaching in Innova Primary School as Malay teacher for 10 years. Recently, a P3 girl approached me during her recess and said 'Thank you' to me for being her teacher when she was in P1 and P2. She said that she missed me too. I was shocked and caught off guard by her kind words.

I smiled at her and said 'Thank you for remembering me'.

Her words reminded me that being a teacher is a very noble profession that shapes the character and future of an individual.

If the pupil remembers me and says 'Thank you', that is the biggest gift that I receive.

Trust the process

By Roselina Abdullah

My good story is about one of the lessons that I conducted a few years ago. It was a lesson that required the pupils to create a poem from the initials of their names. I found it a challenge to draft the lesson plan as the target audience was a class of very young 8-year olds. I had many doubts such as whether the pupils would be able to have enough vocabulary to create their poems, or whether the lesson would turn out to be a waste of time if the objectives were over their heads. I then realised that it is the process of the lesson that matters more, so I printed my poem that I did with the pupils to remind myself that if the process is right, the product will follow, and I mean that figuratively too.

Rreally interesting lady

Or a great teacher

She is always ready

Even in her slipper

A Culture of Care

By Saravanan s/o Ramakrishnan

When I began my journey in Innova as a beginning teacher, I had many uncertainties and concerns but the privilege of having many supportive colleagues has made this journey meaningful.

I truly believe that we are not a team because we work together but because we respect, trust and care for each other.

This culture of care and concern in INNOVA has created many memorable memories.

Happiness is working with great colleagues!

My Mentor

By Sathyajotni

As a fresh graduate out from NIE, and a full- fledged teacher joining the teaching fraternity to finally pursue her dreams, Innova Primary School came as a blessing.

The change of status from Trainee to Trained, may just be 1 letter. But, the thought of it was overwhelming and anxiety kicked in. I often asked myself these questions- “Will I be a good teacher?, Will I be able to perform up to expectations?, Will I be able to produce results?”.

But every time I doubted myself, I always had someone backing me up. She was a reassuring voice telling me not to worry, that help is always around when I need it, that even she started as a BT and so nothing is impossible.

She was definitely an inspiration to me, a good leader and in my opinion, an even better teacher.

In just 1 week, I feel more confident of my abilities. I am inspired to do the best for my students; to grow professionally as a teacher; and most importantly like my mentor says, “Always think creatively, think out of the box” for the best is yet to be.

Thank you Mrs Francisca Subash!

Teaching is learning; Learning is teaching

By Shanwaz Iqbal

“In learning you will teach, and in teaching you will learn” by Phil Collins

In my many years as an education officer, if I were to sum up my journey, I would say that teaching is learning and learning is teaching. This did not come to me when I first stepped into the teaching force as a rookie way back in 1990.

Then, I viewed teaching purely as a one-way street where the teacher was the beholder of knowledge. However, this mindset evolved over time.

In Innova, I have learnt from my school leaders, my colleagues and my pupils too. Having a growth mindset means continual learning

Learning That Every Student Is Different

By Siti Nurhazlin

As a student, my primary school days felt very safe and I had a sense of belonging. I never knew that there were conditions like ADHD. I never saw any of my classmates who seemed to stand out.

Being a teacher has opened my eyes to students who have anger management problems or ADHD. There was a particular boy, a very smart one. He is always reading. However, when he got angry during lessons, he would clench his fists, grit his teeth and cry, but he wouldn't say a word. Whenever he got into this state, I would ask him to breathe and calm down, and somehow he would tell me what was bothering him.

Funnily enough, I never shouted or scolded him for doing that. He taught me that teaching a student and reprimanding a student does not require you to raise your voice. After all, students learn in different ways.

As a teacher, I need to get to know my students and find out how they learn best so as to maximize their potential.

My Innova Story

By Siti Nurdianah Binte Mohd Muhdi

Two years ago, I did a CCE lesson with three P6 classes about overcoming problems. The objective of the lesson was for them to realise that they are not alone with their problems and that their friends are together with them. I did an activity on where they had to write down one problem that they were facing anonymously and paste it on the walls in the classroom.

I was rather overwhelmed by some of the problems that they shared. They faced problem like parents who were going through a divorce, lack of food at home, no proper place to study, custody issues etc.. There were even students who had issues of self-harm.

I realised that some our students are going through a lot of emotional issues and that sometimes translates to inattentiveness and bad behavior. Sometimes, they even put up a front in school even though they are going through a lot at home. It is up to us as teachers to find out about these things. Most of the time, these students are really looking for an avenue to let out all these pent up frustrations.

On hindsight, if I had not made the activity anonymous, the students may not have shared their issues. It was really an eye opener for me and I actually tried to the owners of the stories through their handwriting because I wanted to follow up and support them better.

Now, I try to find out as much as I can about each of students I teach so as to understand them better.

An Educator

By Soo Kiang Hong, Dylan

An educator is someone who patiently stands by his/her pupils, someone who instills the essence of life and who consistently proves that learning can be a joyful and a pleasant experience.

The connection of an educator for his/her pupils is like the connection of a child and his/her parents. Educators and pupils spend long hours per day at school interacting while learning is taking place.

Every educator is rewarded not by money but by the progress of their pupils and feels down whenever a pupil is not doing well.

An educator's love is always extended to the pupils wherever life may lead them; always wanting to keep in touch and to know how far they have aspired.

An educator will always be an educator throughout life.

My Reflection

By Tan Yan Mong

I have been in Innova Primary School for the past 6 years.

When I first came into the school, I found that the staff in the school was very friendly and helpful, the SLs appreciated my contribution and even the colleagues were very helpful. The younger teachers were very respectful towards me, given my experience and never hesitated to help me with ICT, an area that I am not so competent in. I believe that I have a good rapport with all the staff members.

To me, the children always come first as I believe that EVERY CHILD CAN LEARN. Hence, we must give them an opportunity to learn at their own pace, so that they can DARE TO DREAM.

“You can’t spell Challenge without Change”

By Teow Chiow Hua

As this is my first year in Innova, many things are new: colleagues, pupils, and even the school environment.

Am I apprehensive? Yes.

Will I be able to adapt to the changes? This was what I asked myself repeatedly.

Colleagues who gave me advice, pupils who brought joy to me and staff who assist in one way or another, turn this uncertain change into opportunities.

After all, “You can’t spell **Challenge** without **Change**”.

I believe that I will have a fruitful journey in Innova Primary.

The Starfish Story

By Tok Wei Cheng, Allan

Once upon a time, there was an old man walking on the beach.

Off in the distance, the old man noticed a small boy approaching. As the boy walked, he paused every so often and as he grew closer, the man could see that he was occasionally bending down to pick up an object and throw it into the sea. The boy came closer still and the man called out, "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young boy paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean. The tide has washed them up onto the beach and they can't return to the sea by themselves," the youth replied. "When the sun gets high, they will die, unless I throw them back into the water."

The old man replied, "But there must be tens of thousands of starfish on this beach. I'm afraid you won't really be able to make much of a difference." The boy bent down, picked up yet another starfish and threw it as far as he could into the ocean. Then he turned, smiled and said, "It made a difference to that one!" - Adapted from The Star Thrower, by Loren Eiseley (1907 – 1977)

This story really resonates with me. I find it very meaningful and inspiring. It really encompasses what we do in Innova Primary School. Every child matters.

My journey in Innova started 6 years ago. I am grateful to have colleagues who are friendly and supportive. They are always there to offer a listening ear when you are down.

With such a positive and caring environment, I am always motivated to give my best.⁶¹

My Journey

By Wong Swee Oi

As an adolescent, I realized that success comes to those who are diligent and as a result they resolve to succeed.

Correspondingly and irrefutably, every decision I made led me to a distinctive path, with various implications. Each choice impacts and makes impressions on lives, my protégés and friends, - today, tomorrow & yonder

With each passing year, I grew more pragmatic and learnt that it is not possible to reach every being, but I am optimistic to persevere and attempt to connect, to kindle minds infinitely.

My Role As An Educator

By Woon Mei Yiok

One touching moment for me happened at the end of one particular school year when a student of mine came to thank me after receiving her PSLE grades. Seeing her shed tears of joy, my heart was deeply touched.

This incident made me reflect on my role as an educator. My values, my beliefs and practices has a great impact in the lives of my students, and I will not give up on my students.

I want to thank Mr Ho Boon Huat who has been a mentor in my teaching journey in Innova. His guidance has helped to shape me to become the teacher I am today. I am also grateful for colleagues who have supported me.

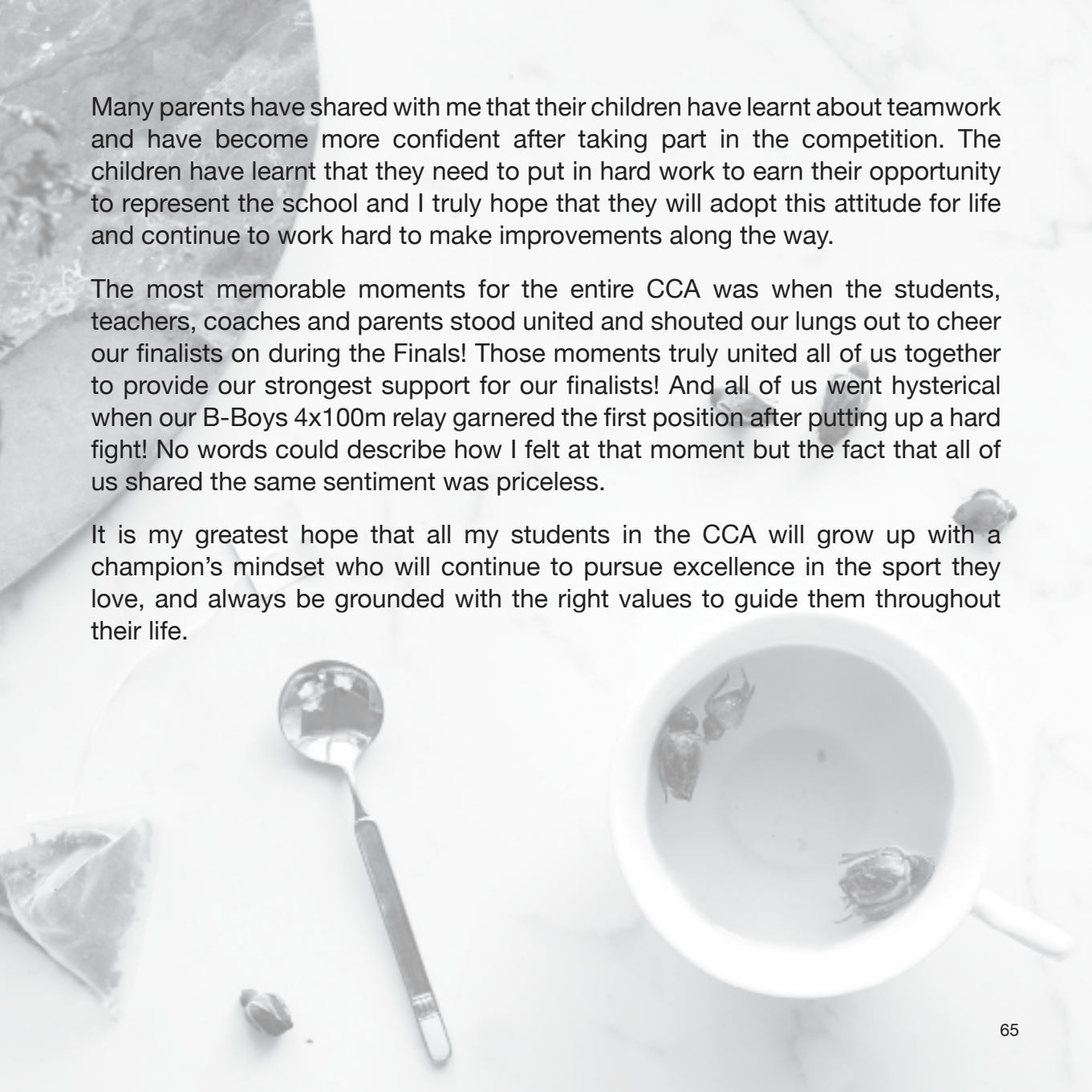
Reflections as CCA Teacher

By Yap Soon Lan

It has been truly amazing to grow with all my students in the Athletics CCA ever since I joined them at the start of 2018. We went through many tough yet fun training sessions together to prepare for the National School Games, and for some the Invitational Meet at the Singapore Sports School too. Lots of behind the scene preparation work went in to support them included taking their measurements for the competition singlets and shoe size for those who needed to loan spike shoes from the school. I believe the students appreciate the “heart work” put in by the teachers to get them ready for competition and this strengthens the teacher-student relationship.

My initial concern about how to make the students have a strong sense of belonging to the CCA was somewhat allayed when the students started to forge strong bonds among themselves through training together, and more importantly, encouraging and helping each other to improve during the process. The friendship that has blossomed has glued them together which in turn makes them look forward to going for more training sessions together.

The students have shown self-discipline, grit, resilience, sportsmanship, teamwork and perseverance in pursuit for excellence during training and at competition. Whilst I initially thought that I am there to lead them, I slowly realised that I am actually inspired by many of them as I carefully observed what they were doing during the training and at the competition. I am truly grateful to be part of their learning journey as they are the true motivators that keep me going strong!



Many parents have shared with me that their children have learnt about teamwork and have become more confident after taking part in the competition. The children have learnt that they need to put in hard work to earn their opportunity to represent the school and I truly hope that they will adopt this attitude for life and continue to work hard to make improvements along the way.

The most memorable moments for the entire CCA was when the students, teachers, coaches and parents stood united and shouted our lungs out to cheer our finalists on during the Finals! Those moments truly united all of us together to provide our strongest support for our finalists! And all of us went hysterical when our B-Boys 4x100m relay garnered the first position after putting up a hard fight! No words could describe how I felt at that moment but the fact that all of us shared the same sentiment was priceless.

It is my greatest hope that all my students in the CCA will grow up with a champion's mindset who will continue to pursue excellence in the sport they love, and always be grounded with the right values to guide them throughout their life.

The Art of Building Rapport

By Anisah Binte Mustafa

Building rapport is the way that leads to positive relationships. It is a subconscious feeling of connection, trust or simply a feeling that you are understood by the other person. Rapport can be built between colleagues and even between a teacher and her pupils.

I am glad for good rapport with my Innova family, it has helped me to connect well with them.

Motivate Not Make

By Anu Kiran Singh

My job as a PE Teacher is not to MAKE the students fit. My job is to make sure that they know all the things they need to know to be MOTIVATED and to KEEP themselves FIT.

This is a belief that enables me to constantly create Good Stories.



Our Job

By Esther Chang

Our job is to teach the students we have.

Not the ones we would like to have.

Not the ones we used to have.

Those we have right now.

Innova Primary School's First Singapore Record Challenge

By Chong Boon Hing

In 2008, all school staff, parents and students took part of in a TV show challenge. We achieved our goal because we worked as a team.

IPS's Kampong Spirit

By Esther Ong

The school official opening was an event which I enjoyed very much. During the preparation period, I witnessed how each and every colleague would come forth to help out whenever they sense a need. The kampong spirit within the IPS colleagues is something which I hold dear to my heart.

My Good Story

By Yeo Ming Hwei, Evelyn

“The greatest good you can do for another is not just to share your riches but to reveal to him his own” ~ Benjamin Disreali

This quote crystallises my current mission as a teacher leader and mentor to fellow teachers in the school. I find meaning and fulfilment in growing others and in turn I often find myself learning and growing with my mentees in the journey. Thank you, IPS. “Together, we grow and glow”.

Innova, My Second Home

By Faizul Nisha D/O Vappriah Abdul Kader

I have been teaching lower primary students in Innova Primary School for the past 5 years. Year in, year out, I have been lucky to have wonderful colleagues who motivate, support and co-operate with one another working as a team to reach a common goal. There is always care, concern and compassion among the Innova family.

Innova has become a second home to me.

My Colleagues, My Rock

By Haslinda Binte Ibrahim

I never knew that I could depend on my colleagues until I came to Innova. My colleagues are my teachers, my motivators, my well-wishers, my energy-boosters and even my jesters. Hahaha!

Though we may be overwhelmed with responsibilities, I can always rely on my colleagues to lend me a helping hand.

Thank you, dear colleagues.

Without all of you, my days in school would not ROCK!!

Math Challenge

By Lee Ai Meen

The pupils learnt through play.
They enjoyed challenging one another during the game.
They were able to apply their Math concepts while playing the game.

My Perspective, Happiness

By Indpal Kaur d/o Jagjit Singh

Happiness is seeing my students pretending to be the teacher, voicing out my usual 'dialogues' in the form of instructions or encouragements to guide their peers and looking out for each other both in my absence and in my presence.

Happiness is when they tell me that they can do it or at least try, knowing that they believe in themselves to make an effort.

Happiness is when I see them succeed in the various areas of their life but more than that, it is when they never give up even when they face failures.

Supportive Colleagues

By Kohilavani d/o Palianey

It has been a privilege to be part of the Innova Family for the past one year. I feel so blessed to be surrounded by very helpful and truly supportive colleagues. Their unlimited patience, heaps of tolerance, contagious laughter and jokes have impacted me positively. They are always there for me whenever I needed help, advice and even showered me with bits of motivation to keep me going! Through their remarkable support and guidance, my devotion to my work intensified and my challenges were faced with strength and courage

Thank you very much from the bottom of my heart!

Rapport Building

By Lai Nai Huey

Rapport equals to quality relationship between a teacher and a student.

My ex-student was going through a family issue that resulted in his dismal conduct and written work.

The warm rapport that I had with him helped him to connect with me and to confide in me about some of the family problems he was facing. I was able to convince him that things would be better and guided him with his revision for PSLE. The fruit of his labor was when he produced 4As in his PSLE results. He came and said, "You got 4As for me!"

Mission accomplished!

Help Is All Around

By Lau Kai Siong

I still remember the first day I came to Innova Primary School. I was a bit nervous, but after meeting my new colleagues, I felt much more relaxed. A lot of teachers helped me to adapt the new environment especially colleagues from Chinese Department.

I wish to thank my reporting officers (Mr Ho Boon Huat & Ms Jessica Lai) for their help and support for the past few years. They gave me a lot of advice on how to improve my teaching and how to get things done better. I also glad that I have understanding school leaders who are willing to give me a helping hand whenever I need help.

Is The Child The Artist Or The Artwork?

By Lee Xing Yu Angela

In the case of one of my students, he was both. No one quite understood what he was painting given the theme we were working on. As he was explaining what his artwork was about, he became the artwork.

The art was in him. I loved the smile on his face when his friends nodded in approval of his artwork.

Sometimes, a few questions and an affirmation is all it takes for one to have a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. And I am glad that this is how the Innova family is.



The Journey

By Lee Yook Ying

Teaching my pupils can be challenging at time. With patience and perseverance, both teaching and learning proves to be a rewarding journey. I feel a sense of fulfilment to see the fruition of my efforts.

Every little progress achieved by them encourages me to move on in spite of the setback and difficulties that I encounter.

Trust

By Muhammad Ghafur Abdul Sukor

After the P5 camp, I developed a bond of trust with my pupils.

Student X had not been the same for some time and I went up to him to check on him. Student X was able to share his personal problems he was facing at home. Now, Student X is more attentive and has been a good student in class.

I learnt that once the pupils have trust in me, I will be able to understand them better and therefore, have a good teaching experience with them.

Innova. Where the Heart Is

By Lim Chain Koon

I am grateful when I receive gifts or an appreciation card from pupils.

It gives me a source of energy and motivates me to go further no matter how tired I am.

I am happy to be teaching the primary school pupils. Seeing them grow and guiding them to overcome challenges is a joy.

Graduation

By Muhammad Shazwan Bin Shahir

The graduation of my class was a great joy, because the youngsters began a new stage of their life filled with projects, goals, and dreams to fulfil. That being said, it is joy with a touch of nostalgia for all the shared history, for the road travelled and built. It is also with the certainty that they will continue being part of the Innova family.

I improved

I grew

They helped me to know myself better



Heart-warming

By Miao Rui

One rainy day, I was in the pantry and my colleague, Swee Oi was there too. We exchanged a casual greeting, and she added, “be more careful when you walk outside. It is quite slippery.” My heart warmed instantly.

This was just one of the many heartwarming occasions I experienced with my colleagues here in Innova

I may not know the names of all the colleagues in Innova, but I do appreciate their care and concern towards me.

Reflections of a Teaching Intern

By Nick Chan

I am extremely fortunate to have some really understanding, patient and caring colleagues who helped me during my time here in Innova. I learnt some very valuable lessons about teaching from them. A few colleagues have made me feel very comfortable here, and it makes me wish that I could stay here a little bit longer.

A New Terrain

By Ong Seng Kim

2017 was the first year I was given a middle primary class to teach. As I have never taught the level before, I was unfamiliar with the middle primary syllabi. I found it very challenging at the beginning of the year.

However, I was blessed to have a group of wonderful colleagues in the P3 level, a supportive Year Head, Mr Khairil and a knowledgeable ST/ Math, Ms Yip, who guided me along the way.

“I never knew I could teach until I met them.”

By Rosemardiana Bte Shamsudin

As an untrained contract teacher, I was not sure if I was right for the job. Given the responsibility to teach a low progress class with challenging pupils taught me that every effort counts. The bond and rapport that we shared till today reminds me every day that as long as we try as educators, we will never fail to make a difference.

2017 – A New Challenge

By See Poh Bee

2017 was the first year that I taught a low progress CL class. I have not taught the class before. Initially, I found it very challenging to teach the class. However, with the support of the Head of Department, Mr Ho Boon Huat, who guided me along the way and the breakfast cater Mr Tan Yan Mong, who prepared food for me every school day helped me to overcome this challenge.

I can. I will. End of Story

By Shin Ern Paul @Daniyal Shin

- 1) Make a difference
- 2) Take a hand, open a mind, and touch a heart
- 3) Use education as the most powerful weapon and change the world, one child at a time.

Family

By Lee Woen Shin

From 2008 till now,
We are the “INNOVA FAMILY”

Thoughts of an Educator

By Suria Binte Mohamed Mortar

Teaching is a profession that gives me the opportunity to make a difference. Looking at those adorable and innocent faces who are hungry for knowledge and sometimes up to their mischief, often makes me wonder..

Did they come to school to learn from me or to teach me?

I am here to EDUCATE them

However, in reality, it is I who ends up learning and they are the ones who TEACH me.

A Caring Environment

By Weng Ting Ting

The colleagues from Innova Primary School are extremely caring. Whenever I need help, I don't need to worry about who to turn to because help is always rendered whenever needed Innova feels like a second home to me now and since I got here, my life here has been very happy.

Acknowledgement



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