



Writing Scripters

Tin Ka Ping Secondary School

The English Department

Website: <http://web.tkpss.edu.hk>

Issue 16 December 2012

From our school to our community...

Hello schoolmates! In this issue, we will take a look at what happens around us. We'll start with our school and then we'll explore the area we're living in! Come and join us!



Our reporters interviewing Alex (middle).



Alex (middle) attending a *Writing Scripters* meeting as a guest



Alex (right) having an English lesson with 4B.

Our school

A new star

(Reporters: Harry Wong Chin-lok, Melody Tang Tsz-kiu, Gloria Chu Chi-yin)

Here's the 'star' in our school. Do you know him? Yes! We are talking about Alex. He is the first ever exchange student of our school. Although he has been here for about 3 months, I think a lot of students still don't know that much about him. So we have asked him some questions so that you can know more about the 'star'...



Alex (right) dining with his host family.

WS: Writing Scripters



A: Alex



WS: Are there any differences between TKPSS and your school in Austria?

A: In Austria, the school time is 8am to 1pm but in TKP school hours are longer. Also, TKP teachers are stricter than those in Austria. For example, they take care of the private lives of students. However, in Austria, the job of teachers is only to provide knowledge.



Hallstatt, Austria, renowned for its scenery.



Bad Gasten, Austria, a famous location for skiing.

WS: How about the difference between Hong Kong and Austria in general?

A: Austria has cleaner air and is much colder. In winter the temperature can be as low as -20°C. The national sport of Austria is skiing, but of course, Hong Kong doesn't even snow. In terms of lifestyle, Hong Kong is much busier and it is crowded everywhere.

WS: So do you miss your family?

A: Not really, to be honest. Due to their occupation, I was never very close to my family. (My dad is a pilot and a company owner and my mum is a flight attendant.) Here I don't have time to miss them.



Vienna, Austria, where Alex comes from.



Alex (front left) has made a lot of new friends in Hong Kong.

WS: Can you tell us about the friends you have made in Hong Kong?

A: I have made a lot of friends in Hong Kong. Some of them are other exchange students in the AFS programme and some are TKP students. I think there is not much free time here in Hong Kong. But when I do have time, I would love to meet my friends or do sports. I don't really like spending time sitting at home.

What is AFS?

The AFS Intercultural Exchanges (AFS) is an international non-profit voluntary organization dedicated to promoting international exchange activities. Want to be an exchange student? Want to host an exchange student? Visit their website for more: <http://www.afs.hk>



Parallel traders line up waiting to enter Sheung Shui Station.

Our community

The parallel trading controversy (Reporters: Oscar Li Hang-on, Mike Mok Tak-kan, Wilson Chan Chung-hei)

Surely you have seen them in the Northern District. There are many parallel traders around, who seriously affect the residents' living standard. They are disturbing, but what can be done? In fact, the Chief Executive CY Leung pledged the Hong Kong Government would try their best to crack down on the parallel traders...



Parallel traders stocking up Yakult.

First, let us look at why they are so rampant. As we all know, the living standard in Hong Kong is higher than Mainland China. Many Chinese residents always come to Hong Kong to buy daily goods like food, drinks and milk powder. They also bring electronic products like smart phones and computers.

These parallel traders transport different kinds of goods to and fro Hong Kong and Mainland China many times a day, with each stay not more than two hours. According to a parallel trader, they do this just because they want to earn more money and make a living. Most of them are poor and find it hard to make ends meet.



Parallel traders distributing goods on the platform.



Parallel traders carrying bulky goods on trolleys.



Parallel traders re-packing their goods in the street.

So, what problems are they causing to residents nearby? Parallel traders usually gather in the concourse area of Sheung Shui and Fanling Railway Station to distribute their goods. They cause a lot of menace and inconvenience to local residents. Worse still, as the Immigration Department has tried to crack down on the activity, some of the activities have been moved to other stations, which has caused more disturbance to more people in Hong Kong.



Parallel traders with boxes line up outside Sheung Shui Station.

What do officials think about this situation? Northern District Councilor Edward Lau Kwok-fan pointed out that parallel traders have already caused a lot of strain to districts along the East Rail Line, not confined to Sheung Shui and Fanling. Although the MTR has already set a weight and size limit for passengers' luggage, the situation is still serious. He believes that CY Leung and the government is going to take firm action to crack down on the parallel traders.



The MTR has set a weight and size limit for passengers' luggage.



Sheung Shui Station is always full of parallel traders, during both day (left) and night (right).

The parallel trading controversy

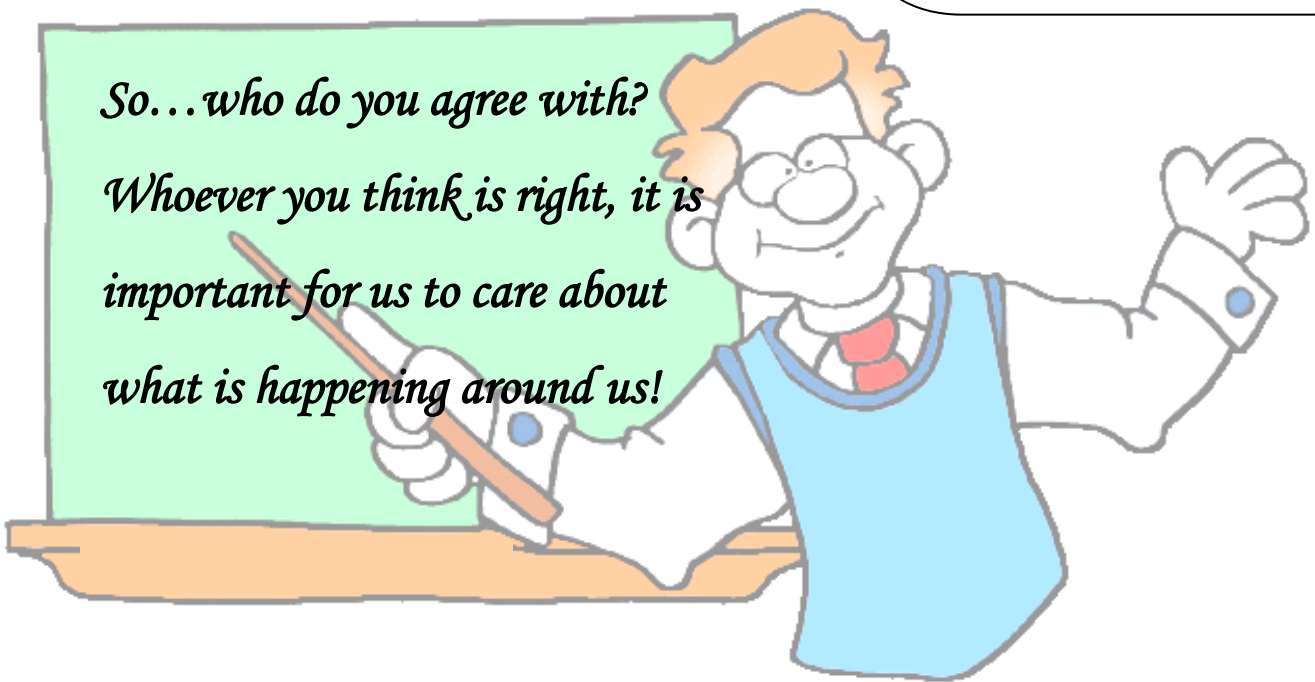
Who's right? Who's wrong?

We think parallel traders are quite poor because they just want to make a living but a lot of people shout at them and say something bad to them. We think that we should not be too critical to parallel traders.



They are transporting all the Hong Kong goods to China! We cannot buy the goods we want! Things are becoming more and more expensive! How can we afford the price? They are like rogues!

*So... who do you agree with?
Whoever you think is right, it is important for us to care about what is happening around us!*



Writing competition: (Senior form)

What do you like/not like about Sheung Shui/Fanling?



Sheung Shui Station today (left) and Fanling Station in the past (right).

Sheung Shui, Home Sweet Home

Having lived in the same place for many years, you start to treat it as humdrum gradually, don't you? You may seek somewhere refreshing, be that as it may, what you want is far from reach but near at hand. Sheung Shui is the place which raises me up in the past 16 years. As a resident in Sheung Shui, not only is this place monotonous to me, but I also find myself having a crush on this lovely region.

In contrast to other regions in Hong Kong like Central, Sheung Shui manages to keep the simple and pure from the village life due to the remote location from the city centre. Plenty of villages still exist and are kept very well, which give our hectic life a brief respite. Whenever tremendous stresses start to overwhelm me, I will have a short walk in the Ng Tung River near home. For the fresh air and the green plants there, pain and stress are washed away. With the breeze from the river and the twitter of birds, my mind is cleared out and thoughts keep popping. Rarely do I see a limpid sky in Hong Kong with polluted air surrounding, which is a unique feature of Sheung Shui.



Ng Tung River (above) and Landmark North (below)

Compared to Central or Kowloon, Sheung Shui is worlds away. Having said that, it is also well-developed with the effective government policies so it is now modern and convenient. We can go to the MTR station in just a few steps. Moreover, there is a variety of shops in the shopping mall and the streets because of the lower rent. To cite some examples, the traditional stores and the well-known shops like Crocodile, which not only give us many choices, but some traditional stores also can be retained. Although Sheung Shui is at the periphery of Hong Kong, it is still easily accessible with the well-developed transport system.

In my mind, Sheung Shui is a perfect mini society with both modern and village lives. I am glad that I am one of the members in the Sheung Shui community, enjoying the exchange of life styles and cultures. It does help inspire me for new and innovative ideas. Perhaps living in the same place for many years makes you numb, but don't judge a book by its cover. Try to care about our community from a different perspective and you will definitely find it free from your prejudice.



A panorama of Sheung Shui. In the middle is Landmark North, the largest shopping centre in the Northern District.

My Love-hate Relationship with Sheung Shui

My Mum once told me that one of her friends didn't want to come to Sheung Shui. "It's full of rude Mainland Chinese. There's nothing to see and do. Only jewelry stores and pharmacies," she quoted. Due to Sheung Shui's location in Hong Kong, it's the centre for illicit parallel trading. It has caused many problems to both the environment and residents. The controversy has heated up recently. However, is Sheung Shui such a negative place? I don't think so.

I have been living in Sheung Shui since I was born. It's where I spent most of the time of my life. From my impressions of Sheung Shui, it isn't a bad place at all. There are many nice places in Sheung Shui. I think the best part of Sheung Shui is the greenery. It's full of different types of trees and flowers. I think Sheung Shui is one of the new towns in Hong Kong that has the most trees. They say green plants not only improve air quality, make the environment beautiful, but also make people relax. Imagine walking down the street with plants all over you. It's something you could easily do in Sheung Shui or even Fanling, but not in other developed districts.



A panorama of Northern District Park, a green lung in the area.

Also, I like Sheung Shui for its convenience to the city. Although Sheung Shui is the farthest new town from downtown Hong Kong, it's still quite easy to get in and out. We could travel by the MTR East Rail Line, which brings us directly to the urban areas. There are also several bus routes which link us to different areas, even Lantau Island! It's clear that Sheung Shui is quite a convenient place if you're not living too far away from the town centre.

However, nothing is perfect. There are many things in Sheung Shui that aren't as good as the other districts in Hong Kong. As mentioned earlier, the problem of parallel imports is quite frustrating for local residents. I think that such activity causes disturbance to the citizen's daily lives. They often block the street and make the MTR station overcrowded. Also, the parallel importers are often uneducated. They might cause security problems. Moreover, many think that they push up the prices of daily necessities, causing huge burden to those who have low income.

Furthermore, I think that Sheung Shui lacks leisure facilities for citizens. Although we have sports grounds and swimming pools, compared with other areas, there are still much less leisure facilities in Sheung Shui. In other districts in the New Territories, there are cinemas, gyms, large leisure parks and so on. Sheung Shui doesn't have any of these. If the residents of Sheung Shui are looking for weekend entertainment, they'll have to go to other places instead. Honestly, it's quite inconvenient for us.

Sheung Shui is my home. I've been living here since I was born and I enjoy living here. Despite the many problems brought about by the development of the economy and the underdevelopment of leisure facilities, it's still a great place to live in, as it has a great greenery and it's quite convenient. I think living environment is the most important when deciding where to live. It's not important that none of the housing in Sheung Shui could have beautiful scenery of the mountain and the sea. What's important is that the place makes people live comfortably, and Sheung Shui is definitely one!

Writing competition: (Junior form)

What is your favourite place in school?

Champion: Mak Wing-sum, 2C

I love everything in Tin Ka Ping Secondary School, especially the garden behind the school hall.

I am sure everyone in our school has already visited the garden. What do you think of the garden? I didn't know there is a garden in the school until my schoolmates told me. I know it is unbelievable but that's true. At that time, I immediately paid a visit to the garden.

When I arrived at the garden, I could feel that it is a peaceful place. The garden was surrounded by trees. When I was there, the smell of many flowers, the fresh air and the tranquility there made me feel really comfortable. All my pressure has gone! It is a good place to relax.



Have you been there before?



I think you know in our school, there is a dog called "Momo". I remember that Momo has stayed in the garden for a period of time. My friends and I wanted to see Momo so we went to the garden and played with Momo. The garden is one of the memories of my friends and I. We all love the garden!

If you asked me "What is your favourite place in school?", I will surely answer, "The Garden".

Visit there in your free time!

First-runner-up: Yeung Chin-hei, 1C

Do you know which place I like the most at school? It is only open on weekdays. It is also only open during lunch breaks or recesses. It can help me when I forget to bring water or lunch. There are lots of noodles, fishballs and snacks there. Do you know where it is?

I think you know the answer. It is the tuck shop. I can buy delicious food there like udon, fishballs, chicken fillet and a lot of other yummy food. They are provided in the second recess, lunch break and after school. My favourite is the egg sandwich with mayonnaise. It is a bit sour and really healthy. Also, it is not expensive. Actually a sandwich costs \$15 elsewhere but the sandwiches there only cost about \$7, which is a great price.



This must be a familiar place for many of you readers.

On the other hand, the tuck shop provides many kinds of drinks, for example, apple juice, cola and so on. The most special thing is there is a monthly drink. It is always good and inexpensive. I always buy one after the PE lesson on Tuesdays! Besides, the tuck shop provides Octopus service. You can use your Octopus card to pay. You can even re-charge it there! It brings a lot of convenience to teachers and students.

It provides delicious food. It is the tuck shop. It helps teachers and students a lot. What a fantastic tuck shop!

Our not-so-secret secret

(Reporters: Wincy Tse Wing-sum, Louise Yuen Lok-yee, Natalie Fong Lok-lam)

Do you know that there is a 'secret' garden in the school? It'll make your eyes pop! There are many kinds flowers in the school garden such as sunflowers and lilies. It makes our school become more beautiful and colourful. Mr. James Lai, our music and arts teacher, always goes there to take many lovely photos. Wandering and staying there guarantees a comfortable and relaxing environment. Next time, when you are free, go there and enjoy the wonderful views!



Our school is green! Do you recognize this place? It is the school entrance!



Beautiful lilies (left) and sunflowers (right) in the garden.



Photos courtesy of Mr. James Lai.

Let us tell you more about flowers!

Trivia

- ✧ The rose is the best-known symbol of beauty and love. Red roses mean I love you.
- ✧ Women prefer pastel colored roses. Men, on the other hand, prefer red.



Meaning of rose in different numbers:

- 1 = You are the apple of my eyes
- 12 = The standard for "be mine"
- 15 = I'm sorry
- 100 = Full of love

Idiom Corner

Shrinking violet

Meaning: A shrinking violet is a shy person who doesn't express their views and opinions.
Example: May is a shrinking violet. She does not like to talk with anyone.

No bed of roses

Meaning: If something isn't a bed of roses, it is difficult.
Example: Achievement is always no bed of roses so we should work hard.



A shrinking violet is a shy person.



No bed of roses means things are not easy.

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