

Middle School Newsletter

January 2017

From the Principal's Desk

by Mr. Conrad Pholar

I hope this finds all of our family and community members well. There has been a lot going on at our school since we returned from Christmas vacation! Please read the following "happenings" to help stay informed to what's new at TCIS:

- Report Cards - Second grading period report cards were mailed to all students homes last week. If you have not received one, please call the school and a hard copy will be sent home with your child.
- Chinese New Year Celebration - This will be celebrated at our school this Tuesday, January 24. More info about this special day is included in this newsletter - Please note that all parents are invited to attend!
- CNY - This last day of school before our Chinese New Year break is Thursday, January 26. We will celebrate CNY from January 27- February 5. Please keep these dates in mind when planning your vacations.

*Wishing all a very happy, safe and restful break!
Happy New Year!*



A TCIS Welcome

The Middle School administration and staff would like to welcome **Mr. Rick Butterfield** to our faculty as a Mathematics Consultant. Mr. Rick is originally from Columbus, Ohio and has 30 of years teaching mathematics not only in Thailand but also in the USA, the Middle East and South Korea.

He will assist our math program and will be working with small groups of students in grades 6, 7 and 8 until the end of this school year.



The TCIS school administration and staff are most proud to announce that the following teachers and administrator have received an award from the Samutprakarn Ministry of Education for their outstanding performance as educators as well as their years of service at our school:

Ms. Rung Penporn - Head of Thai Department
Ms. Caridad (Carie) Prittpongpat - Language Academy grades 5-8
Ms. Rajinee Sachdev - Language Academy grades 5- 8
Ms. Nilar Win - Kindergarten Teacher

Student Services Prepares for Course Selection 2017-2018

Today was an exciting day for our grade 8 students. They joined our current High School students to complete a course interest survey. The survey results will help Student Services to develop a strong academic program for our High School students. The month of February will be devoted to learning more about upcoming courses, course selection, and academic pathways.

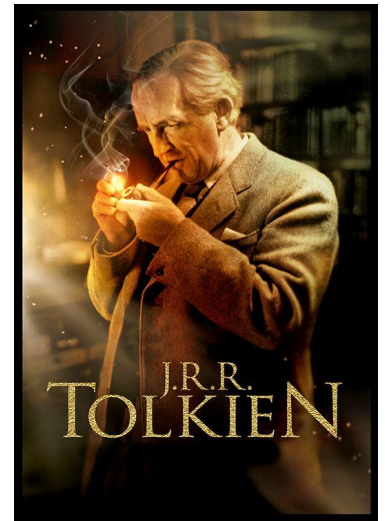
For more information please visit our website at <http://www.tcisstudentservices.com/>.

J. R. R. Tolkien and the 7th Grade

*Mr. Michael Purser
Gr.7 English Teacher*

Our 7th Graders have been reading a book by J.R.R. Tolkien called, "The Hobbit." They are more than halfway through the book, and they are enjoying this beautiful adventure story.

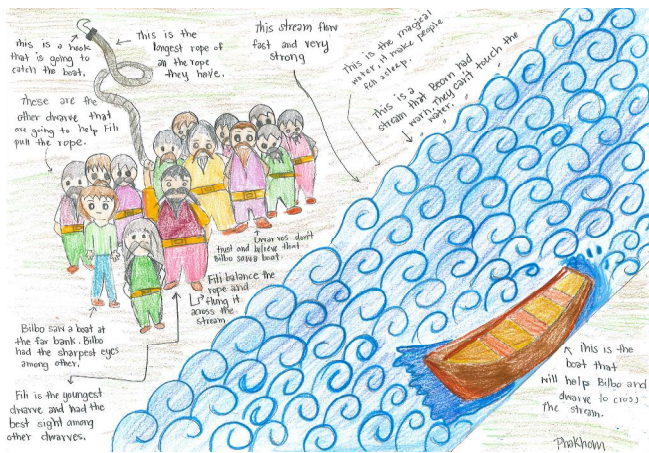
J.R.R. Tolkien born on January 3rd, 1892. He was born in Bloemfontein, South Africa. His father is Arthur Reuel Tolkien, and his mother is Mabel Tolkien. He also has a younger brother named Hilary Arthur Reuel Tolkien. J.R.R. Tolkien died on September 2nd, 1973 (at age 81). When he was little, he developed a language that he invented, which is a mixed language such as the Elvish in his books.



While living in South Africa, he was bitten by a baboon spider and many scholars think that this accident might be an idea or an enlightenment for his future works. When he graduated from Exeter College, Oxford, he was very skilled in English Language and Literature. Then later, he published abundant of books and articles, including three famous books "The Hobbit", "The Lord of the Ring", and "Silmarillion", which is all considered "High Fantasy". (Pim, Prae, Aom, Wawa, Mars)



"The Hobbit" is a fantasy book that takes place in Middle-Earth, a "magical" world in which wizards and dragons, along with mythical creatures live. The book is about a hobbit named Bilbo Baggins and his adventure with dwarves, on a quest to slay the great dragon, Smaug so that they could reclaim their stolen land. At first, Bilbo was reluctant about going on the adventure, but after a while of traveling with Gandalf, the great wizard, and the dwarves, he felt more confident and gained more courage. The Hobbit is all about self-discovery and doing things out of your comfort zone. (Beryl, Christine, Emmy, Kevin, Sidney)



Every year on his birthday on January 3rd, Tolkien fans from across the world celebrate with a simple toast-drinking ceremony. At 9 pm, they simply raise a glass and toast. All you need to do is stand, raise a glass of your choice of drink, and say the words "The Professor" before taking a sip. Then sit and enjoy the rest of your drink.
(Vivi, Mint, Tonhom, Nina, Ming, Mim)



Happy Birthday, J.R.R Tolkien! We love you so much, and we appreciate all your hard work on each of your books. You are a person who changed this world for us and gave us a whole new perspective in literature. You will always and forever be remembered by us because "not all who wander are lost" and you are not lost. May you rest in peace. Happy Birthday! (Path, Arly, Leah, Felicia)



Navigating the World of "Always-On" Technology

Ms. Shanesz Jayasinghe

Over the past decade, we have observed vast changes in the way media and technology have influenced the way we work and live. Information is at our fingertips through 'always-on' devices which have become more versatile, functional, and seemingly essential. Never before have we been so connected, and so exposed, to those around us and to strangers around the world. Consequently, the frequency and duration of media and technology integration into our lives has increased significantly. Willingly or unwillingly, we are now part of a world in which internet connected devices are required; most of us carry them with us everywhere. In addition to our being dependant on these devices for a range tasks in our places of work, school, play, and social functions, our children have never known a world without them.

Due to how media and technology now plays such a major role in our lives and the lives of the younger generation, parents may rightly have questions and concerns about children being over exposed at school and at home. Some concerns may arise due to how even at a very young age children are attracted, influenced and awed by media and technology. Most parents feel that their children are more tech savvy than them and struggle to strike a balance as to how much screen time is needed at home.



It is a fact that in school students are exposed to a fair amount of screen time, however, the time and content are carefully monitored and supervised by trained professionals. But, how then, can the same boundaries, guidelines and controls be set in the home environment?



In school we use a comprehensive digital citizenship curriculum from Common Sense Media which is introduced and reinforced at TCIS at different grade levels during technology classes as well as other subject classes. You may think all that is well and good as teachers are trained to deal with these issues, but what about parents who may not have as much knowledge about technology in education? How can they deal with pressing issues such as: *how much screen time should be given to a child at home, what should parents do if a child is bullied online, Is it safe to post*

a child's photo online or at what age should a child use social media or a Smartphone? These are indeed challenging questions that every parent will face at some point in time. Although each parent may choose to deal with these in different ways, they should first be aware of what is out there and what would be the best options for a child before making a decision. Common Sense Media offers support in the very same areas for educators and more recently, to parents. Shared below are some tips and links

to videos and other materials available on Common Sense Media which I hope will help you navigate our world of technology and manage media and technology effectively at home.

Taken from [Commonsensemedia.org](https://www.commonsensemedia.org):

- **Character Strengths and Life Skills**

Teaching kids character strengths and life skills is one of the most important jobs of parents, caregivers, and teachers. Hundreds of times a day, often without realizing it, we seize on moments to reinforce strengths such as [humility](#), [integrity](#), [perseverance](#), and [teamwork](#). Increasingly, the launchpad for these lessons is media. Learn more about [character strengths](#), [tips for using media to bolster them](#), and [recommendations for media the whole family can learn from and share](#).

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/character-strengths-and-life-skills>

- **Technology Addiction**

Are today's kids [addicted to technology](#)? Are we? From smartphones to social media to video-games, media and tech have become a huge part of our families' lives. The ability to be constantly connected can affect schoolwork, relationships, and concentration. The challenge is figuring out how to get the most from technology without letting it get out of control. Learn more about [how to identify problematic media use](#), the [downfalls of multitasking](#), [finding balance](#), and what to do [if you have serious concerns](#).

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/technology-addiction>

- **Screen Time**

Setting screen-time limits and helping kids moderate their own habits are all about finding the right balance for your family's needs and lifestyle. Click links for advice on creating [a realistic schedule](#), setting [age-appropriate guidelines on TV time](#), finding the [first websites for young kids to use](#), handling [violent media](#), and managing [kids' cell phone use](#).

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/screen-time>

- **Cell Phone Parenting**

To help kids maximize the Internet's benefits while minimizing the risks click links for latest research, tips, and tools on what really keeps kids safe. Which [privacy settings should you use](#)? What are the [ins and outs of parental controls](#)? Get tips on everything from the basics, such as [smart usernames](#), to the big stuff, such as [appropriate sharing](#).

<https://www.commonsensemedia.org/cell-phone-parenting>

- Privacy and Internet Safety

To help kids maximize the Internet's benefits -- while minimizing the risks -- we offer the latest research, tips, and tools on what really keeps kids safe. Which [privacy settings should you use](#)? What are the [ins and outs of parental controls](#)? Get tips on everything from the basics, such as [smart usernames](#), to the big stuff, such as [appropriate sharing](#).

<https://www.common sense media.org/privacy-and-internet-safety>

- Cyberbullying

Once kids go online, their chances of finding [cyberbullies, haters, and trolls](#) is, sadly, quite high. Find age-specific guidelines, videos, and articles to help with tough conversations, whether [your kid is a bully](#) or is [being bullied](#). Links to answer [all your cyberbullying questions](#), offering age-appropriate advice, school resources, and more from parents and experts.

<https://www.common sense media.org/cyberbullying>

- Facebook, Instagram and Other Social Media

Social media isn't simply a way of life for kids, it's life itself. To help them keep their online interactions safe, productive, and positive, these links offer the most up-to-date research and guidance on [social media basics](#). Learn about the [latest apps and websites](#), and get tips on [talking to your kids about sharing, posting](#), and avoiding [digital drama](#).

<https://www.common sense media.org/social-media>



Chinese New Year Seal Carving

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By Yi-ling Class

八年級母語班 林靖嬭

篆刻作品介紹：

努力-我認為胡適先生的所謂「一分耕耘，一分收穫」是非常有道理的，當我們為了我們自己的目標而花心思，那就是努力。而讓我要努力的動機就是看見爸爸媽媽辛苦的工作賺錢提供給我一個更好的未來時，他們疲勞的背影提醒了我不要辜負他們的期望。努力對我來說就是邁向成功的最重要的精神和態度。

靖嬭-靖嬭是我的名字，我是一位基督徒所以爸爸媽媽取這個名字給我希望能夠靜靜地宣告神的名。

大雞大利-今年是雞年，所以我就取了雞的諧音「吉」，祝福大家在新的一年里能夠大吉大利。

月亮-圖形-我和朋友們在網上寫小說然後我們就分別為自己取了一個筆名。月亮代表著夜晚時的美夢，我希望我們的故事能夠讓讀者們有一種身在夢境中的感覺。

大雞大利

努力

刻章作品介紹

我一開始的時候沒法抓到訣竅，因為刀子拿不穩，技藝也不成熟所以起初所刻出來的字並沒有非常的清楚。慢慢的後來熟悉了拿刀的技巧的同時也發現原來刻印章並沒有想像的簡單，不但不可以隨意刻，而且還需要集中注意力把每一筆筆畫刻好，刻印章讓我發現有時候做事時不可以那麼的匆促，它是需要耐心慢慢的完成。

經過這次篆刻活動，我終於體會到了中國古老的刻章樂趣以及中國工藝之美。



安逸安逸



堅毅

逸倖

八年級母語班 張逸倖

刻章作品介紹

1. 安逸逸-「逸」，象徵著安閑、安樂。我希望新的一年，大家能夠過著安樂的日子。
2. 「堅毅」-我們大家常常會因為遇到難題，而放棄。若我們一直放棄的話，我們會被難題給控制，而無法過著自己想要的生活。你說，世界上哪個出名的明星沒有遇過難題？哪個出名的音樂家沒有遇過難題？如果這些人也因為遇到難題而退縮的話，那我們現在知道的世界，就會大不相同。所以，我希望大家能夠有著堅定的意志。
3. 「餅乾」圖形-餅乾是一個人人都愛的甜點。它又脆又香，又軟又綿，品種繁多。餅乾看似非常的平凡，但一口咬下去，裡面卻包含了滿滿的愛。我想讓大家都知道說，我們不該以貌取人，而要去了解他們的內心。
4. 「逸倖」-逸倖是我的名字。我爺爺給我取名字的時候說過，他希望我是一個不在惡勢力前低頭也不畏艱難的人。他更希望我能夠有著一個不被拘束的人生。

篆刻過程感悟

篆刻是一件自古傳承下來的中華傳統工藝。今年的我，使用了橡皮擦來刻章。雖然篆刻看起來是件非常簡單的項目，但是記得我一開始拿起刀不顧一切的隨意刻，導致我把整個字刻錯後而需要重新再來一次時，才明白這是需要技術和耐心的。我雖然是一個很有耐心的人，可當我的脖子開始酸痛的時候，心情便開始煩躁，急著想快點把它刻完。再刻一次的時候，我學到了欲速則不達的道理，不能魯莽的去刻，而是要抱著「慢工出細活」的態度耐心的刻。經歷幾次失敗後的我終於把第一個印章刻好，當時心中充滿了成就感的心情至今仍讓我印象深刻。

八年級母語班 謝天

刻章作品介紹

聞雞起舞（篆書）：我刻「聞雞起舞」是因為今年是雞年，意思是聽到雞叫就起來舞劍，也就是發奮圖強的意思。希望這一年我可以像這個成語一樣，比往年更加用功。

謝天（篆書）：我用篆書來刻我的名字是因為我覺得篆書的字體很優美，幾乎每一筆畫都像是在畫畫。而且我一般看到別人的印章時都是用楷書，所以我想用篆書來試試看。

謙虛（楷書）：我刻謙虛當我的座右銘是因為有時候我真的太驕傲了。我希望培養這個美德來醒我做人處事要謙虛，不要像以前一樣那麼驕傲。

篆刻過程感悟

刻這些印章真的在考驗我們的耐心和雕刻技術。刻這些字時，我們也需要非常的用心才可以刻出優美線條的字體，同時也可以看出每個人的藝術天份！

當我刻聞雞起舞時，我發現篆書雖然長得非常優美，但雕刻起來卻是如此的難。楷書裡面的字的筆畫都不會有那麼多彎曲弧度的筆畫，但篆書的筆畫真的像在刻一幅畫一樣，甚至還有要畫一些圓圈。而在刻楷體的謙虛時，大多數都是直的筆畫，刻起來容易多了！

八年級母語班 楊冠威



刻章作品介紹：

威：我刻了威這個字是因為威是我的名字裡的最後一個字，威它代表要跟冠軍一樣威風凜凜金雞報喜：金雞報喜是關於雞的成語，今年是雞年，新的一年應該要開心所以一整年才會過的順利利喜氣洋洋。招財進寶：招財進寶是個很常見的合體字，但我刻的原因並不是因為它是一個合體字而是因為我希望可以得到很多紅包，也希望家裡生意興隆，家人個個長命百歲。龍貓：龍貓是一隻人見人愛的卡通人物，牠的確很可愛，雖然到現在我都還不知道牠屬於什麼的動物但我還是很喜歡牠。我覺得刻龍貓有點難度，但因為想挑戰自己於是就刻了。

篆刻過程感悟：

我覺得刻篆是一種非常有難度的工藝，但經過我的努力後成品還是很好看的！這次應該是大家第一次刻篆，所以應該也都體會到難度。刻篆刻有很多步驟：第一，要先選自己想要的圖畫而印下來。第二，用鉛筆在轉印紙上描下你要的圖畫。第三，利用鉛筆炭粉將想要的地方刻掉（陰刻）或刻掉不要的部份（陽刻），第四，試印修改。如果線條不夠明顯，我們需要重複這幾個步驟後，成品即可問世。

經過努力終究會有好結果，所以我自己對自己的成品相當滿意。若未來還有機會刻橡皮章，我相信大家的作品也會更好。



TCIS Middle School Artists Featured in International Education Magazine

Ms. Elizabeth & Ms. Cream

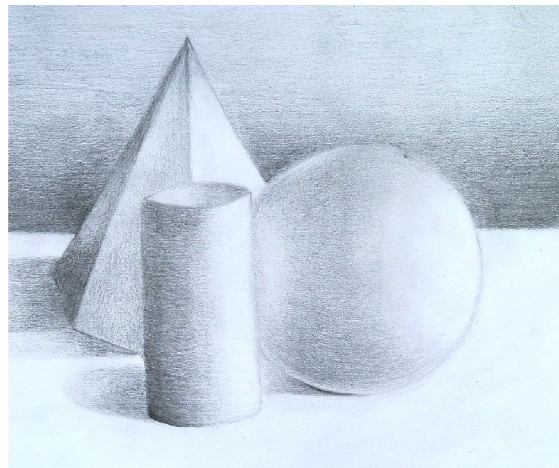


Congratulations to Kassana Wongpensri (Stamp) from Grade 7 and Avitra Trongtrairat (Bell) in Grade 8 for being selected for the Middle School Art Gallery section of the internationally published EARCOS Triannual Journal Winter 2016 addition.

This journal is distributed all over Asia and goes to all EARCOS affiliated schools. We are very proud to see our students take two coveted spots of the gallery section that highlights student artwork. Nice job kids!



Kassana Wongpensri (Stamp)
Watercolor
Grade 7 Art



Avitra Trongtrairat (Bell)
Light Study in Pencil
Grade 8 Art