

Fanling Lutheran Secondary School

English Express 2010-2011

ENVIRONMENT

Interviews With Teachers

Politics

Gourmet

Teenage Life

2012

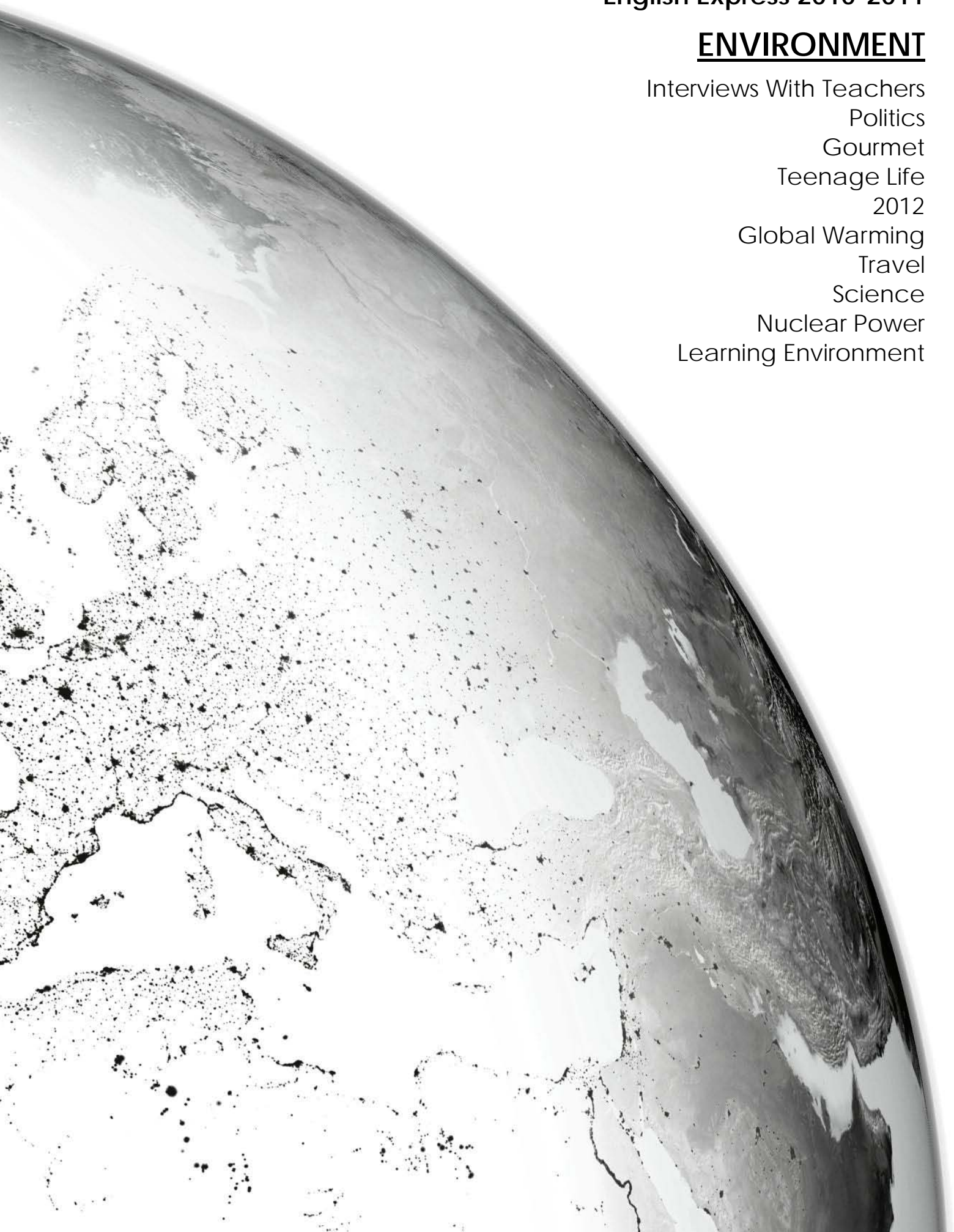
Global Warming

Travel

Science

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Learning Environment



Editorial

Everyone's talking about saving our Earth and this year's English Express will feature this topic and what it has to do with us. Some may think that we as individuals have no power at all when facing huge environmental problems like natural disasters and the degradation of our nature. But we all know that knowledge is power. By presenting some facts and viewpoints related to our environment, we do hope that our schoolmates will have a better sense of what is going on in our world and how we can contribute to our beautiful planet, the Earth.

Closely related is the Japan's Mega-quake. The economy's seriously damaged and time is needed for the people's scars to mend. How "violent" can our environment be? Can scientific methods predict natural disasters precisely? Will 2012, as some people have predicted, be the end of the world? You are about to find some interesting ideas about these issues.

As always, we offer you a great chance to get to know our teachers more by having interactive dialogues with them in the interview section. Read on- you will surely enjoy their lovely sharing!

Happy Reading!

Zoe Shing & Sherry Chui

Chief Editors

The English Society

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Interview with Mr. Lester Sze by Zoe Shing 6A

Us: What's the **first thing** that comes to your mind when you hear the word **"Environment"**?

Mr. Sze: Um...**Green, trees**, pollution?

Us: Okay. What about your **growing** and **learning** environment?

Mr. Sze: I was brought up in a **typical family**- not very different from most Hong Kong children's growing environment. As for learning environment, I studied in a **boys' school** which is not very renowned. I enjoyed my secondary school a lot because the **competition was not very**

intense and most of our schoolmates were very **FRIENDLY**.

Us: But you still managed to work hard and go to university?

Mr. Sze: I think it mostly depends on HARD WORK. I remember when I was in my Form 6 summer holiday, I had already started revising, going through past papers and studying all the materials I'd learned. During the study leave before the exam, I spent all my days in the study room. The only break I had was at mealtimes and watching a one-hour Korean TV drama.



Us: Wow that's hard work. So, were there any interesting events when you were in your secondary school?

Mr. Sze: Sure! I still remember once, during lunch time, some of my classmates went to the Wellcome supermarket and bought a large plate of sushi. Then, after lunch, our classmates circulated the whole plate of sushi and ate it IN CLASS. I need to declare that I didn't eat any. I found it really hilarious. Sometimes we played pranks on teachers and classmates.

Us: Any examples?

Mr. Sze: Once, our classmates helped our class to create a long break during the lesson. Our Chinese teacher was very nice to us. She promised to give us a break at 10:30. She had a habit of putting her watch in a storage box on the teacher's desk. Then, the boys sitting right in front of the teacher's desk took the watch and moved it 5 minutes ahead of the actual time, so we could have an earlier break. That's not the end of the story. During the break, the boys moved the time backward again so we had an even longer break. That was really one of the most hilarious moments in my secondary school life. When I think of it now, I still find it very funny! The teacher did discover the long break we had had in the end and she found this prank Very Creative too. She didn't scold us but she said she wouldn't give us break for the whole cycle and she had learnt a lesson that she should never put her watch on the teacher's desk.

Us: What do you like about this school?

Mr. Sze: Well, I like my colleagues. Most teachers here are very experienced and they are very nice to me and they are very hardworking. Also I feel like we're working as a team instead of working individually. We can get a lot of support from one another. I also like the school campus too.

Us: Like how?

Mr. Sze: The campus is huge and there are trees and lots of beautiful flowers all over the campus! I like walking around the campus as it's a kind of exercise.

Us: No wonder you're so fit. And what do you think about your students?



Mr. Sze: Oh! They're very **friendly** and **willing to learn**. They **respect teachers** as well.

Us: Oh right. But there must be some **comparatively** naughtier students right? So how do you manage to handle them?

Mr. Sze: Well actually I don't think they are really that "naughty"...I've met much worse students. They never listened to the teacher. They slept in the class. Some of them even suddenly needed to go to the police station during the lesson and there was always a **police car standing by** outside the school. You can imagine how naughty those students were, right? There aren't any students like that in this school.

Us: Wow, that's terrible. How did you survive in that kind of environment?

Mr. Sze: It was very **difficult**, but I think **showing them care and respecting them as individuals** helped. They usually **lacked parental care and guidance**, so they needed someone to **inform** them what they did wasn't quite right. Building up a good *rapport* with students is the **key**, I'd say. It makes our teaching life easier, and **more rewarding**.

Us: What environment do you want to create when you teach your students at school?

Mr. Sze: I hope students can learn **effectively** in an environment that is **not too daunting** for them. To get students interested in learning English, the environment is important. If it's **too threatening** for them, they won't be willing to try. I don't like classrooms that are too quiet- I feel **uncomfortable** if it's too quiet. I want some **noise**, as long as it is **constructive**. I believe that if the environment is comfortable enough, students will want to take more part in learning, I feel like I'm not only teaching, but also learning with them. Honestly, I don't want them to treat me like a teacher. I prefer they treat me as a person that **they can learn from and learn with**.



Us: It must be really great to be in your class...Do you have any final words for our F.6 students?

Mr. Sze: Well I guess all I need to say is just **"HANG IN THERE"**. The AL curriculum is really huge. You have to spend much much much time on it. As I said, I spent almost **24/7** in the study room. But then, hard work does **pay off**. My results turned out pretty good! I'd also like to remind S6 students the importance of doing past papers and analyzing the marking schemes. This is really useful.

Us: Well thanks for the tips. Lastly, we heard that your students celebrated your birthday with you on stage during the singing competition?

Mr. Sze: I was so touched that I cried! My 5A students **pretended** that they had **forgotten my birthday** for the whole day. I had a double lesson in the morning, an editorial reading period and an extra lesson with them after school. They did not say a word! I didn't expect they had prepared such a **BIG SURPRISE** for me in the singing contest. It was really very sweet of them and it was one of my most memorable birthdays I've had. They took pictures of me **crying** and even posted them on Facebook! Well luckily I removed the tags.



Us: That's such a memorable experience...Anyway, thanks for accepting our invitation to be interviewed. We really appreciate that!

Interview with Miss Serena Suen

by 6B Sherry Chui

How much do you know about Miss Suen? Miss Suen has been teaching English in FLSS for two years and it seems that not many people know a lot about Miss Suen. So, the English Society is greatly honored to invite Miss Suen to tell us about the environment she grew up in.

E: English Society S: Miss Suen

E: What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word "environment"?

S: Since environment is a very hot topic for DSE, the word environment makes me think of pollution; global warming, etc.

E: How was the learning environment when you were in secondary school?

S: Actually, the environment is very different to FLSS. In terms of the school campus, it is much bigger here with more open areas. It's really a comfortable place to learn in. On the other hand, my old school's learning environment was more active. We enjoyed learning very much and if we didn't understand something, we would pester the teachers until our questions were clarified. We also studied without teachers' reminders and formed study groups to help each other revise after school.

E: Can you tell us any interesting events when you were in your secondary school?

S: In Secondary school, interesting things happened because I have a boyish Chinese name. Since I was a school prefect in my school, I had to go to prefect camp every year. One year, the teachers had assigned me to a boy's dormitory room because of my name. The boys were very excited to see my name in the name list on the school board. In the end I had to sleep with the teachers because there was no room left in the girl's dormitory room.

E: What about interesting events during your teaching career in this school?

S: There are many interesting things that have happened since I've been in this school. One was when I once played table tennis with my students, it was great fun even though I lost. The second one was on last year's birthday. My students knew I like eating seaweed and gave me a lot of seaweed as a birthday present. I have never received seaweed as a present before and it was quite interesting. Another thing quite unusual was I had to chase students for homework whereas my teachers in my old school don't have to run to chase homework. We wouldn't dare to miss homework in my old school.



E: What do you like about this school? Why?

S: I like my English colleagues the most. They are always very supportive to me. Whenever I have a bad lesson, they comfort me. We also like sharing materials, it makes me feel like I'm in a team. It's like team teachers vs team students. I also like the students in this school, they are very sweet and considerate. Whenever I am angry or busy, they try to behave even though sometimes they don't succeed. The third thing I like is the school environment. When I was in my old school and university, the campuses were rather small. I like the trees and plants all around this school. It makes me feel like this school is more like a university with more open space and natural spots for study.

E: Which place in FLSS do you like most?

S: I like the new English corner the most. The new English corner is on the third floor of the main building. I like it because it's like a small library with lots of books and a spacious place where I can take a breath and chat with my colleagues.

E: Do you like the new staff room or the old one?

S: I like the new staff room more. The old staff room was rather stuffy and crowded and the new staff room gives me more space to concentrate on my work.

E: What kind of environment do you want to create for your students when you teach them at school?

S: I try my best to make English more interactive in class. Since the syllabus includes many things and the learning schedule is tight, there is hardly any time for students to interact in English. So, if there is enough time, I hope to create a more relaxing environment and let my students use English more in class. For example, if I can have my class on the lawn in front of our school and just have a picnic or conversation, I think this is a more comfortable way for students to learn English.

E: Do you have any words for our fellow schoolmates/readers?

S: We always tend to blame the environment whenever something happens but actually, we're the ones in control of it. We should not be affected and be controlled by the environment and then make up excuses for ourselves.

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Interview with teacher—Miss Tracy Law by Margery Chan 6B

The theme of English Express this year is 'Environment'. We all know that Miss Law went on a long backpacking trip last year, so she must have experienced life in different environments. Let's see how she enjoyed herself in foreign countries.

E=Member of English Society, T=Miss Tracy Law

E: How long have you been teaching?

T: This is my fourth teaching year here in FLSS. Before teaching here, I taught English at another school in Tin Shui Wai for two years.

E: We know that you had a long trip last year. Can you tell us why you made this decision?

T: Well, there're mainly two reasons. After teaching English for some years, my desire to refresh myself and explore different lifestyles grew stronger and stronger. Apart from enriching my own life, I was sure that the experiences could bring me inspiration and new ideas for teaching.

Another reason was very simple indeed. I just love travelling and a long backpacking trip means more time to enjoy the local life of different places. I knew I'd have fun just sitting in a local café and chatting leisurely with the locals.

E: Did you have any concerns when you left Hong Kong?

T: Surely I did have some concerns or even worries before leaving. The major one was my family. Although one year may not sound very long, I knew I would miss my family a lot! Just the thoughts of spending different precious

festivals in foreign places without my friends and family would sadden me quite a lot! Also, I felt sorry that I couldn't go through the HKCEE with my S4 class!

E: What was your favorite environment during your travels?



T: Let me think about it. Well, I'd say I like Poland the most as it's of great historical interest to me. One can find lots of traces related to the Second World War there. And as it was badly destroyed during the war, I know that people strived hard to rebuild their country and I really appreciate people's efforts and spirit. I also like the music of the well-loved national composer Chopin. To enjoy the beautiful music composed by him, people just need to find a bench on the street, stop, take a seat and press a button. And the place will be filled with his elegant music!

To get to "know" Poland more, I went there twice. The first time was in the severe winter time, and it was all white because of the heavy snow. I travelled to Poland again in spring, and it was much greener!

E: How do Western people contribute to the environment?

T: Well, one city that impressed me a lot was Amsterdam, the capital city of the Netherlands. People cycle a lot there and one can see bikes everywhere. The roads and streets are well-designed so as to make cycling easy. Life is more enjoyable when people do not need to rely on public transport and can become more flexible. Actually, people there are very creative and you can see many interesting bikes on the streets! They don't only make the city green, but also vibrant and colourful!



E: Did you ever get lost during your trip, and what did you do?

T: Well, to be frank, I had fun getting lost during my trip! As I was not in a rush, I had time to get lost and ask the local people for help. Language was not a barrier as I could also use my body language and common sense to communicate. That could be interesting sometimes!

E: What is the most treasurable experience during your trip?

T: I'd say it's the very different lifestyles and the taste of various local ways of life. I could try "slow living", in which I just slowed down and observed what's going on around me. Also, I just had a backpack with me, so it was the very first time I had to be very minimal. I didn't bring or buy a lot so as to keep my backpack light and bearable. And in this process you have to be creative as the lack of resources forces you to deal with problems in different ways. I think I learnt a lot through this process.

E: Do you have any words for our fellow schoolmates or readers?

T: In Hong Kong, sometimes the pace is too fast. I always think it is a good idea just to slow down a bit when you feel really confused and exhausted. Think deeply of what we are doing, what we can do and what life we want to lead in the future. I understand students nowadays have a lot of work to do and a lot of tasks to accomplish, but I do hope that they can still learn to enjoy their learning and learn how to work hard and play hard in their life.

New Zealand is an island country in the south-western Pacific Ocean. To the south of New Zealand is Antarctica. New Zealand's beautiful scenery is really worth visiting, and there are a lot of other attractions too.

There are three world heritage sites in New Zealand. They have been internationally recognized as irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.

Tongariro National Park is one of the world heritage sites. It is a place of extremes and surprises, a place to explore and remember. There are landscapes from herb fields to forests, from tranquil lakes to desert-like plateaus and active volcanoes. There are also many easy, short walks; for example, the Rime Track nature walk at Oakum and the Alpine Walk at Whakapapa.



The Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony is worth visiting too. The penguins in the centre are more natural than those we see in theme parks, since New Zealand is the origin of penguins. They are really blue, with bright white bellies. Because of their very small size, the blue penguins are called Fairy Penguins. During their first few weeks of life, their parents look after them carefully. Then they automatically know how to swim and fish, so they are able to take care of themselves after they leave their nests.

During the daytime, visitors enter the breeding colony and visit the natural habitat of the penguins. There is a 20-minute documentary, followed by an extended guided tour of the breeding colony.

In the evening, the penguins return home and make their way onto the beach. This happens at different times during the year. It is a spectacular experience to see this.



Not exciting enough? You may try the extreme sports of New Zealand!

Take a jet boat to the base of New Zealand's MOST visited natural attraction - the spectacular Huka Falls! A half an hour of thrills, fun and excitement takes you along a beautiful river environment, lined with native bush, sheer rock cliff face and natural hot springs. It is a must-do visitor experience. You will love it!



Also, Zorbing in New Zealand is great too. What is Zorbing? It is a unique Kiwi invention that is extraordinarily hilarious. The sport can be enjoyed by people of all ages who don't mind being strapped inside an enormous clear plastic, air-cushioned ball. As the ball rolls down a long grass-covered slope, you spin around in a virtual anti-gravity form of weightlessness like an intoxicated space traveller. As you tumble head over heels, the centrifugal force keeps you pressing hard against the plastic wall.



I hope that one day , I can travel in New Zealand too 😊.

Architecture in Italy

by Vincent Chan, 6B

Needless to say , Italy is a country full of elegant views and civilized atmosphere . Few people will deny that Italy is a place worth visiting , considering that there are 44 UNESCO World Heritage Sites within the land of Italy . Here , several major sites in Italy will be introduced .

Piazza San Marco

It is the principal public square of Venice, Italy , where it is generally known just as " the Piazza ". All other urban spaces in the city (except the Piazzetta and the Piazzale Roma) are called "campi" (fields). The Piazzetta (the 'little Piazza') is an extension of the Piazza towards the lagoon in its south east corner . The two spaces together form the social, religious and political centre of Venice and are commonly both considered together. This article is related to both of them.



Florence Cathedral

The Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore is the cathedral church (Duomo) of Florence, Italy. Its construction was started in 1296 in the Gothic style with the design of Arnolfo di Cambio and was completed structurally in 1436 with the dome engineered by Filippo Brunelleschi. The exterior of the basilica is faced with polychrome marble panels in various shades of green and pink bordered by white and has an elaborate 19th century Gothic Revival facade by Emilio De Fabris.



The cathedral complex, located in Piazza del Duomo, includes the Baptistry and Giotto's Campanile. The three buildings are part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site covering the historic centre of Florence and are a major attraction to tourists visiting the region of Tuscany. The Basilica is one of Italy's largest churches, and until the modern era, the dome was the largest in the world. It remains the largest brick dome ever constructed.

The cathedral is the mother church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Florence, whose archbishop is currently Giuseppe Betori.

Saint Peter's Square

It is located directly in front of St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, the papal enclave within Rome.



Are we the same as the teenagers in other countries?

By Zoe Shing, 6A

Have you ever wondered what teenagers in other countries are doing in different countries? Do you think different lifestyles affect how teenagers grow up? Here, let me show you some of the lifestyles and interests of teenagers in America, Australia and compare some of them with Hong Kong's ones.



★Family activities:

In Hong Kong, it is not surprising to see teenagers getting up early and going to Chinese restaurant to **'Yum cha' with their families** on weekend mornings.

In America and Australia, "Yum cha" is not a common activity among local people, so what do they do with their

family? The answer is **outdoor activities**.



In America, families like to go on a **vacation** to nearby campsite, mostly 2-3 days during school term-breaks. They start **campfires** and have a little **heart-to-heart-talk**. Sounds pretty awesome, right?



In Australia, since there are thousands of beaches, families like to **hang out by the sea**. Watching the **clear blue skies** with the sound of sea water **lapping the shore**, **splashing water** over your siblings or even parents. It must be very enjoyable!

Although we have different family activities, it still shows that spending time with families and communicating with them are very important to our growth. A good family relationship definitely provides a good environment for us to grow up in.



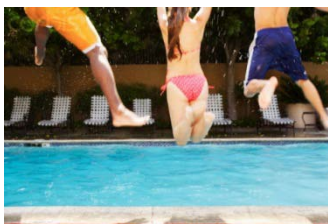
★School life

In Hong Kong, we have to deal with very hard **public examinations**, such as A-levels and DSE exams. **Fighting for university** is our main purpose of studying. Also, we have **after-school activities**, but most of them are not compulsory. As we all know, every year we have **summer holiday** during July and August.

In America, it is much more than academic education. More than **80%** of students are engaged in extracurricular activities, such as students' newspaper and different sport teams. They only have **18-week** semesters. Also, there're a few **proms** in a year, I bet you have heard of the **homecoming dance** or **spring prom**?



As for Australian teenagers, the most special aspect of school life is that **swimming classes** are compulsory for nearly all students. They have **4 terms** in a year, mostly two months per term. They also have many **school dances** that provide chances for them to **socialize** with their schoolmates.

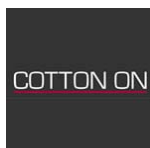


Do you like your school life? Luckily, the **problem of bullying** in Hong Kong and Australia is not very serious. On the contrary, it is very serious in America, especially in **high schools**. We can always hear news about teenagers shooting their teachers and schoolmates in America, and the main cause is always because they are badly bullied. Not only shouldn't we bully others, but also we have to **be nice** to everyone even though sometimes **bad attitudes** annoy us. School provides a platform for us to communicate, and it is definitely part of growing up.



★Clothing

Hong Kong, such as **H&M** from America , **Cotton on** are less well-known, and mostly they are **cheap in leggings and high heels**, and they like to shop in



Clothing shows one's **personality**, but mostly teenagers follow a trend and try to move to the styles that they like. In Hong Kong, many teenagers like **Korean and Japanese** styles. There are many **famous foreign** brands available in **and Roxy** from Australia. However, local brands **price**. Hong Kong girls mostly like to wear places like **MongKok and Sha Tin** malls.

In America and Australia, most of the clothing is from **retails**. Teenagers like **local brands**, such as American Eagle

ROXY

and the local Australian brands

I have mentioned above. Due to the **hot weather**, girls like to wear **slim tops** and **vests**. **Mini shorts** are also popular. Others regard these styles as liberal fashion. Moreover, most girls have a few **evening dresses** for their proms, especially for the graduation ball, which is always one of the biggest events in their life. Boys like to wear casual stuff, like shorts and vests as well. **Sunglasses** are a must for them! It is common to see teenagers dress in **black**, like a rock star or even Emos! They mostly go to the only big mall in the nearby areas, where all the shops are located.

Hong Kong people mostly have traditional thoughts, regarding vests and mini shorts as “**too liberal**” and “**something too sexy for teenagers to wear**”. In western countries, these things are just simple. Here, we can see the **ideological and cultural differences**. Therefore, western clothing styles are always regarded as inappropriate for Hong Kong people, especially parents , to be accepted.

6B

The learning environment in Hong Kong seems to be confined to a few choices of subjects in the public exams, which makes learning become dull and uninteresting. If students cannot attain good result in these subjects, they will be treated as 'losers'. They are doomed to be deprived of the chances of exploring their real talents and potential under today's education system.

Besides, the idea that studying in science class is a priority remains deep-rooted in many people's mind because they think that it guarantees you a brilliant career prospect. If you ask your parents what you should study, science or visual arts, they may probably give you the answer "can you get a job by studying visual arts? Studying science is better!".

Also, the prevalence of tutorial schools during these years only has shown that students just want to learn how to pass the exams. They manage to cram the model answers provided by the tutors, although they may not even understand them.

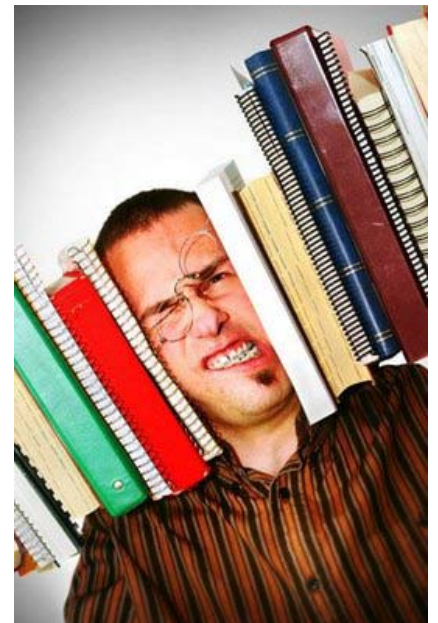
As a result, we are being derided as 'book worms' and gradually lose interest in seeking knowledge.

Obviously,

we **shouldn't** let the education system as well as the learning environment dominate our lives!

Then

what should we do ?

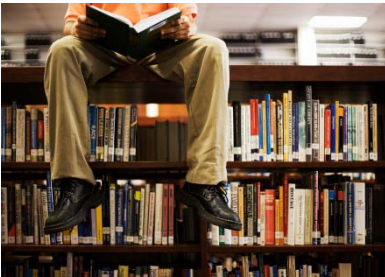


1.) *Stay Curious*



Knowledge is an endless ocean. We shouldn't use being busy as an excuse to be indifferent to current affairs. We should stay curious about the things happening around us and develop a habit of reading newspapers. Read more and Think more.

2.) *Be a Proactive Learner*



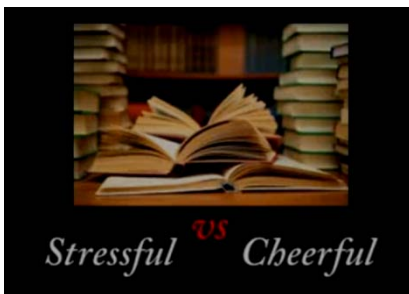
Relying on either the tutors or school teachers is definitely not the way to learn! So, why don't we try to prepare before lessons? For example, we could make good use of learning materials and resources like reference books and the Internet to acquire knowledge by ourselves. It's the way to make learning effective!

3.) *Follow Your Interests*

Choosing what to study is certainly your personal choice. Parents may give you a lot of advice when handling it. However, the most sensible advice is to simply **follow your heart ♥** and don't let anyone discourage you from achieving what you have chosen to accomplish because you won't be successful in a subject that you are not interested in.



4.) *Change Your Attitude*



A positive attitude changes everything! Always bear in mind that 'Learning is for **pleasure**, but not for **pressure**'. Exams and assignments can be something scary for you. However, if you look at the positive sides and realize that you can overcome them with a positive attitude and diligence, they will become easy for you to handle.

Following without thinking? By Baron Cheng, 6B

It is said that we, Hong Kong teenagers, are politically apathetic, that we do not concern ourselves with current affairs. Yet, this kind of impression has changed since the political reform in 2010. Lots of students walked out of the door of the classroom and showed that they were not satisfied with the content of the political reform. No matter what changes have been brought by the political reform, it was the fact that more and more youngsters have expressed their opinions through various ways.

There is freedom of speech and assembly in Hong Kong. According to the Basic Law, we are allowed to choose different ways to express our ideas. Recently, it has been said that we abuse this right because of much irrational behaviour of protestors, including grabbing microphones on MTR Race Walking Day, causing an obstruction on Connaught Road, assaulting some principal officials, etc. Did the protestors learn from the Legislative councillors? Probably yes, because the mass media would be more interested in reporting news which would attract public's attention. Obviously, it is an inappropriate way to present what we are thinking about and sometimes it leads to exactly opposite effects e. g. leaving a negative image and shifting from the centre of the issues.



In contrast, there was a four-day campaign across five Hong Kong districts from Sheung Shui to Legislative Council in Central to protest against the approval of HK\$66.9 billion funding for the Hong Kong section of the Express Rail Link project. There were not any radical actions in the campaign. Participants only concentrated on each step they walked and each time their knees touched the ground. I was shocked when I watched the video of this campaign on the Internet, rather than being upset by the loud noise. This proved that radical action is not the best way to raise the public's awareness.



Indeed, although many protestors said that they actually were not going to hurt anyone, accidents occurred many times and all of us do not want to see this sight. It is good to have an enthusiastic mind as it shows that the teenagers really care about and love Hong Kong. But at the same time we should control our emotions rather than being controlled by them.

The Violent Side of “Environment”

- Can scientific methods predict natural disasters precisely?

By Joshua Tsang, 6B

How much do you know about the environment? You may think that you know a great deal about it as you have studied a lot about it. However, the environment is not as simple as you think.

The Earth has been moving and shaking unpredictably for billions of years. However, in the last few hundred years, the development of modern science has successfully explained the causes of many natural disasters because science is, in fact, the process that removes randomness from natural occurrence. But can science predict those natural disasters too? It is an interesting topic to discuss as recently, more and more serious disasters have happened worldwide and some believe that those disasters could not be predicted. In the following, we will discuss whether predictions are possible by using the earthquake and the tsunami as examples.

Earthquake

An earthquake is the result of a sudden release of energy in the Earth's crust that creates seismic waves. It is one of the most common disasters happening on our Earth. Although scientists can predict earthquakes by using different types of methods like detecting electromagnetic field or observing the weather conditions, those methods are actually not precise enough. The reasons for imprecise predictions of earthquake are simple. For one thing, it lacks supportive information. For another, it lacks reasonable and related scientific theories. Those reasons may be due to the complex internal activities of the Earth and the lack of efficient monitoring system and predicting model. That's why precise earthquake prediction is always a controversial topic in the scientific world.



← Figure 1: After a magnitude 8 earthquake in Wenchuan prefecture, most of the infrastructure was totally damaged.

Tsunami

A tsunami is a series of water waves caused by the displacement of plates which gives rise to a large volume of water, usually happening in an ocean. It can destroy a large area in a very short time and after the event, nothing is left but debris. So, many people are trying to predict tsunamis and thus hoping to prevent them from destroying our land again. Unfortunately, a tsunami cannot be precisely predicted even if the magnitude and location of an earthquake is known. However, there are some warning signs of a coming tsunami, and automated systems can provide warnings immediately after an earthquake in time to save lives. One of the most successful systems uses bottom pressure sensors that are attached to buoys. The sensors constantly monitor the pressure of the overlying water column.



Figure 2: Japanese cars scheduled for export were damaged in tsunami , showing the large scale destruction tsunami can cause.



←Figure 3: One of the deep water buoys used in the tsunami warning system

As a result, it is too early to define whether scientific methods can predict when environmental disasters will happen. But, it will come soon as science improves. However, no matter how far science develops, we still cannot control nature and we **MUST** respect it.

Nuclear Power

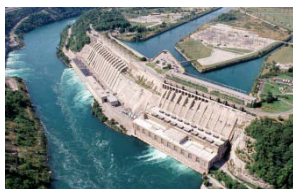
by Tempo Wong, 6B

Do you know **how much fossil fuel is left** in our Earth? **How long can we still consume it?**

According to BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2010, the recoverable amount of **oil** is 13,331 million barrels which can only be exploited for **45.7 years**. The **natural gas** and **coal** can be exploited for **62.8 years** and **119 years** respectively. Therefore, some sustainable alternative energy resources are being developed, such as:



Solar energy



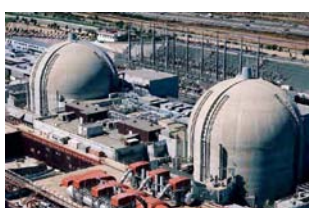
Hydroelectric power



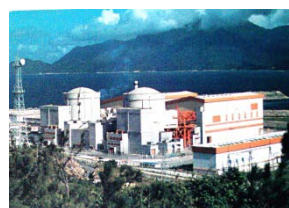
tidal energy



Geothermal energy

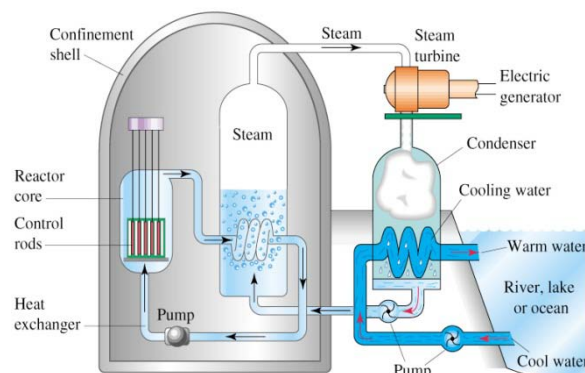


Nuclear energy



The **nuclear accident** at **Fukushima** reminded people of the perils of nuclear power. Nuclear power **provides** about **6% of the world's energy** and **13–14% of the world's electricity**. Should we inhibit the development of nuclear energy because of its high-risk? It is clear that when things go wrong, they can go very wrong indeed. One thing we should know is **there is no perfect fuel in the world** as each fuel has its pros and cons.

Nuclear power is produced by controlled nuclear **chain reaction**. Commercial plants currently use nuclear fission reactions to heat water in order to produce steam, which is then used to drive the turbine and thus generate electricity.



<u>Pros</u>	<u>Cons</u>
Rich abundance of Uranium .	Radioactive waste problems
Less pollution than other types of fossil fuels.	Possibly higher cost if maintaining and upgrading the safety standards of the reactor is needed.
Lower cost than coal or oil in operation.	Possible growth of nuclear weapons .
Huge energy for only a small amount of fuel .	High risks on safety to citizens if accident happens
Occupying not much storage space	Possible thermal pollution .

Around the world today, there are around **440 nuclear power plants in operation**.

Is it only nuclear power that brings us hazard? How about fossil fuel?

Over 10000 people died of cancer as a result of the **worst nuclear accident at**

Chernobyl. However, in the **US alone** pollution from coal plants was expected to have caused **nearly 13200 deaths in 2010**.

Today, **thousand of people** are **killed in coal mining** and **tens of hundreds of people** are **hurt** because of **pollution from the coal**. So it is still **relatively safe** to use **nuclear energy**.

Global Warming

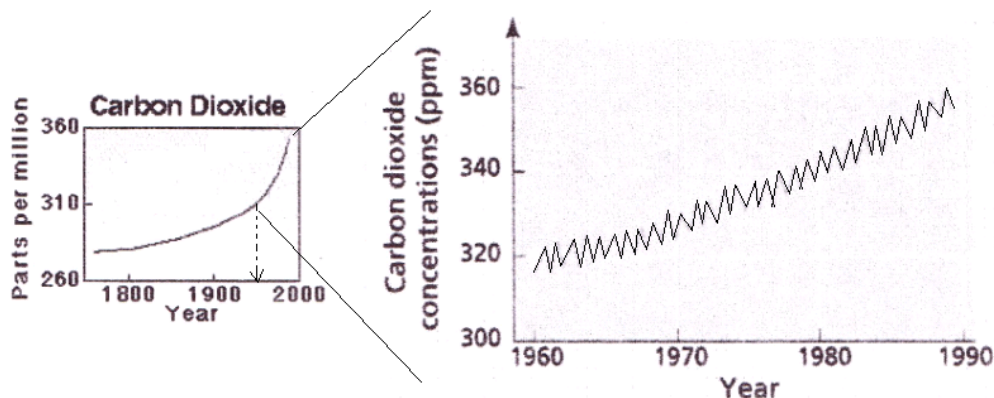
by Margery Chan, 6B

Global Warming has been a hot issue for decades and some people may even view it as a cliché. Well, we might all have a basic knowledge of global warming, but how can we put what we've learnt from books to practical use? In this article, I am not going to repeat again and again the boring things that you certainly know. Instead, I will present something easily ignored by us.

What is global warming?

To make a long story short, Global Warming is the increase in average global temperature. It is also a signal telling us to stop hurting the earth, and it is high time to save our beautiful planet.

When did global warming start?



From the graphs above, we can see that the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide, one of the major greenhouse gases, has had a startling rise since 1960.

Why did global warming occur?

In 1960, the industrial revolution accelerated human activities like deforestation, burning of fossil fuels and mass agricultural production. The rising population, increase in the demand of land and improving life quality also triggered off global warming.

Who should be responsible for global warming?

Some people may ask: should human bear all the responsibilities? Or is it a natural cycle that the average temperature of the Earth rises and falls regularly?

A research found that in the past 50 years, the rate of observable climate change is double that of the previous 100 years. The coincidence of the acceleration of human activities and increasing global temperature seems to prove that there is a relationship between human activities and global warming.

Where does global warming affect the most?

It is the Arctic. I still remember a series of popular pictures showing a mother polar bear carrying her child, swimming far for food and finally taking a rest on a small piece of melting ice. She was too weak to take care of her child, and the young polar bear finally died of starvation. These photos remind me how our selfish acts pose threats to the wild animals and natural environment.

How is global warming affecting our daily life?

Global warming may favour people living in the frozen and snow-covered land as the increase in temperature allows them to start agriculture. They can then become self-sufficient.

Some people may think that global warming is not an issue as it does not affect them at all, they can simply turn on the air-conditioner to enjoy a 'cool summer' and they do not have to bear the chilly winter.

Yet, for me, it is a real disaster. I love taking photos, especially of beautiful scenery such as the blue sky. These are the pictures I took before 2007, the sky was really blue and enchanting.



After 2007, I seldom took pictures of the blue sky. It is not because I do not love it anymore, but I can rarely see the wonderful sky blue above me. These are the pictures I took after 2007. Global warming, along with other pollution hazards, is gradually taking the beauty of nature away from us.



Which road should we choose in the future?

Our world was once very beautiful. Yet, we have been destroying it and putting scars on it. Many species of wildlife are extinct or endangered, and the ecosystem is seriously disturbed. While we still have the ability to save the Earth, the innocent animals and ourselves, why don't we take action immediately and shoulder our responsibilities bravely?

Actions speak louder than words. Protecting our environment shouldn't be words or theories in our textbooks only. Let's apply what we've learnt to our daily life and REALLY save our environment!

2012 , The End of The World ?

by Vincent Chan, 6B

"2012" has become a really hot issue in recent years . Many are worried about whether doomsday will come . Yet , not many people have treated this topic with sense . Some just cry out for help desperately , and some just spread the rumors of doom without considering the factuality of this super massive event . In order to deal with this issue more rationally , here is some basic information about the 2012 phenomenon for you .



Q : What is the origin of this prediction of doomsday ?

A : The 2012 phenomenon comprises a wide range of eschatological beliefs that catastrophic events will occur on December 21 , 2012 . This date is regarded as the end-date of a 5,125-year-long cycle in the Mesoamerican Long Count calendar . Though the Long Count was most likely invented by the Olmec, it has become closely associated with the Maya civilization , whose classic period lasted from 250 to 900 AD .



Q : If doomsday really comes , how will the world end ?

A : There are several predictions. The first one is geomagnetic reversal, possibly triggered by a massive solar flare, that would release an energy equal to 100 billion atomic bombs . Another guess is that a planet called "Planet X" will collide with the Earth in 2012 . The other major prediction is the occurrence of galactic alignment . The supporters of this theory claim that it will somehow create a combined gravitational effect between the Sun and the supermassive black hole at the center of our galaxy , and thus consuming the Earth . There are many other predictions. Still , no one can judge with clear evidence what will really happen that day .



Q : Do we need to worry about doomsday ?

A : Actually , the latest researchers revealed that the doom's prediction is not as true as we think . " There is nothing in the Maya or Aztec or ancient Mesoamerican prophecy to suggest that they prophesied a sudden or major change of any sort in 2012 , " said Mayanist scholar Mark Van Stone. " The notion of a 'Great Cycle' coming to an end is completely a modern invention . " And some other researchers have suggested that the Mayas did not regard 2012 as the end of the world , but a new beginning of a cycle . Despite all that, if the doom really happens , we will be as good as dead , and there is nothing left for us to worry about then , right ?

Food for thoughts

by Sherry Chui, 6B

Have you ever wondered where the chicken bones you've just finished or the hamburger you are too full to eat went? Well, here are some questions to see how much you know about food wastage:

1) How are food leftovers treated after disposal?

- A) Landfill B) Incinerator C) Recycling Facilities

2) How much food waste does a person in Hong Kong generate on average each day?

- A) 100g B) 250g C) 300g D) 500g

3) How much does food waste make up of our total wastes?

- A) 10% B) 20% C) 30% D) 40%

4) Where does the majority of food waste come from?

- A) Restaurants B) Households C) Companies

Answers: 1) A 2) D 3) C 4) B

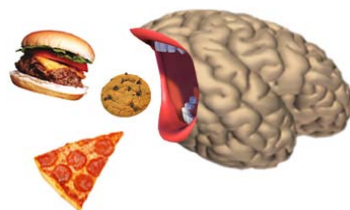
How did you do??

0-1 correct: You don't know anything about food waste! You should really continue reading to know more what this has to do with you!

2-3 correct: You're doing fine! You know the basic knowledge, but continue reading to know more!

All correct: Excellent! Seems like you're an expert on this! Continue reading and see if I wrote anything wrong!

Food waste is becoming a huge problem in Hong Kong. Every year, thousands of tonnes of leftover food is thrown away and go straight to the landfill. If this continues, the landfills will be full by 2012! Since 37% of solid wastes are leftover food, why don't we start by recycling these food wastes and help save the environment?



In ancient Chinese culture, leftover food on tables represents surplus and wealth. Many people like to order more than they can eat as a sign of fortune. This Chinese culture causes Hong Kong people to throw away more food than anywhere else. Another reason is that food is so cheap in Hong Kong

that people don't realize that food is actually very precious in other countries! According to statistics, the leftover food we generate each month can feed ten thousand children for a year in African countries!

So, what can we do?



There are several methods. First is **land filling**. This is currently the main way to treat food wastes, but again, the capacity of landfills is very limited and the garbage trucks transporting these wastes also waste energy and contribute to air pollution by emitting carbon dioxide and other harmful pollutants. Another effect is that food decomposes quickly underground, releasing water and harmful substances generated by bacteria, polluting underground water sources and affecting the local environment.

The second way is by **incineration**. This method is now being considered by the government as it plans to build an incinerator in Shek Kwu Chau. Since food wastes contain 70% of water in composition, the low efficiency of incineration makes it unfavorable for investors to invest in this project as this method wastes energy and gives out toxic air pollutants such as sulfur dioxide.



The third way, **recycling**, is by far the best way to treat food wastes. Through recycling, food is decomposed and further treated to produce organic fertilizers. This fertilizers can then be used to feed pigs, grow plants and agricultural products...etc. The costs for setting up recycling facilities and decomposition are lower than incineration and the process is more energy-saving. Also, the organic fertilizer produced can be sold to farmers to help cover costs and farmers can save money on these products as they are sold at only one-third of the price of man-manufactured fertilizers.



Currently, there are many organizations that are trying to help with the food wastage problem. Festival Walk is a very good example. Swire Properties has installed a "Gomixer" food processor. This mixer can decompose food wastes completely into carbon dioxide and water in just ten days. The resulting water product is then clean enough to be discharged through the sewage system. This method is very clean and environmentally friendly, but it can only be applied to organizations and restaurants and the costs are relatively high.

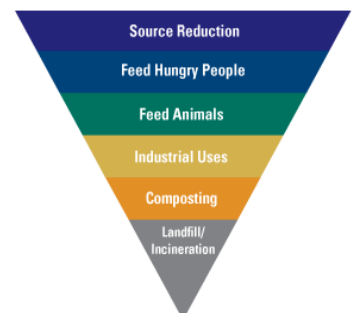
SO, WHAT CAN THE SOCIETY DO TO LOWER THE AMOUNT OF FOOD WASTAGE?

What the government can do:

- Set up organic waste treatment plants and collect food wastes from families and restaurants.
- Set up food processors in large housing estates and collect decomposed food wastes and further process the products.
- Promote campaigns to raise food waste awareness in communities and schools
- Set up laws to restrict the amount of food waste produced by consumers.

Here's what WE can do:

- Order less food. Don't order more than you can eat.
- Take away any leftovers and put them in the fridge for the next meal.
- Go to restaurants labelled "less rice" and save money in dining
- Bring your leftovers to your local organic waste treatment facilities.



So, let's all work together and live a food-waste-free life!