

The Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation



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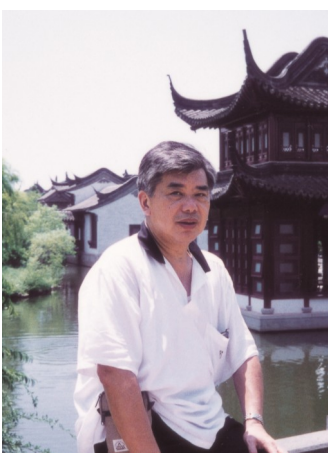
The Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation is a Hong Kong based charity foundation with a strategic focus on early childhood literacy, library development and education enhancement.

We support organizations for innovative, cost effective and high impact projects in Mainland China, Hong Kong and Ghana.

Mission Statement:

To nurture the potential of the next generation by building, supporting and sustaining innovative approaches that enhance learning and personal development. This includes:

- Supporting relevant local organizations and people to achieve capacity building.
- Introducing best practices or new ideas.
- Scaling up successful projects.
- Encouraging the dissemination of innovative ideas.
- Assisting with people resources in libraries.
- Promoting quality literature.
- Supporting life skills training.



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BEIJING TRIP, APRIL 2013: PROFESSORS STEPHEN KRASHEN AND SYING LEE



In April, although it is still a little cold sometimes in Beijing, the spring was coming anyway. At the invitation of The Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation, Professor Stephen Krashen and Professor Sying Lee came to Beijing to give presentations on second language acquisition to parents and English teachers of schoolchildren. The two lectures were hosted by New Reading Research Institute and Haidian District Women's Federation, and drew more than 600 parents and teachers.

Prof. Krashen unveiled his speech by saying: "Today, we are going to reveal the biggest secret of language acquisition." The key theme of his speech was the language acquisition hypothesis versus traditional methods of language learning.

Under the current system, students are required to recite and memorize vocabulary and grammar - Professor Krashen labels this "skill building". Emphasis on memorization and practice make the learning dull and repetitive, causing students to lose interest in language learning.

The language acquisition hypothesis rejects the traditional method of skill building, which has long been used to teach English. According to Prof. Krashen, the most effective method of language acquisition is quite contrary to most people's expectations. It is *Free Voluntary Reading* that is the best "weapon" for language acquisition. This effective learning method is pleasant, natural, and fun! Free Voluntary Reading includes the following three stages:

Stage One: Story! Story! Story!

This stage is for children. We can help to develop a child's interest in books by telling stories, which also fosters their listening and comprehension abilities.

Stage Two: Free voluntary reading.

This stage is for teenagers. In this stage, reading is like a bridge, helping the teenagers find the fields that they are interested in.

Stage Three: Academic Reading

In this stage, students should only focus on the specific fields that they are interested in. Prof. Krashen said: "If you are interested in a field, you will read the leading experts' theses, reports and monographs in such field. By reading the first thesis, you can start from the elementary then to the profound, in this way, you will learn lots of professional knowledge and research methods."



Prof. Krashen also said: "I am not a special person. I also followed this process and benefited from it." He took himself as an example and shared his experience with parents and teachers by expounding how he became a scholar after growing up reading comics and cartoons in his boyhood.

In her speech titled "Make Children Love Storybooks: Corpus-based Analysis of Textbooks and Juvenile Literature", Prof. Syying Lee introduces the data and results collected by herself and her team in the experiment of English reading. She makes a comparison between 65 English storybooks and textbooks used by to teach English by schools in Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan with regard to vocabulary, syntax and culture, etc. She and her team found that the level of grammar and vocabulary in these 65 English storybooks was far higher than that found in textbooks. In addition, the contents of textbooks are more often designed on the basis of knowledge points, which makes the language lose its original vividness and flavor. Starting in Grade One, her team read 65 books, including English picture books, English storybooks and chapter books, to 10 children in a Taiwanese Public Elementary School in their after-class time. At first, the 10 children didn't know any English whatsoever, but by the time they reached Grade Four, their English proficiency and level of vocabulary were far higher than that required by the teaching objectives.

Learning a language will be miserable and inefficient if you aim to increase vocabulary and learn grammar; if you read what you are interested in, you will increase your levels of vocabulary and grammar eventually and learn a lot more, which, however, is not the target of reading. These are the important conclusions made by the two professors in their long-term research and practice.

In his speech, Prof. Krashen also mentioned writing as a skill that was separate from language acquisition. He said: "Writing is an effective way to solve problems, it can help to keep our minds focused and organized, and is conducive to clear thinking, but it is not a method of language acquisition. Language acquisition requires input, while writing is a form of output.

As rigorous and prudent scholars, Prof. Krashen and Prof. Syying Lee are also very humorous; their unique opinions and research on language acquisition show their insight and thinking of education and life. As they have stressed in their speeches, the objective of education is to develop children's abilities of life-long learning and independent thinking, while reading is the way to it. It is important whether we can give up pursuing fame and honors and make children enjoy reading, then let the nature take its cause. This is undoubtedly a re-focus on the essence of education.



BEIJING READING LEARNING NETWORK



In order to improve professional reading knowledge and development in partner organizations, the Foundation is working with Narada Foundation, commissioning the Capacity Building Assessment Center (CBAC) as organizer, to launch the Beijing Reading Learning Network Program. Network preparatory meetings were held on 15-16 April. Fourteen organizations participated in the sessions, including 8 of our NGO partners, including Happy Xiaotaozi, New Century Library, and Green Kids; and 5 migrant community centers supported by the Narada Foundation.

The Learning Network is one of CBAC's signature programs, and 22 networks have been successfully set up by CBAC over the past 10 years; addressing issues including HIV, autism, environmental protection, etc.

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BEIJING READING LEARNING NETWORK

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Different from seminars or workshops, the Learning Network is more than an experience exchange platform - it is also a platform for capacity building and advocacy. Organizations in the same Learning Network often work together to jointly advocate for a common cause. Through the network, individuals can broaden their world views, teams strengthen their professional abilities, and organizations gain stronger, more effective teams. It is a great way for any industry to advocate their cause and potentially attract more funding sources.

The organizations in our Reading Learning Network will meet four times this year. Three points of action will be addressed each time the group meets:

1. Inviting professionals to conduct training; training topics will be chosen based on common needs
2. Discussing the development strategy of the learning



network

3. Evaluating joint actions

At the preparatory meetings, staff from CBAC introduced key concepts of the Learning Network, and led groups to discuss advantages and disadvantages of promoting reading in the community, and in wider society. During the second day meeting, the group's vision was determined after heated discussion - "All children should be happy and free to enjoy reading time." The group also discussed their joint annual plans, including setting up communication channels, carrying out joint reading advocacy programs; inviting experts to carry out training, etc.

At the meeting, Professor Stephen Krashen, the author of *The Power of Reading*, and Professor Syng Lee came to visit the group and to answer questions that the group had on reading, namely: the reading situation in the USA, how to stimulate early childhood interest in reading, and the best age to start reading. The group was thrilled to have the world-renowned experts visit and discuss issues that they all share interests in.

The second round of meetings was held on June 13 and 14, and were mostly focused on operational aspects of the Learning Network.

Despite the various challenges that the group faces, such as network management, and catering to each organizations' needs, we are confident that the experience will bring the organizations together to deliver better services in reading and literacy.

THE 4TH TEACHER-LIBRARIAN TRAINING PROGRAM FOR HEFEI LIBRARIES: BOOK COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

- Written by Tseng Pinfang and Lin Hsinju (Trainers from Taiwan)

As visiting trainers commissioned by the Foundation, our task for this module is for the Hefei Teacher-Librarians to:

1. Understand the meaning of book collection development in school libraries;
2. Gain knowledge of the different genres of novels and novel reading;
3. Learn how to use collecting procedures and tools for novels;
4. Be able to specify novels in the reading plan of the libraries;
5. Become acquainted with diversified strategies for promoting books;
6. Find a balance between the students' reading needs and the quality of the library's book collection;
7. Assist teachers of all subjects to apply library resources in their courses.

With such goals in mind, we guided the Teacher-Librarians to think about the following questions: What is book collection development? What are the advantages of fiction books? How can they distinguish different genres of novels? What are good principles for purchasing novels? What are the tools that assist book collection? What benefits can books generate? How can books better perform their role in helping children grow? What factors contribute to motivating children to read? Why and how can we apply library resources in courses for various subjects? We will also share our experiences of promotion and implementation in our own

schools, and have a discussion on that.

It is our hope that the program is not a presentation only by the trainers, but instead, more interaction will be created among the Teacher-Librarians, and we expect to lead the Teacher Librarians to think about how to use what they have learned. To that end, we have designed a number of exercises. Among others, the one that is most actively responded was for the Teacher Librarians had to select at least one of the novel genres and develop a reading plan, which should include objectives, reasons, genres, book titles, reading methods and applications. Analysis afterwards revealed that in terms of fictional genres, science fiction was the most selected, followed by historical novels, adventure novels and traditional chapter novels. Methods of reading and application of reading had wide coverage, including association of life experience, application in courses, a comprehensive approach to reading, introduction and review from the teachers, independent reading by the students, watching related videos, designing of reading questionnaires, cooperative composition, book review writing and observation of physical entities. The following is the reading plan by the Teacher Librarians.



Reading Plan by Teacher Librarians

Apart from the reading plan for novels, we discovered from the Teacher Librarians’ feedback that their ideas have begun to change

Genre	Books	Reading Methods & Applications
Sci-Fi	Charlotte’s Web The Records about Insects Wolf Totem: Little Wolfie Stuart Little The Trumpet of the Swan The Last War Elephant The Retired Army Dog Huang Hu Brown bear, Brown bear, what do you see?	Association of life experience; Application in courses; A comprehensive approach to reading; Introduction and review from the teachers; Independent reading by the students; Watching related videos;
Historical Novels	Romance of the Three Kingdoms Those Stories of Ming Dynasties Chinese Orphan Chinese Historical Novels Four Cases of Injustice of Ancient China	Designing reading questionnaires; Cooperative composition; Book review writing; Real world observations
Adventure Novels	Fantastic Mr. Fox Charlie and the Chocolate Factory George's Marvelous Medicine	
Traditional Chinese Novels	Journey to the West	

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HEFEI LIBRARIES: BOOK COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

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after the training module. Before they purchase books, they would first contact the children to gain general knowledge about their reading interest and current reading circumstances. By meeting the children's needs, it is then easier for the teachers to guide them through the whole reading experience. The Teacher Librarians further pointed out that, "we need to give the children the opportunity to recommend books for us to purchase and discuss with them about the books they are reading. They have also begun to seek a multitude of channels to provide various views on reading and bring in a wider readership. Some Teacher Librarians are thinking about reading stories and poems for the children in meetings, and sharing about the books that the Teacher Librarians are reading. There are also Teacher Librarians who have begun trying frequent rotation of the latest books for readers of all ages and adding book-reading in important school events. For example, home

reading is heavily advocated at the beginning of the school year.

During the training program, we also emphasized that learning of all fields is inseparable from reading. With extensive cross-field reading, students are guided to explore the concept of learning, develop their ability to read diverse texts and expand their breadth of learning. However, for library resources to be integrated into various curriculums and for teachers to help promote reading, Teacher Librarians should be equipped with relevant background knowledge about education of reading skills and library resources utilization, so as to assist teachers in their teaching and promote effective reading strategies. Only in this way can libraries become a resource and research centre for teaching reading. Meanwhile, we cannot ignore the contribution from library volunteers, one major force that brings forward library service and reading education and whose support offers convenience for various library affairs. These volunteers, recruited for the purposes of promoting reading and serving for the needs of teachers and students, include scholarly volunteers, story volunteers, book prefects and story prefects, who serve to make reading education step forward.

Through the Teacher Librarians' feedback in the program and our site visits to three primary schools, it is found that all the libraries share the following advantages: policy support, sufficient funding, new equipment and a rich book collection. Particularly, sufficient funding and resources to these libraries are most impressive for us, as we come from Taiwan. And further improvements that the libraries should keep in mind include the library system, strategies for teaching reading and innovative library services.

In addition, we also noticed that schools in Hefei not only have books in the libraries, but reading materials are available throughout the campus and classroom corners. It is a pity that the fully equipped libraries with a wealth of book resources are currently underused – it seems that few students borrow or read books there, and there is very few book promoting and marketing activities available in the libraries. It would be a waste of such great hardware and resources if they are not put into good use. We hope after this training, Teacher Librarians in Hefei can duplicate the successful experience of Taiwan, and spread their own effective teaching and promoting experience. They can have communication with other schools on reading education and share their successful experience, thus making reading root firmly in schools.



STONE SOUP HAPPY READING SCHOOL ALLIANCE REVIEW, JUNE 2013



As a flagship program of the Foundation, the Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance in Hefei has come a long way, and its success embodies the efforts of numerous people. This meeting was designed to establish a platform for reading teachers, teacher-librarians, school headmasters and Education Bureau officials to exchange ideas. On this platform, they were able to have face-to-face communication, learn about their peers' duties and responsibilities within the Alliance, support and cooperate with each other to co-promote the sustainable development of the Alliance.

Ms. Chen Xuemei, Director of Baohe Education Sports Bureau, made an opening speech for the meeting. In her speech, she introduced the original relationship between the Foundation and the Alliance. While encouraging the work of the Alliance so far, she also expressed her hope that the schools could take the opportunity of this meeting to appraise and reflect on their work, so as to further develop school libraries and promote school reading programs. As one of the founding members, Ms. Chen has a special affection for the Alliance. She said, "We are not compelled by others to do this, we do it out of the love and passion in our hearts."

Achievement Presentation

Jin Yan, headmaster of Taihu Road Primary School, introduced reading culture on behalf of 17 Alliance member schools. From *Good Books for All to Read*, supported by the Foundation since 2006, to *Model Schools for Reading Environment*, and the *Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance*, launched in 2012, the schools have created a wonderful reading environment and distinctive reading activities for students according to their own conditions and needs, for example, *Reading Festival*, *Noontime Story Theatre*, *Reciting Club*, *Book Time on Radio*, and *Reading Salon*. Regular reading activities have become part of school culture. Furthermore, the Alliance also spreads the positive energy of reading to neighbourhood communities and rural schools where resources are inadequate.

In order to cultivate reading culture, schools give priority to building libraries in order to develop the library into a resource center for teaching. To help schools in Baohe District cultivate and reserve professional library management personnel, the Foundation implemented the *Teacher-Librarian Training Program* in November 2012, which lasted 11 months and covered 12 modules of courses. A total of 39 teachers were



selected from Alliance member schools to participate in the training. Representing teacher-librarians, Jiang Ying from Qingnian Road Primary School, Chen Jun from Tunxi Road Primary School, and Chen Huijuan from Shuhong Primary School gave presentations on their learning experiences and results, as well as current management situations in the libraries at their respective schools. In the past seven themed trainings, directors of libraries from Taiwan and Hong Kong have trained the teachers under the themes *Responsibilities of Teacher-Librarians*, *Development of Library Collections*, and *Library Information Technology*. Teacher-librarians have not only put what they learned into practice in their daily work routines, they have also carefully considered the challenges present in library work. Having listened to the teacher-librarians' presentations, James Henri thought highly of the library development in member schools of the Alliance and regarded it as "a miracle made in such a short time by the teachers."

Keynote Speech

Compared with overseas countries or Hong Kong and Macau, Mainland China is still in its exploratory stage in terms of



Wanghu Primary School has the biggest library of all the schools in the Alliance



The library at Gedadian Primary School is very popular with the students

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STONE SOUP HAPPY READING SCHOOL ALLIANCE REVIEW, JUNE 2013

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primary school library development. To facilitate mutual learning, Ms. Liang Yuexia, Deputy Director of Hong Kong Library Association, was specially invited to deliver a keynote speech themed *Development History of Hong Kong Library*. With her personal experience as a library director, Ms. Liang explained to audiences the history and development of Hong Kong's library systems, the responsibilities facing a library director, and how to integrate the library into subject teaching.

As Director of Hong Kong Library Association, Ye Jinlian is also a mentor for the *Teacher-Librarian Training Program*. Ms. Ye introduced the development trends of school libraries and the objectives of teacher-librarian training. "Developing students' independent thinking and problem solving abilities" is the responsibility of every teacher. Enhancing students' learning abilities through library use is not just the duty of teacher-librarians – teamwork and support from the whole school are needed.

Library Software Demonstration

To help remove bottlenecks encountered by Alliance schools in library management and development, the Foundation invited four library software providers from Taiwan, Beijing, Changzhou, and Hefei to introduce library management software to Education Bureau officials, headmasters, and teachers. They also performed demonstrations so that audience members could fully experience the software and learn about the different kinds of library management software, and features and functions that good library management software should include.

School Tour

During the meeting, Education Bureau officials and guests from the Foundation visited two of the Alliance's sponsoring schools,



Dance performance of the picture book *Belinda the Ballerina* at Weigang Primary School



Jincheng Primary School created a reading area for waiting parents

and two "friend" schools.

Weigang Primary School is one of the Alliance sponsors. Once past the school gate, the visitors were drawn to the vivid and lively reading environment. Staircases were decorated and transformed into reading corners with different themes, students' work is displayed in passageways, and the headmaster Chen Xiaoqin even designed a Hope Tree bookshelf. To welcome us, the students carefully prepared and performed a play based on a picture book, and gave a demonstration of parent-child reading.



Gedadian Primary School is a school that accepts children of migrant workers. Project Consultant James Henri said that the school had changed significantly since his first visit. The school now has reading classes, and has assigned full-time teachers for the library. The bright and spacious library is now the most popular place visited by students after class.

Wanghu Primary School is another Alliance sponsor. It has the largest library of all its peer schools. Covering an area of 1000 square meters, the library is spacious and properly laid out. Surrounded by a beautiful, fun environment, children can sit, crouch, lie down and even hide in a "cave" to read books there.

Jincheng Primary School is a newly built school, but it is making good progress with innovative reading programs. The Reading Zone, set up at the gate of the school, has become a unique and popular feature: parents who come to pick up their children can read books here while they wait.

At the end of the meetings, Chen Gang, Chairman of the Advisory Committee of Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance and headmaster of Tunxi Road Primary School, summarized the work carried out by the Alliance in the past year and planned the future work. For the second half of the year, Alliance priorities will include:

- Establishing the Teacher-Librarians' Association
- Developing library courses
- Producing Alliance brand reading activities

The Foundation hopes that the Alliance program can be scaled

STONE SOUP HAPPY READING SCHOOL ALLIANCE REVIEW, JUNE 2013

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up more extensively to involve more people in reading promotion and library development.

Acknowledgements

Sponsor: Baohe Education Sports Bureau, Hefei

Organizer: Binhu Campus of Tunxi Road Primary School

Special Guests:

Chen Xuemei, Director, and Gao Jun, Deputy Director, Baohe Education Sports Bureau

Wang Sheng, Member of the Advisory Committee of Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation

Shen Shide, Representative of Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation in Beijing

James Henri, Project Consultant of Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation

Ye Jinlian, Director, and Liang Yuexia, Deputy Director, Hong Kong Library Association

Prof. Wang Zizhou and Doctoral student Wang Yifan, Information Management Department, Peking University

Ms. Liu Qiuju and Mr. Liu Yankai, HyRead, Taiwan

WORKSHOPS IN ANHUI BY BMAB TRAINERS: JULIE FOWLKES AND PAULINE YOUNG



From 22-27 May, Pauline Young and Julie Fowlkes, senior trainers of Bring Me A Book, paid a visit to Hefei City and Jinzhai County, Anhui Province. During the six-day visit, they

provided nine training sessions for local teachers and volunteers of NGOs. Trainees included reading teachers in the Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance, English teachers and kindergarten teachers in Hefei, rural teachers of Jinzhai County, and volunteers of NOBs in Hefei. After the training, the two trainers shared their feelings:

Reflections on the Anhui Trip to China (by Julie Fowlkes)

We had a very rewarding and productive time during our week long visit to several sites in Anhui. The principals, teachers, NGO workers and volunteers were enthusiastic and very engaged in the learning opportunities we provided. They seemed to have an open spirit for new ideas, strategies and activities. We were impressed with how willingly the participants joined in and tried new techniques.

We modeled teaching strategies that were less lecture and more student involvement.

Our classes used an experiential learning approach which included partner work (Think, Pair, Share), small group work

(presenting stories and short skits) choral response and student presentations before the class. The teachers wrote their own original books, developed extension activities (drama, art, crafts) for their favorite books and, practiced reading and enhancing stories. We encouraged active, verbal participation throughout the class sessions.

It was truly an honor and joyful experience to share successful reading activities, ideas and strategies with educators in Anhui. We are optimistic that they will use experiential learning with their students to strengthen their current reading programs.

Pauline Young's Quick Recap and Highlights from Hefei/Jinzhai

The greatest challenge was gauging the different levels of the participants and adjusting our core training materials to the needs at hand. Sometimes we didn't know until we talked to the principals of the schools



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WORKSHOPS IN ANHUI BY BMAB TRAINERS: JULIE FOWLKES AND PAULINE YOUNG (

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the night before the training as they kept adding more participants of varying levels to the mix. In one class, we had teachers from kindergarten all the way through junior high school. The core concepts may be transferrable across the board, but we had to address the specific needs of the different levels and ask them to practice applying the learning to their own levels and subjects.

The epitome or high point of our experience was the last day when we trained the NGOs. Their passion was contagious and the sense of mission spoke volumes. We felt so privileged to have met all these wonderful people in Hefei and Jinzhai, and very thankful for the efficient support from the locals, especially Shelly and Cindy, Chen Yet Sen Family Foundation's staff on ground in China, as well as everyone who helped to make this journey a meaningful and memorable one for all.



SETTING UP A STONE SOUP HAPPY READING SCHOOL ALLIANCE FOR PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN -- READING PROJECT FOR HEFEI KINDERGARTENS

A Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation Initiative, *The Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance* has been successful in promoting reading projects in primary schools. The Foundation hopes to expand such reading projects to kindergartens by setting up a Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance for pre-school children. In 2013, thanks to the support of Hefei Education Bureau, the Foundation continued the reading project, working with 6 kindergartens in Hefei, namely, the Hefei University of Technology Kindergarten, Kangyuan Kindergarten, Renhe Jiayuan Kindergarten, Kindergarten of China Tiesiju, Kindergarten of Military Authorities and the University of Science and Technology of China Kindergarten.

Part 1. Cross-regional Interaction between Haimen and Hefei

Haimen Kindergartens have worked with the Foundation for many years on this reading project, and have achieved fruitful results in exploring and developing the model for the reading project for pre-school children. Therefore, at the invitation of the Foundation, the head staff from Haimen Kindergartens came to Hefei to provide guidance and experience so that their successful model of parent-child reading could be duplicated and expanded, thus promoting the development of pre-school children's reading in Hefei.

Thanks to the introduction of the Foundation, kindergartens of



Hefei and Haimen began to interact and communicate with each other. In March, at the invitation of the Foundation, Fan Jinghua, Section Chief of Haimen Education Bureau, and four headmasters of kindergartens under the Education Bureau's administration came to Hefei. They visited 6 kindergartens in Hefei to understand their implementation of reading activities and the support needed to successfully implement this reading project.

From 15-16 May, at the invitation of Haimen Education Bureau, more than 40 kindergarten teachers came from Hefei to Haimen to attend the Exhibition of Regional Features of Pre-school



Education. The teachers visited Haimen Kindergarten Youth Palace, Dongzhou Kindergarten and Experimental Kindergarten. Amongst other activities, they also attended a symposium, watched a performance of a play based on a picture book, and observed a parent-child reading demonstration. Through these eye-opening visits and communication exercises, the teachers learned about new teaching methods and experiences, opening their minds to further learning.

Part 2. Training provided by the Foundation for Kindergarten teachers

In March, Pauline Young, senior trainer for Bring Me a Book (Hong Kong), came to Hefei and organized training workshops for some 100 teachers from 6 kindergartens: *First Teacher Training*, *Advanced Courses for First Teacher Training* and *Storytelling Skills*. The interactive and participatory training



methods refreshed and taught new material and skills to the trainees. One trainee commented: "I have learned how to persuade parents to recognize the importance of reading more convincingly, and mastered skills to tell stories vividly. Pauline Young's professional ethics also inspire me to love my job more."

In May, Pauline Young paid another visit to Hefei. This time, she and Julie Fowlkes, a senior trainer for Bring Me a Book (U.S.A), provided a training course titled *Creating a Lively and Interesting Class*. Based on picture books and storytelling, interesting and easy extension activities such as creating hand-made articles, hand-puppet performances and music, are added to keep children engaged in the stories, making class more fun and encouraging creativity. Over 50 teachers attended this training.



Part 3. Training provided by kindergartens for parents

Parents are a child's first teachers. *Parent-child Reading* is the focus of promoting pre-school children's reading. In line with the Foundation's recommendations, after completing the training for teachers in March, the kindergartens provided training for parents to enhance parents' understanding of pre-school reading and encourage them to read books with their children at home.

The *netting game* is a very popular part of the training where parents are shown the stimulation produced by reading on pre-school children's brain development.

During the training, teachers actively encouraged parents to try to tell their children stories, as well as giving tips and coaching



to improve their storytelling skills.

After learning about others' experiences, all the kindergartens



took action to improve their own reading environments, organize teacher discussions about picture books, design colorful picture book reading activities, and set up a variety of platforms for parent-child reading. Through effective use of picture books, we hope that these joint efforts will result in a Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance for pre-school children.

COMBINING READING WITH ENGLISH TEACHING --TRAINING FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHERS

English teaching in Mainland China features high levels of passive learning by students. Starting in primary school, students have to recite and do repetitive exercises in order to achieve a high mark in exams. The learning process is so monotonous that it is hard to stimulate students to learn proactively. Understandably, this affects students' results and learning outcomes.

Many years of research conducted by Prof. Stephen Krashen and his team in the field of second language acquisition show that effective language learning is based on understanding, not pure memory. Voluntary reading based on one's interests is the best way to enhance language comprehension skills. Through controlled trials, Professor Sying Lee from Taiwan proved the advantages of reading English stories in helping children increase vocabulary, learn grammar, and understand foreign culture. As she often says, "It always begins with stories." Loving stories comes instinctively to children, which makes the learning process pleasant and natural.



In March this year, the Foundation experimented with combining reading and English teaching in schools in the Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance by conducting a trial lesson. Pauline Young, a senior trainer from Bring Me a Book (Hong Kong) was the trainer for the lesson, which 20 English teachers from primary schools attended. Pauline demonstrated how to ignite student's interest with vivid stories, and how to use stories to teach grammar, words and language rules. After the short one-hour experiential class, the teachers became curious about the "story teaching" approach and wanted to try it themselves. The response and feedback from this session convinced the Foundation that there was a need for this kind of training, as well as giving valuable suggestions for how to improve the classes.

In June, the Foundation re-invited Pauline Young and Julie Fowlkes, another trainer from Bring Me a Book, to Hefei to open reading-oriented training workshops for English teachers. During the training, Julie said, "Using storybooks as a tool is to tell children that English learning is not only about the books, but also about interesting stories". They also used current English teaching materials as examples to discuss with teachers how to adopt diversified teaching methods, such as roleplay and creating handmade crafts, to enrich English classes. After the training, Pauline and Julie paid a special visit to Hefei Youth Road Primary School to observe the English classes given by two teachers, Chen Rongyi and Wang Li, and offered teaching guidance for them.

The Foundation will continue to provide support, including training, for English teachers, and encourage them to integrate reading into English teaching to help children enjoy reading and, therefore, English learning.

CHENGDU CONFERENCE: THIRD RURAL LIBRARY AND CHILDREN'S READING SEMINAR

On 24-25 April, the Foundation attended the Third Rural Library and Children's Reading Seminar in Chengdu, organized by the Xiping Foundation and the Yinhuo Charity Development Center. Around 100 participants from 51 organizations attended the two-day conference. This year, the focus of the seminar was on how to maximize the utilization of resources among NGOs in the reading field.

14 speakers shared their experiences and expectations on various topics, including program sustainability and model replication, and how to work together with different stakeholders. The Foundation's Executive Director Tina Chan also made a presentation on *Hefei Stone Soup Happy Reading School Alliance* to the group, sharing the Foundation's experiences during the Alliance's history and development, and support

methodology in Hefei, which resulted in the schools growing and forming their own reading alliance. The Alliance's key activities, including the principal roundtable, and teacher innovation fund, were also introduced to the audience. Several of the Foundation's partners, namely Pass Love, Heart Education, and Smiling Library shared their insights and thoughts on the topic of how to maximize the utilization of resources among NGOs in the field. Through thoughtful presentations and conference organization, all participating organizations had the opportunity to discuss and exchange ideas on the topic of sustainable impact. Despite the great work by NGOs in the reading field, we noticed that Xinping and the Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation are two of only a few Foundations in China that focus on reading programs. With such limited funding sources, most of the NGOs in the reading field remain as grassroots organizations. Both the Foundation and Xinping Foundation have agreed to work hard to address this challenge, and help attract more resources to support our work and promote happy, free voluntary reading.

We were very pleased to be part of the conference, and it further strengthened our conviction to help build platforms for collaboration, provide NGO capacity building, and promote good existing reading programs and NGOs in the field.



PLAYRIGHT: FROM SCHOOL PLAY TO PLAY BASE



Play is an instinctive need of every child; this is a universally applicable truth. Supported by the Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation in Hong Kong, Playright Children's Play Association developed a play promotion project in Hefei city, Anhui province, and won all-round cooperation from headmasters and teachers. Through combined efforts, the seed of play has sprouted, taken root, and grown into a large tree, which is now providing shade for children in the area.

The three-year project, which dates back to the *School Play Development Project in Hefei* in 2008, focused on the design of play environments and play activity days. Helped by Tunxi Road Primary School in Hefei, play spaces were created for four schools, play training courses were tailored

by Playright's professional play trainers, and consulting and supervision plans provided for play day.

The project benefited teachers, who received training, as well as students from the primary schools, who were able to make full use of the new playrooms. The most joyful were the children who, for the first time, experienced a full day of play on International Children's Day. These students could wholeheartedly move freely between every play area with their teachers, parents and schoolmates, playing endlessly throughout the day. Afterwards, the children declared June 1 Playday to be their favorite festival.

The participating primary schools ready to listen to the voices of children continue to deliver the June 1st play day activity every year. As for the children, they are of course delighted to see the play day return year on year. To enhance the quality of play day, the schools dispatched some teachers to Hong Kong to take Playright's three-day play certificate course, and observe first-hand various play activities held by Playright to strengthen understanding and mutual communication: valuable preparation for the future.

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PLAYRIGHT: FROM SCHOOL PLAY TO PLAY BASE (continued from page 13)

All parties responded positively to the project, prompting the Foundation to take the project even further. As such, the *School Play Base Development Project* was unveiled. The 3-year project has seen the number of participating schools rise from 4 to 7, the enrichment of play activities, and extensive development of play promotion and training. In the process, the contribution of Tunxi Road Primary School in Hefei cannot be overstated. The school, one of the key participants of the original project, did its best to keep improving. It selected some teachers for continuous study, and arranged for trained teachers to be responsible for internal training. Meanwhile, the school worked with Playright to co-design domestic play training courses, and provided ambitious peer schools with some suggestions, experience and material support on how to develop play. Through all their hard work, the school made an enormous contribution to the project, and was granted the honorary title of *Play Promotion Base* by the Foundation.

Encouragingly, the project direction and promotion results were recognized and affirmed by the local education bureau, which gave the green light for its future development. We expect that this successful experience and valuable knowledge will be spread from Tunxi Road Primary School to help more provinces and cities, schools, teachers and parents understand and emphasize play, with the ultimate beneficiaries being the children themselves.

QIDONG YOUTH OUTREACH CAMP

Funded by the Foundation, Qiyong Project Summer Camp, organized by Heart Education Youth Development Center, Shanghai, ran smoothly from 7-13 July, 2013.

In today's fast-growing society, adolescents need to accumulate knowledge from books, develop a well-rounded personality, and be able to deal with frustration and stress. These latter conditions are essential for them to come of age and calmly enter wider society.

As a form of life education, the Qiyong Project Youth Outreach Camp aims to encourage youths to develop their individual potential, better understand their own values, learn how to handle interpersonal relationships appropriately, further enhance their self-confidence, and learn how to care for others: taken as a whole, the camp seeks to prepare participants for independent life.

The summer camp is part of the Qidong Youth Outreach Project supported by the Chen Yet-Sen Family Foundation. During the camp, 12 trainees from Qidong Nanyuan Middle School, Qidong Zhegui Nanyuan Middle School and Qidong Jianxin Middle School completed two gold medal courses



Team play aims to help the students face problems as a team, understand and respect their teammates, and find solutions together.

comprising three days of base training and four days of field training.

The 3-day base training focused on team activities. Morning exercise, team play, and outdoor knowledge and skills training helped participants make fully prepare for the 4-day field exercise in terms of physical strength, psychology, knowledge and skills, etc.

The 4-day field training included crossing a 32 km mountain trail on foot, three nights of camping, and cooking for themselves. During the activity, these students were not only confronted by the physical challenges, they also had to learn how to take care of themselves in the field.

Experience and practice are as important as book learning, and a real-life experience can often be more compelling and memorable than repeated classroom theory.

This was the first time that the trainees participating in the summer camp had ever experienced such a hard, challenging but enjoyable trip.



2km morning exercise and leg stretching exercises are mandatory for each day of the 3-day base training

When sharing their thinking on the summer camp closing ceremony, a trainee said, "It was my first time camping. Unexpectedly, I finished crossing a 32km mountain trail on foot. I felt very happy even though I found the experience difficult, and I want to issue to myself an award entitled *Challenge Myself*."

Teacher Chen was appointed by Haimen Municipal Education Bureau to observe the whole summer camp. After the activity ended, Chen said frankly:

"It was indeed unbelievable. It was not uncommon for students to have never washed their own clothes at home, and they would incessantly grumble when asked to run 400m during PE class.

Not accompanied by their parents, these children, often spoiled at home, displayed such strong will and constitution. As well as cooking for themselves, they completed the 32km trail each carrying 5kg rucksacks. What an achievement!

In my view, due to well-meaning parents overindulging their children, and teachers being too afraid to allow them to experience life, children can be over-sheltered and spoiled.

In fact, every child is adaptable. When encountering strange new environments, without any assistance from parents and teachers, she will display a completely different side of her character. This is the very character that parents and teachers hope the child will develop."



To learn outdoor skills, students must use their hands and brains, and learn how to better arrange their four days of camping.



During camp life, everything including food, clothing, shelter and transportation has to be done by the students themselves. After they arrive at the destination each day, they must set up camp and start to cook. This is the most relaxing and happy moment of the day.



The rugged and steep mountain road is just like the students' development path. The students will learn to take responsibility, constantly meet challenges and discover their own abilities.



Experiencing growth rather than simply conquering the summit allows the students to feel the joy of finally reaching the peak.

2011 GRADUATION CEREMONY AND INAUGURAL CEREMONY OF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF TEACH FUTURE CHINA

On July 20 2013, the 2011 Graduation Ceremony for Project Members & Inaugural Ceremony of Alumni Association was held in the Jingwen Lecture Hall of Beijing Normal University by Teach Future China (TFC). The event was designed, prepared and organized by project members who have successfully completed the 2-year rural teaching program. These members have been in the program since 2011. The theme "Let's pursue our dreams once more" shows their will and confidence to continue following their dreams after the end of the program. At the same time, the Alumni Association of TFC officially came into being. It is hoped that the association can serve as a platform to focus on and promote the fair and sound development of Chinese education by bringing together the strengths and resources of volunteer teachers at all levels and social communities.



Around 160 project members who participated in the rural teaching program between 2009 and 2013 attended this ceremony. Representatives of sponsors who have been supporting TFC for years, representatives of cooperating education bureaus, current and former trainers and staff all attended the ceremony. "Sprouting", an original song which was written, composed and sung by project members who have been in the program since 2011 was played during the ceremony. All participants were moved by the song's official video [see link below]. Accompanied by the clear and touching melody of the song, the volunteer teachers got on stage to receive exclusive commemorative medals as recognition for their 2-year volunteer work. Every member on stage gave a speech with smiles and tears, sharing their feelings about the 2-year rural teaching program and the valuable part it played in their youth.

As one of TFC's long-term partners, we were very glad that the Foundation was provided with an opportunity to have a face-to-face exchange with the volunteer teachers. We were deeply touched by their enthusiasm to change rural education, their determination to follow their dreams, and by the deep friendships that had developed among peers. Although the young teachers have now left school, we are confident that they will always pay close attention to and support the development of Chinese education. The Foundation also hopes that they will make a difference in their future work by perpetuating the spirit of Teach Future China.

(See the official video for the song here: http://v.youku.com/v_show/id_XNTg3Nzi00Tg0.html)



Today, let's restart.