

# Learning English through current affairs & non-fiction texts







KNOWING THE WORLD AROUND US

# WHIZ

# Magazine

Developing 21st Century English Learners

**Boost General Knowledge**

**Widen Perspectives**

**Engage in Critical Thinking**

**Enhance Language Skills**

**Suggested Levels: Primary 3 & Primary 4**

## Global & Environmental Issues

## The Singapore Story

## Cultures, Festivals & Appreciation of Diversity

## Inspiring Personalities & Leaders

## World of Sports

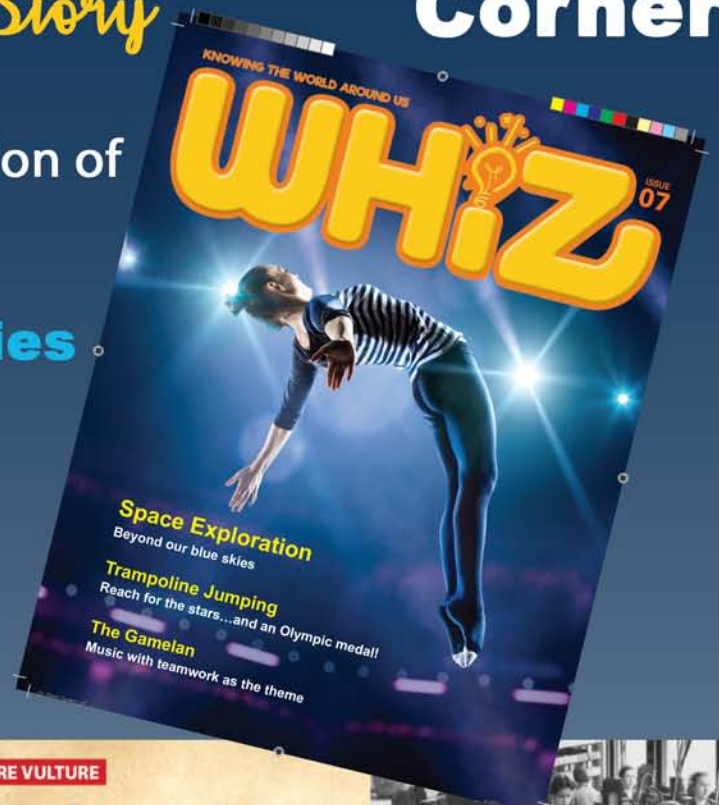
## Core Values, Social & Emotional Competencies

## "Story filled"

## Book Reviews

## Science, History & Nature

## Activity Corner



### CULTURE CULTURE

#### Does Culture Matter?

**WHAT IS CULTURE?**  
To put it very simply, culture is our way of life. We display our culture through our values, beliefs, customs, religious practices, languages, food, clothes, and how we interact with each other.

Every social group has its culture and how the group behaves helps us to identify it. For instance, we may identify a group as Japanese because we observe its members bowing respectfully to each other, and we know that bowing is part of Japanese culture. Like bowing, cultural behaviour is often established at the formation of a social group. Countries with long histories may have patterns of behavior deeply ingrained.

Watch this video about different cultures around the world!

#### NEGATIVE CULTURE

Unfortunately, not all cultural practices are accepted by everyone. In some cultures, there are arranged marriages of young children, because the girl's parents ~~view~~ an unwed adult daughter as a disgrace and a burden to their family. Societies with a minimum age for marriage, however, will certainly consider such infant marriages illegal.

As you can see, a cultural practice that is accepted by one social group can be illegal or unacceptable in another. Cultural patterns are not the same for all social groups.

#### CULTURE CHANGE

For centuries, women in both Eastern and Western cultures did not have the same rights, education and status as men. Women were regarded as physically and mentally inferior. By the start of the 20th

Century, women began to speak out against the cultural patterns that had been long-held against them. In America, they eventually won the right for women to vote in 1920.

Another change occurred during World War II when women started working in factories, producing weapons and other war equipment. They took the place of the men who had gone off to war. Before that, few women worked outside of the home.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Women were finally allowed to participate in the 1900 Paris Olympic Games. Then, 22 women participated in 5 sports while the other 997 athletes were men! In the 2012 London Olympics, 44% of competitors were female.



# English Activity Corner

**GRAMMAR GUARDS**

## Parts of Speech – Nouns and Pronouns

**What is a Noun?**  
A noun is a word that identifies a person, a place, a thing (living or non-living), an event or an idea.

These are examples of nouns:

Teacher	Playground	Basketball	Pencil	Wedding	Joy
Sister	Singapore	Dog	Butterfly	Birthday	Love

**What is a Pronoun?**  
A pronoun is a word that replaces a noun.

These are examples of pronouns:

Me	Her	Herself	I
He	They	She	It
Ours	Us	You	We

**Activity 1 Find and Circle**  
Read the sentences below carefully. Circle the nouns in red and the pronouns in blue.

- Henry got wet in the rain on his way back from school.
- I went on the rollercoaster at the carnival by myself without any fear.
- "This party is great!" Rosie exclaimed to her friend.
- The baby grabbed my hands and tried to pull himself up.
- Fadi couldn't remember where he had kept his guitar.

**Activity 2 Let's Play Name-Place-Animal-Thing!**  
Complete the table using nouns. The first one has been done for you.

Letter	Name	Place	Animal	Thing
A	Amie	Ale	Alligator	Aeroplane
B				
C				
D				
E				
F				
G				
H				
I				
J				
K				
L				
M				
N				
O				
P				
Q				
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U				
V				
W				
X				
Y				
Z				

## "Grammar Guards"

Features different components of grammar rules, structures and phrases with short exercises for students' practice

**(NOT) JUST A MATTER OF SPEECH**

## Idioms (Animals)

It's raining cats and dogs, the assignment was a piece of cake, it cost me an arm and a leg. Have you ever heard such expressions being used?

They are idioms – phrases or sayings that have taken on special meanings over time. Meanings that are often very different from the actual words that they contain. For example when we say it is raining cats and dogs, we don't really mean dogs and cats are falling from the sky like rain but we mean that it is raining very heavily.

It is sometimes hard to guess what the meanings of idioms are, but this is what makes them challenging and fascinating. They also add colour and interest to your writing.

In this issue we look at idioms that involve animals.

Idiom	Meaning	Example
Hold your horses	Wait, not so fast. Be patient. Don't rush.	Hold your horses! We can't rush into this.
Don't let the cat out of the bag	Don't tell a secret.	Don't let the cat out of the bag! This is a surprise!
Let sleeping dogs lie	Don't bring up something that could cause trouble.	Let sleeping dogs lie. We don't want to start a fight.
It's raining cats and dogs	It is raining very heavily.	It's raining cats and dogs today!
A piece of cake	Very easy.	The assignment was a piece of cake.
Cost me an arm and a leg	Very expensive.	The assignment cost me an arm and a leg.

**Now try filling in the animals involved in the following idioms:**

Idiom	Animal
1) The biggest part of the problem is to reveal a secret.	_____
2) To stop someone from doing something.	_____
3) To be an uncomfortable situation.	_____
4) To be a problem too big to ignore but everyone avoids talking about it as it will cause trouble.	_____
5) To be very easy.	_____
6) To be very expensive.	_____

**Proverbs**  
A proverb is a short saying that states something commonly experienced or a wise thought.

Here are some common proverbs and their meanings.

Proverbs	Meaning
A picture is worth a thousand words.	A picture can tell a story better than words can.
Don't let the cat out of the bag.	It is better to keep something secret than to reveal it at all.
The grass is always greener on the other side.	People always want what they do not have.
Let sleeping dogs lie.	What we do is more important than what we say.
It's raining cats and dogs.	Don't judge someone or something only by appearances.

**Complete each proverb below.**

- Don't put all your \_\_\_\_\_ in one basket. Try to spread the risk.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the best policy. Do not overdo it or get what you want.
- If you play with \_\_\_\_\_ you will get burned. Stay safe!
- No man is an \_\_\_\_\_ his next friends for a variety of reasons.
- Laughter is the best \_\_\_\_\_ so don't be sad and grumpy when you are ill.

## "(Not) Just a Matter of Speech"

Features Idioms and Proverbs in each issue to enhance students' language and writing skills

**POETRY IN MOTION**

## Simile

A simile compares two different things. It usually begins with "as" or "like". Similes are often used in poetry.

**Activity 1 Find the Similes**  
Underline the similes in the poem below.

White as snow  
With a bell like a cloud  
My puppy lay  
In the sun, but loud

Fluffy like a marshmallow  
Fast as a shark  
Cute as a button  
But what a scary bark!

**Activity 2 Complete the simile.**  
Fill in the blanks with suitable words.

As cold as \_\_\_\_\_

Sour like a \_\_\_\_\_

Round like a \_\_\_\_\_

As busy as a \_\_\_\_\_

**The Lost Book**

I looked all over the room, checked under my curtain and desk  
But it was nowhere to be found, – my library

I crept under the couch, the table and even the  
The book wasn't there, I found a dead cockroach instead!

Where could it have disappeared? I simply had no clue.  
I needed to return it that day, it was just about.

The school bus was waiting for me, honking near the gate  
I picked up my school bag, and turned towards the door  
Out came everything tumbling, spilling onto the \_\_\_\_\_

Oh surprise to come my bag, I was filled with distress!  
The book I spotted something in the middle of it all!

I breathed a sigh of relief, now everything was all right,  
I guess I must have put the book in my bag, ... I said

## "Poetry in Motion"

Features various language devices to enhance students' language and writing skills





# Magazine

Suggested Levels: Primary 4 - Primary 6

- Boost General Knowledge
- Widen Perspectives
- Engage in Critical Thinking
- Enhance Language Skills

Integrate various areas of language

**SPEAKING**

**WRITING**

**READING**

**VIEWING**

## Practice Sections

Comprise different text types on

**BROAD EDUCATIONAL THEMES**

LEARNING FEATURES includes

**QR Codes**

**Word Bank**

**Discussion Questions**



**MOTHER NATURE**

One example of ecotourism is in Madagascar, an island off the southeast coast of Africa known for its rich biodiversity. Conservation International says that 90% of Madagascar's animals and 90% of its plants can only be found on this island. Madagascar's animals are just one of the many species that visitors come to see. As such, the country places a high priority on environmental conservation. Ecotourism is allowed in small numbers because education and funds help preserve the island's precious ecosystems. In addition, revenue generated from ecotourism **aids** in reducing the country's poverty.

**Efforts by other countries**

Find out how one resort in Thailand is trying to champion sustainable tourism.

**Find out about the ecotourism industry in Brazil.**

Critics of ecotourism point out that increased tourism to sensitive natural areas can threaten the **stability** of ecosystems and cause significant environmental damage. Likewise, they argue that local communities and **indigenous** cultures can be harmed in numerous ways by an **influx** of foreign visitors and wealth.

However, **proponents** of ecotourism argue that if managed properly, the environment can be protected despite visitor activity. Moreover, the revenue generated from ecotourism can be channelled into protecting national parks and other natural areas. Additionally, ecotourism can provide a source of income for local communities with few other income-generating options. Finally, ecotourism can increase the level of awareness and activism among travellers, making them more passionate and effective agents of conservation.

**Urban Sculptures**

**SYMBOLS OF CULTURE, HISTORY AND IDENTITY**

ISSUE 28

**What is Ecotourism?**

**Balance on ecotourism**

"According to The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), 80% of developing countries rely on ecotourism as a major export." Costa Rica, Ecuador, Nepal, Kenya, Madagascar and Australia also rely on ecotourism to increase the quality of their living.

**Ecotourism: variety of plant and animal life in the world**

**Word Bank**

**Admire:** admire, appreciate

**Indigenous:** native, local

**Utter:** speak in large numbers

**Proponent:** supporter, follower

**Reveal:** expose, uncover

**Flocking:** to come to a place in great numbers

**Let's Discuss!**

1. Do you prefer travelling to natural or man-made tourist locations? Explain why.

2. How do you think Singapore can offer a fun ecotourism experience?

3. How would you play your part in supporting ecotourism?



# English Practice Sections

## LET'S WRITE

### Writing An Article

There are six main considerations when writing an article:

- Topic
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion
- Structure
- Edit

In this issue, we are going to focus on writing informative articles. Refer to the article below and see how it can enhance your writing!

#### 3 Benefits of Exercise

Have you heard people saying that "exercise is good for you"? Why is it good for you? How do they know that it is beneficial to you? In fact, there has been ample research and studies to show the benefits of exercise and I am going to outline three such benefits.

Exercise improves brain function. When we exercise, there is an increased oxygen flow to all parts of the body, including the brain. It fuels our cells and at the same time repairs degenerated cells. Therefore, sometimes after a run, we feel mentally refreshed, thus able to think and perform better. Oh, go for a run when you experience that mental block.

Exercise makes you happy. It lifts the spirits. During exercise, our bodies release endorphins – a chemical produced by our bodies which creates a sense of euphoria. Therefore, the key to maintain happiness is to do regular exercise so that the body produces adequate amounts of endorphins to keep us blissful.

Regular exercise gives you better sleep. Increased physical activities increase the time of sleep – a time when the body starts the restorative process. Cells, tissues and organs start to repair during this time. It is no wonder that a mere 10 to 20 minutes of exercise each day would do wonders to your body and you would wake up feeling rejuvenated.

#### Let's Write

Before, exercise does have certain obvious benefits to our body. The next time someone suggests exercise to you, give it a try and see how it works for your health.

Edit: Editing is a process whereby we check for mistakes in spelling, punctuation and whether our ideas flow throughout the passage.

Follow the 6 steps closely and writing articles would become a breeze.

#### Activity 1

You came across the following passage and you thought it would be good to share this information with your fellow schoolmates. Write an article for your school newsletter based on the information provided below.

### THE BENEFITS OF READING

1. **STIMULATES YOUR BRAIN**  
Regular reading habits exercise the brain and improves memory. It also delays degeneration of the brain.

2. **STRENGTHENS CREATIVITY**  
Those who read widely are more imaginative and creative in their thought processes. This is a great advantage for students when it comes to writing compositions.

3. **ALLEVIATE STRESS**  
Reading for pleasure is enjoyable as readers are transported into the author's world of fantasy.

READING IS THE KEY TO LEARNING.

## "Let's Write"

Features various situational writing formats & tasks – formal & informal

## GRAMMAR CLINIC

Cohesive devices connect sentences together, like how the ligaments hold our muscles together to perform coordinated moves. Appropriate use of these devices makes our writing more cohesive and fluent.

### Conjunction

A word used to link clauses within a sentence

#### Coordinating Conjunctions

Example:  
Healthy living means eating a balanced meal, having regular physical exercises and maintaining a balance between work and play.

and is an example of a coordinating conjunction. It joins two words, phrases and independent clauses together.

Other examples of coordinating conjunctions include:

For Nor But Or Yet So

#### Subordinating Conjunctions

Example:  
Most of us make our food choices out of convenience rather than the nutritional value they offer.

rather than is an example of a subordinating conjunction. It introduces a dependent clause and joins it to the main clause.

## GRAMMAR CLINIC

### Activity 1

Join the sentences using the cohesive devices given.

- Healthy eating habits can be easily formed. Choose the right food.  
by \_\_\_\_\_
- Fruits and vegetables are high in vitamins, minerals and fibres. They are low in fat.  
Not only \_\_\_\_\_ but they are also \_\_\_\_\_
- Eat a good amount of fruits and vegetables. They can prevent overweight problems.  
In order to \_\_\_\_\_
- Do not choose processed carbohydrates like cakes, sweets and chocolates. Choose wholegrain cereals, oats and sweet potatoes.  
Instead of \_\_\_\_\_
- Begin to take note of what you are eating. Then you will lose weight.  
Unless \_\_\_\_\_

### Activity 2

Read the points in the box. Try forming the ideas into a sentence using the conjunction given.

- Newsdays, teenagers do not live a healthy lifestyle. Indulge in a sedentary lifestyle.  
Conjunction: due to \_\_\_\_\_
- Being stationary muscles don't burn as much fat.  
Conjunction: result in \_\_\_\_\_

## "Grammar Clinic"

Features different components of grammar rules with short exercises for students' practice

## LET'S WRITE

### SAMPLE ANSWER

To: Mr. Mohammed, Librarian  
From: Sabrina Chan  
Date: 18 May 2016

Proposed by: Sabrina Chan

I visited the library for the first time yesterday, and I realised that there are no comic books in the library. I love reading comic books, and so do many of my classmates. I would like to propose that the school library keep comic books as part of their collection.

As a child, I was introduced to reading through comic books. I believe that comic books are a good way to get children introduced to books and reading, especially to those who are reluctant readers. Teachers are encouraged to provide books for their students, but since they see the pictures, they always read the words as well. Many of my classmates do not like to read, so maybe it would be a good idea to let them read comic books. At least they would be reading something.

Comics are a good way for us to relax and be entertained. My classmates and I are already an international team at our homework, projects, and CCA. Comic books can free our minds from the stress of school by letting us to an alternative world.

It is true that some comics have violent scenes. However, not all comics are harmful. Some comic books teach about culture and traditions. Moreover, they are usually accompanied by very interesting facts and graphics. These comic books can be used as teaching materials. There are many others that do not. I believe that there are the kinds of comics that we can keep in our library.

On the whole, comic books are fun to read, and I am sure most students will want to borrow them. I hope that you will consider adding comic books to the collection of books in the library.

Sign your name at the bottom.

## LISTENING ACTIVITY

You will hear three short recordings. In each recording, a speaker talks about comic collections in Singapore.

Listen to the audio to help you answer the questions.

You will hear the following talks.

We get to learn others about our food.

We get to try food from other cultures.

People from all over the world are coming to Singapore to live.

We used to have racial conflict, but we have learnt to live peacefully now.

It is our responsibility to make things work for everyone.

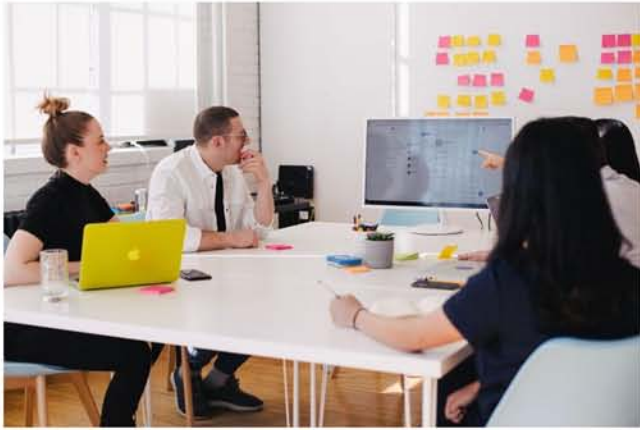
SPK 1  
SPK 2  
SPK 3  
SPK 4  
SPK 5  
SPK 6

## "Listening Comprehension"

Comprises a variety of listening task formats – Matching / Note Taking / MCQ / Graphic Organiser etc.



**We also offer:**



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# Contact Us

## **Address:**

63 Hillview Avenue, #03-08, Lam Soon Industrial Building,  
Singapore 669569

## **Website:**

[www.cpd singapore.com](http://www.cpd singapore.com)

## **Email:**

[contact@cpd singapore.com](mailto:contact@cpd singapore.com)



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