

Austen Term 2018



Newsletter

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from Ms Pun

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New Books to Read!

Celebrating Poetry
Competition Winners

Get Ready for Summer!

Stuck with your Writing?
Check out our Teachers' Top Tips!

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Message from Ms. Pun



Another year has whizzed by at i-Learner, and it is time for us to come together again and prepare for a wonderful, creative summer. This summer's theme is Discovery, and we will be encouraging students to try something new in order to discover something unexpected.

As the year draws to a close, we have been exploring the theme of 'creativity' here at i-Learner!

With an overwhelming emphasis on exams, it is not surprising that parents would like our students to equip themselves first with what the exam requires. The intriguing thing about having good marks in an exam is: if you practise every day what the exam requires, you may achieve good marks on a small test, but for larger, integrated exams, good marks are not guaranteed. Children who practise every day for exams are left with no time to explore the world around them. They have no time to read, no time to build up friendships, no time to understand themselves. Focusing too heavily on exams leads to children who are very good at responding to a limited range of topics, but who struggle with topics outside of their comfort zone. Questions and issues that require a mixture of subject knowledge will be out of this child's reach and they may struggle being creative.

I once had a student who was getting low marks for his Chinese writing. I asked him to tell me why he thought this was. He explained the writing task was to describe the most amazing thing in his life, and that he didn't know what that was. If a child's life is filled up with homework, marks, activities, schedules, results, and competitions, it is understandable that he or she will struggle to write about 'the most amazing thing in their life'. This is one of the biggest challenges for an educator now: where can we find the space to develop a child's empathy skills? Where can we have the time for a child to relax and to understand themselves better? Is this one of the reasons why it is difficult for us to teach a child about poetry and emotions? Empathy, emotion, space, poetry, art—all these are highly related to creativity. As a lot of us believe that childhood is the prime time for creativity, however we often do not value a child's creativity as we should.

Creativity is changing the world in a rapid way. Empathy and creativity are the keys to becoming a well-rounded adult and being able to cope in a dynamic, changing world. Without such qualities, what is the use of 100% on an exam?

It is for these reasons that the focus points for i-Learner's Austen and Summer Terms are 'creativity' and 'discovery' respectively. We want to help children grow, explore the world, and become rounded, creative, interesting individuals.

Kemmiss Pun

Discover our Book Suggestions

In keeping with this summer's theme of Discovery, we have asked our i-Learner teachers to share their newest book suggestions. In particular, we would like to encourage students to discover books and authors from further afield, so they can encounter something perhaps a little unexpected.



Zorba the Greek – *Nikos Kazantzakis*



Published in 1940's Greece, this novel now stands as one of Modern Greece's most celebrated works of fiction. I discovered this book while I was staying in Thessaloniki in 2013 and studied it during my language classes. It is the story of a jaded intellectual who decides to temporarily sever himself from his academic life and live in a peasant community on Crete. As he prepares to leave, by chance he encounters a polymath, man-of-the-world called Zorba. They quickly become close and form a master-student type relationship, as the narrator receives what he feels is a proper schooling.

Together, they explore deep topics about life, religion and the position of man in the universe. The narrator goes on to experience tragedy, alienation, and spiritual renewal and is forever changed by his time with Zorba. Reading this story gave me a space to grapple with difficult questions in a similar way to the narrator. I would recommend this book to students aged 16 and above.

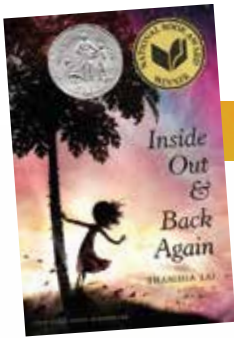


The Snow Spider – *Jenny Nimmo*



For Gwyn's birthday, his grandmother gives him a piece of seaweed, a yellow scarf, a tin whistle, a twisted metal brooch, and a small, broken horse. These are the clues to his family's magical history. Gwyn goes on an adventure through dangerous snowy mountains and into another world to find out the truth.

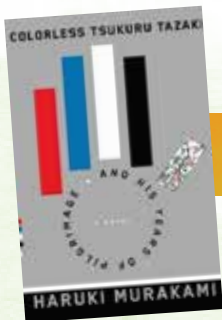
This book has beautiful descriptions, exciting actions and characters we can really care for. It's a great read at any age (I still love it now), but is best enjoyed by people aged 9-12. If you love this book, try the next two in the series!



Inside Out and Back Again – Thanhha Lai



Inside Out and Back Again is an enchanting book about the life of a little girl Hà and her family in Vietnam. The book is composed of a series of free verse poems, making it fast-paced, exciting and easy to read. As war approaches her homeland, Hà and her family flee to the United States as refugees, where Hà faces the hardships of bullying, settling into a new culture, and missing her father who is out at war. I would strongly recommend this book to upper primary school students who would like to experience a moving story of a girl's year of change, dreams, grief, and healing.



Colourless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage – Haruki Murakami



Colourless Tsukuru Tazaki is a highly engaging novel of self-discovery published in 2014 by the celebrated Japanese author Haruki Murakami. It tells the story of Tsukuru Tazaki, a 36 year-old railroad engineer who attempts to find out why he was suddenly and inexplicably abandoned by his closest group of friends when he was a university student sixteen years before. Wanting to come face-to-face with the past and determine the reason for his unexpected rejection, he decides to track down his old friends one by one, first in his hometown of Nagoya and then in rural Finland. I thoroughly enjoyed reading about Tsukuru's quest for truth and his pilgrimage for happiness, and I would strongly recommend this book to any upper secondary school students who are interested in the themes of companionship and self-reflection.

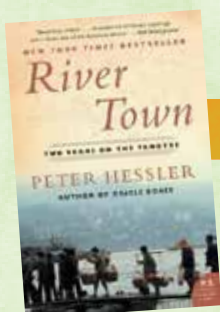


The Four Agreements – Don Miguel Ruiz



Have you ever wondered how different your life would be if you changed your mindset? Here is an enlightening book that allows you to discover new ways of thinking - and probably new ways of living. The Four Agreements, written by the bestselling Mexican author Don Miguel Ruiz, illustrates four principles essential to living a life with true freedom and happiness. Understanding and practising the agreements will free us from the limits and boundaries we have unconsciously set for ourselves and therefore lead us to our ultimate goals of life.

This book is so well written that it is easy to read and understand. Secondary students are strongly encouraged to read this book and discover the wisdom of life that lies within.



River Town – Peter Hessler



《江城》(台譯《消失中的江城》)內地版封面上，一位船工斜撐竹篙，驚濤在他身側欲飛還斂，遠處有「江流天外」與「黯黯青山紅日暮」，這是千百年來詩詞中的浩蕩山河。原版的封面，則展現山城勞動者們腳踏實地的生活剪影，平易、渾厚而又滯重。兩幅畫面我都相當喜歡，它們仿佛代表這本遊記的兩種性格。何偉(Peter Hessler)是出身普林斯頓的記者，本書是他「中國紀實三部曲」之一。他長年寓居中國偏遠的江城，尋訪世情，試圖書寫變動不居的時代巨浪，如何裹挾一座城市中的鮮活生命，從微觀透視中國的傳統與現代性如何矛盾共生。在他筆下，既有漂泊遊子的浪漫溫情，也有人類學家理性、深邃而克制的觀察。



Celebrating the Autumn Poetry Competition

Many students will already know about our popular poetry competition which took place between November 2017 and January 2018. Over 50 students submitted wonderful poems on the theme of Autumn and teachers were amazed at the effort that everyone put into their work.

From young learners to older students, the quality of every entry was a fantastic testament to the creativity of our students at i-Learner.

Particular congratulations go out to our category winners below, who showed an extra special level of creativity and skill in the poems that they crafted. Well done!

First Place (Kindergarten)

Autumn

by Kylie Ho (K3)

A – Ants are collecting food
U – Under the ground is dark
T – Trees are growing
U – Up the tree are apples
M – Mice are sleeping
N – Noses will smell leaves



First Place

(Lower Primary)

Autumn

Safina Ng (P3)

Autumn is a drawing,
Where the noisy cicadas sing.
The soft autumn breeze,
Rushes through my hair to my knees.
As the artist waves his brush,
The whole of autumn will blush!



First Place

(Upper Primary)

Autumn

Valerie Kwok (P5)

Goodbye, Summer
It was turning cold
People struck fires
The flames flared red and gold
Little by little rises higher
The trees rustle their crowns
Looking quite proud As their
leaves turn from green to brown
Floating up to join the thick grey
clouds
Listen to the whispering of trees
Steady but fast
As a light breeze
Whooshes past

So errant
A snowflake
Looking transparent
Falls as coldness wakes
A brief
Blurry misty
Shadow of a leaf
Flits by slowly
Although just
A small yellow leaf no
bigger than a ring
It certainly does
Tell us one thing
Autumn is here!

*Special congratulations go to the following winners of
'Most Creative' in each of their categories!*

Most Creative

(Kindergarten)

Clarissa Chow (K3)

Most Creative

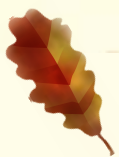
(Lower Primary)

Haylie Mui (P3)

Most Creative

(Upper Primart)

Charlotte Hsia (P4)



I never know how to start my story...

It is important to grab your reader's attention straight away. Good ways to do that are:

- Start with something sudden.
Snap! The rope stretched and broke, leaving Max gripping to the rock with his bare fingers.
- Begin with dialogue.
"For the hundredth time – don't talk to me like that!" Catherine insisted.
- Write about something unexplained.
Brian locked his secret box and hid it under his covers. He knew he could never let his friends know what was really inside.



i-Learner **Top Writers**

At i-Learner, our
experience tea

One of the things that
seeing a young child take t
a confident E

Of course, every student has differ
At i-Learner we celebra

To help students a
we have collected a range
will answer some of the
and challenges tha

What makes a good ending?

At the end of your story, you want to make sure that your reader is satisfied. Some top tips:

- Avoid ending by saying it was all a dream!
- Your character could finally find a way to solve their problem. Make your reader say "Aha!"
- Explain what happens to your characters years into the future after they have solved their problem.
- If you're feeling adventurous, leave your ending open so your reader has to guess what happens next (e.g. we don't know if your character was telling the truth or lying all along...)

I'm a secondary school student. How can I best improve my fiction writing?

- A well-structured story helps your reader to understand your story and leaves them satisfied – spend some time thinking about the relationships between your characters and their journey through your story.
- If you're feeling adventurous, play with sub-plots that run alongside your main story plot. It is more interesting if more than one character has a problem to solve!
- More confident writers can experiment with the time order of their writing. Insert flashbacks or flash forwards to make your story more exciting.
- Plan well to ensure that all your reader's questions will be answered by the end of the story. Nothing is more frustrating than a cliffhanger (unless you're planning on writing a sequel!).

How can I improve my writing quickly?

It's a cliché but there really is not a magic bullet that will instantly 'fix' your writing. However there are some general tips that can help.

- Read everything and anything you can get your hands on. Good writers are avid readers.
- Take inspiration from the books you read. Freely re-use good phrases and vocabulary you find.
- Use the ideas and stories you find in books as a basis for your own stories.
- Base your stories on real experiences. This will make them more believable.
- Plan, plan, plan!

Writer's Writing Tips

tutors have a lot of
aching writing.
t excites us the most is
their first steps to becoming
English writer.
ent goals when it comes to writing.
e every form of success.
little along the way,
of useful tips that we think
most common questions
t surround writing.

What are some good tips for planning my story?

You probably hear this advice more than any other: plan your story before you begin writing! But what makes a good plan? Try answering these questions before you begin writing to help you structure your plan.

- Who are the characters? What are their relationships with each other?
- What settings are you going to use through your story?
- What is the rising action? What is the climax? What is the falling action?
- How will your story end?
- Does your story have a message or a moral?
- What themes does your story contain?

I keep getting low marks for my language... What do I do?

Teachers usually mark your writing for its content, organisation and language. Marks for language are usually the most neglected, but here are some tips to impress your teacher:

- Use a thesaurus to find new words. No one wants to read about the 'nice boy who had a happy day at the sunny beach'.
- ... But be careful! Using words in the wrong way can make your writing sound unnatural. Check in a dictionary that you're using the word correctly.
- Find all the nouns in your writing and add adjectives before them.
- Don't forget to do a quick grammar check. Pay attention to the following points:
 - Singulars and Plurals - Have you added 's' where you need to?
 - Subject-Verb Agreement - Have you checked that you have added 's' for he/she/it?
 - Tenses - Check that your verbs make sense. Is your story in past tense or present tense?
 - Spelling - Pay attention to common words that you mis-spell!



i-Learner Short Story Competition

Following the success of
i-Learner's 2017-18 Autumn Poetry Competition,
we are pleased to announce our next writing competition!

This time round, entrants will need to write a
piece of short story fiction on the theme of...

Discovery

*Entrants will be judged based on their entry group.
The category writing prompts are:*

Entry Group	Writing Prompt	Word Limit
P1-P3	Treasure Island Adventure	150
P4-P6	Exploring a new planet	250
Secondary	If I could read minds...	400

Prizes include trophies, i-Learner vouchers, fun stationery, and more!

Deadline: 6th July 2018

This time, our competition will be open to students in schools across Hong Kong,
so expect the competition to be a bit fiercer!

How do I enter?

Simple! Hand in your complete short story to our Admin team,
complete with your name, grade and date.



i-LEARNER SUMMER 2018

It's time to get excited for summer!
Every year at i-Learner, students enjoy a fun-packed
couple of months, as they make new friends,
unleash their creativity and get ready for the next school year.
Our theme for Summer 2018 is...

DISCOVERY

Which means that children can get excited about all the new things
they are going to discover at i-Learner this year!
They will be able to learn lots of interesting new things, experience
new ways of thinking, and create unforgettable memories!
Read on to find out more about what's on offer this year.

Summer Scholars Camps 2018

9th July to 31st August, 2018

小學者夏令營

Welcome to i-Learner's 2018 Summer Scholars Camp! This year's theme is 'Exploring Nature', so join us as we discover the biodiversity of Hong Kong – and the world.

We provide an immersive English language programme that incorporates a wide range of teaching methodologies, catering to every type of learner. This ensures that all students are stimulated to develop and practise English whilst having fun and gaining awareness about different ecosystems. Through lessons, arts and crafts, projects, presentations and excursions, they advance their knowledge of English and apply it to daily interactions and activities.

The Camp is open to all students from Pre-K3 to Pre-S6. They will be guided on their learning journey by our vibrant team of Oxbridge tutors who foster an exciting educational environment and engage one-on-one with the Scholars.

This summer is guaranteed to be fun-filled and adventurous and we look forward to having you on-board!

小學者夏令營又來了!在這個暑假,我們要和從英國劍橋大學和牛津大學的老師一起發掘大自然的秘密!從森林,到神秘的太平洋,再到跡的稀罕沙漠,我們一起去了解,去學習如何愛護這些對地球極為重要的地方。這個暑假,我們一起學習如何閱讀,如何搜集資料,如何觀察和想像,如何發問表達,如何過一個快樂而有意義的夏天。

準備上K3到中五的同學,這個暑假快來參加我們的學者夏令營吧!





Summer Workshops

Take the chance this summer to learn something new! From Poetry and Drama, to Speech and Debating, students can enjoy a very wide range of interesting new subject areas. Typically, these are things that children don't get the opportunity to learn at school, so we are certain that students will be able to fulfill their goals of discovery this summer through our i-Learner workshops!

ON OFFER, WE HAVE:



Speech and Debating Workshops

Become an expert orator in our Speech and Debating Workshops. Learn how to express your opinion effectively and convincingly!



Drama Workshops

Learn to love spoken language. Listen to the rhythms of English as you explore how actors express their emotions with words!



Book Lovers Workshops

Perfect for both students who aren't sure what to read next, and for those who can never put down a book!

Other workshops include:

- ▶ Mathematics
- ▶ English Poetry
- ▶ Chinese Calligraphy
- ▶ Chinese Storytelling
- ▶ Science



Summer Intensive Courses

What Summer Intensive Courses does i-Learner offer?

The courses we offer reflect the kinds of skills that students find most useful to practise before the school year begins.

Courses include:

- ⊙ **Critical Reading and Writing**
- ⊙ **Advanced Grammar and Reading**
- ⊙ **Love to Write**
- ⊙ **Love to Read**
- ⊙ **愛上語文班**
- ⊙ **中文寫作班**

What is the timetable for these courses?

Our Intensive Courses take place on weekday mornings and last 2.5 hours each.

Available timeslots

09:00 – 11:30

10:20 – 12:50

Our Summer Intensive Courses are perfect for children who want to get ready for the school year ahead.

Children can focus on core skills or add something extra from our Special Courses to expand their academic portfolio.

What are Special Courses?

Special Courses give students the chance to study something a little more academic but that they also don't get to see at school. In previous years, students have found that studying academic areas that they are less familiar with has boosted their problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

This year, i-Learner is providing courses in:

- ⊙ **Robotics**
- ⊙ **Introduction to Latin**

So can I spend the whole morning at i-Learner?

Yes! In fact in the past we have found that students who have immersed themselves in learning have always made the most of their summers. Children can come for one Intensive Course and one Summer Workshop to complete a whole morning of immersive fun!

For more details, timetables and to sign up,
don't hesitate to talk to our Admin team.



Wan Chai is also gearing up for a summer of discovery and fun!

Highlights include:

- Just like our Tsim Sha Tsui centre, at Wan Chai students will also be able to experience a wide range of fun courses as they explore new subjects and make new friends.
- In keeping with our Wan Chai tradition, children will also be able to enjoy Southorn Playground just across the street as they engage their senses and have an immersive learning experience.
- Lastly, students can spend some time with our teachers, discovering more about Hong Kong. They will explore the old streets of Wan Chai and learn more about the history of Hong Kong Island. Come along and join the fun!



Apart from our excellent English courses, the Wan Chai team has also been designing excellent Chinese courses that cater to the needs of students of all ages!

- To relieve the stress of our Primary IB students, Ms. Zhu has held special bespoke workshops to prepare students for their upcoming Chinese graduation projects, guiding them from the initial research to the final products and presentations. Throughout the process, students developed all the skills for IV, such as research skills, independent critical thinking, and discussion skills.
- We also understand that learning is not just about assessments, which is why Ms. Tang has designed a series of unique creative writing workshops to maximise students' creativity through fun activities such as field trips to Lee Tung Avenue.

Come and join our exciting Chinese workshops this summer!

In the run up to summer, Wan Chai has been building a mini-library full of exciting new books for students to discover! Ranging across all levels, students are guaranteed to find stories that they find interesting, strange, mysterious or even a little bit scary! Our fabulous Wan Chai library is used extensively in many of our classes, including our popular Critical Reading and Writing lessons, which are taught by our fantastic teaching team on the island. Come to our Book Lovers Workshops and Love to Read courses to discover your inner bookworm with our new reading collection in Wan Chai!



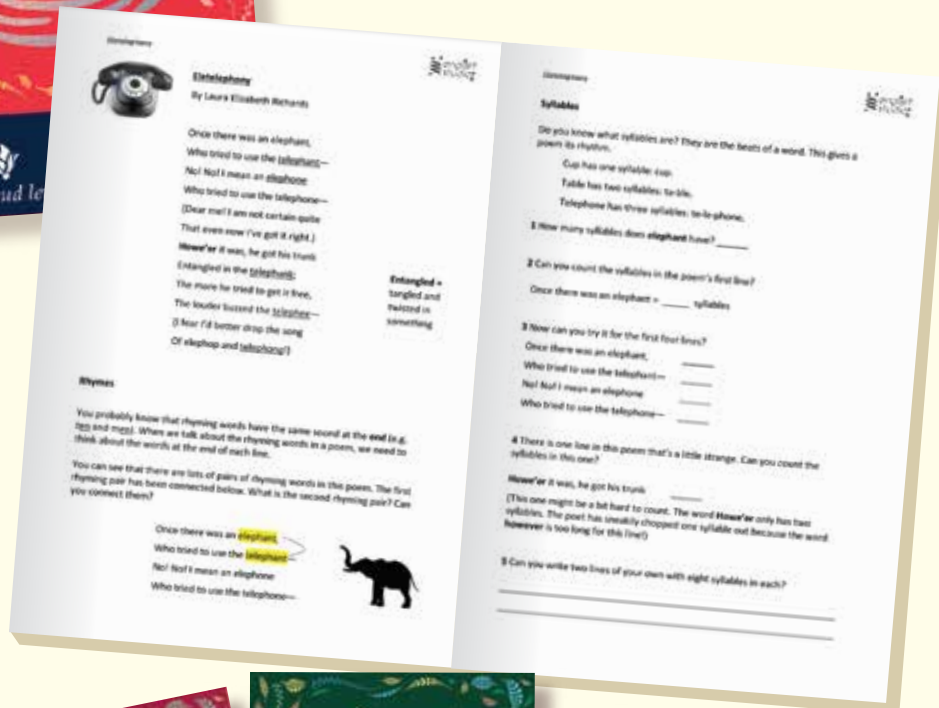
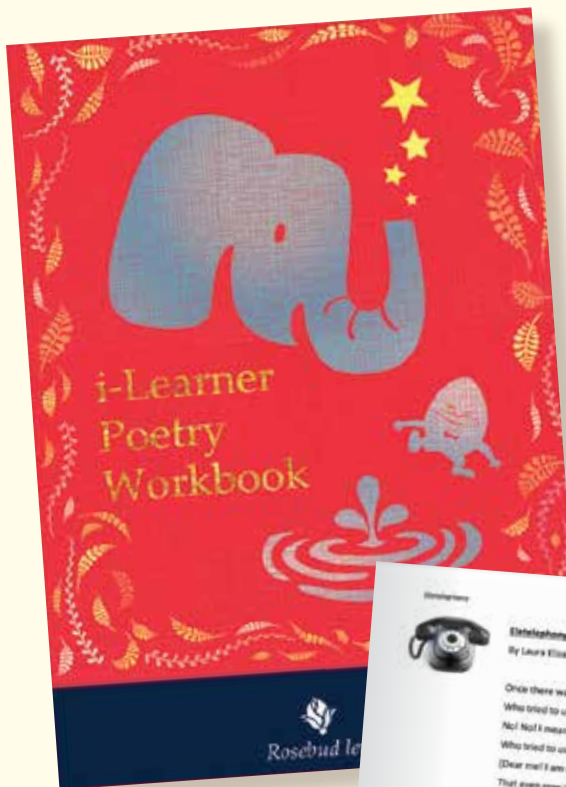
國文詩詞班

這一年來，灣仔的中文老師為學生量身訂製了許多合適的課程！為了IB學生的中文畢業論文，朱老師設計了個性化的畢業論文課程。從文獻綜述到論文完稿，再到個人演說，朱老師都全程陪伴和一一指導。學生在這過程中所學到重要的IB技巧，包括研究技巧，獨立理性分析和小組討論的應對。除此之外，唐老師也為了學生量身設計了一系列創意寫作課程，其中包含了灣仔利東街的實地考察描寫活動。活動過後，學生的創作力得到了明顯的提升。暑假馬上到了，讓這樣的樂趣延續吧！

NEW - i-Learner Poetry Workbooks

These easy-to-follow workbooks use tips and techniques from our teaching team to help your child understand poetry. Each book contains 10 classic English poems, with several pages of guidance and questions on each. Answers are provided in the back of the book, and online recordings of the poems support further understanding.

This series teaches young learners how to understand sounds. Then step by step, the books progress until older students can analyse a poem in depth. Help your child to fall in love with English poetry with the i-Learner Poetry Workbooks.



i-Learner Poetry Workbook stages:



ROSEBUD (P3+)



SUNFLOWER (P5+)



DAFFODIL (S1+)



POPPY (S3+)

