



# TANGO

# EXTRA

*Dancing with Words*

Senri & Osaka International Schools of Kwansei Gakuin

March 2015

Volume 8 Number 3

## It's for everyone!

*The Learning Lab and Homework Center offer the opportunity of enriched learning to all SOIS students.*

### **The Learning Lab**

The learning lab is available for anyone in SOIS to come in and get help with their work. Assistance is offered and computers are available for students to use for their work.

The Homework Club is for SIS and OIS to come in and work together. Mr. Van Plantinga is available from 12 to 13:30 Monday through Thursday and 3:30 to 4:45 every day for any student in the school to come in and have a quiet place with internet access.

The idea is not just for students to come in and to work alone, or to work with Mr. Van Plantinga, but to work with their classmates and collaborate together.

While the library might also be a place for study, there might not be the opportunity for a great deal of collaboration and communication that the Homework Club can provide.

At the moment there is a large group of 6th graders that get together and do their homework together.

Mr. Van Plantinga points out that by getting homework done at the homework club before they go home, students can free up time at home later to relax and unwind. Even if they can't get all their homework done at the homework club, they can at least get the preparation and groundwork done collaboratively before they go home.

The homework club is for any student who

is finding the work challenging but also for students who want to be challenged more. All students who want to enrich their learning are welcome. In other words, the Homework Club is for all students!

The Learning Lab in general is a place where students can just come in to enrich their learning. Maybe they could develop their reading skills by using graded readers. Maybe they could get some help with developing their fluency. Maybe they could work on their mathematical skills. The thing is, the Learning Lab is for everyone: the confident and the not so confident. Students who want to get the basics right and students who have mastered one level in their learning and want to break through to another.

If you want to learn programming, maybe the learning lab can put you onto some software that will teach you that. Other students might want to learn how to type, and there's a program for that too. Study skills, approaches to learning skills, the learning lab can help you in all these areas.

The door's always open! Please come in! Students, the learning lab is *your* room.



*More Graduation photos page 14*

## Farewell



**SIS Seniors**





## Editorial

by Hannah Yamamoto — Tango President

A couple weeks ago, I was downstairs in the genkan working on the Tango Board with Mona after school. While we were drawing carrots, dyed eggs, and baby animals in the spirit of our spring/Easter themed issue, Mr. Kralovec passed by and stopped to comment on our work. Quick shout out to Mr. Kralovec and his family--we're all so glad that you enjoy Tango so much. Anyways, one of the things I remember very clearly during the conversation that ensued, was when he asked us something along the lines of, "So, since you guys have started the board, have you seen an increase in popularity with the newspaper?"

This question caught me off guard because honestly, I didn't know what to say. I don't know if Tango has gotten more popular in the past year. I don't know if people are enjoying it more, or if it's getting circulated around classrooms, or if more people are talking about it. I don't even know how many people read Tango. And honestly, obsessing over whether Tango is popular or not, or how many copies are left over after we distribute, isn't really my first priority.

What I love most about Tango is the creative process. I love that this is a club where students have the freedom to write and draw about things that they love and have interest in. I love that junior high and high school students, from both SIS and OIS, can find a common ground at school to build relationships with others. I love seeing the enthusiasm and desire to put together a student-run newsletter. I love the challenge that comes with contributing to Tango, whether it be having to rack my brain for ideas or finding time in my day to write, just because I want to write and not for a grade. I love how my commitment to the club gives me an opportunity to express my own opinions and develop my thoughts in formal writing on a regular basis. And getting to share the fruits of our labor with the school is just the cherry on top.

In a society where everybody is content with passively and superficially dabbling in bunch of things, it's exciting and refreshing to find students that are actually passionate about a particular something, no matter how weird it is. Developing a personality by discovering your passions and interests is so important in shaping the life you lead because while grades and

friends will fade with time, these are what will stay with you forever. Be the one who gets involved and is proactive, regardless of your age, gender, and especially, what your friends are doing.

So please enjoy this issue of Tango, because we're all very proud of it. I hope you can see the creativity and enthusiasm woven through these words, and I hope it inspires you to pursue the things extracurricular things you love. And what better an opportunity to do this than during Spring Camps and Break. Photography, dog walking, skiing, writing...Don't wait for opportunities for your life to "begin", because by the time you realize you're behind, it's going to be too late.

## Freedom of Speech and Charlie Hebdo

By Hannah Yamamoto

Freedom of speech is something I've been thinking a lot about lately. I've had to write about it in a couple college essays, and I've heard about it in TOK class. I've seen it debated upon on the news websites, and colorfully sprawled on a poster in front of my lockers at school (if you haven't checked out the artwork on Ms. Cheney's "Freedom of Speech" Wall, you definitely should). Now I usually shy away from getting too involved with controversy that has no solution, but this is something that really been eating at me for a while.

To me, freedom of speech has always had a sort of negative connotation. I think it's because I'm from a country where it is often taken for granted, and quite frankly, too often abused. I remember in elementary school, there was this kid in my class named Brandon. He was a troublemaker, and in the context of fifth grade, this meant saying rude things that would often disrespect the teacher and/or other students. Whenever he got in trouble he would show no signs of remorse, justifying his actions by quoting the First Amendment of the US Constitution, which protects the right to free speech. In other words, his choice of words, however insulting of an effect it created, was protected by the US Constitution. So he could say whatever he wanted. At that time, the fifth grade me was pretty impressed with the bare fact that he could quote the Constitution, so I couldn't care any less about what he said. Now that I look back, it's starting to hit me. This Brandon's excuse is amusing, almost innocent, because of the fact that he was only ten years old. But grown adults today use this same excuse in the real world to justify saying things that offend others. When taken to the extreme end of the spectrum, I see people using and abusing their rights to free speech, by using it as a justification for hate speech.

Now I don't know a lot about the right to free speech and the legalities of it, but is it safe to say that I think this is wrong? I can't think of a better context to put this in other than the Charlie Hebdo shooting that happened this past January. Please read up on this event, as I won't really go into detail about what happened, as much as what happened after. The tragic incident sparked a global movement for journalistic freedom of speech in support of the magazine, characterized by the image of a fist holding a pencil and the slogan, "Je Suis Charlie", or "I Am Charlie".

Before I cause any controversy here, please do not get me wrong. The slaughters of those working at Charlie Hebdo and the police involved are in no way justifiable. Violence, much less murder, is never the answer to showing disapproval or difference in opinion. Worldwide campaigns and movements to support Paris and the media community in France are great. The problem I have with "Je Suis Charlie", though, is that I feel like through promoting Charlie Hebdo's freedom of expression, these supporters are also protecting the magazine's offensive approach to political, culture, and especially religious satire.



There is no doubt that Charlie Hebdo's famous, or perhaps infamous, satirical cartoons are unconventional. While the editor in chief of the magazine views their nude, crude drawings of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad as simply aimed to "...provoke thinking or laughter...", is it bad that even I, a non-believer of Islam, find the same cartoons disgustingly distasteful (Simons)? Surely Charlie Hebdo offends a decent majority of the French population. So how can a movement like "Je Suis Charlie" proclaim and glorify the right of freedom of expression for all of France, if it means perpetuating the offensive stereotypes that permeate French society and fan the flames of France's xenophobia?

One of the two police officers killed in incident was named Ahmed Merabet, a French Muslim (Gay). He died ultimately sacrificing his life to defend the rights of a magazine that mocked and criticized his faith and his people. My right to free speech, and your right to free speech, should not be misconstrued as a justification of the circulation of these perverse ideas that Merabet died for. Commemorating the loss of those in the Charlie Hebdo shooting does not necessarily start with nor require a reverence of the work that they published and the perverse ideas they circulated. So while I fully support freedom of speech and mourn the tragedy that took place in Paris on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015, I don't think I feel very comfortable advocating "Je Suis Charlie" if it means that I have to allow offensive stereotypes to be publicized in the name of journalistic freedom.

And yet, I've come to realize that the freedom of speech is a double-edged sword. Exercise no control over it, and governments ultimately find themselves supporting uncensored opinion, hate speech and all. Impose restrictions, and the people are quick to complain about an oppressive government. Different countries position themselves at different positions along this spectrum of tolerance of free speech, and I imagine this to be just one of many convoluted topics upon which governments must make and enforce their own individual policies. After all this ranting, I still don't really know where I stand. If you're as conflicted as I am, just know that this is exactly why I try to keep my opinions on controversy to myself. But with the degree of "free speech" here at Tango, I guess I just couldn't help myself.

# From My Little Table

By Mia Lewis

Continuing from last year, I participated in the 2015 ASP, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat. My job was the Stage Manager. The Stage Manager is mentioned in the curtain call and is given thank you cards every year, but no one really knows what the job is. So I thought it would be time to enlighten the community on what I do and the backstage workings of ASP.

First, stage managing was a job I never thought I would do. It was the job that people I looked up to, Anna Shishikura and Nina Joby did, but not something in my range. However, after auditioning for the role for Dorothy, I did not get the part and ended up becoming a jitterbug. I was disappointed, but thought to try for a larger role the next year and try my best as a jitterbug. However, on the first day of practice, Osaka Sensei came up to me and asked me to become Stage Manager. I knew I would have to attend every single practice and dedicate most my time to the job, but I accepted without any reluctance. After a year of being coached on what to do, I started to



get a clear idea of what my job was. This year was the time to take full responsibility for my job.

The stage manager really has to know everything. And by everything I mean, the props, the costumes, the people, the scenes, the lights, the sound, everything. Unlike the Student Director (shout out to Leina Barke who did a wonderful job and we wouldn't have been successful without her) who has slightly less to do as time goes by and less directing is needed, the Stage Manager gets busier, the closer the show becomes. For the first few weeks of practice, I take role, mark the position of the set, communicate between different departments and overall, make sure that things are going smoothly. It is my job to take notes and keep track of what is done and tell the cast how to improve and more. After the play is getting together, I then have to organise a part of hair and makeup. I had to tell the hair and makeup staff who

was in what scene and how the play flowed in order to for the hair and makeup schedule to be created. Next was the sound. I had to tell the sound who needed mikes for what scenes, the scene changes in-between and how many mikes were required. This was a process that took until the day of the performance, as some mike changes did not work during dress rehearsal. I do not do anything with the actual mike station, but I help to organised the movement of the mikes and make sure that the mikes are being used smoothly. The part of my job that most people ask is, what am I using the blue head set for? Well, the blue head set is used to communicate to the people up in the light booth. I give the queues for blackouts and different lighting combinations. This seems like a small job, but in reality, the lights start the whole show and end the whole show. If I mess up, the whole show may go wrong. As stage manager, I also deliver the message before the show asking to turn off mobile phones and more from my little desk in the wings. I spend the whole show my little desk, giving ques to start the play.



Yes, there are many jobs involved in stage managing, even more than what I have describes, since I am still learning. However, what makes the experience really special is the cast. Everyday from the start of ASP, I meet the members of the cast and watch the play come to life is something that words can't explain. Even if there are members I don't talk to regularly, by the time the last show has ended, it is like they are my family. Because of the role calling, I remember all the names, I've talked to each one of them and become proud of them from the bottom of my heart. I sit at my little table in the wings, giving cues whilst watching over the cast, put on an amazing show. I can't help but burst into tears as they hand me a thank you card, filled with messages of thanks. When we sing a song on the last performance, tears are rolling down my face with joy and sad-



ness. Being Stage Manager puts you in a position where you feel responsible for everyone involved and you don't want to let them go. The week after the show ends, I feel empty in side, not being able to meet my family. But I know that I will smile at them in the corridors, meet them in PE class and have a never ending connection. Knowing that I still have next year, makes me extremely happy. Most people do not know my job or how much it makes me love the cast, now you know. Once more, I would like to say how much I love the cast and am so proud of everyone for being such amazing, talented and kind people. I am privileged to view the amazing show from my little table and hope that everyone else enjoyed the show that we created.



# Q&A



## Interview with Mr. Van Plantinga

*Mr. Van Plantinga has had a rich and varied career: Sailing instructor, hotel manager, TV personality, surf photographer, teacher and so much more! We asked him about how his action packed life and experiences have led him to and prepared him for our community at SOIS.*

Q: You're originally from the US, is that right?

A: Yes. I grew up in Southern California, moved to the East Coast for boarding school, and then finished college on the West Coast.....Northern California.

Q: Oh, I see. And what did you study at college?

A: Organizational communication. Because I really wanted to be able to communicate with people. And then ultimately, I did a Training and Management Degree. So that I could go into organizations and help them have horizontal communication... because you know that organizations are often vertical, with a guy at the top and with a closed door.

Q: Did you know that as you were going through high school that that was what you wanted to do? Or did you get to the end of high school and then make that choice?

A: Well it was in college— and this was why I ended up coming to Asia— that I realized that I really wanted to be able to communicate with people from around the world. Whenever I saw Japanese people in particular at my college, they wouldn't smile. I felt like, "I need to learn how to communicate with those people."

Q: Straight out of college, you got into corporate training?

A: No, straight out of college I went into hospitality. I worked for Club Med, an all-inclusive resort organization. I was a sailing instructor. And a performer at night. You know I didn't know a lot about it, but my Mom introduced me to the concept. So I did that right before I graduated college and then they said wow, with Club med it takes 3 seasons, 18 months, and you work all day and all night, 7 days a week for 6 months. It takes 3 seasons to get to the Asia zone. And I'm like, from college, I want to get to the Asia zone, and I want to learn how to communicate with these people. I'm really great friends with everyone, but I can't really communicate with them very well. So I had a company that sent me to Guam, right into the Asia zone, doing the same thing, And they said, "You worked for Club Med; we want you". So, I was a sports instructor in Guam for seven months. I was the first member of that team to go to Phuket and open their new property, and I did that for over 9 months where I was a tennis supervisor, and a performer in the shows.

Q: So working for these kinds of organizations, you have to be very much an all-rounder, sports, performing, organizing etc.

A: Right, and basically we would organize people. We would have huge groups of 20, 40, 50, 60 guests and we would be doing different activities with them, we'd call them the coconut Olympics or the mini Olympics or we'd have you know, so eventually I became an activities manager overseeing 32 sports instructors when I moved back to Saipan, the third property. And there they

put me in as the training manager to the hotel, which tied back to what my degree was, a corporate trainer. So then I had 250 indirect staff that I would try to help.

Q: When you are in that kind of position of responsibility, is it a really stressful sort of situation?

A: It's a lifestyle. It's all day and all night. And that was my original orientation from Club Med, coming in full circle. We used to call ourselves "G.O.'s. *Gentils Organistateurs* is a club employee 'and gentils member is a club guest). So we called ourselves "Robo-G.O.s. Never has time to do laundry. Doesn't need to go to bed. Always happy and smiling. So the Robo-G.O.s worked seven days a week. We had two hours off for lunch four days a week. That was our only free time. But everything you did was what you wanted to do. You're sailing. You're interacting with guests. You're at the restaurants eating three meals a day. So, a lifestyle. So when this other company opened in Guam, Phuket and Saipan, they jumped at the opportunity to get someone who already knew what this kind of "lifestyle" was. So I was in a 16 hour a day sports/entertainment/activity position. Progressing through that to become the training manager I realized "OK, I understand what a portion of this is all about. Now let's learn about the engineering, the housekeeping, the front office, the reservations, those departments as well, and help them solve their problems.

Q: How many years altogether did you work in the hospitality industry?

A: Well, the overseas portion was about nine years. In Asia, Saipan, Guam, Phuket. Then I went to Borneo to set up an all-inclusive hotel, as a hotel consultant. Then I got married and I went to my wife's country, Korea and taught English. And I was on a national television show twice a week called "Survival English". I was teacher of the month in my third month there. Out of 80 teachers. So it was kind of like, "Wow, I might have a calling for this". Because I had been a trainer, teaching staff, and now I am a teacher at a hagwon, like a Korean juku, I guess. But I was recognized, and they would say, "Hey you're the guy from TV, and that was fun. But then my wife was pregnant, so we went back to the US to make sure my son was born in my country. And he was born in the hospital that was right in my Mom's neighborhood. A very well known hospital. We were real excited about that. And I was trying to break into hospitality and I eventually became an event planner, there, and I said this is horrible. This is not where I want to be. So I said "Get me back to the islands. But stay in the US for my son. So as soon as he turned 6 months and had enough shots, boom, we moved to Hawaii. And I started running Scuba operations. Because I was a qualified scuba instructor. So I started out teaching Scuba diving at one of the top resorts in Maui. It was the most money and then eventually managed that. Eventually moved to another company where they gave me two of them to manage. I took up a hobby of mine full time, as a surf photographer. It was incredible. And then I thought this is really just too much sun, and I can't do this when I get old. So I need to get serious. And that's when the most recent economic crisis hit. The 2008 crisis made me think, what can I do, till I'm 60? 65? 70? So I went back and got my Masters degree.

Q: So your Masters is in...

A: Special Education.

Q: Why did you choose special education?

A: Well, a couple of reasons. One is that they would pay for it if I did it in Special Education. It was a two year program of study. And during that program of study, I was also placed in a school. And while I was making a nominal amount as a teacher, that counted for my student teaching, so I did two years in the program simultaneously in a teaching position and then I needed to work in that school for five years to have the loan paid off. So I stayed for three more years, paid off half the loan in cash to come here.

Q: What brought you to Japan?

A: Well I was in Asia for ten years, dealing with Japanese, Korean and Taiwanese guests. And my son is half Korean. So it made too much sense for us to get him back to his roots. And frankly in Maui, I was at the school for five years, I had great relationships. I was tenured. Our house paid for itself. Everything figured out. Life is perfect. Let's mix it up a little bit! We're definitely going to go back to Maui someday. But just the fact that I'm talking to someone from New Zealand right now. That was my whole concept from 18 to 29 practically sort of orientation. 18 is when I started travelling. And then I had a long time in a maybe somewhat diverse place, Hawaii. But ultimately people are like "Oh my gosh, I've never been out of the US and now IM in Hawaii! First time ever!" And you feel like saying "Well, you know, this is tip of the iceberg!" So I wanted to get back into the mix.

Q: How have you found Japan so far? What have been the challenges??

A: Well my first hurdle was getting intimate with my garbage, and trying to sort it.

Q: What a nightmare!

A: I'm over it now. I can lean over and tie up cardboard in a couple of minutes. No big deal. Back in Maui, you could cut up furniture and put it in your garbage can! But here— oh my gosh. Throwing things out, that was tough at first. Going to McDonalds and leaving with a coke in your hand, that's not really an option. "Don't talk on the train." Nobody does that. You certainly don't eat on



the train. We've got used to that now, but back in the beginning we were just trying to figure out what the culture is and not be insulting, not be the ugly Westerner. So that was the challenge.

Q What are the good things you've noticed? What have you enjoyed about Japan so far?

A: The public transportation is amazing. Going out, and how friendly the people are when you meet them. You can make friends with just about anybody. When you ask directions they walk you to where you want to go. The bicycle lifestyle! In Maui we had two beautiful cars, but, we'd drive to the restaurant, get out, walk in, sit down, walk out of the restaurant, get in the car, come home. We were fit, because it's year round fitness, but here it's just amazing.

I like the people I work with because everyone here seems to be trying to push themselves to some extent and maybe I am at the beginning of this job but it's just fun to say wow we're here and we're going to go here. Whereas in a more relaxed or a public education environment where people are tenured they are like wow I am not really going to push myself past this point.

Q: You've had a rich, diverse, exciting life so far. From your own experience, what would you say to a young person who is wondering where their life is going to take them, what career paths they might take, what advice would you have for them?

A: Realize that it's a large planet. And with the internet you can find opportunities all around the world to expand the way that you think. And you're going to find that if you're a bigger fish in a smaller pond, meaning that if you're somebody with a skillset in that location you go to don't have, that's going to make you that much more valuable there. So if you're a Japanese English speaker and you move to the United States there's very few people with that talent there, in a given, specific area. So if you're a Japanese English speaker, you become a very important person to a hotel that caters to Japanese guests. Or often you are going to get a Japanese person living in the US but they're not going to be very good at English. But if you're good at both, that's just an incredibly marketable talent. Whether it's import/export business, hotel business. The concept I want to get across to students at this school is they might not get how incredibly marketable they are. for the talent that they have. Because in the US people speak one language. They don't know a lot about leaving the country. They're relatively one dimensional because it's such a huge country you can spend all your time there.

Q: How would you sum up your life story so far?

A: Throughout my career, ever since college, it's always been about communication. So that's why I felt that teaching was a natural progression. Originally it was teaching watersports, and entertaining audiences. Later on I was training people in hospitality and management, and then it evolved to teaching in classrooms. So that has been the common thread. It's always been about communication.

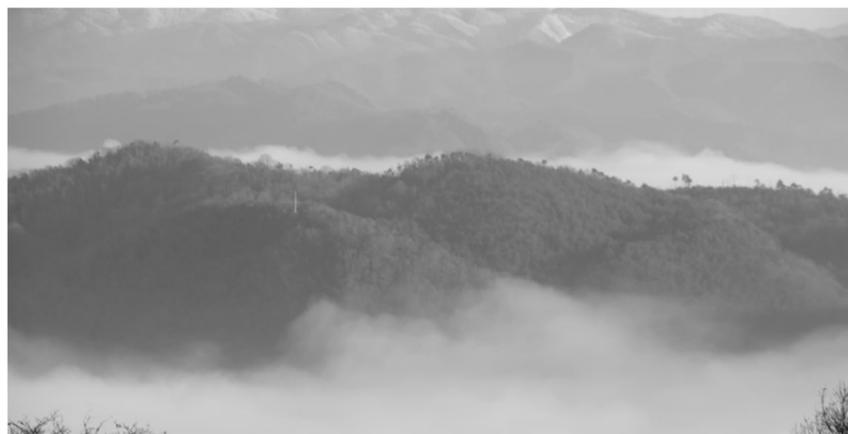
### The Nayuta Trip

Photos and reporting by Luke T

The trip to Nayuta was the most fun I had this year.

In January of 2015 the SOIS grade eights went on a trip to check out the Nayuta telescope. They were accompanied by Mr. Fitzpatrick and four other teachers. The students had the opportunity to stargaze and also to check out the glorious scenery of the natural surroundings, and generally just have fun.

#### The Beautiful Sights of Nayuta



#### QUOTES OF THE MONTH

CHOSEN BY MANON RABY

"It was only a sunny smile, and little it cost in the giving, but like morning light it scattered the night and made the day worth living."

— F. Scott Fitzgerald

"If you only read the books that everyone else is reading, you can only think what everyone else is thinking."

Haruki Murakami

"Perhaps one did not want to be loved so much as to be understood."

— George Orwell



### The Tango Team

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*Dear Kaye...*

#### Question:

I've been having trouble in class recently. I haven't been really understanding the topic and what the teacher is trying to convey to me. What do you think is the best way to approach a teacher when you are having trouble in class, without hurting any feelings?

Sincerely, *What's Best?*

*Dear What's Best?*

First, timing I think is key. Do not catch the teacher at a bad time (example: when the next class is coming and the teacher is setting up their presentation). The best thing to do would be to ask for an appointment – ask the teacher what is the best time for them, and come up with a schedule that is convenient for both of you. Next – Inform teacher about your difficulty. Do give details about which part of the topic or which unit you are having difficulty in. Provide some possible reasons why you may be struggling with. Show the teacher that you have really worked on improving and have reflected on this already - and you can do this by sharing what you think may be some of the steps that YOU have tried, or want to take to improve. Then ask the teacher what they think and seek some other advice. We are very lucky here in OIS to have wonderful and caring teachers who are very open and take the time to help students succeed. Communicating is always important, and the teacher may not be aware that you have been having difficulty, so letting them know and spending some time working together will make a difference in the success you will have in class.

*Kaye*

# As the Curtains Close...

By Eugenie Shim

As a shy fourth grader who couldn't speak much English, I first joined the All School Production along with my friends and instantly fell in love with the glamorous costumes, the colorful lights and the cheerful music. My first role was July, a "main orphan" in *Annie*. I remember being so excited to put on makeup (which consisted of painting dirt-like smudges on my face and thick eyebrows) and having a fake fight with another orphan, Pepper; pretending to clean the orphanage with my friends and acting scared of Ms. Hannigan. I didn't play the role of Annie, I felt exactly like she did when she sings "NYC"; thrust into a whole new world. To this day, I still belt out "It's a Hard Knock Life" in the shower and nostalgia kicks in whenever I hear a rendition of "Tomorrow."

I couldn't wait to return to the stage the next year, this time as a mean duckling in *Honk!*, the story of the ugly duckling. This was the year when I truly admired the high school students' talent. Kota Ito, who brought my mom to tears with his heart-wrenching singing; Raymond Terhune, who played the jolly bullfrog; and Yuritzi Lopez Fotografá, who was the sly, cunning cat. I was so proud to know the older, "cool" kids in the school, and only hoped I could be as amazing as them someday. Practicing quacking sounds with my fellow ducklings is my fondest memory.



In the seventh grade, I joined *Seussical* as Mrs. Mayor of Whoville. Although I got to have some solos, I was disappointed because I did not get the role I tried out for. This was also the year when I was a middle-school rebel and couldn't understand why the high school kids always had to scold my friends and me for being late or being too loud. Now that I look back, it was our fault for being irresponsible.

As I entered high school, not only was I engrossed with the pageantry on the stage, but I also gradually saw the passion behind every element of the show. In all three productions, I learned important lessons.

In tenth grade during *Oklahoma!*, I realized the importance of every single character and role, no matter how small or big. Mr. John Mineo, a Broadway professional who was our director, encouraged us to aim for perfection even for one line or one minor scene. It was his strict coaching that led us to memorize every scene by heart and give our best performance.



*Wizard of Oz* was a production in which I truly came to appreciate the various efforts backstage: Mr. Meadows and the props team who gave us a beautiful set; the stage manager Mia who kept everyone in check; the parents who created the magical costumes; the light team, the tech team, and the makeup artists. Each effort was vital in making the show complete; the stage would not exist without the people off-stage. More than anything, I finally understood the love that goes into the production every year. Everybody volunteers to support the production in one way or another, cheery even during long rehearsals.

However, this year's *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* was my favorite production by far. As one of Joseph's eleven brothers, I always had fun joking around with the other brothers during rehearsals and during every scene. Although I love singing, dancing, and acting, the best part about ASP is the people you are surrounded by. After many rehearsals, I always make friends from different grades and SIS; I meet amazing, funny and talented individuals I would never have met otherwise. After the show ended, I truly felt like the brothers were a family; I felt like everyone involved in the production was a family.



It is strange that I won't be participating in an SOIS All School Production again, but I'm glad to leave with so many memories. ASP has been a huge part of my school career, and given me so much happiness for the past eight years; I was smiling both on and off stage. As Orphan July would say, "you're never fully dressed without a smile."

And it goes without saying that if you have never been part of the ASP, you should join next year!



# Yuuki's Valentine's Playlist

Songs	Good Point	Bad Point
End of the Road by Boyz II Men	The way they sing really conveys their seriousness towards their love interest	I prefer happier love songs- Boyz II Men talk about how they were hurt by this girl, but can forgive her, and want her to love them even more than before...I just feel like that's too much...*obviously never been in love
君の好きな歌 by UVERworld	This singers love deeply affected him, changing him forever	This is the one song that I ALWAYS sing when I go to karaoke so no bad points for this one~
Will You Marry Me by Lee Seung Gi	Lee Seung Gi is proposing to you in the sweetest way possible...with his voice. My answer: Hell yes.	I was not impressed with most of the rap verses...sort of unnecessary
All I Ever Wanted by Basshunter	I be hitting that dance floor like a pro	I get that it's dance music but I can't stand repetitive lyrics...
Obsession by U-KISS	Not to confuse any of you, this is not the "I watch you when you sleep" type of obsession. AJ simply wants to talk to the girl that he likes, and can't stop thinking about her. Nothing creepy there- I know you all Facebook stalk your crushes...or is that just me?	Some parts are somewhat auto-tuned- I think we should just leave that to T-Pain
Apple and Cinnamon by Hikaru Utada	This relationship became more complex time went by, they fit together like "apple and cinnamon". In the end, the relationship died, it was "too good to last".	"Everyone used to be so envious of us"- that is the LAST thing you should be worrying about if what you two had was that special
Gravity of Love by Enigma	Allow your heart to guide you by using senses excluding sight...great message right there	Being a lone dove already sounds depressing; however, Enigma says "lonely dove" which makes me wonder-does being alone mean you're lonely? Just saying...

# Yuuki's Spring Playlist

<b>Sing the Spring by 40</b>  <b>Total= 6/10 marks</b>	Obviously, this song's title has the word, spring, in it (1 mark). This song is about meeting a girl in spring, and how being with her makes 40's heart flutter. (2 marks) Other than the lyrics, he has a beautiful voice- like I don't care if he's 40 or 80 years old, I'd marry him for that voice. (3 marks)	He compares himself and the girl together to spring, which makes no sense to me. (0 marks) Also, I appreciate that he met this girl during spring, but he wants her to be by his side... only in the spring. Not only is he neglecting the girl, he's also neglecting the other seasons. (0 marks)
<b>Flowers by Emilie Simon</b>  <b>Total= 6/10 marks</b>	Flowers. (1 mark) This song sounds a bit childish, perhaps implying that this "relationship" is between two little kids. (1 mark) It also sounds French-y (I'm the Shakespeare of Tango). (1 marks) I also love how Emilie talks about buying flowers for a boy, and how it's a shame that he's a boy because no one buys flowers for boys. (3 marks)	To a certain extent, this song which one would expect to sound cute, sometimes sounds creepy. (0 marks) And then at the end, you find out that the boy likes someone else, and the song ends with Emilie stating that flowers do not last forever. (0 marks)
<b>Hunger of the Pine by alt-J</b>  <b>Total= 7/10 marks</b>	Impressive dynamics. (2 marks) Apparently, "pine" is referring to missing someone, pining, can be as painful as hunger; this relates to the departure of the band's bassist. (3 marks) Why do I associate this song with spring? Because this song marks a new beginning for the band. (1 mark) At the same time, this song can also be interpreted as the aftermath of a breakup. (1 mark)	Don't even get me started on the "I'm a female rebel part". I'll be honest, I was really excited when I heard that first line, but was filled with disappointment when the lines following that one were "I'm a female rebel". (0 marks) It doesn't really fit into the song either. (0 marks)
<b>Ying Roo Juk Ying Ruk Tur by Da Endorphine</b>  <b>Total= 8/10 marks</b>	This song sounds springish (Shakespeare moment). (1 mark) Spring is perfection, and so is this person's relationship with her lover. (2 marks) She projects her voice very well too, and has a nice vibrato. (2 marks) The guitar solo fits into the song perfectly. (1 marks) Overall, this song is very positive and I love the singers portrayal of love. (2 marks)	This song is pretty straightforward: I've loved you since the day I met you, I still love you now, I'll never stop loving you even after we die.



Illustration by Haruka Liu

Playlists by Yuuki Fujiwara

# The Fine Line

By Yuuki Fujiwara

I take dance lessons at this one studio at Senri Chuou station. I used to go to the station hours before my lesson. With all that extra time on my hands, I would sit on a bench and do my homework outside while eating food from the nearby convenience store. One day, a man approached me. Approached as in stood in front of me, didn't say a word, and watched me study. Eventually, I glanced up and noticed he was there. He was smiling at me, I smiled back (most likely one of the biggest mistakes I've ever made). He just kept on staring at me, not saying anything. Not knowing what to do, I continued studying while listening to music (duh). I heard him say something, and took out my earphones once again. He was talking about the weather. That's normal, I mean, nothing strange about that. I agreed with him- "Yeah, it is pretty cold." He just kept on staring at me with that stupid smile. He asked me what I was doing, I told him homework; he asked me where I was going, I said I was going to a dance lesson soon. He didn't acknowledge anything that I said. He just kept on asking questions, sometimes even repeating some, specifically the ones about the weather. Eventually, he left. But that was only the beginning.

After speaking to my friends, they suggested that I sit somewhere else from now on. In that one month, I changed location 3-4 times. He appeared every Tuesday, spoke to me, a little bit longer every single time. Sometimes he wouldn't even say anything. If he stood in front of me for 20 minutes, he would only speak for 30 seconds max. The other 19 minutes and 30 seconds were spent staring at me. I talked to my dad, and he said it would be good if I had a picture of him. That way we could go to the police station and show them the picture of him. I have to say, this was one of the scariest things I've ever done. My friends questioned whether this was safe or not, but I just wanted him to stop bothering me. I know what many of you are thinking. "He hasn't actually done anything". He touched my leg, asking me if I was cold once. Other than that, you're right. At this point, he hadn't actually done anything over the top yet. The day I got a picture of him, I pretended to use my phone's camera as a mirror, and snapped a pic of him when he was standing in front of me. He clearly noticed something was off, since he kept getting closer to me the moment I started doing this. The moment I got the picture, I went back to ignoring him. He left. I was relieved.

A week later, before we had the chance to go to the police station, I went to a bench on the second floor to do my homework. When it was time to go to dance, I went down the stairs and had found that the man from before was waiting for me to come down. My first instinct was to get away from him. Avoid making eye contact, don't talk to him, and get as far away as possible from him. That's exactly what I tried to do. What did he do in return? Started rushing to catch up to me. How did I react? I ran to the nearest bathroom, only to realize that he was still following me. Luckily, the moment I ran inside the girl's bathroom, he went to the boys. I got my phone out and tried to get in touch with my dad but couldn't. I messaged a couple of friends in a group chat, freaking out. Another thing that you might be wondering: why didn't I just call 119? In order to talk to the police, I'm assuming you'd have to be able to speak Japanese, so I didn't see a point in doing that. I spoke to my friends, and one asked me if he was still outside. Maybe the coast was clear? I peeked out and he was pacing back in forth in front of the bathroom waiting for me. The moment I saw his crazy expression, I went to the back of the bathroom. There were other people there who noticed that I was acting strange. I was close to tears, and then in tears. My dad called back finally. And when I told him what



was going on, he said he would come right away. The only problem is that it would take around 40 minutes for him to reach Senri Chuou. My only option was to hide in the bathroom till then. After 20 minutes of talking to my friends on Facebook, I checked again and he was gone. One of my friends lives near Senri Chuou and agreed to meet me at the Starbucks there. She met me and I felt somewhat safer. But to be honest, not by much.

While waiting for my friend at Starbucks, every time someone walked past me I jumped. When my friend finally arrived and sat across from me, I was 2 seconds from breaking into tears but held them in. 10 minutes later, my dad arrived, relieving my friend of her position. We went to the police station and this is what I was told: "We'll make a note of what he looks like and typically wears based on your description and photo. However, we cannot do anything until he actually does something that causes harm to you." I understand that they can't just arrest someone because of what 1 person said, especially since I came out of this fine (physically). But I hope you can understand how upset I was to hear this. What if I see him again? What if next time, he has a weapon? After all, I upset him by running and hiding from him. What do I do then? I was told to find another location and I said I tried that more than once. They said that there was nothing that they could do really. Where did this leave me? In fear. Nothing had changed. My dad had realized how serious this had become, and called my dance studio to see if they had any vacant rooms for me to do my homework in before my Tuesday lessons. He explained the situation to them, and they treated me like I had lost a leg. I felt a bit safer, I admit. However, I became more paranoid than ever after that.

Have you ever walked through a crowd of people coming from the opposite direction before? I couldn't even do that anymore. My breathing sped up, I felt lightheaded, anxious, and most of all, scared. Scared of a bunch of strangers walking towards me? Exactly. Because since my last meeting with that man, all I saw was his face everywhere. This happened over a year ago, and I only deleted his photo from my phone a month or two ago. I still remember what he looks like though. You know what's even more terrifying? When someone walks close to you, and you think it's him. When there are 5 people around you, and you mistaken each of them for him. I realized I wasn't okay months later, when my dad was dressed almost exactly like him and was wearing a backpack the same way he wore it. Not to mention, they both wear glasses. The moment I saw my dad, I told him to take off his backpack out of desperation.

How am I doing now? A lot better actually. I just needed time to get reused to being out in public. I still have his picture on my computer, and admit I still think about this almost every week. But I guess that's better than every day. The only thing that hasn't changed- paranoia. An old man in Kita Koen once spoke to me about how scary the park was- I basically

ignored him; but I couldn't just assume that every man around the same age or wearing the same clothing is just as creepy as that one. And so, I continued the conversation for a little bit. After reaching a certain point, he said goodbye and we parted ways- he didn't follow me or anything. This was only a few months ago, and I felt better after talking to him. Time is all I need, and luckily I have plenty of that.

So what is the question of the day? Simple. Where can we draw the line between friendliness and inappropriate behavior from strangers? With my situation, I convinced myself that it wasn't that bad the first few times, and passed it off as friendliness. It wasn't until he crossed the line by touching my leg, that I started regarding his behavior as sick and inappropriate. So maybe the question isn't where do we draw the line, but rather how do we determine when this fine line is being crossed? Here's what I think: There can be misunderstandings, you can misinterpret another individual's actions, and sometimes what you perceive as dangerous or scary isn't actually dangerous or scary. I think that despite this, you have to be realistic when dealing with stranger danger. Your first time meeting a dangerous stranger should be your last, because there are always going to be warning signs during that meeting. Let's take a look at my situation. There were quite a few red flags that I chose to ignore.

1. He didn't introduce himself; he watched me for who knows how long, and didn't speak until I realized there was someone standing in front of me.
2. He would sometimes repeat questions even after I answered them more than twice.
3. Most people who approach me state why they're approaching me- whether it's "I recognize your green hair from that concert you sang at" or "I need help getting somewhere". This man just started asking me questions about myself with no explanation whatsoever.

After identifying these warning signs, understand the circumstances. Again, going back to my situation, I'm a female foreigner in high school. Not to mention, I was alone every single time I ran into this man. Once you do all that, you have to consider your first impression of him/her/them. My first thought when I saw him standing in front of me was "What in the world; how long has he been standing there?" I found him to be disgusting the moment I saw him, but I strongly believe that books shouldn't be judged by their covers, but I should have ignored that belief of mine, and realized that this man was not of the norm.

After doing this, the danger still exists, right? What you have to do then is tell people. If something had happened to me, I would like someone to at least have an idea of what happened to me, and who was possibly involved. I kept 2-3 close friends updated with what was going on, and also my dad. But even then, the danger still exists. YOU, the one who is being directly affected by this, have to make changes now. This man knew when I would be at Senri Chuou, down to the time. It's not something that I would have liked to have done, but I should have gone on hiatus from dance for a month or two. My safety is what is important- and there won't be any more dancing if something happens to me. I should have also stayed indoors somewhere- every place that I sat at was outside. Taking all precautions to avoid running into that stranger, now that is the best you can do. Of course, if you fear that someone will harm you, by all means make your voice heard. Do what I did- tell the police. Yes, my visit didn't do much for me. But it's better for more people to know about this. Imagine getting kidnapped and thinking that most likely no one has any idea of what happened to you.

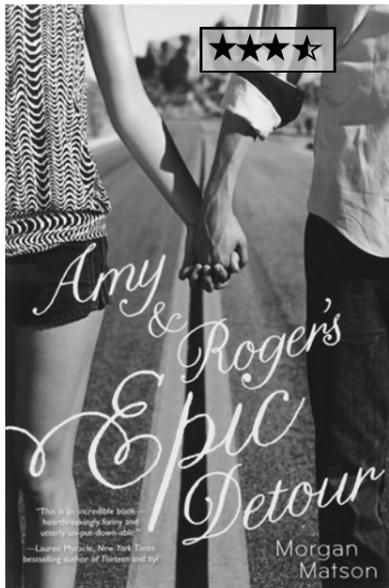
Your first interaction with a dangerous stranger can't be erased; you can't undo it or go back in time. All you can do from there is to keep things from escalating in order to keep yourself safe; better safe than sorry. And that is how you locate the fine line.



# Books

 by Eugenie Shin

In January and February, I read these fuzzy romantic books to get through the cold months! In this edition of Tango, I review books that you can easily read fast. Sometimes, I just want to be entertained by a book, especially after a long week of school or while being stressed about exams. Hopefully, these fun, light reads will brighten the month of March and evoke that spring break feeling!



*Amy & Roger's Epic Detour* Morgan Matson

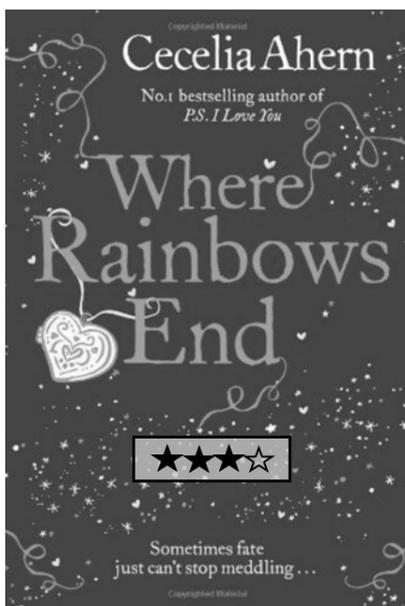
Genre: Young Adult, Romance

Amy Curry is not looking forward to her summer. Her mother decided to move across the country and now it's Amy's responsibility to get their car from California to Connecticut. The only problem is, since her father died in a car accident, she isn't ready to get behind the wheel. Enter Roger. An old family friend, he also has to make the cross-country trip - and has plenty of baggage of his own. The road home may be unfamiliar - especially with their friendship venturing into uncharted territory - but together, Amy and Roger will figure out how to map their way. (GoodReads)

I picked up this book because of an online recommendation and was really glad I did. The most interesting part about this book is the way it is structured. As readers, we follow Amy and Roger through their cross-country road trip. Each chapter is divided by a music playlist (that the characters listen to on the trip), photos, receipts, and quotes. These details made the book a lot more engaging and enjoyable for me.

I also love the concept of the story: going on a spontaneous road trip with a person you barely know. It's something I would never do but want to do. Throughout the book, visiting new places and meeting new people really allows Amy to grow as a person and also break out of her shell. Without spoiling too much, the trip lets Amy come to terms with her past and guilt.

Overall, the book is not only a good romance novel but has a good story, and really makes you want to go on a road trip!



*Where Rainbows End* Cecelia Ahern

Genre: Romance

Cecelia Ahearn's *Rosie Dunne* is the amusing story of Alex and Rosie, best friends who grow up together in Ireland and stay close throughout cross-continental moves, marriages, parenthood, family dramas, and professional triumphs. Friends for close to 50 years, the potential for romance between the pair is always under the surface, yet never seems to find the right time or place to become a reality. (Amazon.com)

"Where Rainbows End" by Cecelia Ahern (the author of *P.S. I love you*) has recently become adapted into a movie called "Love, Rosie." This was how I found out about this book.

I loved the idea of a story that goes on over a span of 50 years, and reading about two characters who grow up together. The whole book is told in letters, emails and instant messages. This gives a completely different dimension to the book, compared to typical novels. Reading almost 600 pages of no narration was tiring at times, but definitely worth it. The format lets me feel as though I'm peeking in on the characters' lives (as creepy as that sounds) and made me oddly emotionally attached to Rosie and Alex.

Since the story is essentially two peoples' lives, things can get a bit mundane at times. There is no spectacular element of surprise, anger or sadness throughout the book. It progresses gently, so you can easily read a little bit every day.

I thought both the book and movie were charming, and they made me smile. I highly recommend the book to sappy romantics!



*Girl Online* Zoe Sugg

Genre: Young Adult, Romance, Celebrity Novel

2 stars

Penny has a secret.

Under the alias GirlOnline, she blogs about school dramas, boys, her mad, whirlwind family - and the panic attacks she's suffered from lately. When things go from bad to worse, her family whisks her away to New York, where she meets the gorgeous, guitar-strumming Noah. Suddenly Penny is falling in love - and capturing every moment of it on her blog.

But Noah has a secret too. One that threatens to ruin Penny's cover - and her closest friendship - forever. (GoodReads)

I bought this book purely because it was written by Zoe Sugg, otherwise known as Zoella on Youtube. Truthfully, I didn't expect much because it is written by a celebrity, rather than a professional author.

The story itself is a bubble-gum romance, mostly geared towards younger teens or even pre-teens. I felt it was often very childish and predictable. However, readers who don't want to concentrate much and have a quick, fluffy read might enjoy this book.

I did think it was great that Zoe Sugg incorporates her personal struggle with anxiety in the book, and her experience with fame. Because she has such a big voice on the internet, her encouraging message about anxiety is very beneficial to many young people.

Overall, "Girl Online" didn't blow me away but if you are younger and love Zoella, you might!



## Recipes

### BEST PANCAKES EVER

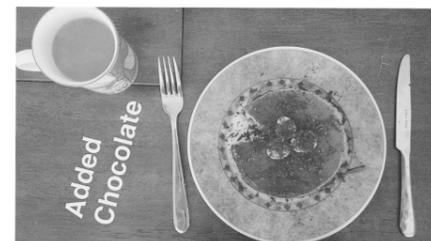
by Mia Lewis

For those of you who don't know the amazing culture in the UK (and some other places) we just celebrated Shrove Tuesday. Shrove Tuesday is a Christian holiday in which everyone eats pancakes in order to prepare for lent by using all the flour, sugar, eggs by eating sugary-battery goodness.

I wanted to make classic British pancakes (which I recommend) but I woke up too late so I had to make pancakes for Lunch. BUT these pancakes are healthy and so quick with only 4 ingredients and 4 utensils! You will need:

1/2 Cup of Rolled Oats (or any other flour)  
1/2 of the milk of your choice  
1 egg (or other egg replacements)  
Desired amount of your sweetener of choice.  
(liquid sweetener such as honey is recommended. I personally use plant sugar.)

A blender to mix all the ingredients in (I use a nutribullet)  
A measuring cup  
A frying pan  
spatula



First, if you are using Rolled Oats, add them to the blender and blend until it becomes a fine powder. Next, add all the other ingredients and blend until smooth. Finally, pour your desired size of pancake onto your heated frying pan (don't forget to grease so the batter doesn't stick!) and cook until bubbles appear on the top and then flip over. Cook until golden brown. After, whack them onto a plate and TADA! You are done. Add any toppings such as honey, banana, jam, chia-seeds, yoghurt, the list goes on. I personally love a few bits of fine dark chocolate on top of banana coins.

After trying this once, you'll be hooked! It is so easy, you can have it for breakfast, lunch and/or dinner with no regrets for it is filled with nutrients :D

### Chocolate Fudge Pie *by Keri Howard*

This is a very good dessert and is very easy to make. Takes ~240 minutes (~4 hours)

#### Ingredients

A pie crust fitted into a 9-inch pie plate  
6 ounces of chopped semisweet chocolate (some more for toppings)  
1/2 cup of unsalted butter (1 stick)  
3 large eggs  
1/8 teaspoon of kosher salt  
1/2 cup plus 3 teaspoons of granulated sugar  
1 1/2 cups of heavy cream

#### Steps

Heat the oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Place the pie plate on a baking sheet. Prick crust with a fork and line with foil. Fill to top with pie weights or dried beans. Bake until the edges are firm (20 to 25 minutes). Remove the foil and weights and bake until just golden (8 to 10 minutes).

Reduce the heat to 325 degrees F (162 degrees C). In a heatproof bowl set over (not in) a saucepan of simmering water, melt the chocolate and butter.

Using an electric mixer, beat the eggs, salt, and 1/2 cup of the sugar until fluffy (4 to 5 minutes). Fold a third of the egg mixture into the chocolate mixture, then fold in the remainder.

Pour the combined mixture into the crust and bake until puffed and beginning to crack (20 to 25 minutes). Cool for 1 hour, then chill.

Beat the cream with the remaining sugar until soft peaks form. Spread over the pie and sprinkle with the shaved chocolate.

Enjoy!

Adapted from: "51 Best Chocolate Recipes." Real Simple. N.p., n.d. Web. 25 Feb. 2015. <<http://www.realsimple.com/food-recipes/recipe-collections-favorites/popular-ingredients/best-chocolate-recipes>>.



Episode 4

by Lara Taniguchi

## Pâtisserie Cantona

I have to confess. I've eaten six different slices of cake from this shop, all in one day. To justify this, it was my birthday and I did share with my parents, but it was, after all, just because the cakes were so yummy. I've been trying to come up with all sorts of excuses to go and buy some more cakes to eat. I am sure when you visit this shop, you will feel the same way and will want to come back multiple times to get more cakes.

The shop is called Pâtisserie Cantona, and it's a little cake shop that has grown in popularity among the locals. It looks like a cute, small shop on the outside but inside it is glamorously filled with a big glass display of the beautiful cakes. The location is about 10 minutes by walk from Hankyu Takatsuki-shi station, which is VERY DANGEROUS because I can get there so easily and try to buy everything in site.

I haven't tried all the selections of cakes but I already have my favorites. One is called Espresso and it costs 360 yen. First, let's talk about the shape. The fact that it is shaped in a simple but perfect pyramid shape with chocolate powder carefully sifted on top tells me right away that it is going to be amazing taste wise as well. And when you split open the cake, there is no disappointment. The vanilla cream right in the middle of the cake brings sweetness to the slight bitterness of the coffee and chocolate mousse and it tastes heavenly. Another one of my favorites is the Marjolaine cake that also costs 360 yen. Again the presentation is excellent. You can see the different layers of the cake perfectly aligned and can't wait to taste all the layers together. The hazelnut, almond, caramel cream was crunchy and smooth, and it complemented the spongy cake layers perfectly.

I can't wait to go to this cake shop as soon as possible, and I highly recommend you give it a try too! You will fall in love just like I did, and we'll all have to be careful we don't spend too much and eat too much!

Location: Matsubara-chō 6-5-101, Takatsuki, Osaka, 569-0086

Opening Hours: 10:00 am - 8:00 pm





# What are your plans for Easter? *By Shoko Yamaji*

Whether you're spending your time with family and friends or just by yourself, this Easter popcorn is the perfect treat for you to make! These festive treats will definitely keep you addicted!

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup unpopped popcorn kernels, or 2 bags tender white popcorn
- 12 oz. Plain Vanilla Candy Melts
- 1 1/3 cups pretzel squares, broken into pieces
- 1 12 oz. bag plain Milk Chocolate M&Ms. Preferably M&Ms Bunny Mix.
- Multicolored Sprinkles, about 1/4 - 1/3 of a 2 oz. container



### How to Make It

Pop the popcorn in to a popcorn popper or a large bowl if using the microwave. Make sure to remove any unpopped popcorn kernels. Spread the broken pretzel pieces and M&Ms.

Melt the vanilla candy melts in a microwave in a bowl on the highest power. Stir every few seconds to see if it is melted and the texture is smooth.

Drizzle the remaining half of melted chips over the popcorn and gently stir the mixture. Do not over stir.

Pour the mixture into a single layer onto wax paper and pour sprinkles on top. Allow it to cool and harden.

### Note

If you want to hand these to your friends and family, put them into small, clear plastic sleeves and tie it with a pastel colored ribbon.



## The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (2008)

Movie Review by Manon Raby

Directed by: David Fincher

Main Stars: Brad Pitt & Cate Blanchett

Genre: Drama, Fantasy & Romance

Public Rating: 7.8/10

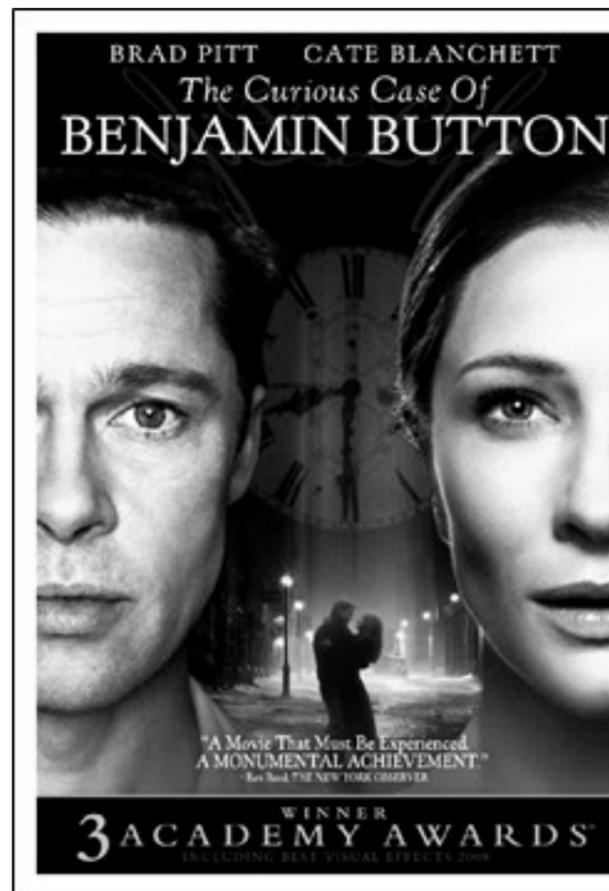
Personal Rating: 8.5/10

David Fincher's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* is based on the 1922 short story written by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The film opens with an elderly woman laying on her deathbed as her daughter reads aloud an unusual diary that once belonged to a man named Benjamin Button (Brad Pitt).

The diary tells a story about the beauty and inevitability of aging through the eyes of this peculiar man. He recounts his remarkable and melancholy journey as someone who was born under unusual circumstances. This film may appear to be "typical", but it really is anything but that. Benjamin was born with the appearance and physical maladies of an elderly man, and unlike anybody else, ages in reverse.

We are taken on a beguiling ride as he fights in the Second World War, falls in love with a passionate ballerina named Daisy (Cate Blanchett), encounters a retiree who was struck by lightning seven times, and befriends a woman who dreams of swimming across the English Channel. At the end of the film, all the intricate relationships in the story are consolidated, and it is revealed that the elderly woman in the hospital actually plays the most important role in Benjamin's life.

This film touched me in the strangest of ways that I even thought about it for weeks. I must



admit that I found the story difficult to relate to, but somehow it really impacted me. Because of all the fascinating personalities in the film, I was reminded of five important factors in life that are often overlooked. 1) Regardless of one's age, time should not be taken for granted because sometimes the most sacred of moments are lost in an instant. 2) Life is a gift; so always try to find a reason to be grateful to be alive. 3) Life passes too quickly for one to be afraid of their dreams. 4) Appreciate each and every person that you have crossed paths with in life, despite the sorrow that some have put you through. 5) No matter what you believe, there will always be someone who appreciates your oddity and that should be something to smile about. Perhaps others won't agree with my interpretations, but when a film has such a lasting effect on me, I feel the need to share it with others.

If you have not already seen it, I can genuinely admit that this movie was one of the most breathtaking films that I saw in 2014!

### QUOTES FROM THE FILM

"Our lives are defined by opportunities; even the ones we miss."

"Life isn't measured in minutes, but in moments."

"I hope you live a life you're proud of. If you find that you're not, I hope you have the strength to start all over again."



# The Man With No Hair

By Yuuki Fujiwara

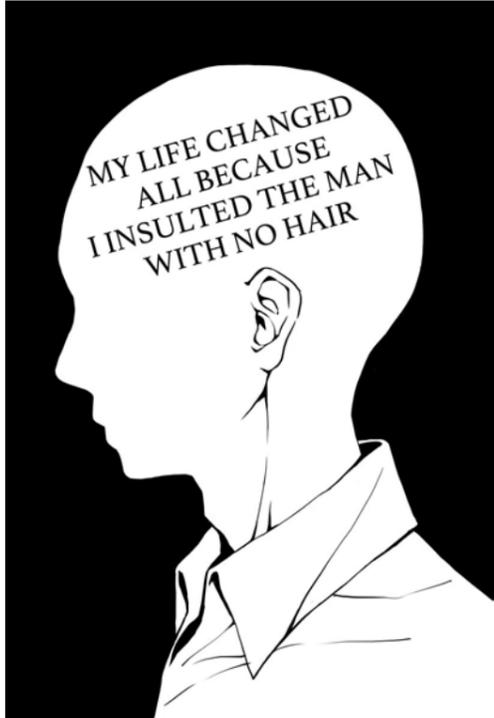


Illustration by Horuka Lia

My life changed all because I insulted the man with no hair. He had hair; it's just that he shaved it all off. I pointed and laughed, making offensive jokes. "You look like you aged 20 years." "Looks like you just got out of prison." Despite these rude remarks, he just smiled and laughed with me. Until I crossed the line one day. "You look like a cancer patient." His expression turned ice cold. "See, you shouldn't say stuff like that, even if you don't actually mean it. It doesn't matter what you think; you don't have to tell me.", he said with a smile. That was the last day I made such a childish joke like that, partially due to the fact that that was also the last day that we ever had a normal conversation ever again.

Days passed, and my guilt vanished. Until karma appeared. My dad called, my grandma was in the hospital. She had fallen and hit her head. He went to Tokyo, while I waited patiently at home. When I finally spoke to my dad, he had good news and bad news for me. The good news: the fall wasn't that bad luckily. The bad news: they needed to run some more tests. "Why?" I asked. "Cancer." He said. Cancer. I could hear the devil pointing his finger at me and laughing. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. And that's when my guilt returned.

That night, my guilt-ridden-self logged onto Facebook. I sent a brief but sincere apology to the man with no hair. He replied simply with "No hard feelings". I knew what he really meant though. "Thanks for the apology, but this is goodbye."

A week later, my father and I went to Tokyo to visit my grandma. The hospital was horrible. It smelled horrible. I could hear a patient crying and calling for help. My grandma looked lifeless, helpless. She needed help going to the bathroom, had no appetite, and could barely move. I wanted to talk to her. I needed to tell her something. But I speak English, not Japanese. I had no way of communicating what I wanted to say. I looked at my dad, uncle, and great aunt; I didn't want to bother any of them. I didn't want to converse with my grandma through a translator. We rarely spoke to each other, but I still can recall how kind and gentle she was when I was little.

The day she was discharged from the hospital was a week before February 14<sup>th</sup>, Valentine's Day. I bought her chocolate, knowing that she wasn't able to eat it. I wanted to at least let her know that I cared about her through actions, since it didn't seem possible through words.

After I got back to Osaka, I bought a new baby blue notebook and pen. My plan was to write letters to her in Japa-

nese as often as possible.; that way I could have someone check my Japanese for me. I decided to also start focusing more on losing weight. "For every pound that I lose, I hope my grandma gets to live an extra day." That's what I kept telling myself. I was determined.

On February 13th, I was extremely busy. My class was trying to raise money by selling roses and chocolates and delivering them on Valentine's Day. We had to do all of the major preparations the day before, so we had our hands full. Around lunch time, I noticed a couple missed calls from my dad. I called back to find that he was once again on his way to Tokyo. My grandma's condition worsened. As a matter of fact, she was hospitalized around 3 am, and we were only finding out about this 10 hours later. I called my dad before he got onto the bullet train. He told me that he probably wouldn't be back till at least Saturday. "The doctor wanted everyone in the family to come to the hospital as soon as possible." I asked about my grandma's condition, and he responded quietly, "They usually only call for the entire family to be present when it's serious. I don't think she's going to make it." I didn't know how to respond. "Oh." I assured him that I'd be fine by myself and to call me when he gets there. Afterwards, I realized how late I was. My grandma was dying and I had told her nothing. It's only been a week. I hadn't written any letters to her. I was devastated. It felt like God was punishing me for what I had said to the man with no hair. I cried my tears out.

10 minutes before my last class of the day, chemistry, I was contemplating on whether I should go to class or not. I just wanted to be alone. I went anyways; I needed a distraction. After class, I checked my phone; no messages from my dad yet. I got dragged into helping out after school with the Valentine's Day preparations. I had a good time. We attached little heart-shaped cards to roses and chocolate. I even saw a few addressed to me. 3 hours later, we were finally done. My friend and I had missed the 6 o'clock bus, so we decided to walk to a different bus stop. But first, we went to our lockers to get our homework. My friend went to the bathroom too. As I was waiting for her, I suddenly remembered the situation with my grandma. I checked my phone and noticed my dad had called me a couple hours ago. I immediately called back; he answered only after a couple rings. He sounded normal. "Your grandma passed away." Tears streamed down my cheeks, but my voice didn't show it. "I'm sorry" was all I could say to him. He must be hurting, I thought to myself, since it was his mother who passed away. My friend came out of the bathroom smiling, when she saw me crying on the phone, she knew it wasn't good. After I had gotten off the phone with my dad, I went up to her and told her with the little Japanese that I knew, "She died."

As we were walking to the bus stop, I couldn't hold the tears in. I spoke, she listened. "I didn't get to tell her anything. I thought I had time. I feel so horrible." She just kept on walking, looking straight ahead. To be honest, I was glad that she didn't say much. I just needed someone to listen to me. Eventually, I asked her, "Have you ever lost a loved one?" She finally made eye contact with me. "Yes." I wanted to know how she felt. Eventually, she said she had to call her parents. She spoke to them in her mother tongue. Afterwards, she turned to me and informed me that I could stay at her place for the night. I went directly home, packed my stuff, and met her in front of her house. Her parents greeted me lovingly, and offered me their condolences. I was no longer crying, but I didn't feel any better. I only needed to be alone in my sleep. I wanted to be surrounded by people who cared. My friend and I painted our nails red and pink for Valentine's Day. We also argued over what to wear the next

day; she preferred red, but I was voting for pink. That night, my heart was heavy, but I somehow still slept well.

The next day, her father had made me breakfast. In the past, when I had gone to their house for sleepovers, usually we just had toast and milk. But he had made me an omelette, a truly warm gesture. I changed into my pink dress, my friend laughed when I saw her red one. Her father drove us to school. On the way there, it was snowing. I think it was my first time seeing snow in Osaka, and it rarely snowed back in North Carolina. It felt like I was back in Minnesota, where I grew up. I enjoyed the beautiful scenery. When we got to the school, everyone in our class got together to deliver the roses and chocolates. It was fun, but a tad difficult; I didn't know the faces of the people I was trying to find. I even mistakenly handed the wrong rose to the wrong person. Still, it was a success. When we were finally done, we returned to homeroom. I received 2 chocolates and 1 rose; I was ecstatic.

As the day went on, I started to fall apart. I went to go talk to a teacher, and broke into tears during the meeting. I felt so bad for him because he didn't know what was going on. He offered me a couple of cookies, and suggested that we talk later instead. I could barely talk without choking on my own tears, so I just nodded and ran out of the classroom. I wasn't fine. When school had finally ended, I was relieved. Upset, but relieved. My dad returned that night. We didn't say much to each other.

On Saturday, I had a Japanese lesson in the morning. I hadn't realized how unbelievably hard it was to keep myself from breaking into tears. After that 2 hour lesson, I had no energy. I didn't want to go to my dance lesson in the afternoon, and my dad was fine with that.

By Sunday morning, I was deader than ever. When I was awake, I didn't think. My mind was always blank. I felt nothing. I had stopped crying finally, but it was difficult to smile, laugh, or show any emotion whatsoever. I guess that's what you'd call depression.

Later that week, I hung out with a friend after school. I confessed that I was grieving. He sympathized with me, as he had lost a loved one only a few months ago. He explained the grieving process to me. I had to face denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Although the steps aren't sequential, acceptance had to come last. I was past denial, and was dealing with bargaining. After speaking to this friend, I felt better.

Now 3 months have passed. I overcame anger pretty quickly. In order to protect myself from the painful reality, I bargained with God before she even passed away. I was pretty much done with bargaining. I occasionally think about how if I had done something different, maybe she would've lived longer. However, I've come to understand that God doesn't make deals with people. He just hopes for the best for us. So, I'm currently in a state of depression. I wonder how long this stage will last. Every now and then, I run into the man with no hair. I see his no longer bald head, and it reminds me of my grandma. He's making more of an effort to speak to me now; he usually can tell when something's wrong with me. But I can't bear to go back to the way things were before I had made that ill-mannered comment. I'm afraid that if I talk to him too much, I'll start to become more comfortable around him. Comfortable to the point that more rude words will come out of my mouth. I'm scared of karma; I don't want to lose anyone else.

I saw him outside, and walked right past him. Karma's evil; waiting for you to mess up. Never again, shall I fall for its tricks.

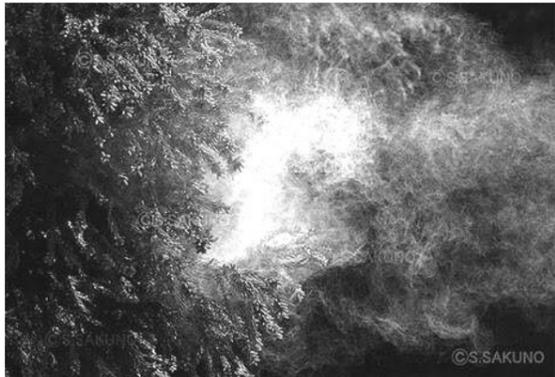


This year flu has been prevalent in the school.

How have your days been? Have you caught a cold? I have been OK, actually.

However, spring is coming soon!!!

Actually Starbucks coffee has new flavor which is Sakura. Have you tried it yet?? I used to think that spring was the best of the four seasons. Because of Starbucks, and also spring has a comfortable air temperature for me. But now I have changed my mind. What I mean is, last year I suffered from pollen allergies. Look this picture.



Pollen being released

If I saw this one, there would be a tickle in my nose, without a doubt. Too awful. So spring is a terrible season for me at the moment. I want to share this feeling. Do you agree with my opinion?? If you do not agree yet, you may agree in the future. So now I am going to introduce about how to lessen your hay fever. Check it out!!!

### GREEN TEA YOGHURT Ingredients

- green tea powder one teaspoon
- yoghurt 100CC~150CC
- honey a taste

### HOW TO MAKE IT

All you need to do is put the all three ingredients in the bowl.

That all! Such easy cooking!! If you drink this, you can be immune to hay fever.

**Try out GREEN TEA YOGHURT!!**

## YouTube YouTube Review by Mia Lewis

The Vlogbrothers, known as the founders of the YouTube community, VidCon, GeekyCon and so many other events, are a channel you must subscribe to.

Watch Hank and John Green (also writer of The Fault in Our Stars, Looking for Alaska and Paper Towns) upload daily vlogs of their thoughts that are hilarious, educating and inspiring.

The screenshot shows how the "hashtag" is really meaning less and we could call it an OCTOTHORPE. So, don't forget to check out their videos after doing your homework to find out more quirky facts and join the Nerd Fighteria.



The Doctor Who Tag  
charlieissocoollike  
Subscribed 284,562

YouTube basically started with Charlieissocoollike who posted his first video in 2007. It is a channel you have to subscribe to as part of the YouTube community. He will make you laugh out loud with this Challenge Charlie videos, educational videos and of course my favourite, The Doctor Who Tag video. Charlie McDonnell is the founder of music written about Doctor Who with his band Chameleon Circuit and is also a tea producer, making his own brand of "QualiTea." Once you start watching, the content never ends and you will be watching him for hours! Join the charlieissocoollike YouTube channel and join the ending credits, "You've just had the most imponderable joy of watching Charlieissocoollike, which makes you, like, cool!"



Illustration by Sofia Watanabe



Illustration by Shen Yuan Zuo

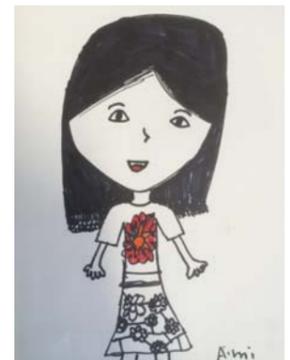
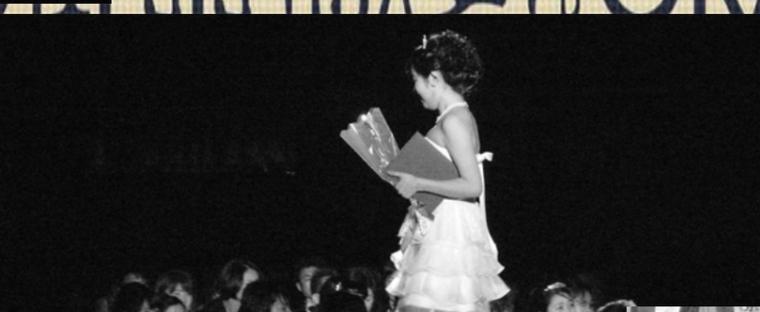


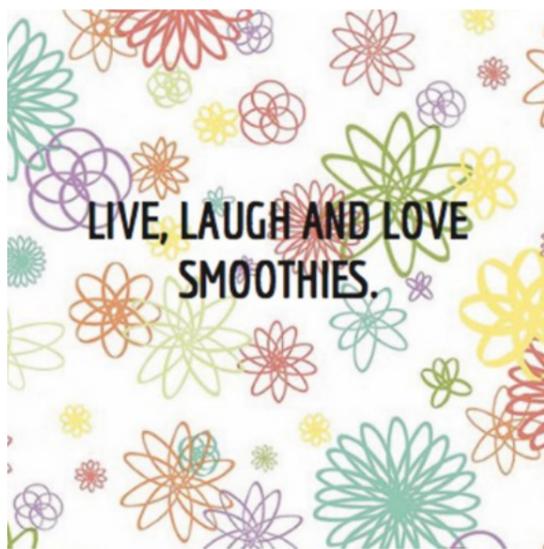
Illustration by Aimi Iwamoto

**Calling all artists, photographers, poets and writers!** Would you like to see your work in *Tango*? Come and see Mr. Algie in room 332 and let him know how you would like to contribute.

# SIS Graduation

## *Class of 2015*





## Personal Project, Smoothies, and Donations by Airi Wakasa

The OIS 10<sup>th</sup> graders have recently finished their personal projects. We all spent many months working on the projects and preparing for the exhibition, so thank you to everyone who dropped by!

Out of the large number of projects (a wide range from robots to videos of soccer trick videos), Karen Humphrey has produced a book about smoothies. This book contains recipes for smoothies that use vegetables, fruit, and more! It has steps that are easy to follow, color coding and images of all the smoothies. The 200 yen per book will be donated to the service trip for Grade 11 next year.

If you would like to purchase this book, contact Karen at:

[172019@soismail.jp](mailto:172019@soismail.jp)

BLUEBERRY(50g), FROZEN RASBERRY(30g), SUGAR SYRUP(2 teaspoons), NON-SUGAR YOGURT(100g)

### Steps

1. Put all of the ingredients in the mixer.
2. Mix it until you see a smooth texture.
3. Drink up!



MANGO(1/2), BANANA(1/2), SOYMILK(80ml)

### Steps

1. Cut the banana and the mango up into relatively small sizes.
2. Put all of the ingredients in the mixer.
3. Mix it until you see a smooth texture.
4. Drink up!



LYCHE(5), SOYMILK(200ml), HONEY(2 teaspoons)

### Steps

1. Peel the skin and remove the seed of the lychees, and then cut them up to relatively small sizes.
2. Put all of the ingredients in the mixer.
3. Mix it until you see a smooth texture.
4. Drink up!



### Here is a spooky story.

The house next to ours is empty. Nobody lives there. Nobody has lived there for many years. It's not a run down or creepy looking house. Hired cleaners, handymen and gardeners are sent fairly regularly to keep it looking nice.

But no one lives there.

One night last year I was walking home from Kita Senri station. I had been down to Yamada and bought a cooler box there. Now I was carrying the ungainly purchase back to my place. As I walked up the hill towards my house I saw a man emerge from Kita Koen. He was a Japanese man, casually dressed, ten years or so older than me. He was smoking a cigarette. He walked across the road from the park, went up the steps and through the gate of the "empty" house next to mine. He walked in. I kept going up the hill, past the shadowy entrance to that house, and glanced in through the shadows at the house. I could see lights on, somewhat dimly, inside.

I was a bit puzzled, but had lots of other things on my mind; so forget about it for the time being.

The next morning as I had my breakfast I suddenly remembered what I had seen and told my wife the curious story of the man who had entered the neighboring "empty" house the night before.

She was somewhat concerned, almost upset at the news. She was worried some sinister man was utilizing the house for some dark purpose. "Nobody lives there," she said, "You must have been mistaken".

I am always stubborn when my powers of observation are challenged. "No!" I said, "I definitely saw someone go in that house last night"

When I arrived home from work that day, my wife had called the other neighbors in our neighborhood, and asked them if there was any reason a man might have entered the house next door the previous night. The answer came back: No.

There were only two possible explanations for what I had witnessed the night before. Either the house next door had been illicitly entered by some sinister man last night.

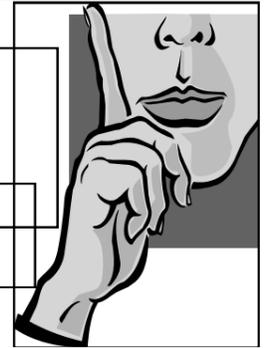
Or it was haunted.

All the other neighbors said that apart from gardeners and handymen, no one ever went in the house. Had I made a mistake? That evening, I had to go check if the mystery man was next door again. I went out into the darkness and stood on the sidewalk outside the neighboring house. Was that a light on in the window again? No... Wait a minute. It looked like there were lights on in the house because the traffic light on the opposite side of the road was reflecting softly off the windows. Hey... Had that been the case last night? Maybe! I had thought I had seen lights on in the house but what I had seen was a reflected streetlight. But I had seen a man walk through the gate and door into the house, right? Hadn't I?

I looked again. There was an alleyway leading off down a side street right beside the gateway to the house. I remembered that when I had seen the man the other night, I had been distracted balancing the large cooler box I had been carrying home. Reason made it clear what had happened. I had looked down at the awkward load I was carrying as the man had walked across the road and down the alleyway. I had mistakenly assumed he had gone into the house. That was it! The man I had seen was just someone walking from Kita Koen and on down the road, not secretly slinking into the house next to ours!

## Talking TOK

by David Algie



My senses had been fooled in the darkness, and now I relied on my reasoning to correct my previously mistaken impression.

When I went back in and told my wife that my eyes had deceived me, I thought she would be happy that there was not a spooky man hiding next door after all.

Actually, she was annoyed. "I called up the neighbors and told them there was a man in there! You told me you had been certain. Everyone will think you're crazy."

This real life situation raises the knowledge question: How can our reasoning help prevent us making mistakes based on our instincts and on sense perception? In this case, I had belatedly used my reasoning to double check what I had instinctively thought I had seen.

A few weeks later I was walking home in broad daylight. Standing in the open carport of the "empty" house next door was the man I had seen. He was smoking a cigarette as his car idled in the carport. I hurriedly passed him and rushed inside and told my wife "That man is there. I didn't imagine it all!" She hurried out to see for herself.

The guy owns the house. He comes back infrequently, sometimes at night after his work is finished, to check on it.

It turns out that on that first night I had seen him do exactly what he had done. My eyes and instincts hadn't fooled me at all. It was when I tried to reason things through that I led myself away from the truth my sense perception and instincts had initially led me to. That's the spooky part of my story. My first hurried, distracted, instinctive judgment made in the darkness was correct. My reasoned, logical reevaluation in the cold hard light of day was wrong.

Now, I am not saying that our initial impressions are always right and shouldn't be checked against our reasoning. But perhaps we shouldn't always assume that our thoughtful reevaluations must override our instinctive first impressions.

# Triathlon

by Kaya Frese

Designed to primarily test endurance, modern triathlon consists of swimming, biking, and running in consecutive order.

SOIS introduced the Triathlon club in September of 1993 and have competed in numerous competitions in Osaka since. This extracurricular activity is currently run by Mr. Hiroshi Baba and Ms. Cheney.

Mr. Baba has taught SIS mathematics and coached triathlon/swim clubs since 1993 when the club was initially founded.

Ms. Cheney began coaching triathlon in 2011 and has been teaching at SOIS since 1999. She presently teaches OIS high school courses including DP History, Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay, and Grade 10 Humanities.

Triathlon is a popular club activity among students particularly because it's available every day of the week. This allows students to participate in both a seasonal school sport and Triathlon. For the running aspect of the club, you are expected changed and stretched by 4:00; the group will jog and return to school at 4:45 (5:00 on Wednesdays). Though each day varies, students will run an estimate of 5~8km per session. One of the longest routes that students remember is past Minami Senri Park; this route is approximately 10km. Swimming practices are on Mondays and Thursdays at the SOIS pool; beginning at 4:45 and ending at 5:30. On Tuesdays and Fridays, members meet in the training room to practice biking (4:45 to 5:30). SOIS club members have participated in different competitions including cross country, marathon, duathlon, and aquathlon races.

I asked several students ten questions involving their personal opinions and comments concerning Triathlon. Using their feed-

back, we can recognize that most kids job to improve their personal records. Other reasons include keeping healthy, dieting, for the purpose of exercise, and because triathlon is one of the few sports where you can attend whenever your schedule allows. Though all the interviewed students agreed that Triathlon is exhausting, they also explained the improvements and benefits they personally experienced as a result of continuous practice. I personally joined Triathlon towards the end of the fall trimester. I cannot deny that it is an extremely physically demanding club due to the need of endurance and stamina. I participated in my first SOIS marathon on the weekend and although it was exhausting, I felt exceptionally satisfied that I completed 5km in the time that I did. Mr. Baba and Ms. Cheney motivate members of the club to run consistently and create a comfortable environment to exercise in. Not only do you physically benefit from this activity, but there are far more opportunities to make friends and communicate with students from different grades or classes. To join, contact Ms. Cheney or Mr. Baba; practice times are mentioned above.



# Sabers "Sports Shorts"

Coach Heimer, AD

Sabers Athletics Facebook page: Check it out.

<https://www.facebook.com/soissabers>



## SHOUT OUTS

To all SIS graduates: "Once a Saber, always a Saber." Best wishes.

To departing SSCers – Kaho, Juri, Risako, Nono: "The Best".

To departing Sabers TV personalities: Atoka, Mira, Miho, Ayumi, Rica, Rintaro, Kaiya: "Until next time, go-o-o-o-o-o Sabers."

Thank you, Coach Entwistle and Coach Mecklem, for a great MS girls basketball season. From the MS Sabers.

Congrats to Coach McGill and Coach Stone: Pete and Repeat went fishing in a boat. Pete fell in. Who was left? (Five WJAA MS boys soccer championships in a row – can you spell 'dar nə sti?')

Good luck Sabers high school soccer teams at your WJAA and AISA tourneys.

Reporter: "Hey, Coach Bertman, how is everything going in the Sabers pool?" Mr. Bertman: "Swimmingly."

To Coach Datta: You put the "bad" in badminton. From a little birdie.

Dear Hatsue: Accident rules every corner of the universe except the chambers of the human heart. Love always, Ishy.

## Sabers "in the bleachers"

*Question of the week: What does "AD" stand for?*

Mr. Mecklem: "At some schools, AD stands for athletic director."

Mr. Kralovec: "At SOIS, AD stands for activities director."

Hirai-sensei: "Aquatics director?"

Mr. McGill: "Admissions director."

Mr. Heimer: "Awesome dude!"

Niki Heimer: "Annoying dad."

## Swimming Tournament at ASIJ

Photos and reporting by Luke T.

This year's ASIJ swim meet was one of the best. Yung Nakako (also the annual Knowledge Bowl champion) led his team and SOIS to another victory in the boys 200m medley. The swimmers were accompanied by Mr. Bertman and Mrs. Cooper. SOIS was competing against ZAMA American military school and ASIJ Tokyo. SOIS came in second place.





# The Sports Page



## Round up

### Boys Basketball

Article and photos by Emily Yamanaka

This past season was undoubtedly the least lucky one for Sabers boys' basketball players. Firstly, the team started off with only one senior, Kota Nakayama and Kota unfortunately injured his ankle on his first day of practice... That left the team with mainly less experienced members who just transitioned from middle school basketball into high school squad, which was far more rigorous and competitive. Although proper warm-ups were done every time before practice, members keep getting injured. Daiki Ishii was injured from the previous volleyball season so there were limits to his performance. Luca Ling injured his figure during one of the practice games so he had to miss some of the official games as well. But that was not the end of this tragedy for the team. Just before the JV tournament, almost half of the JV team members caught influenza and could not attend the competition. Again, Coach Routh had difficulty getting his "dream team" on the floor.



Photo by Emily Yamanaka

Similar situations happened during the AISA tournament as well. During the first day, Leo Roberts, Aki Shigeyama, and Leslie Tokai all got injured. This immediately posed a quandary for the team because the injured members were the starting members. These three players had to miss out four games, which had detrimental effects on the overall performance of the team. "It seemed like something went wrong every week," recalled Coach Routh, "hopefully we had used up all the back luck and next season would be smooth and amazing!"



Photo by Emily Yamanaka

After all the turmoil the team have experienced this season, next season seems to be leading to a better path. The team in general was said to have picked up many lessons from this season and would know just exactly what they would be facing against. The boys know that they would have to start training more during their private time and Coach Routh suggests putting weight lifting into their training menus. Furthermore, Taizo Heimer is coming back and there are chances of new boy, who are skilled in basketball, joining the SOIS community for next school year. Yeah, these all seem good for the team! Coach sees great potential in this team and thinks that when the team is on fire, it is invincible. However, he sees inconsistency in the team and recalls memories from WJAA and AISA. "Top teams were always consistent and always playing

well," stated the coach, "all we have to do is to figure out a way to stay consistent an that goes for the players on the floor and the bench players."

The team, especially JV members, owes Kota a debt of gratitude. Usually when players got injured, they would simply quit the team and no one would have anything against it; however, Kota decided to stay with the team even after injury on day one. Kota stayed to pass down his experiences to the JV members by joining their practices and even attending to all of their games. "You can see him everywhere! He coached the JV team, came to all the games, and even helped with statistics! He was just incredible," exclaimed the coach "I would like the thank Kota for everything he had done for us this season on the behalf of the team and we wish him best of luck in university!"



Photo by Emily Yamanaka

One of the things that made me really happy throughout this season is the number of OIS students on the team. Since I have been around, there had always been more SIS students involved compared to the number of OIS students. There was this game I remembered seeing all five players on the floor composed by only OIS students. It is great to see OIS students not only focus on their academics but also working hard to fight for their spots in the sports areas! Lastly, the two schools combined idea has always have its flaw of language barrier. Coach Routh and I believe that this problem can be solve by having student volunteers translating simultaneously what coaches want to say to his or her players during games. Anyone can see how simultaneous translation can benefit

both the players and the coaches and would have direct influence on the game results. Who knows, this may turn out to be a great CAS idea for the OIS students!

### Girls Basketball

Article by Emily Yamanaka

The girls were put into a similar situation as the boys: the team in general was just not as experienced as its precedents. As mentioned in the last Tango edition, Akane Imai, one of the starting members of varsity volleyball and basketball teams, was injured during a volleyball game against a nearby Japanese local school. This left the team on a somewhat shaky ground since the team had lost numerous experienced seniors (class of 2014) along with Akane.



Photo by Luke T

On a brighter side, the team was flooded with many new juniors who decided to give basketball a try and of course new freshmen; this saved the team from not having enough players to form both JV and Varsity teams this season.

Coach Sagara had mentioned many times that he wishes basketball seasons were longer so each player could spend more time sharpening her fundamental skills. Although it is nice to be able to experience different types of sports in this school, it is definitely more challenging for new players to improve their skills at an exponential rate due to the length of basketball season. With that being said, the team would like to encourage all players, who were either on the team or are planning to join for next season, to practice more basketball every Monday morning before short homeroom in the gym. Practice makes perfect!

The peak of this season for the girls had to be the WJAA tournament that was held at home this year. The two biggest opponents also fighting for championship were probably Canadian Academy (CA) and Yokohama (YIS). Last year YIS beat CA in the final and was able to bring the trophy back to their dragon nest but this season our saber girls were determined to keep the trophy home. The girls faced Yokohama twice. The team was frustrated at first because the girls knew that they were going to fight against skillful adversary. After a tight fight, the girls lost against Yokohama. During after-game-reflection, Coach Sagara said that he knows that the Saber girls are physically capable of beating Yokohama but perhaps the girls were not mentally prepared. To everyone's surprise, CA did not do well at all and they ended up in the fifth place of the tournament. I was actually disappointed by CA's performance.



I simply thought they were more capable but I guess I was wrong. The semi-final game on day two was a fierce contest but the girls were able to step it up a notch. This gave the girls the chance to seek their revenge on Yokohama in the final. Throughout the most of the game YIS was leading the score by a few points. The Sabers managed to keep their cool and were able to turn the table in the last quarter with strong defense and incredibly aggressive offense that enable them to clench the trophy by an exciting 3 points. On that note, we would like to congratulate all the girls on a fantastic season! Each girl displayed outstanding sportsmanship and great commitment to both her teammates and coaches.

