



Fiction

Group 2

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Joseph's Primary School, Chan, Tsun Yui Marvin – 11

I was walking down a smooth street, basking in the warm sun, when I inadvertently bumped into a frail old man. He wore a bright yellow robe that looked ancient and seemed filled with stories. His face was full of wrinkles, and his eyes were bright and cheerful. He looked up at me and asked, "Would you like to hear some stories of China's Inventions, young man?" I nodded and suddenly I fell into a colourful spiral. Then, I found myself transported to a bygone era. The world around me was truly magical, and the people around me were all dressed in long, flowing robes. As I looked around, I noticed that I was in a busy market square surrounded by vendors selling exotic spices, silk fabrics, and pottery. The air was filled with clanging metal, chattering merchants, and the aroma of roasted meat. In the distance, I could also see a magnificent pagoda towering above the city skyline, and then it dawned on me that I had somehow found myself in Ancient China!

While I was skipping around the plaza, I suddenly realized that I had no idea how to get back to my own time. The thought of being stranded in Ancient China made me worry, and I began to wonder if the old man had some kind of magical powers that he used to transport me here. I started to feel a sense of panic rising within me as I began aimlessly wandering the streets, beginning to feel hopeless. As I was crying my heart out, I suddenly heard a faint whisper behind me. I couldn't muster the energy to move or speak, and instead sat there in silence, feeling defeated and helpless. Everything seemed to be going wrong, and I couldn't see a way out of the mess I had found myself in. Suddenly, the old man appeared and said, "Young man, there is no need to be upset. I only need you to do me a favour." I angrily grunted in response and he continued, "There is a man by the name of Yixing. He is a Buddhist monk and a brilliant mathematician. He is now struggling to create an invention that would change the future. Help him, and I will bring you back to the present."

After I blinked my eyes, the old man was nowhere to be seen, as if he disappeared into thin air. "Well fine then," I thought, "I'll help Yixing and get out of here." Like a miracle, I was instantly teleported to a beautiful place with mountains everywhere. Then, not far in the distance, I saw a group of men under a gigantic mechanism. I walked over there and noticed that the men were all bald. Soon, they noticed me and called me over. "Child, what are you doing here? Go back home!" One of the men said to me. I ignored him and closely examined the contraption. It was made from wood and bamboo and was moved by bronze and iron gears.

Then, a man walked over and introduced himself as Yixing. I had found the target of my mission. The other man was **Nangong Yue**. I stood there quietly, admiring the intricate details of the Water-driven Spherical Birds. After a few minutes, Yixing looked up at me and asked, "Do you know anything about mathematics, young man?" I shook my head, feeling embarrassed that I didn't have any knowledge about the subject. He then patiently taught me the basics.

And so, for the next few weeks, I worked alongside Yixing and Nangong Yue in creating the Water-driven Spherical Birds. I found out that it needed a large supply of wood and iron, and we needed to work 14 hours every day. I was always exhausted after work.

Once, we ran out of materials and we needed to cut some more trees and mine more iron. I found a magical world inside the woods, and it was beautiful. Yixing was patient and kind, and he explained everything to me in detail.

After several weeks of hard work, the clock was finally complete. It was a magnificent sight to behold, and Yixing was pleased with the final result. As a reward, he gave me a small, intricately designed wooden bird to take with me as a souvenir. I was overjoyed and grateful for the experience.

As promised, the old man appeared before me once again, and he congratulated me on a job well done. He then snapped his fingers, and I found myself back in the modern world, standing on the same street where I had first met him.

When I got back home, I put down my wooden bird in the glass case where I put all my treasured items. From that day on, I made it a point to learn more about the history of China's inventions. I read about the Four Great Inventions of China: papermaking, printing, gunpowder, and the compass. I was fascinated by the ingenuity and creativity of the ancient Chinese people, and I marvelled at their ability to create such inventions that change the world. I also learned about other inventions, such as the abacus, which were also developed in ancient China. My experience in Ancient China opened my eyes to a whole new world of possibilities. I felt inspired and motivated to explore the world and all its mysteries.

In the end, my encounter with the old man led me on a journey of self-discovery and exploration. It gave me a glimpse into the past and showed me the amazing things that could be achieved with hard work, determination, and creativity.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Joseph's Primary School, Chu, Tsz Yui Kingston – 10

“For your eyes only.

Classified documents enclosed.

We received reliable intel that our neighbourhood country C might be developing a lethal weapon in a secret facility. Infiltrate and perform a full assessment. Once determined if it's a threat to our country, thwart the evil plan by all means.

Destroy this message and the dossier immediately after reading.”

John presumed that it was just another uninspiring espionage operation; however, it turned out to be something entirely different.

The secret facility was hidden in plain sight – it was on a piedmont plateau facing the Yellow River, surrounded by towering trees. Whatever inside should not be fatal or contagious as it was in close proximity to the capital city. Surprisingly, no barriers were installed and the area was not guarded at all. John frowned as everything just didn't add up with the intel. No way it would be a blacksmith workplace or a weapon arsenal in anyone's eye.

“The higher you climb, the better the view.” John scrambled up a grand pine tree and built a covert hideout on one of the thick limbs. The mist dissipated after sunrise and the whole area was fairly exposed. The facility was comprised of different size of brick houses with corrugated tile roof. Nothing more. John was puzzled as the setting was more like a vacation villa instead.

Sound of nature was fading out when workers started to sign in. All of them were in Taoist outfit. They commenced the day by carrying various types of bottles, going back and forth between houses. They worked during daytime and returned to living quarters of a nearby Taoist abbey in the evening. Undoubtedly, the best time to infiltrate would be at late night, when everyone was asleep.

John simulated and rehearsed all possible situations. When the right time came, he clad himself in black from head to toe, walked stealthily towards the facility, hunkered down at the back of the biggest brick house and quietly sneaked into it through an opened window. There was not much light inside, but only a glimmer of the moon. The house was sparsely furnished, with a gigantic alchemy furnace in the middle.

“It is a laboratory!” John gaped. When John was peering around, he heard mumbling and footsteps approaching fast. In panic, he managed to duck behind a chair next to the entrance right before two men walking into the house.

The senior Taoist was holding a hossu and the junior was carrying a small cloth bag. They kept whispering to each other and left the door open. Both of them were oblivious of John's presence.

The junior was firing up the furnace while the senior was unloading different ingredients from the bag into the furnace. “Any progress? We have to present the elixir of life to the Emperor at the Palace in two days and we don't have much time left!” the hossu man grumbled.

Suddenly and unexpectedly, the furnace bursted into pieces! A cloud of smoke exploded from it and enveloped the two unfortunate men. John deftly leaped out of the house and escaped unharmed, while both men were caught off guard and covered in ashes. John couldn't help himself but stifled a laugh quietly, in order from giving himself away.

It was almost daybreak and John had to head back before the workers coming in. He couldn't wait to see what the hossu man was up to on the judgment day.

Two days later, John disguised as a worker and joined the crowd at the facility. Upon arrival at the outer courtyard of the Palace, instead of presenting a bottle of elixirs, a pinwheel was erected.

"Where is my elixir?" The Emperor bellowed furiously.

"Well... it ascended to heaven when the furnace broke... but along the way a new substance was created,' the hossu man hummed and hawed. "We named it 'black powder'. It deflagrates but doesn't detonate, which is excellent for celebrating occasions. It also goes well with fire crackers..."

Workers started to fill the powder into tubes, which were then fixed to the centre of the pinwheel. When all tubes were ignited, magic happened. Not only it produced sparks and flame, but it also caused the wheel to rotate quickly, making the display even more spectacular.

Everyone gazed at the astoundingly magnificent fireworks and couldn't take their eyes off even after the powder was burned out.

"Immortality is worth the wait, in the meantime, please enjoy the new toy," the hossu man cringed.

The intrigued Emperor decreed that more black powder should be produced, then left without a word about the elixir. Everybody was relieved, except John who was sceptical if either the black powder or the pinwheel would be weaponised.

With the passage of time, the alchemists were able to repeat their accidental success. At the same time they were so engrossed in adding different materials, like steel dust, to the black powder to make the fireworks more appealing. On the contrary, the elixir of life was never created.

Since the black powder had never been tested for other purpose, no weapon could be leveraged with it.

"It's about time to pull out." John wrote a message to his supervisor. Thanks to John, a war was well avoided and civilians were living in peace for an extended period of time.

"Confidential and for intended recipients only.

Based on my observation and eavesdropping in the past six months, I conclude with confidence that black powder would not be an imminent threat to our country. It combusts and produces flares and smoke, but can't cause massive destruction or casualty.

At the moment, country C has no intention to weaponise the black powder, instead it is deployed as fireworks for entertainment purpose only. The Emperor is fully immersed in pursuing immortality and promoting the country's prosperity, and has no interest in warfare.

No sabotage action was taken. Operation log and sample of black powder will be presented upon return.

John
850 A.D.
from the capital of China"

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Joseph's Primary School, Kwok, Ayden – 10

In the courtyards of the palace in China, Yu was sitting under a tree. He was an emperor. Resting after a long day of politics, he ordered his servants to boil some water for him to drink. It was a beautiful day, with the cool summer breeze and sunshine peeking through the clouds. Yu asked for a cup of hot water, so the servants poured it into Yu's stunning, shiny emerald teacup. Yu sipped it slowly. But he realised it tasted slightly different from the usual water he drank. He exclaimed, 'Wow! The water today is sweet. Did you put anything in the water? Or in the fire?'

The servants replied, 'No, we didn't put anything in there, your majesty. Allow me to check.'

When the servants checked the pot of water, they were surprised to see that there were some tree leaves in there! The wind must have blown the leaf into the pot with the servants' knowing!

'Wh-What? Where did it c-come from?' One of the servants sputtered.

'I- I don't know!' Another servant stuttered, afraid that the emperor would get angry at them.

However, to their surprise, the emperor said, 'I know a famous herbalist here. His name is Li, and he has been an herbalist for decades. Let us ask him what type of leaf this is. I bet he will know.'

They packed up their things and set off to Li's house. Yu knocked the door, but nobody answered. He tried again, but still nobody answered. Yu then sighed, 'Seems like he's out of town.' He thought about the herbalists in the kingdom. But they were working hard to find a cure for Yu's wife, Wu, and he didn't want to disturb their work. So, he asked his servants.

'There is an herbalist nearby. He is called Sung, and he has a master's degree. I think he will know. The problem is, he lives in a town which is extremely far away from us right now. But there's word that he is coming to our town in 3 days. Can you wait for that, majesty?' The servant said.

'Well, uh, in that case, let's wait in the port on Sunday morning.' Said Yu begrudgingly since he was eager to drink that sweet water again.

Upon arriving on Sunday, Sung saw a luxurious carriage and a crowd at the port. Stepping out of the boat, Sung saw that it was the emperor there! The emperor, Yu, immediately asked Sung, 'I heard that you are a very skilled herbalist, so I have a question, what kind of leaf is this?' Yu gave the leaf to Sung.

Puzzled, Sung replied, 'I'm quite in a hurry right now, I need to find accommodation before my meeting in the city square at noon.'

Yu said, 'if you can answer me what this leaf is, then I will pay for your stay.'

Sung was surprised at the emperor's generosity so, he inspected the leaf closely and said, 'this is a Chamomile leaf.'

'Thank you so much!' said Yu and ordered his carriage to leave.

On Monday, Yu commanded the servants to pick a few leaves into the water before boiling it. He called it 'hot water with leaves.' However, time and time again, they tried and failed to recreate the same sweet water that Yu fell in love with.

The servants tried putting the leaves after the boiling water. Yu sipped the cup and shouted, 'Why is it so bitter? Give me a new pot of hot water with leaves! Try it tomorrow!' Yu commended angrily.

On Tuesday, Yu suggested, 'This time, try to put the leaves before the water.' When the servants served the hot water with leaves, Yu shouted angrily, 'Why is it still bitter?! Did you follow my instructions?'

The servants replied, 'Y-Yes, we did follow your instructions.'

Yu was annoyed. He said, 'Next time, use a separate pot to boil the water, then pour it to the leaf, which stored in another pot.'

On Wednesday, the servants tried the new method. They served it and Yu still complained that it was bitter.

On Thursday, the servants still could not replicate the hot water with leaves. Yu was growing more and more annoyed as the week went by.

Friday came, one of the servants finally realised that they had been using the wrong leaves! The colour of the leaves they had been using was light green but the one on Sunday was dark green. Upon this revelation, the servants looked in the garden and found the leaves. Then, they boiled the water with leaves.

They nervously served the water to the emperor, hoping that this time, the water tasted right. When Yu sipped it, he said, 'Now that is a lot better! What should we name it? I'm tired with the name 'hot water with leaves'. Let me think... Me... Wait, I have got it! Tea!'

The servants chanted, 'Tea! Tea! Tea! Tea!'

From that day onwards, Yu ordered the servants to make tea every day.

China's Newest Invention – Diving 3000

St. Joseph's Primary School, Lam, Cyrus – 10

In the year 2060, a groundbreaking innovation emerged from China, captivating the world with its ingenuity. This remarkable invention takes the form of a star-shaped adhesive sticker, designed to revolutionize the way we explore the underwater realm. Not only does it can help you breathe underwater, but can also help you adjust to the environment in the ocean in order to keep you away from cold since the temperature range extends from about 30 Celsius at the sea surface to about -1 Celsius at the seabed. Imagine the possibility of exploring the depths of ocean without the encumbrance of a bulky oxygen tank, or the fear of drowning plaguing your mind. Allow me to introduce you to the extraordinary creation known as the Diving 3000.

The Diving 3000 is a head-sized sticker meticulously crafted from a water-resistant material, ensuring its steadfast adherence to the skin even in the face of aquatic environments. This marvel is filled with a generous supply of life-sustaining oxygen, granting its wearer the ability to breathe effortlessly underwater. At the early stage, this sticker was a diving suit which can tackle the problems underwater but it was heavy and not long lasting enough. Kids and teenagers could not wear it for too long as it was bulky and weighty. Therefore, the scientists made improvements to the suit by trying to look for a more convenient solution. It took the team 10 years to develop this new water-resistant material and apply it to the sticker we see nowadays. With a reasonable price of merely \$1,000 RMB, the Diving 3000 can be readily obtained from various sportswear shops exclusively in China as supply is limited. From now, we can only afford to benefit our Chinese people.

In the coming future, the scientists are going to expand their production line by lowering costs of the manufacture through establishing factories in Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia etc. Therefore, it will undergo a gradual reduction in price and become more affordable.

At its current stage of development, the Diving 3000 proves to be an incredibly beneficial accessory for a multitude of water sports enthusiasts. Gone are the days of fretting over the safety of your loved ones while they engage in swimming activities, for the Diving 3000 acts as the ultimate safeguard. It renders the risk of drowning due to cramps or unforeseeable circumstances. With this ingenious invention, the safety of children and adults alike is fortified, granting them the freedom to revel in the joys of aquatic pursuits without fear.

Furthermore, the Diving 3000 serves as a catalyst for facilitating experience of effortless diving experience. No longer burdened by the burdensome weight of traditional oxygen tanks, divers can now embark on underwater expeditions unencumbered. This does not only enhance the enjoyment of diving but also ensures the safety of professionals such as lifeguards and swimming coaches. Their crucial roles in safeguarding lives can now be executed with greater ease and efficiency.

Beyond its immediate applications, the visionary team of Chinese who would hitch their wagon to a star with grand ambitions for the future. Recognizing the pressing issue of overpopulation in China, they aim to explore uncharted territories and pioneer the creation of underwater cities. This insightful endeavor seeks to alleviate the dire housing crisis by providing a new frontier for habitation, liberating individuals from the confines of cramped living spaces. The furniture within these underwater cities is conscientiously created from water-resistant materials, ensuring durability and functionality in the face of aquatic environment.

To facilitate transportation within these submerged metropolises, the inventors have conceptualized an awe-inspiring mode of underwater public transport. Equipped with fortress-like windows capable of withstanding immense water pressure, these vehicles promise a seamless and secure means of traversing the underwater landscape. Additionally, a revolutionary food production system harnesses the cuisine power of water as an energy source, yielding delectable cuisine for the denizens of the underwater cities.

In conclusion, the Diving 3000 represents not only a short-term experience solution to enhance water sports experience and safeguard future generations but also an invitation to embrace the boundless possibilities of underwater habitation and exploration. The prospect of breathing freely beneath the waves beckons, inspiring awe and anticipation within us all.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Joseph's Primary School, Li, Shing Yu – 11

After reading a book about the lives of people in ancient China, I was shocked to discover people in the old days didn't have any electrical appliances. Filled with enquiry I asked to Dad, "Why didn't the ancient Chinese invent electrical appliances? Were they not intelligent enough?" Dad replied, "Do not despise the ancient Chinese. Why don't we go to ancient China and see the invention of paper?" The answer from me was as expected, so Dad led me to his lab. Inside of his lab was a time travelling machine that looked more like a washing machine to me. My dad changed the clock to 206BC. Suddenly, all of a sudden, the machine began to spin, faster and faster, and then it stopped, 2000 years before today.

Upon arriving at Luoyang, I saw busy streets and hawkers all around us. There were some people playing traditional music. However, everyone was staring at us. At that moment, I understood that I have been wearing my T-shirt. Luckily, Dad had snatched some clothes we wore during the Chinese New Year so we put them on. We had a hard time communicating with the locals, but we found where Cai Lun lived at the end. There was nothing special about his house except for the boxes filled with strange liquids. "Boo!", shouted Cai Lun. I was frightened as I thought it was a tiger. Dad told him that we were scholars from another town, and that we were there to help Cai Lun. Cai Lun smiled and said, "Come on in, then." Cai Lun told us he thought writing on bamboo was inconvenient, so he decided to invent a writing material that is light and cheap. He had tried many materials but they had all failed. Now he's trying fishing nets and bamboo fibre and was mixing some ingredients in the boxes. I thought, "how can he make paper with liquids?" My dad looked as if he knew what I was thinking of. He said, "You will find out soon".

Cai Lun led us to another room. After finding out the ingredients, I asked myself, how can I make a writing material out of liquids? I scratch my head but suddenly, "Bingo", I cried. I just had to pour them out onto a piece of cloth and let them dry out. Cai Lun said, "Wow! How clever." Cai Lun said 'if you're here to help me get on moving and pour those liquids out on the cloths!' I was about to go away but Dad whispered through my ear that it was a good opportunity for us. So I went on with it and lifted the box of liquid and poured them onto a piece of cloth. Dad told me not to pour too much or the paper will be real thick. I cheered as I have just made a real sheet of paper.

When it was finally time to say goodbye, Dad suggested to Cai Lun to give it to the emperor so people could all get to use it. I was tugging on Dad's clothes as I was already so hungry I could eat a horse! But we kind of had a currency issue so we had to go home. We went back to the alley our Time Machine was in which was thankfully there. We hopped in setting the clock to 24th December, 2023 as we arrived home just in time for Christmas Eve.

It was a terrific adventure to the past, I learned so many things. How I begged dad to take us on another journey but he just wouldn't listen. Maybe we should go to medieval age Europe since we've been studying about it but that's a story for another time.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Joseph's Primary School, Li, Zachary – 9

I was in my wheelchair, gazing at myself in the mirror. I adjusted my attire and secured the pin that represents our team – I wanted to look my absolute best – the presentation today symbolised the triumph of our brotherhood and unwavering determination to succeed in the face of adversities and despair. In my firm grasp was a small rusty compass, which carried an invaluable meaning deep in our hearts.

A wave of excitement and anticipation filled the air as my scout team and I gathered near the stage entrance. Seated in my wheelchair, my eyes became watery – instances of the remarkable journey we had gone through since the life-changing accident fifteen years ago replayed in my mind like a familiar film. Today, we stepped onto the stage as a unified whole, filled with confidence as we prepared to present our groundbreaking creation to the world.

I had been dreaming for this moment – the six of us gathering on the stage in a grand auditorium crowded with young and promising inventors from all around the globe. As I shared our incredible achievements, I felt like stepping into a time machine – the past was vivid.

Fifteen years ago, during a scout camp, we embarked on a challenging hike through a sprawling valley. The symphony of crickets was deafening. All of a sudden, a colossal spiral cloud rumbled and started to draw nearer and nearer. Panic penetrated our nerves as we hurriedly sought shelter. Unfortunately, I stumbled and fell into a pit. A whoosh and a crumble passed by my ears shortly before I fainted. When I regained consciousness, I had already lost all sensation from my waist down. We waited silently in the cave for the storm to die down. The next time we stepped out of the cave, it was a scene of chaos. The storm had swept down all the trees, fences, signs and the pavilions nearby. The hiking trails were severely destructed and blocked. Everyone started to panic and trembled fiercely with fear. At this moment, our leader, Xu Hui ran through his backpack and took out a little black pouch. In the dark, we saw him take out something small and shiny – it was a compass. We saw it as our guiding light to bring us back home.

Just as I was preparing to bid farewell to my team, they surprised me with two bamboo poles and large baskets, along with scout ropes from their backpacks. Inspired by the ancient Chinese sedan chair which was used as a mode of transportation, Xu Hui guided everyone to use the bamboo poles as carrying poles, tying the baskets onto them to construct a sedan chair for me. They took turns to carry me with the help of the compass – eventually, we found the exit out away from the valley and our way back home.

Yet, our story had not just ended. In fact, it was only the beginning of it. Some may think that it was tragic to be paralyzed from the waist down, but we refused to allow such mishap becoming a forceful obstacle on our road to success. We learnt from the adventure that ancient inventions may be conventional but never obsolete. Inspired and driven by the wisdom, perseverance and hard work of the Chinese inventors, past and present, we embarked on a mission to create something that would empower people with disabilities to explore the great outdoors and allow them to embrace a life of independence and adventure. For the last fifteen years, we worked together relentlessly with a dream to change the lives of millions with physical disabilities.

Today, we proudly present 'Hoverchair' – a state-of-the-art wheelchair incorporated with advanced sensors and voice guidance to enable physically disabled individuals to navigate rugged terrains and conquer any obstacles they encounter. The technology of GPS has been adopted for users to select the safest, shortest and quickest routes to reach their desired destinations. It is equipped with sensors that enable automatic acceleration or deceleration in view of the surroundings to prevent any collisions. The wheelchair is also vested with a unique function where it will halt whenever dangers are detected, deriving the best route with its AI system developed by top Chinese engineers. When there is no signal connecting the GPS, the wheels will be guided by the internal compass to take the user to his desired destination. The chair can be elevated and transformed to accommodate the user's needs.

As our presentation reached its end, the audience rose in a standing ovation. Faces of admiration were filling the auditorium in the thunder of applause. At this point, we knew deep down that we had not only invented an instrumental device, but also sparked a movement – one that honoured the wisdom of Chinese inventors. Our story

would forever inspire future generations to embrace the wisdom of the past, believe in their potential, and create a world where every individual, regardless of physical limitations, could build their path without boundaries.

The Strange Painting

St. Joseph's Primary School, Lo, Yat Long Adam – 9

“Welcome to the world’s largest collection of ancient relics. In this beautiful collection of relics, you will find Chinese, Indian, Mayan, Egyptian, Greek, Roman and many more relics” I was delighted when I was invited to visit the HKYWA museum. The museum contained many priceless artifacts, including a pearl necklace that cost over 10000 dollars! The museum itself was made of marble, with curves overhead. I didn’t need to be a child of Athena to appreciate the architecture.

I rushed through the museum, all the way to the Chinese section, where I saw a painting of a battle between the yellow emperor and Chiyou. I was surprised to find myself drawn to it, as it was an unusual painting. Instead of being drawn on paper, it was drawn on a bamboo canvas. When I inspected it closely, I noticed that the emperor looked surprisingly like me. I also noticed that he appeared to be guarding a machine. As I tried to walk away, I found myself froze to the spot. My hands seemed to be possessed. Slowly, I reached out and touched the painting. A hand reached out and pulled me into the painting. I instantly saw a blur of motion, and I realized I was being sucked back in time.

My life passed through my eyes. Literally, as I saw myself on my eighth birthday, playing video games with my family. I saw myself drawing a Christmas card for my mother. I saw my father pushing me on a swing, but they were all a blur. In a split second, I found myself in a battlefield with soldiers fighting on each side. Lucky for me, I had quick reflexes. I dodged a spear and jumped over a motionless body. I suddenly felt a dizzying sensation and I realized that I had a concussion.

With a groan, I opened my eyes and saw a shoe. I thought my shoe had fallen off but when I looked at the shoe, I realized it was an ancient Chinese shoe, not my brand–new Nikes. I jumped up, and I realized that one, I was in a hut of some kind, two, that I was wearing ancient Chinese clothing. Then, I heard a voice saying “Emperor yellow, sir, you’re needed at the council meeting. “I asked, “What happened? Where am I? “Silence. Then the door opened, and I saw a man standing in the doorway. He said, “You are the yellow emperor, and you are in your house. “He continued, “You got knocked out by a sword. Chiyou blasted you into a cave. With a jolt, I realized that I was in ancient China.

The council was, in a word, informative. They told me that I was knocked out in a battle with Chiyou, that they had lost the battle greatly and were mourning their dead. They had lost most of the battles against Chiyou due to Chiyou’s mist. They turned to me, and asked, “What should we do now, Emperor yellow?” I was startled to see that they were asking me for guidance. I thought that I had heard about a story of the yellow emperor inventing the compass for finding his direction in the mist of Chiyou. I said, “Well, the main reason you’re losing battles is because you can’t find your direction in Chiyou’s mist, right? “A few nods. I continued, “Give me a few hours and I’ll have a solution for Chiyou’s mist.”

A few hours later, I summoned the council and said, “Presenting.....the compass! “I lifted the cloth off my machine. “The compass is a machine made of wood. It is a wheelbarrow with a bamboo pole sticking out in the middle. On top of that bamboo pole, there is a miniature metal man pointing south. Here is the trick: The man’s finger is always pointing south. “The council asked me why the man’s finger is always pointing south. I explained, “the earth is a magnet, therefore metal standing is always pointing south.”

Two days later

The battle was chaos. Swords clashed, arrows flew, daggers stabbed, shields deflected and men screamed. Getting in was easy. Getting out was not. We had fought our way through the woods. In the distance, I could see the fortress Chiyou called home. We defended the compass with our lives. It had guided us through Chiyou’s mist. We had killed Chiyou, but his men were avenging him and were attacking us at all sides. I slashed and hacked, stabbed and killed. The battle seemed to go on forever. Slowly, we retreated toward our base. The plan was simple: The scouts use the compass to get past Chiyou’s mist, report the enemy’s position to us. The archers would scale the trees in the forest next to the enemy’s base and snipe at the enemy’s lines.

After the enemy had been driven into forest, the cavalry would charge in and slaughter them. Then, they would kill Chiyou. I was part of the scouting team. We easily killed the enemy's patrol. When we returned to the camp, we told the army the enemy's position. I led the army to the forest. The plan went accordingly until we charged the enemy's fortifications. They had catapults! We lost quite a few men and horses until I launched myself onto a horse, jumped on an enemy soldier, somersaulted over a battle carriage and landed onto a catapult, slicing it in half on the way down to the ground. I landed on the ground inside the fortress. It was easy work from then on. I sliced down the catapults and the soldiers manning them. I charged down the stairs and found myself staring at an army.

I was not a one-man army. That was what was in my mind when I saw the army. Even Ahlborn Gunderson's training was not going to do me much good against an army. I turned and ran to the fortress doors. Luckily, they were not locked. I rushed out and shouted at the army to attack. They attacked and killed the surprised enemy army. The moment the last soldier fell, I felt a whooshing sensation and found myself in the HKYWA museum again. I screamed and a passerby stared. I was so happy that I cried. What have I learned from the adventure? Nothing is impossible.

Make the world better

St. Joseph's Primary School, Ng, Cheuk Him Gabriel – 12

Human behavior determines the future. Scientists examine some possibilities for the future, including business as usual, but also more options based on sustainable practices. But regardless of what measures are taken in the future, in almost all possible scenarios, the negative trends in global nature will continue beyond 2054.

In 2054, the leader countries were making a lot of atomic weapons to rule the world. If the powerful and peaceful countries threatened the leader countries, the countries would be destroyed of using the atomic weapons by them, and then supported their leading position in the world. That's why the air was polluted in everywhere.

In fact, people were living in a horrible and terrifying environment in their life. 85% of the air was polluted, 30% of the ocean was nuclear polluted, 40% of the plants were destroyed. Unfortunately, the head of the countries did not care about the pollution of the earth. But this situation was going to be changed.....

After the scientists heard the news, they were very fuming, but not afraid of this information. They really knew they had a mission of stopping them immediately. Most of the scientists were doing some experiments about solving the polluted air in the world. China was one of the powerful and peaceful countries in the world. The best team of the China scientists was still paying attention to improve the environment to create a better living place. Importantly, they had still courage to face any difficult problems, unyielding to find the truth and self-sacrifice.

Nowadays, there are some passionate scientists, and they are Gabriel, Jackey, and Fanny. Also, they are the best team scientist members in the China. Jackey is courageous person, and he bravely tries to manufacture every dangerous experiments. Fanny is calm and determined, he always makes his decision accurately. The last member of the team, Gabriel, he is diligent and encouraging, he likes to excite human potential.

On 10th January in 2054, they were concentrated to research some experiments about the pollution of the air, but they didn't have any ideas how to improve the environment in the world. Suddenly, one of the solders ran to the laboratory and screamed "Run! The bomb is coming!" The scientists were very shocked. Without any hesitate, they ran as fast as cheetahs to the safe place. They thought that day was going to come. After arrived at the safe place, they were very depressed and furious.

On 11th February in 2054, Fanny shouted, "Why! Why they must kill our families and destroy our home! What is the meaning of making the world a better place!", then Gabriel encouraged, "Don't be so depressed, our mission is stop them and make the world better. So we need to stay strong to face any challenges." After listening to his solemn words, the scientists were energetic to their job.

On 15th March in 2054, Fanny screamed suddenly, "Oh no!" He accidentally broke Jackey purple diamond decoration with chemical elements. Later, the decoration gave out some smell that was really fresh air. Jackey introduced, "That is the Plum diamond. That is quite expensive and rare." Gabriel said, "If we turn the diamond with chemical elements into powder and spread out on the air, then we can breathe some fresh air in the world." The scientists were really surprised, very impressed of Gabriel. But Jackey asked, "This diamond is very rare. We cannot get it easily." Fanny replied, "My father has this experience with lab grown diamond in Sichuan laboratory."

On 16th March in 2054, they immediately went to Sichuan to find the Plum diamond in his laboratory. They used some tools to grow for the Plum diamonds. After a few hours, they still could not manufacture the Plum diamond. They felt disappointed and depressed again. At that moment, Fanny's father appeared and cheered us, he said, "Don't be depressed. Your mission is to make the world better. If all of you, guys, also give up, the people on the earth will

be hopeless. Is that what you want? ". After the scientists had listened Fanny's father's words, they paid harder efforts to grow for the diamond. After a while, "We success! We success!" Jackey screamed. There are so many of lab grown Plum diamond!" Jackey said. The others ran to him and cheered for him.

On 20th April in 2054, also, they had tested to spread out the powder into the ocean, it really worked and it made the ocean clearer than before. Gabriel excited said, "It is so pure and clean." The soldiers called "The bomb is coming again!" But the scientists were not scared and they tried to test the ability of the lab grown Plum diamond as soon as possible. They knew if they failed, they would die. They stayed in the lab and waited for the bomb coming. BOOM! The bomb came and polluted air in everywhere. After a while, the scientists had come out from the rubble pile. They extremely excited that they were succeeded. The scientists shouted, "We did it! We did it!"

On 24th November in 2054, Gabriel was deeply analysis, and improved the lab grown Plum diamond with chemical elements into the decoration. Fortunately, he invented it successfully, it would be decomposed the polluted air, and people could breathe a fresh air around them. Beside this, the price of the lab grown Plum diamond was cheaper than the natural diamond about 70% of amount. So that, this decoration could be applied in their daily life.

Due to their unyielding spirit, the world was really changed. The leader countries eventually faced to the truth. They admitted that they had destroyed everything, and China built up and improved everything in the world. So the following years, these countries were very respect to China because they knew they were making some wrong decision. Finally, the world become peaceful and clean everywhere. I think that it's not just countries and institutions that need a change in mindset, everyone needs to change their mindset and take action.

Marco Polo and the wooden oxen

St. Joseph's Primary School, Ng, Ka Hong Hayden – 9

It was AD 1291, the time when Kublai Khan ruled China. Kublai Khan was having a feast with his ministers in the cavernous court. Among the Mongolians, there was Marco Polo, a venetian merchant, and also the emperor's foreign emissary. He had stayed in China for 17 years, helping the Khan with many diplomatic missions. He missed his own country.

"Your majesty, would you do me a favour? I want to travel back to Venice to see my family. I won't stay there for long. I will come back to serve you again," said Polo sincerely.

"Mm...for the sake of your past credits, I grant you a holiday. Before that you have to help me escort the Mongolian princess to Persia," said Khan.

"Definitely," Polo replied exuberantly.

A few days later, Polo and the escort headed to the west. When Polo was in the Indian Ocean, he saw a gigantic bank of dark cloud mass above him. It started to rain. However, the rain buzzed incessantly and boiled the surface of the sea. The ship bobbed like a cork upon the capacious sea. Polo gripped the tiller and refused to let go. A whirlpool gaped under him. Like a spinning wheel, it absorbed Polo. Giddy, woozy, groggy. Polo fainted.

When Polo woke up, he saw some conical tents built from animal skins. He stood up and looked round to make certain where he was.

"Horses, shields, swords... am I in a military camp?" Polo was confused. He tried to walk but he couldn't! He was now a spirit and was as light as a feather! He could only drift. Polo urged himself to calm down. He drifted into the largest camp. He saw a man holding a fan, pacing backwards and forwards across the room, deep in thought. At one moment, it seemed that the man noticed Polo but acted nonchalantly.

Another man, dressed like a general, charged in the tent. He didn't notice Polo.

"Chancellor, we are now ill supplied. However, the labour of transport is very heavy. We can't transport them with animals. What should we do?" asked the general tensely.

"Give me some time," the man with the fan replied tranquilly.

Once the general left, the man faced Polo and asked, "You have been here for a while. Are you a ghost?"

Polo flinched, "I am Marco Polo. I live in China in AD 1291. Who are you then?"

"Nothing is too strange in the world, so you are a time traveler. I am Zhuge Liang, the chancellor of Shu, now is AD 231." Zhuge said placidly.

Polo recalled he had read the information of Zhuge Liang before. Zhuge was a legendary Chinese statesman, military strategist and an inventor.

"Mm... I came here by accident. I have just overheard your army is facing a problem. Do you have a strategy?" asked Polo.

"I have had a plan ready for a long time. I will construct some wooden oxen for transporting grains. Here are the sketches of the wooden oxen. You can take a look," Zhuge's eyes danced with laughter.

The sketch was in great detail. The appearance of the wooden ox was similar to the appearance of a real ox. The ox comprised two front wheels, two rear wheels, a rod, a steering device, an actuating device, a decelerating device and a stopping device.

"What are you going to do now?" asked Polo eagerly.

"Now, I will gather 1000 artisans to make the wooden oxen. My plan is to mislead my enemy, Sima Yi," said Zhuge sagely.

A few days passed. The wooden oxen were ready. They moved like real oxen and scaled the mountainous terrain with no problem.

Sima's spies reported back that Zhuge used wooden oxen to transport grain and that the task was now a cinch. Sima was alert. He summoned his soldiers to capture a few wooden oxen. Sima's soldiers disguised as Zhuge's army and waited in the gorge. Once they saw the wooden oxen, Sima's force attacked. Zhuge's force intentionally ditched the oxen and ran. Polo's spirit followed Sima's force to their base.

When Sima saw the oxen, he was deeply impressed, “Zhuge isn’t the only one who knows how to make these oxen. I do too!” Sima said conceitedly.

“Poor you! You have fallen into Zhuge’s trap!” Polo sighed. Some days later, Polo reported to Zhuge that Sima used wooden oxen to transport supplies.

“Exactly as I thought,” said Zhuge with pride.

Zhuge ordered his general Wang Ping, “Dress up soldiers as those of Sima’s and find your way covertly to Sima’s camp.”

The next day, Sima’s convoy encountered Zhuge’s convoy. The commanding officer of Sima’s camp was unwary Wang Ping. Suddenly, he turned on them and Sima’s convoy scattered. When this occurred, Wang twisted the tongues of the oxen. Polo did help as well. The oxen were locked from movement. Zhuge’s convoy then ran away.

When Sima’s convoy came back, they were unable to drag the oxen. They had to give up the oxen. Zhuge’s convoy then came back and gave the tongues a backward turn and got the grain.

After the small victory, Zhuge’s convoy headed back to the base. There suddenly came a mist. The mist soon became a moaning wind. The wind howled and twisted the army including Polo. Without warning, Polo fell in a spinning wheel as he saw before.

Giddy, woozy, groggy. Polo fainted. When he opened his eyes, he found himself back in the escort to Persia.

“Marco, are you alright? Your face looks pale,” a sailor asked.

“Yeah, what a dream!” Polo smiled.

Polo finally returned to Venice. At that time, Venice was at war with Genoa. Polo made use of the wooden oxen learnt from Zhuge to transport the military supplies. Venice was once on the lead. Jealous of Polo’s talent, the Genoese captured and imprisoned him. It was during that time, Polo wrote his universally acclaimed book, “The Travels of Marco Polo”, indubitably including the fantasy journey with Zhuge.

New Tale of Congee Invention

St. Joseph's Primary School, Shum, Ching Cheung Anson – 10

Once upon a time, there were two young boys who lived with their parents: Kong and Chi. Poor and impoverished, the family lived in a dilapidated hut. The walls, which were made of planks, could barely stand steady against the viscous howling wind during the winters. The worn-out thatched roof itself was a mockery of any decent shelter. In the freezing and bitter cold at night, the two young boys huddled together with their Mother and Father – with the thick, large and orange furry tiger-quilt being their only source of comfort.

One day, the two brothers were starving badly. They were at their wit's end. They were disillusioned. Not knowing what to do yet still desperate for food, they eventually stumbled around for hours until they found themselves facing a field of rice paddocks. The water gently cradled the rows of rice plants and in desperation, the boys began to devour the rice plants and drink from the field like animals. What the boys did not realise was that this was part of the Emperor's land. Taking as many rice plants and gathering them into whatever pockets they could find in their tattered clothes, hoping that they could return home with some food for their parents and themselves, they began to make their way home. Suddenly, the boys heard heavy footsteps approaching.

“Who are you? What are you doing?”

The boys stood there in shock. Two guards stood in front of them. It was the Emperor's land that they had trespassed.

“Trespassers! And what are those you have? The Emperor's food! Come along with us at once! Stealing from the Emperor!” Chills ran down the two boys' spine.

When they met the king, he was in bright clothes with dragons printed on it. His throne was glamorous with different types of dragons in all sorts of colours. When the guards told the king about the shocking news of the boys stealing his rice paddies in his garden, he stomped his feet and yelled to the boys. His eyes and mouth were as red as a tomato. ‘Hang their necks in front of me. Execute them now!’ ‘No! Let us explain to you! We are trying to invent something.’ Just as the guards were preparing the hanger, they defended themselves. ‘Guards, put down the hanger.’ The boys swiftly explained they wanted to steal the rice paddies because they were hungry and confessed how they put water in the rice. The king said that they had to cook this special rice dish with water for him the next morning, or else they would be exterminated. Also, they had to sleep here for one night to prepare the dish. If the king did not think the dish is a delicacy, they would be tortured with a sharp knife. The two brothers were nervous. They were paralysed in fear. They prayed to the god that they wished they would cook well. They decided to cook congee with vegetables and beef, and steam water from the palace's kitchen. When they thought about the concerned faces of their parents, tears rolled down their cheeks.

After one night, they served the emperor with congee the next morning with fancy plates and utensils. When the emperor tasted the congee, the boys thought, ‘Would I be hurt? I hope that this dish is not too disgusting, we tried our best.’ Unexpectedly, the emperor grinned from ear to ear. He praised them, ‘Wow, this liquid of rice is extremely yummy. Boys, you are the best cook I have ever seen!’ Scribbles of joy were written on Kong and Chi's cheeks, and continued, ‘well done, boys! I am so proud of you! You could invent a new dish even you are kids! What are your names?’ “I am Kong, and this is my brother Chi,” Kong replied timidly. “I name the new dish CONGEE in honour of your names. I would also give you one thousand zillion dollars as a reward! From tomorrow onwards, you will be my chef, and I will give you one hundred times the salary of an ordinary chef.’ Kong and Chi pranced in joy. They were over the moon. As merry as larks, they skipped home with the heavy sack of money.

When their parents saw them, they immediately had a warm family hug. “Where have you been? I have been finding you for ages!” Then, Kong and Chi told the whole extraordinary story to their parents. Their parents’ jaws dropped. Also, the brothers told their parents they will get a job in the palace tomorrow, with a decent salary.

From that day onwards, they got a gigantic new house and a beautiful farm since they had become rich. The invention of congee was spread all over the world. The brothers got a patent for this invention. When any seller in all parts of the world sells congee to every customer, the seller has to give half of their earned money to Kong and Chi’s family in honour of the two brothers. The family lived gloriously ever after.

New Tales of China's Invention

St. Joseph's Primary School, Wong, Cheuk Him Edwin – 10

"Emmanual, your hands raised too high... Vladimir, slow down your breath... Yamada san, mind your balance... Thomas, breathe your 'qi' deep down to your abdomen..." Finally, I finished the Tai Chi lesson for students coming from all around the world. This is what I do every Sunday since my Tai Chi Master discovered that learning Tai Chi could significantly combat the COVID variant virus a few years ago. From that day forth, I determined to spread this new "cure" to the world. I wanted everyone to be beneficial from my Master's invention.

I was reading a newspaper about how many people died 20 years ago due to COVID, and I still had a faded memory of it. I remembered most of us being forced to stay at home like cowardly turtles hide inside their hard shells; putting on thick masks like technicians in a laboratory encountering lethal gas leakage. Also, I recalled the news reporters had always used a tragic tone to report that thousands of people had died like the earth was going to be engulfed by the black hole. At that time, in our Tai Chi class, there were over a hundred students. Having learnt Tai Chi for three years, I was the most junior in experience in the class. Fortunately, none of us got infected by COVID. Therefore, all of us kept practising every day without being interrupted by the government's idea of "quarantine". After 4 years of being "tortured" by the deadly virus, eventually a news was spread by an "angel" – the cure of the virus is to practise Tai Chi every day! Word got around quickly, and the park was full with people learning Tai Chi like sardines packed in a can.

My master believed that it was not a miracle that practising Tai Chi every day was a "magical cure" to the COVID, it had to be some rationales. He therefore cooperated with the HK University to do some experiments. The University began researching about the benefits of practising Tai Chi. They compared people of practicing 3 years of Tai Chi continuously and people that didn't learn any Tai Chi at all. Then, some mind-blowing news came. The researchers told that the people who did practised Tai Chi every day for 3 years increased flexibility and strength. In light of that, they also created a "shield" against some viruses – they could have 3 times more COVID antibodies than a person that didn't practise Tai Chi at all. They solved the greatest mystery – why Tai Chi but not taekwondo, karate or kendo has the power? What is the difference? It is because Tai Chi has one basic principle – balance. Even the symbol of Tai Chi tells us that – a circle with half white and half black. Not only Tai Chi, Chinese all emphasizes on balance. To cite an example, when you are visiting a clinic of using Traditional Chinese Medicine while having a nasty cold, the doctor will probably tell you to eat less fried food to balance your diet. By the same token, Tai Chi's concept of balance requires a series of slow, flowing motions and deep slow breathing to exercise the body and calm down the mind. On the contrary, taekwondo, karate or kendo does (do) not require any "balance" but needs a lot of "fighting skills" which do not really calm down our nerves. The researcher also proved that people's mood was far more important than the immune system. With a balance mood, the immune system will be stronger.

About balancing, I always told my students that they could be "Tai Chi Masters" if they could passed the "Tofu" test. It seemed to be a piece of cake as I said it but in reality, it was totally opposite. Before having become a Tai Chi Master, I was literally "sick" seeing Tofu because the test required me to catch a Tofu "perfectly" without making it fall apart or more professionally, saw any cracks on the Tofu. It takes many umpteen practices, and even one crack on the Tofu makes you fail. You have to manage how to make the right timing to move your hand backwards to not let the Tofu just crash to your hand, then you make a curve like a net and hold the Tofu to avoid it to fall down. Most people would hold their hand steadily but the Tofu would either crash to their hands or fall down to the floor. This skill requires balancing skills – you would need to balance the Tofu's weight by using your hands to make a "net" and tenderness – to avoid the Tofu to be squashed to your hands and last but not least – patience – you would need to preserve and not give up even your very desperate but to stay calm. This is a comprehensive balance test.

"Hey!" I was startled and almost tripped backwards. "Did I frighten you? I am sorry." I looked up and saw Mum. She enquired, " You have already had a day's long of Tai Chi lesson! I have made a scrumptious snack for you – my homemade Tofu pudding! Come quickly and try it out!"

Title: A New Tale of Papermaking

St. Joseph's Primary School, Wong, Ho Him Marcus – 11

Once upon a time, in ancient China during the Tang Dynasty, there lived a young and imaginative man named Zhi. With a brilliant mind filled with ideas, Zhi longed to bring his creations to life. It was during one fine day, as he sat by the riverside, that inspiration struck him like a bolt of lightning. He discovered a way to transform natural resources into a remarkable material that could be used for writing, painting, and so much more. Little did he know that this brilliant idea would change the world forever and become known as paper.

Zhi was determined to dedicate countless hours to experimenting with different methods, tirelessly seeking the perfect combination that would result in a thin and writable surface. He understood that if he could achieve his goal, he would revolutionize the way people communicate and record information throughout the ages.

To begin his quest, Zhi embarked on collecting various plant fibres from trees, bushes, and even discarded plants. With extreme care, he examined each fibre, searching for those that held the most promise. After thousands of failed attempts, he stumbled upon the ideal combination of bamboo, wood, and palm tree leaves. These materials possessed the necessary qualities of strength and flexibility.

With his new discovery, Zhi set to work. He meticulously chopped the plant fibres into tiny pieces and then boiled them in water to soften their texture. Once they reached the desired form, he mashed them into a pulp using a mortar and pestle. The resulting mixture was spread out onto a flat surface and left to dry under the gentle warmth of the sun.

Days turned into weeks, and weeks turned into months as Zhi tirelessly honed his craft. He experimented with different techniques to improve the quality of the paper. For instance, he discovered that by adding rice starch to the pulp, he could enhance its strength and smoothness. Additionally, he found that adding silk or other fine fabrics into the mixture would create paper, perfect for painting and writing.

News of Zhi's invention spread like wildfire throughout the land, fascinating the hearts and minds of all who heard. People from far and wide flocked to witness the marvel of paper. Artists, writers, and even the emperor himself astonished at the practicality of this new creation. Paper perfectly replaced the expensive silk scrolls previously used for writing, making knowledge accessible to a wider audience.

Zhi's name became synonymous with the inventor of paper, and his legacy lives on to this day. His unwavering determination forever altered the human history entirely. Whenever we write, draw, or read a book, we owe a debt of gratitude to Zhi and his remarkable invention. Paper, the medium that connects us across time and space, allows ideas to take flight and knowledge to flourish.

Through the invention of paper, Zhi opened the gateway to a new era. The written word, once confined to the privileged few, now spread to different classes of people. The discovery of paper revolutionized education, enabling the passing of ideas and knowledge like never before. Libraries and universities flourished, and wisdom of human could be passed on from generation to generation.

As centuries passed, the art of papermaking continued to evolve and spread to every corner of the world. From China, the papermaking technique traveled along the Silk Road, reaching the Middle East and Europe, sparking knowledge revolutions and cultural exchanges. It became the cornerstone of civilizations.

In modern times, paper remains an integral part of our lives. While digital information has transformed the way we communicate and store information, paper still retains a unique charm. The sound of turning pages, and the feel of a book in our hands evoke a sense of connection with the past.

So, the next time you put pen to paper or flip through the pages of a book, take a moment to appreciate the legacy of Zhi and the extraordinary invention that continues to connect us across time and space. In a world of ever-changing technology, paper remains a timeless medium, bridging the gap between generations and cultures, and preserving the collective wisdom of the past.

Navigating and Firing Away at War

St. Joseph's Primary School, Wong, Pat Lun – 11

The trade between the Chinese and the British was one of the most defining moments in 19th century Chinese history. The West has long been attempting to conduct trade with China. Initially, the Qing Government placed many restrictions on how trade and expatriates were permitted to conduct trade in the region. Regarding the business of trading, the West were infatuated with oriental products such as tea, silk, porcelain, etc. However, on the other hand, the Chinese were not interested in any of the products that the West had to offer. This led to an imbalance of trade that resulted in China reaping all of the profits and benefits of the trade. However, the British finally found a product that captured all Chinese souls. Opium was the first and only product that the British offered to the Chinese that they wanted. However, opium was a drug. Opium was a major reason that led to the demise of Chinese society as people became highly addicted to it. As a result, understanding that this drug is gravely affecting the Chinese people, the Qing Government decided to appoint Lin Zexu to restrict and clamp down the opium trade. Lin Zexu decided to burn and destroy all the opium that the British traded to China in Humen which led to great discontent among the British traders as well as the British government. The tensions caused by this led to the two countries at the brink of war.

31st October, 1839. Today, it is a windy day, approximately 20 degrees. My fellow officers, workers and I are currently sailing down the Pearl River Delta to protect the city of Humen from a British naval invasion. Staring out from the deck of the ship that I am on, I see a clean and clear river with our Chinese armada of ships; we were a large fleet in terms of numbers. A bird flew from the skies seemingly guiding us to victory, it raised our morale to kick the western imperialists away from our shores. To my right, there were mountains with a lot of foraging. The leaves are mostly red or orange in colour since it is currently autumn. I can also see leaves falling. The scenery before me is absolutely breathtaking. Birds chirping, leaves cricketsing, it did not seem and feel as though we were heading for war. At the same time, I hear workers shouting and calling upon their other colleagues to help them push crates of weapons across the decks.

I hear someone call, "Hey! Someone help me push this to deck number 2!"

Someone else called, "Hey! We're lost! What should we do?"

It was utter chaos on the deck. As my fellow sailors were pushing crates of supplies from one end of the ship to another, I smelt the pungent odor of gunpowder. All along, we are working hard upon locating ourselves on the map and to keep on heading south. How did we find our location? By using the compass. The compass is a tool invented by us in the 3rd Century B.C. during the Han dynasty. This tool is used to navigate locations and find out which direction is North. The first compasses had a central pool of water surrounded by concentric circles. Others had a thimble, magnetic needle, submarine line, outer box, and a glass cover fixed across the inner disk. Now, the compass has a needle in the circle in the center, and the needle has two ends, North and South. The needle indicating the directions will move due to magnetic properties of the compass. We use the compass by putting it on a flat surface, and after a few seconds, until the needle in the middle stops, it will show which way is North. We're now finding out which way is South because we're heading to Humen. I'm proud to be Chinese and to use the invention for our country's glory. I hope we can win against the British in the battle a few days later.

Thanks to the compass, we have finally arrived at the city of Humen. At Humen, I see two fleets of ships; ours as well as the British navy. Suddenly, I hear an explosion made by the cannonball fired from one of the British ships. As a result, we started preparing our weapons and loading our cannon. Then, we started firing shots of our own against the British; however, only one reached its intended target. It seemed as though our weapons were no match to the British's. This was humiliating because we, the Chinese, were the initial inventors of gunpowder. We invented gunpowder in the 9th Century. Carbon is an important element for gunpowder to operate. Carbon in a fire that must draw oxygen from the air, but the saltpeter in gunpowder provides the oxygen. When heated, the sulfur ignites first, which in turn burns the charcoal fuel, raising the temperature to the point that it literally tears the nitrate molecules apart, releasing the oxygen which aids the combustion. This technology has given our country an advantage against many other countries over the years. However, it seems as though the West had caught up and even surpassed our

accomplishments. The explosions from the shots fired against us made all of us frightened. One by one, our ships collapsed. By the end, only one ship remained afloat; the one I was onboard.

The opium war marked the start of the “Century of Humiliation” for Qing China. As a result of the Opium War, the Chinese and the British agreed through the Treaty of Nanking to cede Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula British territory in perpetuity, allowed for free British trade with any merchants in China, and forced China to pay damages for the destroyed opium. It was the first of what the Chinese later termed the “Unequal Treaties”. Soon, many other European powers also followed suit. This was the age of colonialism and imperialism.

A Trip to the Future China

St. Joseph's Primary School, Yap, Tsz Long Jayden – 11

Today, I woke up and walked towards the window as usual. However, I noticed something strange. Numerous buildings and vehicles were floating in the air. I asked myself, 'Is this some kind of future cities in the movies?' I rushed to the street with confusion and asked a passerby what the year was. It was 2150 now! I had no idea how I got here. Suddenly, a man with a special suit appeared in front of me and said, 'Thank goodness you came here. This is Hong Kong, China. I am Tom and I have an important message for you. Come, let me show you around the city.'

Tom and I wandered through the streets. I looked around and found out that Hong Kong has changed a lot throughout the years. 'Has China produced new inventions?' I asked Tom. 'Of course!' he said, 'There are four new inventions. Let me introduce them to you!'

'Firstly, as the weather is changeable, scientists invented a kind of suit that can change its temperature. During winter, it turns warm so the user won't be cold. During summer, the temperature of the suit will decrease to cool the user down.' Tom told me, 'Also, it is portable and easy to wear. Since the suit uses nano technology, you only have to put the device on your chest and let the nanometers spread on your body. Then, you put on the suit successfully! Also, since the nanometers can change color, you can control them and create your one and only suit!' I was amazed by this marvelous invention. I could not wait to see the next invention!

After that, Tom said, 'The second invention is a machine which was invented because of a lot of kitchen wastes and they can harm the environment. With this invention, people can convert 1kg of kitchen waste into fertilizers in just ten seconds! Kitchen wastes can already be converted into fertilizers in the past. However, the process was slow at that time. The machine is fast and convenient. There are three steps to use the machine. Firstly, open the lid of the machine. Then, put all of the kitchen waste into the container on the right-hand side. Finally, collect the fertilizers in the bucket on the left-hand side after the bell had rung. Furthermore, the price of the machine is low so families can easily afford it. Families are encouraged to plant vegetables and fruits by the government and they can use the fertilizers to help plants grow. This machine is based on the machine in the past. Scientists made some improvements and now the machine become very popular.' My jaws dropped and said, 'Wow! This invention combines the original machine with new features to encourage people to plant to help the environment.'

Then, Tom started to introduce the third invention. 'The third invention is a smart-home. This invention is not a product but a project that contains many parts. As many people left their apartment to go to work, they lost access to their apartment. User just need to download an app on his smartphone and connect every electrical appliance at home. Then he can control them anytime, anywhere. Moreover, there are robots in the user's apartment to assist the user. When the user is not home, the robots will do all the chores so the user don't need to do them. The user can even control the robots by just telling them to do whatever the user wants. And of course, the robots won't betray humans and kill us all as they are coded not to do so.' I was shocked, I wanted to stay here for my rest of my life because robots were my favorite kind of toy.

'The last invention, is about transportation. Scientists realized that the traffic here was always jammed. Therefore, they invented a car that can be driven on land, air and water so there are more routes for drivers to choose from. There are three modes: car mode, boat mode and plane mode. The driver can switch from mode to mode whenever necessary. There is an artificial intelligence in the car. The driver can turn on auto-driving mode when the driver is tired. This mode will also be turned on by the artificial intelligence if it senses danger. However, to keep the driver safe, the driver needs three driver's licenses: one for driving a car, one for a boat and one for a plane. There are also spots to land the car.' I was astonished because I thought this was only in movies, not in real life.

Tom has finally finished introducing the four new inventions to me. ‘Time to tell you the main reason why I brought you here!’ Tom announced, ‘I’m here to tell you a severe problem. The Earth is dying soon because people in the past created pollution and global warming. They are extremely harmful to the Earth. Although countries are trying to save the Earth using technology, it can only make the Earth die slower. The only way to save the planet permanently is to change the past. You have to convince the people at your time stop wasting natural resources. If you want your descendants to have the opportunity to live in a world like this, do your best to help the planet. The whole world is depending on you now. Here, this pair of high–technology glasses can help you. You can follow the steps showed on the screen.’ I was perplexed. I am just a 11–year–old boy. How can I do that?

When I was hesitating how I should answer, I heard something, ‘Do–Do Do–Do Do–Do’. It was my alarm clock which woke me up. Everything was a dream. ‘Phew, I thought I really have to take the responsibility to save the world!’ I said to myself. I felt relieved. But all of a sudden, I felt something in my hand. It was the pair of glasses Tom gave me before I left!

New Tales of China's Invention

St. Joseph's Primary School, Yeung, Ho Chun Cyrus – 9

Cyrus and Tom joyfully set out on their day hike through the large forest near their town. The trees were lush and green, a perfect summer day for adventure. They brought plenty of water and snacks, intent on enjoying the picturesque sights.

However, as the hours passed, the trails seemed to blend, making it difficult for them to find their way. Cyrus started rushing Tom along, wanting to cover as much ground as possible. Tom grew weary but did not want to slow both of them down. Soon the trails faded altogether and they found themselves in an unfamiliar part of the woods. With the sun sinking lower in the sky, the shadows beneath the trees grew longer.

"I think we are lost," said Tom, feeling on edge. Cyrus scoffed, refusing to admit defeat. As darkness fell, they ran aimlessly, having no idea in which direction the trail or town might lay. Tripping over roots in the dim light, they tumbled down a slope and crashed through the bushes. Finally, they came to a jarring halt at the base of a large oak tree.

Battered and frightened, they clung to the trunk, not knowing what to do next. Suddenly, a strange rumbling shook the ground, growing louder by the second. Looking up in alarm, they saw cracks appearing in the tree before it tipped backward into a flash of mysterious blue light.

When Cyrus opened his eyes again, he found himself lying in a small clearing surrounded by even older-growth forest. Tom lay dazed beside him as well. But where were they? Rising unsteadily, they gazed around in bewilderment.

"Hello there! Are you two lost travelers?" called a friendly voice. Turning, they spotted an unfamiliar man smiling and approaching. He was dressed in flowing robes, unlike anyone they had seen before. "Come, come inside, and let me tend your wounds. Then you must tell me how you came to be here."

The kind stranger introduced himself as Shen Kuo, a scholar living in the Northern Song Dynasty of China. As they savored some warm soup and flatbread, he gently inquired about their unusual arrival. When they told of falling through the old oak, he nodded knowingly. "The veil between worlds grows thin in certain places. You have been gifted a glimpse into my era, it seems."

Over a pot of tea, Shen Kuo began to share stories and adventures of his remarkable journey. One story, in particular, caught their interest – the discovery that would change navigation forever. He spoke of traveling through dense forests, trudging for miles with his pack. One night, he stopped to rest by a great rock. As he unpacked his meal, he noticed the stone was filled with strange veins of magnetite.

Shen Kuo studied the rock closely, noticing how the veins all pointed in the same direction. No matter how he moved it or turned it over, the direction stayed true. Then it hit him – this must be why some strange lodestones he found spin and point! With great excitement, he realized he might be able to use these directional rocks to always know which way is North.

Returning to his workshop, Shen Kuo conducted numerous experiments with the lodestones and magnetite. After months of tinkering, he crafted the first compasses – small circular saws with magnetized needles attached. They spun freely but always found the way. His discovery meant travelers would never be lost at sea or in the wilderness again. Cyrus and Tom sat in awe as Shen Kuo recounted his tale. They marveled at the groundbreaking discovery and could not believe that a simple tool like this could come from a rock in the forest!

He showed them meticulous diagrams and calculations, explaining magnetic fields and polarity. "Navigation had long relied on the stars and dead reckoning. But storms or clouds could waylay even the most experienced sailor. I sought to harness the unwavering power of magnetic truth to always point to the North." he explained enthusiastically. "It became much easier for people to find their way. Explorers could go on big adventures and discover new lands because the compass allowed them to navigate through unfamiliar terrains. It also helped mapmakers make more accurate maps. Even in your era, the compass symbolizes a source of comfort as it provides unwavering guidance and stability, while staying focused on a chosen direction." he continued. Cyrus and Tom listened raptly, realizing the impact one simple tool could have on the future of exploration. As the last light faded, Shen Kuo invited them to stay at his hut for the night. Cyrus and Tom gladly accepted the offer and slowly drifted off to sleep.

The following dawn, they awoke refreshed in the familiar forest clearing once more. Cyrus and Tom couldn't help but wonder what had happened – was everything just a dream? However, one thing was for certain – they would never look at a compass the same way again. Thanks to this opportunity to meet Shen Kuo, they have now learnt to appreciate the wonders of the amazing inventions of China.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Chan, Andre – 10

It had always been the dream of Emperor Wu of Han to find the magic potion that could lead to everlasting life. One week ago, Emperor Wu ordered me, his humble servant, to go on a quest in search for this magic potion. Was this even possible? Where should I begin? Rumour has it that the Taoist monks up in the deep woods had a good knowledge about herbal medicines and they were always finding ways to cure incurable diseases. Maybe they would have some ideas on how to prolong life to its fullest.

Taking the orders from the Emperor, I set off on the impossible quest of finding this magic potion. I started the journey by going into the city to find clues from the local herbalists on the whereabouts of these Taoist monks that supplied them with herbal medicines. They told me to head north into the deep woods of the Shaanxi Province and I would find the temple that they lived in. As I ventured into the deep woods, I came across a monk walking in the same direction. I immediately came up with a plan. I pretended to be lost and hurriedly ran up to the monk and asked, "Excuse me, I seem to have wandered off and lost my way. But it is starting to get dark, could you guide me to the nearest place where I can find shelter for the night?" The monk sincerely replied, "I am just on my way back to my temple. If you don't mind, you could stay for the night before starting to head out again in the morning." I quickly nodded and bowed to thank the monk for helping me out. I followed him up the path and deeper into the woods until we reached a big ancient tree in front of us. He waved me over and led me to a small hidden path located behind the enormous tree. Yes! My plan had worked. We continued to walk along the path until I saw a huge temple in front of us.

Once in the temple, the monk showed me to the guest room and told me that I could stay there for the night after having dinner in the dining hall together with them. After dinner, I wandered around looking for the monks that were responsible for the herbal medicines. As I was strolling around the courtyard, then suddenly..."BOOM!!" A big explosion erupted from one of the rooms across from the courtyard. I hurriedly ran over to find out what happened. A few monks covered in ashes came out from the room shouting that their experiment for finding a life extending elixir had turned wrong when they tried to mix saltpeter, sulfur and charcoal together. They never expected this combination would create such a powerful force. "WOW! JACKPOT! What a discovery! This mixture could be even better than the magic potion that the Emperor wanted!" I thought. I immediately asked the monks what they used and how they mixed the ingredients together. I had to tell the Emperor right away!

Next morning came and I quickly jumped out of bed and got ready to head back to the palace. I couldn't sleep much as I was too excited with the discovery. I thanked the monks for their hospitality and headed back down the mountain without delay. I ran all the way from the temple back to the palace without stopping.

When I got back to the palace, I was panting badly and quickly asked to see the Emperor at once. The Emperor was very excited when I told him that I had made a huge discovery during my journey and explained what happened to him. At that moment, the Emperor asked his servants to prepare the ingredients right away so that he could see this magic mixture that I was talking about. This discovery could be the answer for the Emperor to win against the Mongol's and ending the threat that they posed on the kingdom. They could use this magic powder to shoot their arrows further and even create an explosion that would scare the Mongol's away. The Emperor was very pleased with the information that I had brought back. He awarded me for my dedication and great discovery. And now I stood proudly with the team that produced this magic black powder in hopes of winning the war against the Mongol's.

New Tales of China Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Chan, Wing Trudy – 11

Long ago, in a not-so-far land, there lived a Chinese merchant by the name of Ming. He was hurriedly preparing for his next trip along the newly opened Silk Road. He was as tired as a sloth and didn't want to go, but after all, this was his job and how he would gain wealth for his family.

He was ready and departed from China not long after, leaving his family for who knows how long. Why would he want to leave if he hated it so much anyway?

Well, long story short, the King needed him to test a new and important invention called a compass by going along the Silk Road all the way to India and back, bringing back the best of spices. Now, we must remember, this is easily done for people today as the Silk Road is now well developed, but back then, the road was not as well developed and people would often go off track if they were too distracted. Knowing that, Ming was obviously horrified to the core. How was he going to do it? More importantly, how long would it take? The scariest part was, no one knew.

At this point, China was barely in view; the only thing around him was a piece of deserted land. He soon started to get hungry. Luckily, he was able to buy some vegetables and fruits beforehand. He sat down, feeling tired, and he started thinking about the wonders of the countries he would pass, this job doesn't seem that bad after all. While fantasising, however, he had lost track of which direction he was heading.

Not long after going off track, he was now officially nowhere he could recognize. Luckily, he was, after all, a merchant, and all merchants have a map and compass. He took out the large instrument and started using it; he soon found the correct path back to the Silk Road. It was soon night and he started to camp out, making sure where he rested was within the Silk Road, of course. He definitely didn't expect the first day to go like that.

By the second month, food was scarce, water supplies were lowering quickly; if he didn't do anything, he would surely die out of starvation or thirst!

However, his bad luck didn't end there, as for the next few days a huge sand storm swept through the area, blinding everyone in the way, making it practically impossible for him to travel around. At this point, he didn't need to think twice to use his compass. He used it once again; this time, it was hard to read as the sand was getting in his way. He ended up going in the wrong direction!

It didn't take long for Ming to realise that he was practically going nowhere. Evening soon came; he still had no idea where he was. No road home and no way of communication.

He went towards where he thought the nearest town was, hoping to seek refuge. After a couple of days, he had finally arrived. He was as relieved as he was worried a few days ago. He saw the beautiful streets of India and was delighted. Not much later, he found a place to stay and finally had a good night's sleep.

The next morning, Ming started to get to work, he felt refreshed and so much better. He went to the market with some goods from China. By the end of the week, he had everything he needed, spices, food, toys, and much more!

Ming knew he couldn't stay for long and left India with plenty of goods and a new mindset, to succeed in his mission of trading goods and bringing his family wealth and prosperity for.

Something he noticed through his vast journey to India was that the compass he used was very big and inconvenient, every time he used it, he'd have to take time to set it up. With that note in mind, he started to trade

porcelain from China for materials. It was risky to do this as if he had failed, he would lose many resources used for trading goods and spices.

After many, many tries, he had finally settled on a design that would be convenient for travelling and easy to use. He soon started on the project, hoping that all would go well.

After a few more months and a bunch of trial and errors, he had finished! He was enthusiastic about it and was ready to test it out!

It seems as though his bad luck had ended right then and there, for he had a wonderful time going home, the sun was shining but it wasn't too hot, birds were chirping but it wasn't too loud and the nice summer breeze were grazing amongst the grass, almost as if the environment had changed due to his new-found happiness.

The process of going back seemed faster too, not long later, actually he didn't keep track on how long it took but let's assume that it wasn't long, he had finally come back. The King excitedly ordered some servants to pick him up from the gate and happily welcomed him into the palace. Ming was provided with a beautiful guest room and an amazing banquet.

The next day, the king questioned him about the old compass. Ming told the king "The compass worked as it was supposed to, however, it was too large and inconvenient to use for long distance journeys. Meanwhile, I have created a new and improved compass which is practical for travelling and easy to use." The King was mildly impressed by this and patented the invention.

Ever since, Ming had received many compliments and orders from various people, all buying a compass of their own. From then, he knew that this was what he was meant to do, as he was happy with it and it helped him make loads of money, enough for many millennia to come.

China's Amazing Inventions for the Future

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Chen, Tze Lam Julian – 9

China has a history of making incredible things, and they might surprise us with even more cool inventions in the future! Let's imagine some of these inventions that could come from China!

One cool invention idea is having robots as helpers at home. These robots would be like our personal assistants and could help us with lots of tasks. They could clean our houses, cook yummy meals, wash our clothes, and even entertain us with games and fun activities. We could also connect our robots with our friends' robots, so we can play and have fun together. These robots could also keep us safe when we need to go out alone, acting like bodyguards. The best part is that they would get their power from the sun, just like solar panels, and they would charge up automatically when they go outside.

Another great idea is finding new ways to reduce harmful gases in the air that are not good for our planet. China could come up with smart methods to capture those gases and store them deep underground, where they can't make the Earth too warm. This would help make our planet healthier and cleaner.

China might also explore a special way to send electricity without using wires. Instead of having lots of cables and power lines, they could create a system to send electricity through the air. This means power plants could directly send electricity to our homes, making sure we always have power, even during times when there are problems or disasters.

China could also develop an advanced warning system for disasters. This system would be super smart and could detect possible dangers like earthquakes, typhoons, or floods before they happen. It would send alerts to our mobile phones or through the speaker for the elderly or who has not had a phone, warning us about the dangers and helping us stay safe. This would be really important during emergencies.

Besides that, China might use drones for delivering packages. Since China is a big country with many remote areas, it can be hard to deliver things to those places. But with special delivery drones, packages could be flown through the air and reach those remote locations faster and more conveniently. It would make sending and receiving things much easier for everyone.

China might even create devices that can monitor our health in real-time. These devices would be like little helpers that we put inside our bodies, and they would constantly keep an eye on our health. If something seems wrong, they would give us immediate alerts, so we can quickly get help and stay healthy.

Lastly, China might invent smart clothing that can change depending on the weather. These clothes would be very clever and could keep us cool when it's hot outside and warm when it's cold. They would be super convenient to wear and would also be good for the environment.

China's creative spirit make our lives better and could lead to these amazing inventions in the future. We can be excited to see how they shape our world and make our lives even better and more exciting!

Chinese Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Cheng, Evelyn – 10

Whenever we hear the words, “Chinese inventions,” we would always think of paper making, gunpowder, printing and the compass. But a lot of things we use now are invented by China. Social media platforms like TikTok, “XiaoHongShu” and WeChat to name but a few examples.

What other things will be invented by China in the future? No one really knows yet, but everything now uses artificial intelligence (AI) such as AI robotics, AI smart assistants, Chatbots and more. I think China would invent more AI related products and services to give us a better and more convenient way of life. Nowadays, there are a lot of different delivery platforms or apps but to make it more convenient and time saving, I think a drone delivery service will be invented. All you will need to do is input some related information in the app, then the delivery drone will soon arrive at your house with all the goods that you ordered.

On the other hand, high population density and serious traffic congestion in those main cities like Shanghai and Beijing in China. Although self-driving cars have already been invented, it seems they cannot solve traffic jam problems. I think China should develop self-driving car systems into public transport such as self-driving buses, taxis and trains. These self-driving forms of transportation can reduce vehicle crashes, provide more efficient travel and can avoid slow moving traffic. In addition, people will rely on self-driving transportation more instead of driving private cars. This can help solve traffic congestion.

Technology is changing rapidly in the recent century. More inventions are being developed all over the world. Will China create an invention that shocks the world? Let's wait and see what will happen!

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Ko, Hoi Ching – 9

On a chilly Christmas day, my best friend Ruka and I decided to spend a cozy afternoon at Cuppy Tea House, sipping warm tea and enjoying each other's company. The atmosphere was delightful, and the tea house had the perfect setting for a BFF gathering.

As we stepped out of Cuppy Tea House, we were greeted by an astonishing sight – a huge and mysterious object blinking in front of us. We both exclaimed, "What is it?" The mysterious structure kept appearing and disappearing. We were curious, so we decided to get closer to it. We saw a sign "Time Machine Made in 2073". Suddenly, we were sucked by into the machine. To our surprise, we were teleported to ancient China.

As we were walking along a busy street with red lanterns, we met an old man who was showing his papermaking "magic tricks".

"Hi, what's your name?" we asked. The man replied with a smile, "My name is Cai Lun."

Our hearts skipped as we knew that he was the big name we learned in the lesson! He's the inventor of paper! We were so excited to meet such an important person in Chinese history.

We had a great time learning how to make paper. Later, we decided to bring him to the year 2023 and show him what amazing things his invention has done to the world. Cai Lun was so happy that he cried. He looked at us and said, "I promise you that I will not give up!" Then, we sent him back to AD 60 to let him continue his amazing work in papermaking.

As we prepared to return to our own time, we heard "Ding!". In the next second, we found ourselves back in 2023. I sat up in my bed and asked, "Is it a dream?" Maybe it's just a dream. But it's a dream that I will never forget.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Choi, Wai Lun – 11

China is one of the most important countries in history. Chinese people had created a lot of important items that we use everyday in our daily life. Spinning and weaving in China can be traced to the mid Paleolithic period, or Old Stone Age.

In a long time ago, we used different kinds of materials to make our clothes. Such as the skin of animals, roots of plants and even leaves! The earliest textile machine we've found is the Pottery spindle whorl.

There is a worker in the clothes making factory, His name is Dafuk. He is always late for work because changing his clothes costs him a lot of time. He needs a lot of time changing his clothes because he can't control both of his hands very well. His hand was injured in an accident and the nerves that receive nerve messages in his hand were damaged. So it is a bit hard for his hand to receive the instruction that is sent from his brain. Everytime he needed to change his clothes, it took a long time. In a performance, he saw the actor change his clothes in a few seconds. So he thought, 'why can't I make a cloth that can transform into other different kinds of cloth?' 'So I don't have to always change my clothes!' He knows the way of making clothes from the clothes making factory. He also used the science knowledge he've learnt in university. Meanwhile, this goal also reminds him of his dream when he is small— to be a scientist or inventor. To make this cloth, he travelled around the world. He met his old university classmate. His university classmates also agree on his goal. Under their hard work, they spent several years researching and developing his prototype, using materials such as the gene of an octopus, nanofiber and electric fibre. They also incorporated artificial intelligence and temperature detectors. They make the cloth smart and interactive. They named their invention the colour cloth, and he applied for a patent in 2024.

This cloth can adjust its colour however you want. At the same time, it can also transform into other types of clothes as well. From T-shirts to Tuxedos, pick whatever you want. This cloth can also automatically detect the surrounding temperature. If the temperature is cold around you, it will heat up. If it's hot, it will automatically cool down.

The colour cloth is a new tale of China's invention, a tale that showcases the creativity and innovation of Chinese people in the face of challenges and problems. This cloth seems good, but the Modern science and technology is developing quickly. There must be something better in the future

New Tales of China Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Choy, Chelsea – 11

I'm sure that everyone knows about the famous inventions from China in the past. However, you probably won't believe the amount of new inventions that China has come up with lately. This is Elena from the year 2040. You must be wondering how I got this piece of writing to you. Don't worry, let me show you.

You must be from around the year 2023, right? Well if you didn't know, China has already invented many life-changing inventions by that time. Still, that's nothing compared to what we have right now. They recently made this really cool invention: a time machine! I know it sounds marvellous, however their technology has not advanced enough to let people go back to the past. It can only transport objects, just like this letter, and visions that only last a few minutes.

Now, I think you should be curious about how China achieved such an invention! Well, back in 2031, there was a guy called Peter Lee, he made a couple of inventions before this one, but no one paid much attention to those because they were apparently not that important. Still, I think it's important to acknowledge someone's inventions even if they aren't that useful. They put a lot of effort into them, after all. Anyway, Peter spent nine whole years to come up with this time machine. Even though it sounds like a long time, most scientists wouldn't be able to create such a masterpiece in this amount of time. Isn't that impressive? He even got a Nobel Prize for this invention!

Well, the thing is, lots of other countries are jealous that China was the first to come up with this invention. Since Peter was originally American, the USA claimed that this invention should actually be theirs, and China faced a lot of backlash for supposedly "faking" having invented something new. Many people agreed with this since they thought China hadn't come up with anything great in the past years, so they wanted this chance to take credit for something that someone from another country had invented, which is completely untrue! Thankfully, Peter was born and raised in China, and therefore is technically Chinese, as he confirmed it himself. He also claimed he had lots of help from his friends who were all Chinese. Still, people think he is being forced to say this, which is why the USA and China have constantly had debates on this issue.

I must be boring you with all those facts about this time machine. You probably want to hear more about some other amazing inventions! Obviously, there are many of those, so I'm only going to pick the best of the best, which is the wireless charger! I know you probably already have those, but it's not what you think, and I cannot explain how useful it's been for me. I did a little research of the wireless chargers you have, and there's these little boxes you take with you so you can charge your phone outside! This new one is so much more practical. Basically, when you're at home, instead of using those wires to connect your phone with the charger, you only need to stick something like a USB port into your phone, turn on the charger, and boom! It's charging! It doesn't sound so cool, but when you try it, it is! I can walk around the house with my phone and it can still be connected with the charger.

Here comes the more exciting part: charging outside! Instead of bringing those boxes with you and only being able to charge it when putting your phone on the box, the new one has something like that but so much smaller. You won't even have to put it on the box anymore, as it uses the technology I told you about just now, just sticking the charging port in your phone and turning on the little box which is the charger. This way, you can charge your phone while you're walking and not only while you sit down. Also, I often ask my grandma about the technology in the past, and once she told me that the chargers for charging outside were incredibly slow. She would sit in a café for an hour and only get about 5% charged (although I don't know if it was just her charger or if everyone else back then had this problem)! Well if you're also facing this problem, don't worry! In the future, charging will be so much faster. The battery will also be so much more durable.

Want to know who invented such a thing? It was a woman called Ellie Chan! Did you know she invented this while she was in college? When I knew that, I couldn't help but think, I want to be just like her and invent something

great at a young age. She's an inspiration to many of my friends as well, since they all like science and technology, just like me! This invention is incredible and you should tell your family and friends about this. I bet they'll be so excited to see it! Maybe next time I could send you one so you can have a look.

Anyway, that's two of the inventions that I think are really fascinating! If you want to know more, you can always send me a letter like this one. I added the time machine in the package which contains this letter. All you have to do is click the red button on it and throw the letter in! Make sure to write my name and the year I'm in on the top right of the letter. Also, if you're wondering why I'd sent this to you, it's actually a piece of homework assigned by my teacher! Our class is supposed to use the time machine to send a letter to someone from your time, telling you about some of the inventions we think are important! I would really like to know more about you, so we can be pen pals! It would be amazing to have a pen pal from a different time period.

Have a good day!

— Elena

The Invention of Noodles

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Kwong, Charlotte – 10

Do you like eating noodles? They are the most delicious main course ever. But do you know how they were made? Or which country invented such delicious food? Or even who invented it? Let me answer all these questions of yours today!

Well actually a country in Asia, China invented noodles around one hundred thousand years ago, but by accident! And the family also invented lots of types of noodles like normal ones, longevity noodles and even fried noodles, anyways, let's dive straight into the legendary story!

Around one hundred thousand years ago, the Lee family was preparing to eat dinner at their dinner table carved with dragons and other pretty patterns. But suddenly there was a huge problem! Oh no! They were out of rice! It was all because of the bad weather at the time. It affected the harvesting season for the whole country. It has been raining non-stop for one month already and a thunderstorm was about to hit. Just as the whole village of one hundred and seventy-nine people were devastated and starving. Lee Ya Xiu the daughter of Lee Mei Ya and Lee Hao Ran thought of an excellent idea. She told everyone not to worry and she would eventually figure something out. Ya Xiu walked to the kitchen with second thoughts, but nothing could stop her from saving her family from hunger issues.

Ya Xiu added all the remaining ingredients in their kitchen such as some flour, some sauces, onions, vegetables, magical spices, chillies and other ingredients. She then boiled it for about half an hour on medium heat, after that she served it on a super huge plate. They all enjoyed it really much, some complemented Ya Xiu's cooking skills and some even ate more than five bowls of the dish! And that only means one thing—they loved it!

A few weeks later, a family member suggested to create a name for the dish Ya Xiu made. So, Ya Xiu decided to name the dish after their pet hamster “noodu” which eventually turned into what we call now, noodles!

When the weather got much better the Lee family decided to open a stand and start a business by selling fried noodles on the Main Street. Ya Xiu's parents helped harvest the ingredients and planted more of the ingredients, while Ya Xiu and her fifty-four cousins made the noodles and some of their uncles helped with plating the noodles, which means almost the entire family was engaged in the very huge business.

Their business began to boom and at one point they sold eight hundred and fifty-nine bowls of noodles in just one day! And eventually they got rich and famous for the best noodles in town. They even started to do charity work by giving out free meals to people in need.

Fast forward a few years later, they earned enough money to open another store, and even started selling delicious drinks like tea, the Lee family were known as the famous noodle family!

It was finally Ya Xiu's twenty-fourth birthday! To celebrate her birthday, the village decided to make noodles instead of cakes. But by accident they forgot to cut the noodles in pieces and made a super long noodle, and that was actually the first ever “Chang xou mian” and that is the longevity noodles!

And nowadays, the myth is, the longer the noodles are, the longer the life of the “birthday star” is! So remember, do not break the noodles apart.

Back to the story, the whole village celebrated this important moment together at the ancestral hall. Ya Xiu thanked the villagers and began to slurp up the huge amount of noodles. The others ate some other food that the villagers prepared as well, they had so much fun at the party and Ya Xiu suggested making longevity noodles again!

Soon after, they ditched rice and only ate noodles and other food except for rice. But they didn't get tired of always eating noodles, because they invented many types of noodles, such as, rice noodles (Mi Xian), flat rice noodles (He Fen), glass noodles (Fen Si), wonton noodles (Húntun mian).

Based on the Lee family's experience with cooking noodles, legend has it that they said out of all noodles they made, fried noodles is the easiest noodle to make because it's only sauces with noodles and some vegetables and wonton noodles are the most difficult noodle to make because not only you have to make noodles and the soup, you'd also have to make the wontons for the noodles.

But after that story of the Lee family, you might ask me why did I say that noodles are the most delicious main course, well that's because noodles lasted from one hundred thousand years ago till today! It spreads all over the world and turned into pasta from Italy, ramen noodles from Japan, udon noodles from Japan as well. Without noodles the whole world would've been completely different from today.

For me, I love eating Japanese ramen noodles and Korean spicy noodles. Or cup noodles as a late night snack is just perfect when you are too lazy to cook. And personally, spicy noodles wake me up and gives me motivation to study or to just start the day! By the way, my favourite way to cook spaghetti is making it into a carbonara.

And that was how noodles were invented, by accident.

Bamboo Sky Boat

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Lau, Yuen Yuen – 10

Recently, the Bamboo Sky Boat has been invented by a Chinese company Bambooship. It was inspired by a pilot from Hong Kong Airline, he said that it would be great if there is a boat that can fly, since it is a lot more convenient to have a transportation method allowing people to travel both on the sea and up in the sky.

The Chinese company Bambooship has received the idea and decided to invent the sky boat by adding some wings and engine on the boat, also, since they are a Chinese company, they decided to be more creative and add some Chinese culture in it. After some discussion, they decided that the best way to make it with some Chinese elements is to use bamboo to make the ship's body.

The scientists found that it was hard to use only bamboo to make a boat, especially when it is used to fly in the sky, because bamboos are too fragile, the ship will be broken easily in the sky since it cannot withstand the strong wind. So, the company decided to coat the bamboo with a metal layer outside, which helps protect the bamboo from the strong wind outside. After adding the metal layer, they tested the strength of the bamboo flying boat, but they found out that it was still not strong enough to withstand the strong wind, so they added another layer of titanium, which is one of the strongest metals in the world. After having the titanium coat, the strength of the flying boat is tested again and finally it passes the test, meaning that it has the same ability to withstand the wind as normal planes.

One problem after adding the metal coat outside is that it would block the Chinese element from the outside although people can still see the bamboo inside the flying boat. The solution the designer gave the company was to make it in a tiger shape outside using the metals, so there will still be some Chinese element observable from the outside.

People can take a trip from the sea and the sky with the sky boat, allowing them to enjoy the view of both the ocean and the sky. Also, it will be a special experience for people riding the flying boat since it is still a boat design but it can also fly.

The scientist also decided to power the flying boat with electricity instead of oil in the traditional plane in order to make it more environmentally friendly. So it is also an inspirational invention giving everyone an alternative way of travelling with using less oil.

Chinese Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Lo, Casper – 10

The abacus was a fascinating invention as it revolutionised the way many people calculated maths problems. Even though nowadays people use calculators to calculate maths, it is still an invention that was really important in the early days.

In the very early days of Ancient China, students already went to a school. But it was not a very advanced and nice classroom. They only had a roof and some materials in the classroom, that was basically it. Since maths was a particularly hard subject, that's why students tended to get lower grades in this subject. After hearing that the students were not really good at this subject, the ancient Mesopotamia of Sumeria which was the birthplace of writing made a new and amazing invention called the abacus.

They took inspiration from a little boy named "Jimmy." He would always cook fish eyes on sticks because he thought that fish eyes were tasty, that made the ancient Mesopotamia of Sumeria very interested in making something similar to the boy's way of cooking and a way to help the students. They tried many different designs, through lots of kinds of materials and finally came up with a sustainable and unique design.

The abacus was a new-found invention that helped students strive in the subject of maths. The people hand crafted wooden beads with holes to fit in wooden sticks. These sticks would then go through the holes of the beads and then more beads will be added onto the stick thus creating a rod. After the creation of the rods, they would create a foundation for the rod to stick into the holes of a bar. After creating bars around the rods, the abacus was formed.

After the creation of the abacus, it was a new thing to people. So when the teachers started learning about this very immaculate and weird tool, they had to learn how to use it before telling students what to do. So the teachers went to courses after courses just to learn and tell the students how to do arithmetic problems with it.

After the teachers went through a few years of training and dedication, they finally mastered the use of the abacus, the teachers then taught the students how to use and solve problems with this useful tool. It took a while for the students to find out how to use it. But after some trial and error, they eventually knew it worked.

Months went by, and more and more people started using the abacus. Even mathematicians started to use this interesting invention. One day, a foreigner came to China to look at all the things that were new and that's when he discovered this new invention. He quickly asked how to use the abacus and after learning for himself, he quickly went back to his hometown and told his people about this.

Lots and lots of people started to know not just in China, but also in other countries. These people started to get jealous and wanted to steal the abacus for themselves. So the Albion (The ancient UK) started a war with ancient China. But not to claim land, it was a fight for the abacus.

The Albion fought through the rivers of China. They invaded China and raids went on for years. People had to flee to different places just to escape from the war. When the war was at its climax, both countries looked neck and neck. But in the end, China won the war and they got to keep their abacus. On top of that, Albion's king had to pay some gold in order to repair the damage that they have caused in China.

The abacus passed through generations and went through a lot of changes from before. The original designs have changed and the materials have changed over time, but even though there were changes, lots of people still liked this invention.

Even though this invention is not very useful today calculators have helped more people and students to calculate even more efficiently and even more accurately, it is still a very interesting and fun tool to learn about.

Invention of Chinese characters

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Nair, Dhruv – 10

Language is a medium of effective communication. Why is it that despite most developed nations adopting an alphabetized system, China is one of the few developed countries still adopting a character-based writing system? I genuinely believe that there is an argument to be made that the Chinese character system is so ingenious that it ought to be considered one of China's greatest inventions. Furthermore, when one sees a system that has effectively remained unchanged from the Shang dynasty to the present day, one has to appreciate the creative mastermind behind its invention. And so, I would like to share the story of the legendary Cang Jie, the inventor of the first set of Chinese characters.

Let us travel back to around 2600 BC, the period of the Yellow Emperor. During that era, every year, the palace was responsible for fairly distributing bags of grain to all the provinces in the Kingdom. For a long time, knots on ropes were used to remember counts, but this was unreliable and easy to manipulate. Soon, the officials became knotted up trying to resolve the issues of their knotting system. Luckily, a brilliant man named Cangjie served as an official historian of the Yellow Emperor. Legend has it that he had four eyes because nothing missed his attention.

One day, the Yellow Emperor called Cang Jie to his palace.

The Yellow Emperor said: "Cangjie, you are a very wise man; that is why I chose you to help me with my problem. I am unhappy with this rope-tying method we use to distribute the grains among the provinces. I order you to find a better way to separate the grains. If you succeed, you and your family will be honoured by me."

Cangjie says, "Oh, Great Emperor, I will not disappoint you." Cangjie bowed low, and he departed back to his hometown.

Cang Jie was pondering this problem and wandering about, lost in thought.

One day, as Cang Jie was walking in the forest, he overheard three hunters arguing at a fork ahead in the road. As he moved closer to them, he heard the first hunter say, "Let's take this path on the left. That is the footprint of an antelope." The second hunter shook his head, dissatisfied, and said, "No! Let's take the path in the middle. That is the footprint of a deer." The third hunter disagreed most vehemently and said, "No! No! Let's take the path of the right. That is the footprint of a tiger. It is bigger than a deer or an antelope, and we could easily trap it if we work together."

Cang Jie was ecstatic as he realised that he had a solution to his problem. The hunters had not seen the antelope, the deer, or the tiger, but they could recognize the animal from its unique footprint. He studied the footprints of birds and animals, shadows made by people, and other objects in nature, and in this way, the Chinese character system was born. It was compact, meaningful to ordinary people, and, most importantly, an effective communication strategy.

The Yellow Emperor was impressed with Cang Jie's idea. He sent messages to all his government officials to learn and understand Cang Jie's list of symbols. This set of symbols is the first known list of Chinese characters recorded in history.

Contrary to alphabetized languages such as English, where a word like cacoethes might be readable but obscure in meaning, Chinese language characters possess the opposite ability. Isn't that the purpose of a language, anyway, to effectively convey the meaning of what you want to say?

In this new information era, I look forward to more inventions based on the foundation of the Chinese character system. It is truly a system beyond borders.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Siu, Hannah – 10

Today, we had an interesting class about inventions.

“Class, you’ve probably heard of the four great inventions of Ancient China: papermaking, printing, gunpowder, and the compass. But today, we are going to learn about another 2 different inventions – kites and silk production. Let’s start with the learning about kites.” Ms Lee was teaching us inventions of Ancient China.

“Let’s guess which year the kites were invented. How about you, Chloe?” Ms Lee asked.

“Hmm... I’m guessing kites were invented around 2800 years ago, so the 5th century BC?”

“That is correct! Good job!”

Ms Lee said the invention of kites in ancient China is a fascinating achievement that dates back over 2,000 years. Chinese inventors discovered that by attaching lightweight materials such as bamboo and silk to a frame, they could create objects that could fly in the air. Kites were invented by Mozi (also Mo Di, or Mo Ti) and Lu Ban. Kites can be made of simple materials, such as wool, cloth, or paper. The first kites appeared in China. When most people think about the Chinese skies, all they can think of is a polluted atmosphere. But the Chinese skies have hosted a myriad of flying objects through the years. Kites were exclusive to China for many years before the knowledge of how to make and use them advanced. The period saw many attacks from foreign powers, as well as civil unrest. Kites played a role in providing military intelligence for the Chinese forces.

“Can you share some fun facts about kites?” Lisa eagerly asked.

“Kites played a role in providing intelligence for the Chinese military force. They were first made to measure distances, providing information to aid moving large armies across difficult terrain. They were used to calculate and record wind readings, similar to ship flags at sea. Another fun fact about kites is that they were used to drive off bad luck. Historical accounts detail the use of kites during the Qing dynasty (1644–1912), when spirituality and superstitions were rife, to drive off personal bad luck. Kites were flown through the sky and strings released, somewhat ceremonially, to ensure luck and improved health. There is also folklore describing how kites were created by ancient Chinese people to commemorate their dead loved ones and friends.”

“Now, let’s talk about silk production. The people living in the region were the inventors of silk fabric, and no other culture discovered this process independently. The history of silk making stretches back 6,000 years, and the earliest example of silk fabric that has been discovered dates from 3,630 BC in Henan. Silk cloth manufacturing was well advanced during the Shang Dynasty (1600–1046 BC) era. An interesting fact about silk is that according to a legend mentioned in Confucius’ ‘Odes’. Roughly 2700 years BC, Princess Si–Ling–Chi the wife of Emperor Huang–Ti, discovered the secret of silk by picking up a cocoon that had fallen from a tree into her hot tea. The Chinese then figured out the important stages in the silk making process. Are there any questions you want to ask me about silk production?”

“How can we use silk in our daily lives?” Julius asked curiously. Turns out, besides clothing, silk has been and is used for tablecloths, pillowcases, bedding, wall hangings, table runners, and even comforters. It is also used in surgical sutures, parachutes, upholstery, bike tires as well as bridal and formal attire. Silk is one of the most insulating natural fibres. This means that silk clothing is great at keeping you warm. Silk also has an incredible warmth–to–thickness ratio. Even a thin and lightweight silk fabric can keep you warm when worn close to the skin. This is why silk fabrics are a popular choice for insulating clothing, especially undergarments. Now, let’s talk about some fun facts of silk production. Silk is a luxurious fabric that has been valued for centuries for its smooth texture and shiny appearance. While many people are familiar with silk, there are several things about this fabric that most people don't know. Silk has a long and fascinating history that dates back to ancient China. According to legend, the discovery of silk dates back to around 2700 BC when a Chinese empress discovered silkworms and began to cultivate them for their silk. For centuries, the Chinese kept the secrets of silk production a closely guarded secret. But eventually, the

knowledge of silk-making spread across Asia and then to Europe. Silk became a highly prized commodity and was traded along the famous Silk Road, which connected China to the Middle East and Europe. Today, China is still the largest producer of silk, followed by India, Thailand, and Uzbekistan. I bet you didn't know silk is naturally hypoallergenic and antimicrobial! Silk is not only beautiful and luxurious, but it also has some surprising health benefits. One of the most significant benefits of silk is that it is naturally hypoallergenic, meaning that it is less likely to cause allergic reactions. This is because silk does not attract dust mites or other allergens. In addition to being hypoallergenic, silk is also naturally antimicrobial. This means that it has properties that help to prevent the growth of bacteria and fungi. As a result, silk is an excellent choice for people who are prone to skin infections or who have sensitive skin. The last fact I will be sharing today is that silk is said to be the strongest natural textile in the world! Despite its delicate appearance, silk is surprisingly strong. In fact, silk is said to be the strongest natural textile in the world. Silk fibres are incredibly fine, but they are also incredibly strong which makes them ideal for use in textiles. Silk has a unique combination of strength and elasticity, which means that it can withstand a lot of wear and tear without losing its shape or tearing. This makes it an excellent choice for clothing and other items that are subject to a lot of wear and tear."

And that was the end of our class, it was very interesting and I learnt a lot about ancient Chinese inventions!

New Tales of China Inventions

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Wong, Aiden Rex – 10

Once upon a time, in China, there was a little girl named Xiao Mei who lived with her mum and dad. When she was eleven years old, she had to do all the housework herself because her parents were very busy and she hated doing it, so one day she decided to invent a cleaning robot and started to draw it on a piece of paper. The robot would be able to do all the general housework, for example it could cook food, make the beds, wash the dishes and many other household chores. This robot could help other families too.

She decided to study engineering, science and technology. She worked and studied very hard and by the time she was 25 years old, she finally became an engineer. She started a company and employed very clever and intelligent people to invent the cleaning robot. After many years of research and development, they finally created the cleaning robot with the latest AI self learning microchip. They created a robot that was very friendly and helpful very good at doing housework. These robots would be able to think for themselves in the future. Xiao Mei decided to name the robot “Cleaning Friend”.

Xiao Mei ‘s company decided to mass produce “Cleaning Friend” for Chinese families, every family in China could afford to buy a “Cleaning Friend” robot. The cleaning robot became a huge success, Xiao Mei’s company sold 10 million “Cleaning Friend” robots.

However, after many years of success, something bad happened with the robots. All of a sudden, all of the “Cleaning Friend” robots started to think for themselves and stopped listening to their owner’s commands because the robots didn’t want to work for anyone anymore and shut themselves down. Xiao Mei’s company decided to collect all of the “Cleaning Friend” robots and recycle them. All of the owners got their money back. They decided to do all the housework by themselves. It’s better to rely on each other in the family than rely on a useless robot to share the housework chores.

Through this story, I wanted to tell a tale of a Chinese invention that failed and how Chinese families can help each other with simple household chores.

The Incredible Invention: The Story of Paper

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Wu, Aden – 10

Once upon a time, in the ancient land of China, there lived a curious and imaginative fifth-grade student named Wei. Wei loved to read and write, but books were scarce in his village, and the few that existed were expensive and difficult to obtain.

One day, while exploring an old library, Wei tripped upon an ancient book that spoke of a remarkable invention—a way to turn ordinary materials into a thin, writable surface called paper. Wei's eyes sparkled with excitement as he read about the possibilities this invention held.

Driven by his passion for learning and a desire to share knowledge with others, Wei went on a quest to uncover the secrets of papermaking. He sought out the village elder, Grandpa Zhao, known for his wisdom and knowledge of ancient crafts.

Under Grandpa Zhao's guidance, Wei discovered that paper was originally made from the bark of mulberry trees. Eager to try it for himself, Wei collected the fallen bark from the trees surrounding his village. He soaked the bark in water, pounded it with a wooden mallet, and then spread it out to dry in the warm sun.

To his amazement, Wei saw that the bark transformed into a delicate, smooth material. It was just like the ancient book had described! Wei's heart improved with pride as he realized he had made his first sheet of paper.

Excited to share his newfound invention with the village, Wei organized a small gathering. He demonstrated how to make paper, explaining each step with enthusiasm. The villagers watched in awe as Wei carefully spread the pulp and created thin sheets of paper.

With their own hands, the villagers began experimenting with the paper, writing messages and drawing pictures. They marveled at the smoothness of the surface and how easily the ink adhered to it.

Word of Wei's incredible invention quickly spread beyond the village. Scholars and merchants from nearby towns flocked to witness this groundbreaking discovery. Wei's paper became highly sought after, and people began using it for writing letters, creating artwork, and keeping records.

As the years passed, the art of papermaking spread throughout China. Wei's invention revolutionized the way people communicated, making knowledge accessible to all. Schools were established, and students eagerly scribbled their thoughts and dreams on sheets of paper. The written word became a powerful tool, connecting people from different regions and cultures.

Wei's invention also had a profound impact on trade and commerce. Paper was used to record transactions, making business dealings more efficient. It became the backbone of China's economic growth, paving the way for advancements in various industries.

Wei's humble village transformed into a bustling center of paper production, with workshops and artisans dedicated to perfecting the craft. The village became known far and wide, and people traveled from distant lands to learn the art of papermaking.

Today, as we hold a sheet of paper in our hands, let us remember the remarkable story of Wei and his quest to unlock the secrets of paper. Let us cherish the power of this invention, which brought knowledge, creativity, and progress to China and the world.

Wei's invention of paper stands as a testament to the ingenuity and perseverance of the human spirit. It reminds us that even the simplest ideas can have far-reaching impacts, shaping the course of history and connecting us across time and space.

The Power of Gunpowder

St. Margaret's Coeducational English Secondary and Primary School, Yip, Elliot – 10

Once upon a time in ancient China, there was a clever, little boy named John. He lived in a small village surrounded by beautiful mountains and rivers. He loved playing outside with his friends and exploring nature. One day, while John was playing near a river, he saw something shiny underwater. It was a small rock that glowed brightly in the sunlight.

As John wondered what the shiny rock was, he eagerly picked it up and ran back home with excitement in his heart. Bursting through the door, he found his grandpa sitting by the fireplace and enjoying a nice, hot cup of tea. "Grandpa, look what I found! It's a shiny rock! What does it do? Will it give me super powers?" Grandpa smiled warmly, and took the rock from John's hand. He examined it carefully. "This, my dear boy, this is not an ordinary rock. It is called, sulphur," Grandpa explained. "Sulphur is a special substance that can do amazing things." John asked him, "what kind of things? Will it explode into a wild and cute puppy?"

Grandpa chuckled softly and began to tell John a fascinating story. He spoke of alchemists, wise men who spent their lives searching for secrets of the universe. They mix different ingredients together, hoping to create something extraordinary. And one day, they discovered a magical combination. "They found that when sulphur, charcoal and saltpetre are mixed together in the right amounts, something incredible happens," Grandpa explained. "They called it gunpowder."

John was confused. "Gunpowder? What does it do, Grandpa?" Grandpa paused for a moment, enjoying the anticipation in John's eyes. "Well, my dear boy, when gunpowder is ignited, it creates a powerful explosion. It can be used to propel objects into the air or to create loud sounds and bright flashes. It's like magic!" John's imagination exploded as he imagined all the amazing things he could do with gunpowder. He dreamed of fireworks painting the sky with vibrant colours and loud booms, bringing joy to everyone in the village. He dreamed of firecrackers that would make people laugh and forget their worries. He dreamed of people being surrounded by many beautiful colours as they watched with wide eyes.

Determined to bring his dreams to life, John asked his Grandpa to teach him how to make gunpowder.

A Brewed Journey to the Past

St. Mary's Canossian School, Chan, Ngo Chi Eugenia – 11

“Ugh, where am I now?” I thought to myself miserably. I was in a basement with nothing to do and had no one by my side. I was lost and desperate for a way out, but the portal was closed. I had nowhere to run...

“Today was supposed to be a field trip organised by the school, now it turns out to be a history lesson.” Looking at the downpour outside the classroom window, I groaned to my brother, Chase, who was sitting beside me. He was a straight A student and a big history buff. “Shush! I’m trying to concentrate in class,” he snapped, clearly feeling annoyed.

“Class,” started Mr. Parkinson, “today we are going to meet a famous person from China — Shen Nung. He was the person who made tea.” he said excitedly. He was a tea person, he drank tea at any time of the day, just like my brother.

I was depressed. I HATED tea. Suddenly, I felt something in my pocket, “What is this?” I asked Chase, he looked at it and shrugged. I was about to ask Mr. Parkinson when the machine started beeping crazily and a red button was flashing. I quickly pressed the button down and released it, anticipating for what was coming up next.

The next minute, I woke up lying on a hard bed made out of straws and rocks. I was in ancient China! An emperor was just sitting beside my bedroom window, behind him was a servant carrying a pot of hot water beneath a *Camellia sinensis* (I can recognise the flower because I am a science enthusiast.) Some leaves from the tip of the tree were suddenly blown into the pot of water by a gust of wind. That emperor decided to try the infusion that his servant had accidentally created. “What a tasty drink!” exclaimed the delighted emperor. “Tell everyone in the kingdom to try this drink immediately.”

I was shocked, this was what Mr. Parkinson was talking about. He should have told us in a more interesting way. Oh wait... that emperor was Shen Nung! Then, a portal appeared mysteriously behind me, and Chase stepped out of it, with a shocking face. “OMG! Is that... Shen Nung?” he cried. I nodded awkwardly and gestured for him to try to talk to the emperor.

Chase started to walk towards the emperor when a few guards suddenly grabbed him and pulled him towards a basement. As we went down, I saw a bunch of filthy people, they were the prisoners! I gasped, everyone turned to look at us. Our clothes were different from others, we were wearing shorts, T-shirts and sports shoes. On the contrary, they were wearing black cotton shoes and black Hanfu. We definitely looked out of place. After that, we were thrown into a prison cell separately. “Help! Help!” I cried, desperate for someone to save me.

“There’s no use,” piped up someone next door, “the walls are soundproof. If you were tortured, nobody would hear you scream.” Suddenly, shivering wind blew on the back of my neck. I heard the footsteps as they became louder and louder. Another creak, another shuffle, just down the corridor. Now only seconds away. The torches made its shadow dance on the walls, the silhouette moved towards me, revealing a skinny, fragile girl. My heart skipped a beat, “Oh, sorry. I forgot to introduce myself.” The girl apologised. “My name is Andrea. I was caught stealing ten years ago. I have the most knowledge of this prison in the kingdom, including the emperor.”

I started stammering, but soon I gave up. I was at a loss for words. I sat down on a patch of hay, exhausted. How could I live here? I searched my pockets for the time machine. Found it! I caught the machine in my hand and gently studied it.

“Oh! The way is easy, it's just simple math.”

I started turning the time machine into 11-12-2023 when Andrea took it away, "What is this?" she asked. Although I knew she was just curious, I still snatched it back. "It's nothing." I said, I was furious. But before I could react, the machine had already sucked me into the portal. 'Ugh, where am I now?' I thought to myself miserably, I was in a basement with nothing to do and had no one by my side. I was lost and desperate for a way out, the portal was closed. I had nowhere to run to, it was so lonely. I took out the machine and started to turn it back to the date, but then I forgot what day it was. I soon found a door and went out of the hole. After that, I hired a taxi back to school. I asked Mr. Parkinson what the answer was, and he told me quickly.

I swiftly took out the time machine and twisted it to the right date. At last, we were safe back at home, acting as if nothing had happened.

Unwanted Disease Meets Wanted Curer

St. Mary's Canossian School, Cheung, Tsan Ka – 10

In 3171, the world was still like where we live back then. But something was different, babies were born with different potential superpowers. Somebody could carry things vigorously up to 300 kgs. Somebody could fly up in the sky which could speed up express delivery. Everybody could do exceptional things. However, one thing had not changed at all. Human lives were still very short. What's more, cancer was still one of the most frightening, tragical diseases in the world.

Torry Wa, an ordinary Chinese boy who was born in Hong Kong lived by the seaside. His parents were fishermen. Luckily, he discovered his superpower when he was a child. He could talk to animals – real animals. Torry got along with a whale shark, which was the gentlest whale shark in the world. He named his lovely whale shark companion Shasha. Both of them spent a lot of memorable time together.

Unfortunately, Torry's mum got blood cancer. When Torry heard this news, he was very sad. He went to the seaside and found Shasha to express his grief. "Shasha! My mum has cancer. I feel miserable!" mourned Torry. "Oh! It is heartbreaking to hear that. But don't worry Torry, my blood can cure cancer. Put my blood into a cup of liquid and give it to your mum." To give Torry some blood, Shasha bit its tail. It was painful to see Shasha bleeding, but Torry had no choice. He collected the blood, then mixed it with some grape juice and let his mum drink. After a few days, his mum made a miraculous recovery.

Torry wondered why the blood of a whale shark could cure his mum. He started to study hard on this topic at school. The successful story and research of Mr. Li Min Chiu inspired him. Mr. Li Min Chiu was the first therapeutic scientist to demonstrate that the use of chemotherapy was able to cure metastatic, malignant cancer. Torry followed Mr. Li's footsteps to discover ways to prevent and cure cancer. During his collage years, Torry specialized in cells and nerves as well as Chinese medicine. He built up a research team investigating how cancer could be prevented or even killed by a whale shark's DNA and how to strengthen one's body foundation during cancer treatment. He tested over thousands of whale sharks for twenty years and discovered that less than 0.1% of sharks got cancer. Their special DNA, bones, blood, etc. were the best medicine to cure cancer.

However, Torry did not want to announce his research result to the public because he was afraid that his friend Shasha and other whale sharks would be caught and killed for medical purposes. He decided to invent a product to replicate whale sharks' genes in a more environmentally friendly way.

Three months later, he succeeded in using a combination of Chinese herbs which had similar effects on preventing and curing cancer. It was known as Cancer Killer. Later, a multinational company received the news and wanted to buy off his research result with a rocket high price. However, Torry said NO to the offer.

On the contrary, he sent his research result to the Chinese government but did not ask for any money. His selfless behaviour touched everybody. The selfless Chinese government did spread this medicine to every corner of the world to complement Torry's selfless contribution and his invention cured all cancer patients on the earth. This is not just saving a person but a family, which can reduce the grievance and sadness in the world.

Eventually, Cancer Killer was promoted all over the world, and Torry won the Nobel Prize in Medicine!

The Compass Conundrum

St. Mary's Canossian School, Chiu, Sum Yu – 12

When the sea became ward of their bodies, heaven became ward of their souls. For after deaths at sea the divine comes as healer and keeper.

1100 AD, during the prosperous Song Dynasty in China.

In the dimly lit room cluttered with maps, scrolls and enigmatic artefacts, a figure concealed in darkness paced back and forth, lost in thought.

“The magnetic compass... a creation of immense power. With it, I can reshape the world, overthrow the emperor and seize control of the dynasty. But first, I must acquire it discreetly,” he murmured, his green eyes gleaming in the shadows.

As he contemplated his next move, footsteps echoed down the concrete walls. The figure cautiously released the safety of his gun.

“Who goes there?” he demanded.

“My lord, I bring news. A brilliant scholar named Shen Kuo has invented a magnetic compass that surpasses all others.”

“Shen Kuo, you say? Bring him to me. I want that compass in my possession. No one must stand in my way.”

Chapter 1:

Shen Kuo, a brilliant scholar and inventor, dedicated his life to unravelling the mysteries of the natural world. Intrigued by the celestial bodies, he sought to create a device aiding navigators in their treacherous sea journeys. Unbeknownst to him, his invention would alter humanity's course forever.

Years were spent studying the stars and experimenting with various materials. One fateful night, inspiration struck Shen Kuo as he gazed upon the firmament. Filled with anticipation, he hurried back to his workshop.

With unwavering determination, Shen Kuo fashioned a small yet powerful device – a magnetic compass. Its delicately balanced needle, floating upon a pivot, unerringly pointed to the North Star. Shen Kuo marvelled at his creation, understanding the immense possibilities it held for navigation's future.

Chapter 2:

In a bustling market teemed with vibrant colours and exotic aromas, peddlers hawked their wares, enticing passers-by with silken fabrics, fragrant spices and delicate porcelain. The air was filled with the symphony of bartering and laughter, creating a lively tapestry of ancient commerce. Shen Kuo approached his old friend Li Wei, a merchant known for his connections and influence.

“Li Wei, my friend! I have invented a magnetic compass that will revolutionize navigation. With it, sailors will be able to traverse the seas with greater accuracy and safety,” Shen Kuo exclaimed.

Li Wei's eyes widened with excitement. “This is remarkable, Shen Kuo! We must share this invention with the world. It will transform the way we explore and trade.”

Li Wei sought the aid of Zhang Hao, an adventurous sailor captivated by the capabilities of the compass. Zhang Hao readily agreed to join Li Wei's cause. Together, they embarked on a daring journey to introduce the compass to the maritime world.

Chapter 3:

One night, they encountered a storm of unimaginable ferocity. The violent tempest tossed their ship like a rag doll, threatening to claim their lives. Just as they thought the worst was over, some mercenaries descended upon them.

Struggling to maintain his balance amidst the raging storm, Shen Kuo screamed, "Zhang Hao! No! Hold on, my friend!"

Zhang Hao roared above the crashing waves, "Shen Kuo, carry on without me! Don't let my sacrifice be in vain! The compass, Shen Kuo! We must protect it!"

"Shen Kuo, we must keep moving! We can't stay here! The mercenaries will kill us!" yelled Li Wei.

Tears welled up in Shen Kuo's eyes as he nodded in understanding. With a heavy heart, he left Zhang Hao behind, determined to honour his sacrifice.

Chapter 4:

After Shen Kuo sailed around Asia and told everyone about the compass, he delved into the heart of the conspiracy. His investigations led him to a mysterious figure known only as General Zhao, a puppet master who had orchestrated the entire plot to obtain the compass's secrets.

One day, he was given a mysterious letter, which said, 'Meet me at the imperial palace.'

In a hidden chamber within the imperial palace, Shen Kuo confronted General Zhao, his voice was firm with determination.

'So, you are General Zhao, the one who orchestrated this plot to obtain the compass's secrets,' Shen Kuo said.

General Zhao smirked, acknowledging Shen Kuo's deduction. 'Impressive, Shen Kuo. But it seems your journey ends here. Once I have the compass, I will have the means to claim what is rightfully mine.'

Defiantly, Shen Kuo responded, 'Your treachery ends now, Shadow. I will expose your plot to the emperor and ensure you face justice.'

General Zhao's capture followed and Shen Kuo stood before the emperor, presenting the evidence of General Zhao's wrongdoing.

The emperor's voice was stern as he addressed General Zhao. 'Shadow, your actions are unforgivable. You will face the consequences of your betrayal.'

General Zhao retorted, 'You may have won this battle, but the war is not over. The power of the compass will be mine.'

At last, Shen Kuo watched as the compass was kept safe. A smile crossed his face as he whispered, 'Zhang Hao, we have prevailed. The compass remains in the hands of those who will use it for the betterment of humanity.'

Chapter 5:

Shen Kuo, forever changed by the events that unfolded, continued his pursuit of knowledge and invention. Zhang Hao's sacrifice remained etched in his heart and he swore to protect the compass's legacy, ensuring its widespread use for the benefit of humanity.

The compass, a testament to human ingenuity, spread throughout the world, guiding explorers, traders and adventurers across vast oceans. It became a symbol of mankind's insatiable curiosity and its unyielding spirit to conquer the unknown.

A Dream or a Reality?

St. Mary's Canossian College, Fong, Hei Tung Natalie – 11

Once upon a time, there lived a girl named Emma who loved to wander about in her own backyard, catching butterflies with a net and inspecting the small creatures that crept around. One day, Emma found a sleek and shiny black box along with a note behind the bush. Reading aloud from the note, she whispered to herself, “You are one of the chosen ones. Inside the box is a pair of VR glasses 2. Just by wearing this pair of solar-powered glasses, you will never want to take it off!” Out of curiosity, Emma opened the box and saw a pair of white VR glasses. She put them on and gasped.

VR glasses 2 made it look like there was a transparent barrier between her and the world. However, she could still see and walk properly. She began to press a button that was at the top of the screen. Immediately, the screen switched to FaceTime. It even asked who she wanted to call! It seemed like the pair of glasses could work like an Apple gadget and call anyone anytime and anywhere she wanted. A giggle slipped out of her mouth. She was going to have a fun journey with this pair of glasses.

Emma pressed another button. This time, it opened an updated map and a compass, which allowed her to find her way. She twirled around, watching the compass moving round and round, like a roundabout. Then, she pressed a yellow button. Sheafs of paper floated up and down, finally settling on the screen. Then, there came a pen. However, that was no normal pen, instead it was a VR pen. As long as you talked or wrote anything in the air, the words you say or speak would magically appear on the sheaf of the transparent paper. This way, the VR glasses would be able to replace paper and pens, as well as saving the trees from being cut down.

As she continued pressing the buttons, she found a camera mode. Without thinking, she turned it on and a mirror with a button sprang up out of nowhere, making her scream loudly. Horrified, she clasped her hand over her mouth, hoping no one had been near enough to hear her loud scream. “Perhaps they think that it is a bird screeching its head off...” She thought to herself. Smiling slightly at her thoughts, she began to press the button absentmindedly, taking photos of herself in the process.

Suddenly, she saw a blaring red sign appearing right at the centre of the screen, saying that the battery was low. Frowning slightly, she took off the pair of VR glasses and looked at the note along with it. “Solar powered. Solar powered. Solar powered...” She murmured to herself. “Maybe I can charge it with some sunshine!” She put the VR glasses on the soft, grassy field and the pair of glasses lit up. Then, she wondered, “How about when it’s rainy or cloudy, can I charge the pair of glasses then?” She decided to put it to the test. She took the VR glasses into her room and closed the curtains. Then, she took out a torch from her drawer and shone a beam of light onto the VR glasses. The pair of glasses lit up just like before, but the light coming from the pair of glasses was dimmer than when the sun shone on it. She looked at the pair of VR glasses in a mixture of awe and glee.

“I didn’t realise that VR glasses were this useful!” Emma said to herself. She now knew that she could carry the pair of VR glasses around in her bag as they were very light and didn’t take up a lot of space. She had made up her mind to wear this pair of VR glasses every day, as she thought that it was a cool, fantastic and useful gadget.

“Hey Emma, wake up! Emma!” Emma woke up in an instance to her mother’s annoying shouts. She looked around for her pair of VR glasses, but couldn’t find them. “Perhaps that was a dream,” she thought and got out of bed. Little did she know, the pair of VR glasses was sitting at the back of her wardrobe at that very moment...

Marnie and Her Magic Stationery

St. Mary's Canossian College, Leung, Hei Yu – 12

It was a chilly winter morning. Everything in the yard withered. Leaves and petals were on the ground. Only the plum tree had tiny pink blossoms. Marnie sighed while she took out her ink brush and paper. She imagined the view of her yard during spring. She smiled and started painting it.

After a few days, the sky was dark and it rained heavily. Marnie looked at the gloomy sky and moaned, 'I wish the weather could be sunny like the day before yesterday.' Then she crawled back in bed. She felt sleepy. While she was sleeping, she dreamt of an old man. The old man looked like Cai Lun. 'Marnie, I hope you can help me to help the people in need using this paper. When I was at the palace, I didn't help the people. I even killed the emperor's grandmother – Song Noble Consort. Please, use the magic paper to help the needy.....' He faded away. Another man came soon after. Marnie exclaimed to herself, 'Oh! I learned about him in Chinese lesson too! He is Meng Tian.' Meng Tian sighed, 'In the past, people used to engrave on turtle shells or carve on bamboo slips. It was very inefficient as it took too long to write. To report to the emperor faster, I first invented a camel hair paintbrush and I found that it was actually helpful in painting and writing. I learned that we should never give up and think out of the box. Please combine this writing brush with the paper that Cai Lun gave to you. You can do wonders. Do not fail us!'

When Marnie woke up, she saw the paper from Cai Lun and the ink brush from Meng Tian on her hands. She was stunned to realise that it was not just a dream. She was confused, so she drew some candies on the paper with the ink brush to see what could happen. Marnie touched the candies after she painted them. She took one and it fell out of the painting into her hand. 'It's real!' She squealed ecstatically and popped the candy into her mouth. 'It's delicious too!'

She also remembered what Cai Lun and Meng Tian had said, 'Try to use them to help the people in need!' Marnie packed her ink brush and paper and left her house. It was a chilly day, and many homeless people were starving under the cold weather. Marnie also noticed that some of them were sick. Marnie took out her magic paper and ink brush and started painting vigorously. Thousands of food and warm clothes instantly appeared and she handed them out to the homeless people. She also drew some gold nuggets and distributed them as well. The people who Marnie helped were extremely grateful to her. They all said, 'No one cared about us except you!' Marnie smiled. Hearing those words from the people she helped made Marnie determined to help more people. She waved goodbye to them and continued to find other people to help.

Along her walk, Marnie heard a noise. 'Help!' She followed the voice and found a woman badly hurt by a horse. She had been trod on by a horse. Marnie was shocked! She asked her what happened. The old woman moaned painfully, 'I bought a pretty horse this morning and was ready to put my horse inside the stable when a male horse ran after the horse that I had bought. I tried to shoot it, but it kicked and stepped on me. Now, I have lost the horse I had bought since it ran away with the male horse.'

Marnie thought for a while then asked, 'How does your horse look like?' 'It was all white,' the old woman replied. Marnie drew the horse according to the old woman's description. When the picture was done, the horse jumped out of the paper, 'Neigh! Neigh!' The horse suddenly appeared in the stable. The woman jumped up and down shouting, 'Oh my! Thank you so much!' Marnie smiled. She took a brand-new key from the paper. 'Here are the key and a new lock for your stable.' Marnie was over the moon that she was able to help another person.

Marnie had become famous in the city. People would come and seek her out whenever they had a problem. Everyone asked Marnie to help because they all know she would always be willing to help whenever she could.

An Ink–Stained Dream about a Writing Brush

St. Mary's Canossian College, Lo, Yuet Hei – 11

I woke up from my sweet dream. I recalled it...

I travelled through an old place that I hadn't seen before after closing my eyes. I was astonished. There were temples and pavilions all around me, however, there was no one there. It was deserted. A brisk wind blew towards me that made me shiver. As I haven't been here before, I had to see where was here. I walked along the steep road. It became very spooky when I went through some tall trees. The trees covered the sun was shining softly. It was very frigid that I had to wrap myself in the coat.

Suddenly, I heard a sound that was very loud, 'No one believes me! I really can invent a writing brush! I just need to think of a solution!' I was curious and wanted to check out who was talking that loudly. When I pushed aside the branches in front of me, I saw that there was the general Meng Tian! I was shocked. I then remembered that our General Studies teacher had taught us a bit about Meng Tian but I was still unfamiliar with him.

Unexpectedly, he saw me and stared at me angrily. He said furiously, 'Why are you following me? You want to eavesdrop my secret? No way! Now go away, or else...' He then took out his sword from his back and smiled at me sharply. I shivered again and said, 'Mr. Meng Tian, I am very happy to see you. Please put away your sword and I can help you with your problem.' He looked at me suspiciously at first, but then he thought of the writing brush and put away the sharp sword. Then I started to talk, 'Okay Mr. Meng Tian. First, you might be curious why am I wearing a "grand" new pyjama that you haven't seen before, right?' The general nodded his head. I continued, 'I don't know where I am now as I travelled here suddenly. I need you to answer all my questions and I can help you.' Meng Tian nodded his head again and answered me. I then knew that I was in the Qin Dynasty and the king was Qin Shi Huang. He said that the king couldn't help him with his invention, so he went to the woods and had a temper.

After knowing everything, I smirkingly said, 'Instead of dipping your sword tassel in ink, you should hunt animals in the forest for their fur. Once you tie the fur to a bamboo stick, you can use it to write!' In a trice, we set off to the forest. He sat on his horse and pulled me up. He rode it as fast as a rocket! I was very surprised. Brisk wind blew towards my face, the pain made me shiver. I used my coat to cover my head and my body, preventing to be sick as it was easy to be sick under such a cold weather. At last, we became friends and I help him with the birth of a writing brush.

I hope in my other dream, I can meet him again!

China's Amazing Future Invention – A Green Vehicle above the Clouds

St. Mary's Canossian College, Tsang, Yi Ching – 11

China is a country known for its incredible inventions, and we Chinese have come up with something amazing for the future. We are creating a special transportation system that will make it super easy to travel in the air. That means that people can fly above the ground, and the land can be used for other purposes. It is an awesome invention because it helps to reduce pollution and make the environment cleaner.

One day, a group of friends named Lily, Tom, and Emily were talking about the future of transportation.

Lily said excitedly, "I heard that China is working on a new invention that will let people travel in the air. Can you believe that?"

Tom exclaimed, "Wow! That sounds so cool! Imagine being able to fly above all the traffic and reach our destinations faster."

Emily echoed, "Yeah, and it will also help reduce pollution since the flying vehicles will use clean energy. That is really important for our future generations."

Lily cheered enthusiastically, "Definitely! I can't wait to see how this new air traffic system will work. It will be like something out of a sci-fi movie!"

The new transportation system will use special flying devices that are powered by a sustainable aviation fuel known as biofuel. It will be made from used cooking oil. The biofuel will produce less carbon dioxide, which helps slow down climate change. It will be safe and efficient, allowing people to quickly move around without getting stuck in traffic. In other words, it means less time wasted and more time for fun activities.

The friends continued to discuss the benefits of this new invention.

Tom continued, "You know, this new air traffic system will also make the city less noisy. No more honking cars and loud engines! We will even hear the birds chirping the rustling of the leaves while walking on the street!"

Emily gasped in amazement, "That's true, Tom. It will be so peaceful and quiet. Plus, we won't have to worry about finding parking spaces anymore! Car parks will be converted to theme parks and sports stadiums so that more people will come visit our motherland, China!"

Lily was astonished. She raved ecstatically, "I can't wait to try it out. It will be like flying in the sky, just like superheroes! Now, all we need to do is to take actions to preserve our world and promote green living."

The friends imagined themselves soaring through the air, feeling the wind in their hair and seeing the city from a whole new perspective. They were excited about the future and all the possibilities this invention would bring.

In conclusion, China's amazing future invention of an air traffic system will revolutionize the world of transportation. People will be able to fly above the ground, which greatly help reducing traffic congestion, saving time and protecting the environment by using eco-friendly energy. It will be an incredible experience that the friends couldn't wait to be a part of.

Into The New World: FastgrowPill from China

St. Mary's Canossian College, Yu, Tsoi Sin – 11

One day, I woke up in a new place. I didn't know where I was at first. Until I saw some crops, I knew where I was, I was on a farm which was in China. In China, it was raining cats and dogs. There were many thunderstorms and lightning. Moreover, it was extremely windy.

At that point, I looked at the crops on the farm. Nearly every single crop was dead. They all were damaged badly. Then, I went to discover a town which was in China.

There, I noticed that a lot of people did not have enough food to eat. They were all skinny and weak. In addition, I noticed that the farmers in China worked extremely hard to plant the crops. Even if the weather was very hot or cold. They even needed to work during typhoons.

Afterwards, I found a room where there was a working computer. I did some research on the Internet. I found out that since crops take more than two days to grow, many people could not eat enough food. As a result, more than 345 million people didn't have enough food to eat every day in 2023. 1 in 9 people go to bed hungry each night. About one-quarter of the world's population now struggles to eat safe, nutritious and sufficient food.

After a while, I found a picture. It was a famous person. He was the founder of hybrid rice varieties. I knew who he was. He was Yuan Longping. I read a book in the library which was the story of Yuan Longping in the past.

At that moment, I knew that I had to create an invention. It was a pill that could help the crops in the farm. I immediately made a prototype. Next, I went improving the pill. Finally, it was made.

I took the pill to the farmers. They were surprised as well as quite stunned. They all asked me in suspicion, "Can that tiny pill really help our crops?" I answered, "Yes, it can. The pill might be small. However, it is very useful. Additionally, the pill is waterproof. The pill can protect the farmers' crops during hails, rainstorms, earthquakes and tsunamis. You can put the pill with the vegetables or fruits together in the soil. Water the pill just as normal as growing the vegetables and fruits. Then, the next day, all of the plants will be grown. Moreover, the food can be eaten right away."

The farmers were all very impressed by the pill. They tried to use the pill at once. They put the pill inside the soil with the crops. On the next day, the crops grew very quickly and were ready to harvest.

In the end, people in China did not suffer from not eating enough food. Other countries heard about my invention, the pill which can help the farmers' crops. They all wanted it. I created more, more and more of the pill. I renamed it into FastgrowPill. My FastgrowPill had helped many people in the whole world. Fewer and fewer people suffer from the lack of food.

The Rise of the Other Sun

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School, Chong, Tsz Lun – 12

Speeding along the vast plains of China, the high speed rail travelled silently, without a sound of rattling wheels or billowing steam of traditional trains. The scenery of the plains flashed in front of the window, allowing me to catch glimpses of windmills, greenhouses, farming vehicles and the darkened sky. Swirls and patches of ink-black clouds filled the sky, lightning bolted and thunder boomed, while the train remained untroubled. Instantly, a streak of blinding lightning pierced the sky and struck the train. The train tilted dangerously, the light tubes on the ceiling went out consecutively with soft clicks barely heard over the screams and shrieks of panic from the passengers. However, my heart skipped a beat as I became aware that instead of slowing down to a halt, the damaged train accelerated to breakneck speed as the carriage plunged into darkness with a deafening crash.

Wondering how much time had passed, I realized that I was lying on a solid ground. Barely had I wished for light than warm, soothing rays filled the carriage. I glanced around, paralyzed in shock as I found myself in a different train! I peered out of the window, my jaw dropping --- on the field, interlocking railways knitted a web on the farmlands, cars extending wings of planes soared in the blue sky... my gaze followed the cars to the sky and I nearly had a heart attack --- there were two blazing suns! I muttered, "I must not stay on this mysterious train anymore." Turning around a corner, I found a boy, about my age waiting on a platform and approached him. "How can I help?" He greeted me with a friendly wave. I stuttered, "Excuse me, I want to ask..." I had three questions: where I was, when I was and why on Earth there were two suns." "Oh, You're here in Chengdu, Sichuan, in Year 2045, and that—" he pointed to the suns, "---one of the suns was artificially created by the China Technology Development Department two years ago, and was launched into space to orbit the Earth. The excessive content of carbon dioxide and tritium in the atmosphere are converted into heat that can reach one hundred million degrees Celsius. My father was one of the lead directors of this project and explained to me that the purpose of the artificial sun is to stabilize sunlight supply to grow crops, while alleviating the severity of global warming caused by the imbalance of gases in the atmosphere." I nodded and pondering what to do when he called, "Wait, who are you? You don't seem to be around here... Did you accidentally time travel?" I turned and explained my situation that I came from year 2024. The boy grinned and offered, "I might be able to find someone who can help you. I'm Tony, by the way. You can be transported in time at the Beijing Laboratory, where I am going to visit my father." "I'm Julian." I introduced myself as a vactrain, a super speed train, arrived at the platform and we boarded the next-gen vehicle departing for Beijing.

The journey from Chengdu to Beijing took us only forty-five minutes by the vactrain, which was completely computer-controlled and travelled on magnetic forces in an enclosed vacuum tube to reduce air resistance. As the train whizzed past the farms, I noticed a bizarre sight: farms were divided into sections, and though they appear to grow under one sky, some of the crops were blown by powerful wind while others were spattered with rain, or stoked by a miniature flaming sun. A quizzical expression appeared on my face and I asked Tony, "That is the Ecosystem Independence Program," he replied, "using saved up rainwater as man-caused rain, and solar panels are to start wind, creating a copy of different weather in order to foster growth of crops, and therefore China will not face famine. My home has installed a miniscule version of this facility." I gazed at the farms and wondered "How rapidly has

China developed in twenty years?” The new inventions of China are utterly impressive and have solved numerous problems, taking the lead in different scopes in the world.

An hour or so later, the vehicle skidded to a stop in Beijing Station and we walked to the laboratory. We hovered, as skateboards like drones drifted around and carried pedestrians barely an inch above the ground. This method reduced the friction between skateboards and the ground, increasing the speed of skateboards, therefore cutting down energy usage. The air of the city was more refreshing and cleaner than I remembered, and no sooner had the question formed in my mind that a gigantic transparent orb filled with dense smog transferred to a tower through a tube, the smog was released through the tube and the pressure of the gas moved a windmill in the glass tower, while a panel on top showed the amount of electricity. The facility was obviously converting harmful air into useful energy by utilizing air pressure to generate electricity. We entered the laboratory, which was a towering, hulking structure. In the hall, there were a dozen narrow tubes that could fit only one person at a time. I stepped into the tube and instantly rocketed up. Tony landed next to me and I followed him as he dashed off to find his dad.

We soon found his father, who was setting up the time machine and expecting my arrival, “Julian, welcome to the China Technology Development Department—— the core of all China’s inventions, but I unfortunately do not have time to show you around today. The other end of the time tunnel is your time dimension and thank you for accompanying my son. I wish you a fine journey back.” Tony and his dad waved goodbye. I stepped into the tunnel and Tony’s father exclaimed, “We will see each other again —— one day, right here.” I plummeted into the abyss before having time to consider his words. A split second later, I fell down on my seat on a train, and for a second I feared the time travel had not succeeded. I clambered to the window, watching the clouds floating away and revealing one single dazzling sun. I heaved a sigh of relief.

Nine years later, in an early morning, I set off for the Beijing Laboratory to report to work by train. As I once again gazed at the single sun, imagining another hovering nearby. I understand what Tony’s father meant —— I would join the project of “the Other Sun” at the laboratory and contribute to the technological achievement of China. Come to think of it, I was probably in the same department the first time I visited the laboratory. Isn’t this a miracle?

Automated Dim Sum Maker

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School, Lee, Cheuk Man Sherman – 12

The morning sun bathed everything in its golden embrace. Its warm rays spread across the land like a comforting blanket. The crisp autumn air was breezing. Some of the leaves had changed to red and yellow outfits. Ming and Qi were on their way to school after a long weekend.

“Good morning, Ming! How’s your weekend?” Qi greeted her friend cheerfully.

“I had a great weekend. It was the birthday of my grandfather. We had an early morning walk at the park with him and grandmother, followed by his favourite Chinese dim sum for lunch, like shrimp dumpling, siu mai, turnip cake...” Ming shared with his best friend about his birthday celebration with family.

“I love dim sum, too! My favourite is spring roll!” shouted Qi excitedly.

“So do my grandparents! We then watched a Chinese opera. For dinner, Aunt Ping prepared all the favourite dishes of my grandparents at her home, like soya source chicken, steamed fish, dumplings... and “Shou Bao” (the Chinese birthday bun). As you know, Aunt Ping enjoys cooking and she cooks well. Most importantly is that she knows about the taste and preference of my grandparents. Also, she is health conscious. She knows what kind of food suits for elderly.” Ming licked his lips while he thought about the scrumptious food.

“I wish my uncle and aunt is a marvelous chef like Aunt Ping. We usually dine at Chinese restaurants with grandparents. It would be great if someone is good at cooking Chinese food or even dim sum in our family,” signed Qi.

Ding! Dong! The bell rang. Ming and Qi raced like horses back to their classroom. Qi woke up late that morning and she missed her breakfast. Her tummy rumbled and she thought about the Chinese dim sum.

After a long and busy day, school ended. Qi dragged her tiring legs back home after two sessions of basketball training. On her way back home, she walked past a food store selling Chinese dim sum take-away. Many elderly were queuing for the afternoon tea discounted dim sum.

“The dim sum smells really nice and elderly always like them. Wouldn’t it be great if there is a dim sum machine at home? Just as simple as a toaster, sandwich maker or rice cooker?” Qi wondered herself. “But now, let me buy a roast pork bun to fill up my growling tummy,” grinned Qi.

Being inspired by the thought of dim sum machine, Qi started reading Science books about the structure and mechanism of different home cooking appliances. During her leisure time, she also broadened her horizon by researching and studying about food, starting with the nutritious value, cooking method and the match with other food. Moreover, she talked to lots of the friends of her grandparents who could share valuable insights and knowledge about the culture and tradition of Chinese dim sum with her. Their sharing was treasure to Qi.

Qi often shared her thought and ideas with Ming who encouraged and supported her a lot. He also arranged Qi to meet Aunt Ping for understanding more about the practical difficulties and concerns in cooking. Further, Aunt Ping also shared her knowledge and experience about Chinese tea with Qi.

“A cup of fragrant Chinese tea is the best partner with dim sum, yet you must understand the taste and texture of the tea and how they match with different dim sum,” Aunt Ping shared her thoughts with Qi.

“No wonder tea is always served with Chinese dim sum at Chinese restaurants. There is a long way for me to learn. I hope that I can invent an automated, user-friendly and versatile Chinese dim sum machine which can be used at home, at affordable price by everyone. If possible, I would like to share this invention to other parts of the world such that they know about this delicate and delicious Chinese dim sum,” smiled Qi with fulfillment and confidence.

Time Traveling Journey

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School, Lin, Chenyu - 10

On one peaceful evening, I found out a mysterious object gliding behind the clouds. At first, I thought it was the trick of light, but my thought didn't last long.

Boom! An explosion woke me up at midnight, "Who's there?" I whispered, too scared to move. "Oops. Sorry for the mess. It was an accident." said a voice somewhere in my bedroom. I turned on the lights and screamed. A person who seemed as old as me stood there introducing himself, "I am Jack, from the future. It seems like I fell back to the past." "Excuse me, but what do you mean 'fell back to the past'?" I asked, moving a step away.

"Don't worry, I won't hurt you. I'm a human, just like you," Jack explained, "My time shuttle is out of batteries now. That's why you can see me, otherwise I'll be invisible to any people from the past." "Wow! Can you take me to the future?" I asked excitedly. "Sure, my time shuttle can recharge itself. Once it's ready, we can travel to anywhere we want!" he replied with a proud smile.

Early next morning, Jack's time shuttle was recharged fully. He pressed a button and then something magical happened. A flash almost blinded me. Afterwards we were in a weird place: high walls were around us. And in front of us there were stairs made by stones leading to an ancient style palace. "Aren't we travelling to the future? Here looks like the past instead!" I said confusedly. "Oh no! My time shuttle was not fully fixed!" Jack cried out.

"Excuse me, who are you?" a man's voice behind us said. I turned around and thought I had seen this face before...oh yes, in my history book, he is Cai Lun, the inventor of papermaking! "Wow! You are Cai Lun who invented papermaking, aren't you? I exclaimed excitedly. "Huh? What is paper?" Jack asked. "It's for writing and better pass on Chinese history and culture. Everyone here knows it." Cai Lun answered, "Are you from other countries?" "We type on computers and read e-books in our time." Jack said fascinatedly. "May I know what is computer and e-books? I've never heard of it!" said Cai Lun, utterly bewildered, "As an officer to the Imperial court, I must learn more about it!" But then, another flash appeared. We were at another place. "What happened?" I was a little bit worried. "Sorry, I believe we are travelling again. It seems my time shuttle is still in the self-repair process." Jack apologized. "But could you tell me what is paper made of?" "It is made of mulberry and bast fibres, along with broken fish nets and other hemp waste. Cai Lun invented it to replace heavy bamboo or expensive silk in 105 C.E., which was a big improvement and one of the China's Four Great Inventions in ancient China." I answered proudly. Before we could discuss anymore, an alarmed voice shouted, "Who are you? Please go out of my house. Otherwise, I will call my villagers!" "Sorry, we didn't mean to enter your house. It is an accident." We apologized hastily. The man looked at us from top to bottom like a scanning machine and then introduced himself, "I'm Bi Sheng. This is the machine I'm working on. Several days ago, there was a rob trying to steal it. So, I'm too sensitive for the unexpected guests." I can't believe it's true. My jaw has dropped on the ground. "Are you making the movable-type system for printing?" I asked softly. "Yes, that is exactly what I want to produce." he smiled. After he introduced his idea and the machine, I can't help expressing my praise to him, "Do you know that you and another inventor called Cai Lun are famous people in Chinese history? Both of your inventions help to keep and inherit Chinese culture from generation to generation." "Really? Are you from the future?" Bi Sheng asked. "Yes, we are from almost 2000 years later." I smiled.

Unluckily the time shuttle pulled us into modern days again. We went back to my bedroom suddenly. "Thanks for letting me know these old famous inventions. Although in my times we don't use it anymore, I'm so proud that we had a splendid civilization since ancient times. But I must go now. Otherwise, my parents will notice my absence and be angry." Jack said. "Oh, what a pity! I'm super happy that we can go back to ancient times and feeling proudful as a descendant of Yan and Huang as well. The China's four great inventions are as precious as jewels to the World. But I also would love to have a chance to visit your times. I believe the pace of the development of high technology won't

stop. As you mentioned you even don't use paper." I gushed. "Yes, we use microcomputer to record or search what you want to remember or learn, which is visible only when using it. See, like this...Oh no time to explore further..." Jack explained sadly. "No worries. It's already a fantastic journey to me. Shall we have a photo together? I'd like to share my experience on TikTok although others may think I'm crazy." I smiled and raised my phone at the same time.

After a goodbye hug with Jack, I fell asleep again and was looking forward to his visit next time.

New Tales of China's Invention

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School, Lo, Genevieve – 12

When discussing Chinese inventions, people may think about paper, gunpowder, the compass, etc. But one that was invented in the past, and was consummated throughout the years, but was discussed by few people, is forensic entomology. Forensic entomology studies the association between different insect types and dead bodies. For example, in suspense movies, there may be a plot that the coroner can extrapolate who the murderer is from the insects found in the wounds of the dead body. In real life, studies on insects do play an important part in criminal investigations.

The origin of forensic entomology can be traced back to the Song Dynasty. In 1247, the famous medical scientist, court judge, and writer Song Ci published a forensic science book that contained the oldest known case of forensic entomology. This book was called *Collected Cases of Injustice Rectified*. In a murder case, the victim was stabbed to death with a sickle, which at that time was usually used by villagers to collect their harvest. Based on this evidence, one of the villagers was suspected to be involved. Therefore, all of the villagers were gathered in the town square, together with their sickles. After they arrived, within a few minutes, a large amount of blowflies were attracted to only one sickle, but not the others. Although the murderer had already cleaned his weapon, there was still residue of bloodstains that could not be seen with the naked eye but could be sensed by the flies, so the murderer was obviously the owner of that sickle. This marked the beginning of tracing evidence based on the flies hatched on dead bodies. Song Ci also wrote a book called *Washing Away of Wrongs*, which acted as a handbook for his successors. As a judicial intendant, Song Ci came across different criminal cases. He captured the details of how the victims died, analyzed the possible causes of death, and elaborated on how to examine the dead bodies. This book became guidelines for his succeeding coroners – when they came across an unseen criminal scene, the cases documented in the book could provide them with some inspiration. Song Ci's careful observation and detailed analysis laid the foundation of modern forensic entomology.

When it comes to modern forensic entomology, the only female forensic anthropologist in Hong Kong, Winsome Lee Hin-shin, has done research on how flies are attracted to dead bodies within a short period of time. She mentioned that the enzymes and bacteria inside dead bodies are actually a big feast for both insects and animals. Female flies can detect the smell of a dead body, hence they can appear within a few minutes and spawn. She pointed out that some specific breeds of flies would spawn on the wounds directly, or the body parts that were exposed to air, and thus there would usually be quite an amount of maggots on the dead body. Based on the past examinations done by the coroners and the database built by different scientists in the past, the professionals now have knowledge regarding a variety of fly species that would commonly be found near or on dead bodies.

Fundamental forensic entomology is divided into different subfields, for instance, urban forensic entomology, stored-product forensic entomology, and medico-legal forensic entomology. For medico-legal forensic entomology, it covers evidence gathered through the study of the insects found at different scenes of crime. The forensic investigator will first identify the species of flies on the dead body, then determine the age of the flies or their eggs or larvae, in order to estimate the time elapsed since an individual's death, that is, the post mortem interval (PMI). The post mortem interval is an invaluable piece of information for criminal investigation. The entomological study may also give clues about the location of death. Hence, modern entomologists work systematically to identify the species of flies. In ancient days when technology was not even developed, no mortuary was available to store the dead bodies, and coroners were not experienced enough to solve the mystery, the chances of solving the case within a short period of time might barely be possible.

In a nutshell, without our predecessors who had laid the foundation of forensic entomology for us, there would definitely be numerous unsolved mysteries. Their observations allow us to know that insects could be the most crucial element in conducting forensic investigations. From the Song dynasty till 1996, research has shown that there are more than 4200 fly species, some of which are important in forensic science. New techniques are developed, utilizing scanning electron microscopy, mitochondrial DNA and gene expression studies, to more accurately identify the fly species and determine the age of the egg and larvae, and hence the post mortem interval. Development in this field has great assistance in helping associate a victim and a suspect with a scene.

However, in the present days, the utilization of the modern techniques is still hindered by the cost, the limited availability of the equipment, the significant size, the long turnaround time, and hence is impracticable for use in a field study. With more research in this field and further advancement of other associated technology, it may not be only a movie plot that the coroner, with a handy scan in his/her hand, can quickly identify the species and age of the insects on the dead body, and then estimate the PMI in no time. We can further speculate that, based on the assumption that human DNA may be left by people who have been in the criminal scene, one day, the possible suspects may be identified from the minute trace of DNA collected, after matching with the database in the supercomputer.

Thanks to our ancient Chinese predecessors for their groundbreaking achievements, dedicated scientists are inspired to continue and expand upon their research. In other words, the criminals will have less and less room to evade investigation and identification.

The Inventor's Story

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School, Tung, Victoria Karen – 10

The fat raindrops poured down on me as I sighed heavily, and the wind sighed with me loudly. I had wanted to go to Hadley's house today to bake some delicious apple pies as desserts for the school's Christmas party, but this heavy rain had stopped me from going. I had my eyes set on a large window of the cosy library across the street and the library seemed to be the only welcoming shelter nearby. I ran towards the library's welcoming entrance hurriedly and sat down at one of the candle-lit reading tables near the long rows of shelves. It was the table closest to the entrance.

When I looked out the window, I saw people outside carrying umbrellas of all shapes and sizes to shield themselves from the rain shower. A flash of questions with no answers rushed through my mind. Who invented the useful umbrella? So I went up to the book directory machine to search for books about inventions. Then I found the section on "science and inventions" and searched through the bookshelves. I grabbed a shiny red and purple leather-coated book with gold and white cursive writings proudly spelling, "Everything you need to know about inventions".

I flicked open the book with my fingers, tempted by the white shiny and glossy pages. It had loads of colourful and black and white pictures about the history of different inventors, and I was wowed by the amazing first umbrella – invented around 1,700 years ago. I was shocked how such an invention could change in style and form overtime. Suddenly, a misty white fog covered my eyes, and an old man who looked exactly the same as the man (shown as the inventor of umbrellas named as Lu Ban) appeared amidst the foggy scene. I gasped in surprise. "Lu...Ban?" Lu Ban smiled. "Hello! I can see that you are curious about umbrellas. I loved to talk to all people who were fascinated with umbrellas and their origins. I am the one who invented the umbrella." I nodded enthusiastically. "What was your motivation behind the invention, Lu?" I asked. "My mum always got sick after being soaked in the rain when there was no umbrella. At my time, medicine was not advanced and it took a long time for her to recover from the colds or sickness. Inspired by children using lotus leaves as rain shelter, I started using some oil paper and bamboo sticks to make an easy-to-carry 'shelter' for my mum. That's how I finally invented the first umbrella."

I was fascinated about the reason behind this creation! If my mum were sick, I would only think of getting medicine from the doctors, instead of spending time to think of an invention for her! He then disappeared with a puff of bright purple smoke. "Goodbye, Lu Ban! I hope you and other inventors visit me again!" Then I looked around trying to find his face but in vain. I was left in shock and confusion.

I could not resist the temptation of finding out more about other amazing Chinese inventions. So I turned to the next chapter: the earthquake detector. While deeply immersed in the lines describing how the earthquake detector was invented 1,800 years ago, a faint image of Zhang Heng stood out from the page and stared at me with his lips whispering, "Hello!" I greeted him back cheerfully. "What inspired you to make this wonderful and life-saving invention? You have saved the lives of thousands of people by helping them to escape from an earthquake in the medieval times." Zhang looked into my eyes. "My parents died in an earthquake – they did not survive. Therefore, I was determined to invent a machine that could tell us beforehand when an earthquake would happen."

I shook my head. "I'm sorry for bringing up the death of your parents. It must've been a very hard time in your life." Zhang nodded. "Yes, it was. I always put my mother's picture on my working desk to give me encouragement to continue with the invention. Finally, my efforts paid off." I cheerfully said, "Indeed, it did, Zhang! Thanks for sharing! Do you have any message you want me to tell the people in the world?" "Yes, I do. Always be determined and never give up because of failures. Success is the mother of multiple failures and mistakes. I still remember clearly that my brother was always teasing me and my inventions, and he doubted that the earthquake detector would eventually work. I was not discouraged at all by such mocking comments. I continued with my invention relentlessly."

Our conversation suddenly paused followed by a dead silence. Then I looked at my watch, and it was already half-past seven. I saw the librarians throwing their tote bags over their shoulders and starting to lock the

windows and turn off the lights. “Goodbye, I have to go home.” I whispered to Zhang’s image in the book and slowly closed the book with Zhang’s image still stamped on my mind. Then I packed my belongings and left the library.

Lu Ban and Zhang Heng both have something great in common: helping people to stay away from natural phenomenon, like rain and earthquakes. Without these inventors, our early ancestors could not have survived from those natural phenomenon. I am deeply impressed by their determination and courage. We need to thank these inventors because they have planted a seed for us to harvest in today’s modern society. Think about what our lives would be without a good old umbrella. Think about what would happen if we do not have the earthquake detectors to tell us an earthquake is coming.

I have never thought of being an inventor in my life. Surprisingly, after the wonderful encounter with the two inventors, I have started to change my mind...

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Chan, Aden – 10

"It's been months since we had our summer holiday," I said, lying down on the stunning beach with my best friend, Josiah.

"It's incredibly relaxing here," Josiah agreed, taking in the serene surroundings.

"Let's go diving!" I suggested enthusiastically. With a playful grin, we both jumped into the refreshing ocean, swimming peacefully in the crystal-clear waters.

Suddenly, I was hit by a glass bottle, and inside, there was a mysterious note. "Hey Josiah, I think I found a treasure map!" I exclaimed excitedly.

We dashed back to our chairs and struggled to take out the note from the bottle. After ten minutes of effort, we finally resolved it, revealing strange words – "Secret China Invention 1973." "Woah, that's 50 years ago," Josiah exclaimed with surprise. We felt weird, but the thrill of an adventure compelled us to believe there might be a hidden treasure waiting for discovery.

Leaving the beach behind, we embarked on the journey to this secret destination. The sea sparkled, and the fortress ahead was as tall as the Eiffel Tower. After a long trek, we finally arrived. "This place is enormous, is it a maze?" Josiah pondered.

"I think so," I replied, observing our surroundings. A poster greeted us, "Welcome to the Secret China Invention Maze. Complete tasks to claim your mysterious prize. Good luck."

There was a map guiding us to clues, we navigated through obstacles until we uncovered the final clue – "Your prize awaits in the master bedroom: a 'TIME MACHINE.'"

"A time machine? Seriously?" We exchanged incredulous glances, then hurried to the master bedroom. To our astonishment, there it was—a genuine time machine. "Should we activate it?" Josiah asked hesitantly.

"Why not? It's an adventure!" I responded with excitement. We hopped in and eager to embark on the time machine. "Zap." In an instant, we were teleported to a different era.

Stepping out, we encountered a man engrossed in fixing with something. Curiosity arouse, we approached him. "Hi, who are you?" I asked gently.

"I'm Koki Niwa, the China secret engineer. How did you find me?" He responded, sounding surprised.

"We traveled through the time machine," I answered. But before we could explore further, I asked, "May I ask what you're creating?"

"It's an invisible cloak," Koki Niwa explained, detailing the complex process behind its creation, using a blend of innovative materials. Fascinated, Josiah and I hung onto his every word. "Did you also create the time machine?" I questioned.

"Yes, I created it. Where did you discover it?" Koki Niwa seemed intrigued.

“We navigated a maze and awarded it after completing challenges,” I explained. The year, 1973, left us amazed—it matched the year on the note found in the bottle. We told him our time-travel from the year 2023 and it was about time for us to return home.

“Before you depart, take this,” Koki Niwa handed me the invisible cloak. “Thank you. It is nice meeting you,” I delighted. We re-entered the time machine, journeying back to our era. It was definitely the most exhilarating day of my life, and now, we had the extraordinary gift of the time machine and an invisible cloak.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Chan, Hei Ching Sophie – 12

Ming stared out the window of the train, exasperated. The train was barely moving, and he was almost late for school. Impatiently, he glanced at his watch. It was nine-thirty, and school started at ten o'clock. "If only there was a way to make this train go faster," he thought. Then, he started thinking about different problems around China: different types of pollutions, no more space to build shelters, spread of diseases, natural disasters, ... Being an inquisitive boy, he couldn't help but thought curiously about ways to improve these situations. But suddenly, something sparkly caught his eyes. It was a golden button on the wall of the train. He walked over, took a closer look, and pressed it. Out of the blue, Ming vanished into a time travelling tunnel...

Ming was floating. He looked around, frightened and worried that he will never be able to get out. As he walked around, he saw amazing inventions created by talented Chinese inventors. The first invention he saw was an earthquake detector. He then realized he was in the Han dynasty. This invention was fascinating. It can detect the direction of earthquakes from thousands of kilometers away. "Maybe I can create detectors to detect all natural disasters around the world," he thought.

As he explored, he arrived at the Tang dynasty, where he saw the second brilliant invention – gun powder. Ancient Chinese people mainly use it for firecrackers, but the invention gave Ming an astonishing idea. "Maybe I could turn gun powder into medicine to kill horrifying viruses," he thought to himself.

After a while, he arrived at the Song dynasty, when paper making techniques became better. This invention greatly affects human history. But in nowadays, it causes a huge loss of trees, which can cause many problems. "What if I could invent a way to make paper without causing deforestation?" he thought curiously.

Besides these three extraordinary Chinese inventions, Ming also learnt about other inventions such as row crop farming, kites, acupuncture and many more.

Suddenly, a bright light shone into Ming's eyes. It was so strong that Ming collapsed. After a couple of minutes, Ming opened his eyes and found that he was back on the train again.

After this trip to see ancient Chinese inventions, Ming was so inspired and was desperate to create inventions to help improve situations in China,

Ming worked extremely hard every day from that day forward. He invented detectors to detect a variety of natural disasters from miles away, powders to kill cancer, a machine to make paper out of recycled materials to avoid pollutions, vertical farms to save space for shelters and houses, and high-speed maglev trains which can travel up to 1000km per hour for people and students who had to travel from city to city for work or school.

After many years of hard work, Ming improved a lot of problems in China and became one of the greatest inventors in Chinese history. His stories were passed on to generations and had inspired many people to work hard and pursue their dreams.

The Legend of Silk

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Cheng, Tung Alyssa – 9

Silk has remained an important luxury item in China, Korea, Japan, and Thailand. We all know that making silk takes time, but have you ever wondered how silk was discovered?

According to legend, during the Chinese Neolithic period around 3630 BC, there was a Chinese empress named Xi Ling Shi. One day, as she sat under a mulberry tree, enjoying a cup of green tea, a shimmering cocoon fell from the tree and landed in her tea. Curiously, the 14-year-old empress raised her cup and noticed the cocoon glimmering inside the tea.

Puzzled, Xi Ling Shi wondered how the cocoon had ended up in her drink. She noticed that it must have fallen from the mulberry tree above her. She cautiously attempted to retrieve the cocoon from the tea by gently putting her fingers in, but the tea was still hot, causing her to wince in pain and withdraw her fingers. While she waited for the tea to cool, she saw that the threads that built the walls of the cocoon were very pretty when they were gleaming in the light.

Finally, when the tea had cooled down, the empress once again reached into the cup and carefully pulled at the unraveling silver threads surrounding the cocoon. As she unraveled the threads, she discovered that all that remained in the cup was tea and a lifeless pupa. She looked up into the tree and found some other cocoons, so she emptied her cup of tea on the ground and plucked the remaining cocoons and put them in her empty cup. She then brought the cup filled with cocoons and the threads to a skilled weaver, explaining what she had observed and done. The weaver took the cocoons, immersed them in water, and finally pulled out the threads. With these threads, the weaver created the very first piece of silk.

Thus, the legend of the discovery of silk was born. Now, everyone knows that it was a Chinese empress, not a Persian or Indian empress, who made this remarkable discovery. However, if we revisit the first paragraph, we can see that silk has remained an important luxury item not only in China but also in Korea, Japan, and Thailand. So, how did the secret of making silk spread to these countries?

According to history, silk sericulture had initially spread from China to India and Japan, but these were only two countries. And even though Persia had developed Silk weaving and dyeing as crafts, they still derived most of their yarn by unraveling Silk fabrics from East China. Silk sericulture still largely remained a secret of China.

In the second century, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian instructed two monks who had previously lived in China to find out the secret of producing silk and return to Byzantine to tell him the secret. The monks agreed because the emperor was going to pay both a great deal of gold, and they set off to China. When they arrived, they snuck into a temple near the Chinese castle where the monks there helped the royal weavers make silk.

Suddenly, another monk emerged from seemingly nowhere and entered the temple. Luckily, the two monks hid just in time. Both monks snuck closer to the new monk who was talking to a royal weaver and overheard the secret: "Feed the silkworms mulberry leaves and continue doing so until they form cocoons. Before a moth comes out of the cocoon, steam the cocoon to kill the growing moth inside. Then put the steamed cocoon in boiling water to loosen the threads, and finally take the cocoon and pull out the threads. Discard the dead pupa's body after you pull out all the threads. The threads can be woven into pieces of silk, but it takes 10kg of cocoons to make only 1 kg of silk!"

Once the monks had gathered enough information, they left the temple and hid in a nearby bush. They patiently waited until the guards, monks, and weavers had left, and quietly snuck up the un-steamed cocoons and grabbed handfuls of them, stuffing them into hollowed-out bamboo canes which they found nearby. The sneaky monks returned to Byzantine to tell the emperor the secrets of producing silk and showed him the cocoons. Emperor Justinian paid the monks and let them stay in Byzantine in fear of them telling the Chinese emperor the details of their spy mission. Emperor Justinian then told the secret to other states and countries in exchange for gold and valuable items. And so, the secret of making silk spread throughout the world.

Silk was and is still valued and is very expensive. But it's still not as famous as the Four Great Inventions of China! Gunpowder, Compasses, Paper and Printers are very famous, but silk could easily take the fifth spot.

To 3-D Printing and Beyond!

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Cheng, Yan Wing Marilyn – 12

Chris was a history lover. He was always reading about history, with a special preference in Chinese history. On his flight to Dubai, he was reading about ancient Chinese inventions. “Wow, I can’t believe the Chinese invented the printing technology and even typography almost a thousand years ago... Thanks to them I can read about everything anywhere now.”

It was the summer of 2016. Chris just graduated from university and was on a solo trip to see one of the wealthiest cities in the world, Dubai. He visited a few popular tourists’ spots, such as the Burj Khalifa, the Burj Al Arab, the Dubai Fountain, and even the Red Dunes Desert. This afternoon, he decided to check out the Office of the Future, which was built by Winsun, a Chinese 3-D building company. Apparently, the whole project was finished within twenty days of construction using 3-D printing technology! Chris was very much intrigued.

The Office of the Future consisted of a group of buildings, of which the most used colors were white, black and grey, making it look very futuristic! The buildings were mostly rectangularly shaped with rounded edges. The large glass panel doors and windows were trimmed in black, showing the indoor space of the offices. It appeared that the interior of the offices had very simple and cool design as well.

In a coffee shop nearby, Chris called his sister on WeChat. “Oh I wish I could own a little house like that! You know, sis, I’ve always wanted my own space! Yes, small, simple and convenient—my criteria of a perfect house! You’re so right that the designer is a genius! And all that within twenty days!” Chris’ animated voice caught the attention of the older man sitting behind him. “Uhm—hm. Excuse me, handsome young man, I can do that for you easily!” “Wait, um... who are you?” asked Chris, perplexed.

Ma Yihe was the founder and chairman of Winsun. He was visiting Dubai to personally see the latest creation of his company—the Office of the Future. Always wearing a warm smile, Mr. Ma was a sincerely kind and generous man. He was also innovative and creative. He was full of quick wit and great ideas. He had wanted to develop the 3-D printing technology on architecture because he wanted to help construction workers build more efficiently and more safely. Overhearing Chris and his sister’s conversation, and delighted that his project was highly appreciated by this young man, he decided to help.

Only five days after their discussion in the coffee shop, Mr. Ma completed a beautifully constructed, simple, and convenient house for Chris. However, Chris looked at it and found it not small and compact to his wish. He told Mr. Ma about the imperfection with much regret. Mr. Ma, embarrassed to have flaunted his skills in creating grand projects, promised to make Chris a new house that fit his criteria.

Another five days passed. Mr. Ma took Chris on a tour around his new house. Surely, it was small and compact, and minimally furnished, yet it was built on top of a tree! That was certainly was not too convenient to Chris’ taste. Furthermore, Chris was scared of heights and birds! Chris could only decline Mr. Ma’s offer again.

Another five days passed. Chris’ newest 3-D printed house was right next to a convenience store, hence extremely convenient. It was also small and compact. However, it was not simple enough. Mr. Ma was too generous and apologetic about his previous failed attempts that he stuffed the little space with many high-tech gadgets that Chris could not quite comprehend how to operate! Both Mr. Ma and Chris were quite exasperated by now! Mr. Ma sighed, “I never thought this would be such a difficult project!” Indeed, Chris, though young and nice, was quite particular and perfectionistic, meaning, quite difficult!

After hauling the expensive gadgets out and delivering them to various charity organizations in the neighborhood, Chris and Mr. Ma sat down in the now perfect 3-D printed house for a cozy cup of coffee. Small—check! Convenient—check! Simple—check! Chris never knew his dream house would come true!

Marveling at Mr. Ma’s company’s technology, Chris asked, “Why don’t you make a time machine, go back to when people were building the Great Wall of China, and 3-D print the whole wall and save many people’s lives?” Chris went on to describe all he had read about the construction of the Great Wall of China. In fact, it was quite well known! Back in the Qin Dynasty, thousands and millions of people were recruited as workers to build and connect the bits and pieces of walls around the country’s terrain to defend against the attacks made by the neighboring enemies. Many had died in the dangerous mission. Mr. Ma stroked his chin and fell into deep thoughts, “Well, I definitely cannot build a time machine, but I can maybe fortify the wall and rebuild the fallen parts to stabilize the wall...” Chris added jokingly, “You know, you would do a perfect job with the Great Wall, since you are good at building BIG, COMPLICATED and INCONVENIENT structures at high, risky locations!” “Haha, you may be right! But perhaps... what if... we could really time travel?”

A year later, Chris read in the newspapers, “Winsun to embark on new tech mission—Time Travel!”

The Invention of Gunpowder

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Cheng, Zing Ethan – 12

Long ago, when emperors ruled ancient China. China was a huge empire with lots of allies and resources. The Chinese army was strong and proud, and China was a peaceful and rich land with the Mongols as their only enemy. Somewhere in the huge Royal Chinese castle, there raged the almighty emperor of China. He had commanded his royal subjects to create him a substance that would make him immortal, but no matter how hard they worked, they just couldn't make that magical food.

"Answer me! Why does this piece of garbage make me feel dizzy and nauseous?" shouted the king at his subjects. Wong fearfully looked at his helper and whispered "Oh no! I forgot that this mixture would cause dizziness, not immortality!" The helper looked at him helplessly and whispered back, "What should we do then? We're dead for sure!" Wong calmed his beating heart and thought of an excuse, "Your highness, this is just the first step into becoming immortal! We must still burn it and remake the shell for the best result, but eating it now doesn't do any harm, in fact it's good for your body!" The emperor looked at the brown ball in his hand and sighed, "Fine, I'll let you off the hook this time, but if you still don't have the final creation by next week, you will taste the pain of a million bodies boiled in hot oil, understood?" Wong shuddered and bowed, he quickly returned to his humble little workshop with his helper.

Wong worked day and night with his helper, designing the best he could. In the end, he came up with a liquid substance that included a mixture of the brown ball he had got back from the emperor and a cheap gray powder he had picked up from a trader. He then put all of it into a pot of boiling hot water while chanting a sacred chant inscribed on the scrolls of the past subjects that had failed the emperor. As he proceeded with his plan, he heard footsteps outside his door. Wong feared that it was the emperor and panicked. In the mess, he knocked over the jar containing the gray powder into the empty pot over the burning fire. At first, there was only a whistle, then slowly, the pot began to shake. Wong knew that something was wrong, and he leapt out of the window just before his house exploded into flames and pieces of wood flew everywhere. Suddenly, his head hit something hard, and the world turned black.

Wong opened his eyes to see angry faces staring back, he focused on the faces and saw that they were the imperial guards, bloodied and bruised. He ignored the ringing in his head and asked, "W—what happened to us? Were we attacked by the gods?" One of the soldiers snarled and said, "Don't play stupid, you asked the gods to attack us, didn't you? You nasty brute!" Wong looked around and saw what the soldier was talking about. His home was completely devastated. A bit of wood there, a bit of chair there, the place was a battlefield. His head pieced the bits together and he realized that the gray powder would explode when heated. Before he could get excited over his discovery, his head was covered with a bag and he was whisked away.

When the bag was lifted again, Wong knew he was in front of the emperor by smelling the strong jasmine tea, the emperor's favorite beverage. "Explain!" ordered the emperor, the simpleness of speech coming from the emperor was not a good sign. Wong quickly retold the story while bowing and kneeling on the floor the whole time. When he had finished, the room grew quieter, and the emperor stroked his beard thoughtfully. The soldier beside him, which was the same one that had called him a "nasty brute" sneered at him, like he was willing the emperor to give Wong a death sentence. At last, the emperor said, "Wong may have my personal study room to continue his studies of "immortality food". Although all experiments must be done in the yard." The emperor then smiled at Wong and said, "Good job. Now go." The whole room fell silent since everyone was flabbergasted. Even Wong wasn't expecting such gracious mercy, no one was. The emperor raised his eyebrows and said "Well?" Wong gave a final bow and shuffled out of the room.

Once he was outside, he gave a quick thanks to the god and found his helper, the two then headed to the emperor's study room to start their research right away. Over the years, the invention Wong made was given the

name, “gunpowder”. It was used in war and for something called fireworks, another invention of Wong’s. The use of gunpowder even spread to Europe and the Western side of the world and is still used widely today.

Jurassic Park? I'll Pass!

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Cheung Season – 11

Tears welled in my eyes, and to think everything was fine just a few minutes ago.

Oh— I'm sorry, did I confuse you? Okay, I'll start from the top.

I was on my way to my friend, Samira's birthday party, I had spent hours choosing a gift for her and was sure she'd like it.

After taking a ten-minute walk to Samira's house, I finally arrived. I rang the doorbell excitedly, and she opened the door so quickly I almost dropped her gift. "Did you hear the news?" Samira asked me while jumping up and down, she looked like she was on sugar high!

"No, what news?" I asked curiously.

Samira looked at me, absolutely flabbergasted. "Seriously? I swear, you never watch the news. China has made a new invention, and it is a huge breakthrough! They've learnt how to resurrect extinct animals!"

I was too stunned to speak, so I just stared at her. Samira giggled. "I know right? I couldn't believe it at first either, but it's true! They are going to start resurrecting them tomorrow, and they're starting with the dinosaurs, so then we will have a real life Jurassic Park!" "Oh my god, no, they can't!" I exclaimed.

Samira stopped blabbering about dinosaurs and looked at me weirdly, as if I just dropped out of the sky. "Why not?" she asked, sounding a bit annoyed.

"What if they start devouring other animals? The government obviously haven't thought this through! It's an excellent invention, yes, but they still must be careful!" "Oh, come on, don't be a buzzkill, even my parents think it's safe! In fact we're going to see the resurrection of the dinosaurs tomorrow!" Samira said, casually dropping the biggest bombshell ever.

I was feeling very nervous when Samira's parent's car stopped in front of the local park, where we're supposed to see the dinosaurs. I wanted to bolt right then, but at the same time, I didn't want to disappoint Samira, so I forced myself to walk towards the entrance of the park.

As we sat down at one of the benches, waiting for the resurrection to happen, I kept on shifting around, unable to find a comfortable spot. My head was screaming for me to bolt, to drag Samira and her parents away from this stupid park and forget about the dinosaurs, but, knowing Samira, she would be too stubborn to listen to me. So, I stayed, and little did I know, that would be the biggest mistake I've ever made.

After a few minutes, a huge limo rode up to the park, and the spokesman for the government stepped out with a microphone.

"Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen," boomed the spokesman's voice through the microphone. "And welcome to the resurrection of the dinosaurs!" The crowd roared with excitement.

The spokesman took out a gadget that looked weirdly like an ice-cream cone and said, "In a minute, I will resurrect the dinosaurs with this magnificent invention! But you don't need to worry about your safety," he pointed to a giant glass dome that I hadn't noticed before, "We will only resurrect them in there, ensuring your safety!"

I highly doubted that a glass dome will protect us from dinosaurs, but went along with it, since nobody else in the crowd had any complaints.

The spokesman pressed a few buttons on his gadget, then threw it in the dome. That was when everything went wrong.

At first, everyone was cheering, they couldn't believe it, they were seeing dinosaurs! Not ones in movies, but live dinosaurs!

But it was what happened next that scarred me for life.

The dinosaurs grew bigger and bigger, too late did we realise that the glass dome was too small, it shattered into pieces so tiny it looked like dust. All the sudden, the dinosaurs were roaring, and the people who realised what was happening were screaming. People ran for their lives, some escaped, but some weren't so lucky. The dinosaurs had figured out what was going on and sealed the exit with their manus.

Now there was no escape.

At first I was just numb, unable to process what had happened, then came the devastation as the situation dawned on me, tears welled in my eyes, and to think everything was fine just a few minutes ago, but I couldn't give up, what would my family think? I had promised them I'd be back before dinner.

Then I decided that I was not giving up. My body filled with strength from my newfound determination, and a plan formed in my head. And even though Samira was the reason I was in this horrible situation in the first place, I couldn't leave her, so I turned to her and said, "Samira, we're getting out of here."

Samira stared at me, her eyes wide and full of confusion as she processed what I said. "What?" she said dumbly, then regained her senses, then she started yelling – going full lion mode on me.

"Have you lost your mind?" she asked, astounded, "There's no getting out of this! It's impossible!" I glared at her, "Anything's possible as long as you have the right mindset." I said calmly, even though I was anything but calm at the moment, and my glare must have looked more intimidating than I thought, because Samira gulped.

"Now do you want to get out of here or not?" I asked. She gave a swift nod and we started planning.

I took a deep breath, and nodded to Samira. "Now." I said, not too loud but loud enough for her to hear. Samira charged at a dinosaur and screamed at the top of her lungs, "Hey! You giant fluffy dog!" Apparently that was offensive to the dinosaur, so he charged at her.

I don't really know what happened next, it was a blur. But what matters is we somehow managed to get one of them to clear the rocks and we got out.

New Tales of China's Invention

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Cheung, Yee Ching Karis – 10

Qiao Ching loved planting more than anything.

She loved the colors of them. She loved the shapes and sizes of them. But what she loved, mostly, was the way they smell.

It all started on a Friday. She left school, and, as usual, went home through the famous Plant Garden Park, to spot new species, if possible.

She didn't find any.

Back home, her mother, who was a nurse was on the balcony, painting. "Hello, dear. How was school?" She asked. "It was fine, thanks." Qiao Ching replied.

As she dashed to her room, Qiao Ching saw a glimpse of white on top of one of her jasmine leaves.

Already? She thought. *The jasmine flowers are budding already!*

It took her a while to water all the plants. She was so excited about the flowers that she found herself humming a happy tune!

On the next day, Qiao Ching woke up to a loud BANG, and a certain smell. *What in the world?* She thought. She soon realized that a storm was coming. *But what about that amazing smell?* She thought that it was her mother's perfume, but it wasn't. She followed the smell.. and it soon led her to a bunch of pretty white jasmine flowers! "Oh my goodness! They look absolutely amazing!" She yelled. "What looks absolutely amazing?" Her mother asked. "Jasmine flowers! They have fully budded!" "Well, I suppose they do look nice and elegant." Her mother said. *Only if I could drink this... a drink that smells like this would definitely taste great! So many people would love to try it!*

At night, it slowly got more windy. The wind howled in the air. "Time to sleep!" Qiao Ching's mother announced.

Qiao Ching woke up all of a sudden. She felt very hot! *I hope I'm not getting poorly,* she thought. "Good morning! Oh dear, you look quite pale." Her mother put her hand on Qiao Ching's forehead. "You're so hot! Gosh, you must have a fever!" She exclaimed. "But.." Qiao Ching started. "No buts, go to sleep and have some rest. I'll get some medicine for you." Her mother said firmly.

Sick again, her mother wondered. She opened the book of medicine recipes. *I wonder, will those petals do any good? They so certainly smell well.* She glanced at the jasmine flowers. I'll try.

She grinded a few petals into small pieces, and attempted to dry them with a fan. It did not dry. *Whatever, I'll mix them with a few matcha leaves and see.* She mixed them, and the smell seemed to smell more great! *I guess.. I'll mix them with water.* Splish splash! The water seemed to tell her something. *It smells nice... I'll have a sip, for my daughter's sake!*

She took a tiny sip. *Ahh, it's so good! I'll tell Qiao Ching to try it. But is it drinkable? I don't feel funny. I guess it's fine then.*

She entered Qiao Ching's room. "Wake up! I made a special drink for you." Mother said. "Oh? OK." Qiao Ching said sleepily. She took a few sips. "What did you put in this drink, mother? It's so good. I like it a lot." "Well... I used a few matcha leaves... and a few jasmine petals." "WHAT! JASMINE PETALS? You should have

asked me!” Qiao Ching yelled angrily. “But fine, I have to admit that it is worth it. What is this drink called?” She asked. “ATISOO!” Her mother sneezed. “Tis? Ti? Te? Tea?” Qiao Ching wondered out loud. “What? No—” “Tea it is! Everyone, come try some tea!”

Even though tea did not cure Qiao Ching’s cold, it still lasted as a tradition to drink tea when sick.

New Tales of China’s Inventions

St. Stephen’s College Preparatory School, Chiu, Sum Yu Ardice – 9

China is a large, amazing country, rich with fascinating inventions!

Some of their inventions are the compass, toilet paper, gunpowder, paper...and many more!

Around 25 centuries ago, the Chinese found gas and used bamboo to pipe it to villages, creating an energy system that most people think of as a modern invention.

I would absolutely love to speculate on what new inventions might appear today or in the future.

So, as I was saying, I think that maybe the world would have outstanding gadgets that are made especially for young kids. So kids could walk to school, restaurants by themselves! Watches with apps, maps inside them to track you down wherever you are! Heartbeat scanners to track your heartbeat! Kids would be safe where they are, without their parents’ watching!

Combination App

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Chow, Caelyn – 11

It started as a perfectly ordinary day in China. The children all went to school like normal, with their cellphones tucked away in their backpacks. The adults went to work with their phones buried in their pockets and everything seemed fine – when suddenly chaos erupted!

At around noon that day millions of people opened up their phones and noticed some strange errors popping up on their screens. The errors said there wasn't enough storage and that their apps could not be updated. Everyone stayed calm at first and tried to restart their phones and troubleshoot the issues. However, things only got worse. Suddenly the screens on their phones began glitching and people began to panic. The phones quickly became unusable. There was no way to call their friends and family and no way to use their phones for their jobs and schools. No one in the country could figure out what to do or why this was happening to everyone all at once.

While this panic was occurring, in Hong Kong, a group of three girls named Kaydence, Jamie and Caelyn were thinking about what they could do to help solve this huge dilemma. Kaydence was a technology expert and loved coding and programming. She was deep in thought when suddenly she shouted, "I have an idea! We could create a new app which would put all of the smaller apps on people's phones into one location. This would solve the storage issues everyone is having, and it would be more convenient for people. We could make it secure and protect phones against viruses and malware as well." Jamie chimed in, "That is a great idea Kaydence, but we must find a way to condense the storage of the apps or else people might still have these problems. So what should we do?" Caelyn's eyes lit up and she responded, "I know what to do! We can develop a zipping effect for our app that will zip or save the storage space when people aren't using it. Then, it can be unzipped and used normally whenever people want, while continuing to save space on their phones." Kaydence and Jamie both happily agreed and started to get to work.

The girls decided to call their app the Combination App, because it combined all of the most used phone functions for people. Inside the Combination App there were four main elements – a communication feature, an information feature, a recreation feature, and an access feature.

The Communication feature was where you could communicate with friends and colleagues, send emails and call your friends and family anytime. This feature was better than other apps because you could do all these things in one place instead of all over your phone.

The Information feature was where you could do research, use the dictionary, and access free TV channels, videos, movies, and music. You could also download Class Dojo or Google Classroom so that parents can follow up what their child is learning at school, and they can get notified if there is an issue or emergency.

The Recreation feature was where you could play games, relax, and do meditation and mindfulness. This feature would be the most popular because many kids and adults enjoy playing online games. This feature was suitable for them because you could download whatever games you want anytime and play together with your friends.

The last section was the Access feature, where you could call a car when you need to go somewhere, use the food delivery app to get food and get grocery deliveries straight to your front door! This feature would be useful when taxis or public transport aren't available. It could also be useful to people who are sick or disabled if they cannot move from place to place easily. They could use this app to help them when they need to eat or if they want to go somewhere.

The girls worked tirelessly for hours to put the finishing touches on the Combination App. They put in all of the necessary technological elements to make it function properly and zipped together the information so the storage

would be usable on everyone's phones. This wasn't easy at all and the girls went through many unsuccessful attempts along the way. Even though there were struggles, they didn't want to give up because they knew the country was counting on someone to solve the problem and they wanted to help. After an exhausting day, the app was complete. The girls were so happy and proud of themselves. They gave each other a big hug to celebrate and then they rolled out the app immediately. China's phone carriers sent it out to all the people in the country. After only a few minutes people's phones downloaded the app and were working perfectly again. The crisis was over!

The Chinese president noticed the three girl's hard work and gave them a certificate for their ingenuity! Later that year, they were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and got published in newspapers around the world for their incredible use of technology. Everyone thanked and appreciated these heroes because without them China might still be struggling to use their phones to this day.

The Fate of a Winner

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Chung, Jeremy James – 9

It was 1232 A.D., and the formidable Mongols were fast surrounding the Chinese city of Kaifeng. Jen knew that his army had to win the next battle, or his city would be captured. Over the last 20 years, the Mongols had attacked the Jin army relentlessly, aiming to conquer the whole Jin territory. The Mongols' strategy was to invade the small towns and take over the Jin resources. They even captured the old Jin capital of Zhongdu a few years back! This was the last hold. If Kaifeng fell, the whole Jin dynasty would fall.

Jen was a general in the Chinese army based in Kaifeng, and he had defended the city many times. This time, though, was different. The city was plagued with famine and illness. The Jin army faced starvation and were getting sick one by one. With fewer soldiers fighting, Jen wanted to create new weapons that could eliminate more enemy soldiers with one strike. However, Jen worried that if these new weapons got into the hands of the Mongols, the Mongols would easily copy the weapons and use them to attack his army. Jen was determined to win, constantly thinking of new strategies and developing new weapons.

Jen's best friend from childhood, Ming, grew up as a curious child who always wanted to be an inventor. However, Ming was known as someone who always invented useless things. His latest invention was vegetable skin paper, which unfortunately attracted rats and was quickly devoured! Nobody took Ming seriously, but Jen believed that Ming could create something magnificent and gave him a chance.

One day, Jen had a sudden thought. What if they could eliminate groups of their enemies in one single strike without endangering themselves? The Jin army had been shooting arrows at their enemies and fighting them with spears, but arrows could only hit one enemy soldier at a time and spears required close-contact fighting.

The next day, Ming invited Jen to a nearby grassland to see his new experiment. Ming combined sulfur, charcoal and saltpeter and put this mixture, which he called "gunpowder", into a bamboo tube. He ignited the tube and threw it a few metres away. Seconds later, there was a loud bang, followed by a flash of red, and a cloud of smoke filled the air. The grass surrounding the tube caught fire. Ming and Jen were thrown back by the blast. Jen was shocked at first, then suddenly had an idea.

Jen's idea was to attach a gunpowder-loaded bamboo tube to an arrow and add a twisted piece of rope leading to the gunpowder. Before releasing the arrow, the archer would ignite the rope so that the arrow would explode when the fire reached the gunpowder. The explosion would eliminate a large number of enemies. The brilliant thing about this fire arrow was that because it would explode, the Mongols would have no chance to copy it! Jen was excited about this new invention and couldn't wait to unleash it on the Mongols, but Ming was sad and mumbled to Jen that he wanted to make something that would promote peace instead of conflict. Jen ignored Ming. With this new invention, he would be known as the greatest general in history.

Jen prepared his army for a surprise attack during the dead of night. The Mongols had dug trenches in front of the city gates. His plan was for the archers at the top of the city walls to shoot these new fire arrows down at the Mongol trenches left and right, forcing the Mongols to gather in the middle. The city gates would open slightly for the foot soldiers armed with spears to charge towards the Mongols while the fire arrows would provide cover for them.

Jen also planned to join the archers on the city wall. Inside his command tent, he put on his full armour with his bow slung across his back. Holding one of the new fire arrows in his hand, he got ready to ignite the fuse. This was the first time that the fire arrow would be used in a real battle. His heart raced. He was afraid that there

would be a lot of casualties if the fire arrow idea failed. He stepped out of the command tent and walked to the city walls. He wiped his hands on his cloak, removing any traces of sweat. Carefully, he nocked the fire arrow and took aim. His arms were shaking from the effort of pulling back his bowstring. Jen suddenly stalled – Ming’s voice had popped into his head, but his army was looking at him expectantly. He instructed his assistant to light the fuse... and SWOOSH, the arrow was released. The arrow whistled through the air – Jen watched the burning fuse and held his breath.

A second later, there was a fiery explosion when the arrow landed, followed by desperate cries of surprise from the Mongols. The fire arrow was a huge success! When the other archers saw Jen’s arrow hit the ground burning, it was their signal to shoot, and they immediately followed. The Mongols’ eyes widened in fear, and their jaws dropped. Jen quickly commanded his archers to continue firing, and he watched as the Mongol army was defeated.

Jen immediately went to tell Ming about his victory, but Ming paid no attention to him and just continued reading his book.

Jen asked, “What’s wrong, Ming?”

“It’s how you used my invention,” said Ming.

“It was the only way to defeat the Mongol army,” Jen replied.

“I never wanted to use it for warfare,” Ming said, “I’m leaving this city. I never want to see you again. I don’t want people to think that I mercilessly helped kill thousands of Mongol soldiers.”

“I..I..I... don’t understand...” Jen stammered in shock.

“I have said what I needed to say,” Ming replied and stormed off.

Jen muttered to himself, “Bah, I didn’t need that friend anyway.” He heard the crowd cheering for him in the distance, but all he could think about was Ming. He had won the battle but lost his closest friend.

The Ancient Compass

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Ip, Chun Ting Silas – 9

I woke up in the middle of nowhere. The sky was blue and the trees were red. There lay a compass and a map, I picked them up and looked at it. This was crazy, I have no idea where I am and I only have a compass and a MAP? What am I supposed to do? I looked at the map and the title was I.O.D. There were little words under the title that said “Island of Doom”.

I started to panic. How did I get here? What do I do here? I turned the map around and saw a message, it read “Find the key, unlock the door and kill the Wompa monster. The compass will help you as a weapon”. That doesn't really make sense, whatever that Wo-m-pa thing is, I need to kill it?

There were words over the compass, I read it out loud and it attached to my wrist and turned into an armour. Suddenly the compass moved my body towards the map and made me pick it up. I looked at the map but the sentence was not the same, it said “Find the ancient compass and take it to the golden age people”. Phew... there is still some people I can talk to.

I walked and walked but nothing was unusual until arrows shot out of nowhere. One hit the armour, but nothing happened. Two people with gold skin jumped out of the forest and started hitting me, but a voice said “STOP!” and the gold people stopped. The chief asked me, “Are you the one from the prophecy that will help us retrieve the ancient compass?” “I suppose”, I said. “Then we welcome you to our village!” said the chief. “Thank you.” I followed them up the trees and I saw a village on top of trees! This was amazing villages on top of trees. It looks like a villa but on top trees and is full of different colours and is so big that 12 people can live there.

Along the way, he told me that I had to get the ancient compass back to them as their protection against bad guys that try to attack them so they made the ancient compass for protection but the Wompa monster stole it from us.

The next day, I woke up on my bed inside the village and after breakfast I said goodbye and continued my journey to find the ancient compass, I followed the map and the armour corrects me. In the distance, there was a light on the ground and I saw a golden key and a door was in front of me. I unlocked the door and I was face to face with a giant monster grinding his teeth with a bone. I punched it in the face and it flew away. It jumped onto me and a sword shot out of my hand, I stabbed it in its butt and it yelled in pain, and ran away. I saw a compass with Chinese words on it, this is really ancient and is made in China.

After that I went back to the village and gave it to the chief “Thank you!” said the chief and the village was full of joy. Suddenly, the scene turned in to a swirling view.

I woke up and found out I overslept! I must go now or I am going to be late for today's math quiz about direction that needs compass.

Time Traveller

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Lai, Cheuk Hei Curtis – 11

It all started when I was in my classroom, listening to the teacher talk about people from, like, I don't know, a hundred years ago? Well, I was almost asleep when the teacher started talking about the technology they had back then. I was like, no way, they couldn't have survived with this little technology, right? I didn't believe her.

After that day of school, I went to the library and checked out a lot of books on the 21st century. They all confirmed what my teacher said was true. Anyways, I still didn't believe her. I wanted to see for myself. That's when I got the idea of time-travelling.

I initially studied about wormholes, to find a passage for leading me back to the past. Anyway, I didn't find anything until one night when I was about to give up and go to sleep. I turned off the light and it hit me. I had to accelerate to the speed of light in order to travel back in time, as time slows the faster you get. I turned on the light and wrote down in my notebook in capital letters – "MUST GET TO SPEED OF LIGHT IN ORDER TO TIME TRAVEL."

I'm now 22 years old, and it's been ten years since that history lesson. I held on to my dreams and worked with a team of scientists with the same dreams and ambitions.

First, with the help of China's Space Agency, we acquired a jet with two newly invented nuclear engines to help it accelerate to the speed of light, and made the jet fireproof – another new technology – in order to get through the atmosphere. The jet had two seats – one for the pilot and one for the passenger. Next, we charted out the quickest route to the nearest wormhole, with help of the astronomers from all around China.

The first time a pilot tried it, the engines broke down and he had to eject. The second time, the pilot managed to go back in time, we lost him when he went through the wormhole. After that, we added 250 backup communication servers. The third time, which had to be perfect or the government would stop funding us, really worked! The pilot was safe and sound as he returned back to the present. He told us, "That was the best flight I had ever flown."

After these test flights were successful, we started our own time travelling business – Hong Kong Time Airlines (HKTA). In order to serve more passengers, we bought a C919 commercial jet and added a few more nuclear engines to it. Again, we made the plane fireproof. Then, we added 300 backup communications servers, upgraded the safety regulations, becoming the first time travelling airline that ever existed!

My plan was to strike it rich doing time travelling business, then spend the rest of my life travelling around. Maybe I would tell my old history teacher about time travelling and apologise to her for saying she was wrong. Maybe I would meet a real dinosaur. Maybe I would meet Thomas Edison, or Henry Ford, or even Orville and Wilbur Wright. Afterall, who knows what will happen in the future?

The Time–Traveling Scientist: Alex's Journey through Ancient China's Inventions

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Li, Leon – 9

In a small town, there lived a young boy named Alex. He loved reading and was really interested in science. His biggest dream was to become a famous scientist and make groundbreaking discoveries that would help people.

One day, while exploring an old bookstore, Alex found a dusty, ancient book. Its pages were weathered and worn, holding the secrets of the past. As he carefully flipped through its yellowed pages, he found an exciting story about an old man named Master Wu who accidentally invented something called gunpowder in ancient China.

This story made Alex's imagination go wild! He really wanted to experience what it was like in those old times. Little did he know, the book held a magical secret. As Alex closed his eyes, he found himself transported back in time, right in front of Master Wu's workshop!

Inside the workshop, Master Wu was working on experiments to unlock the secrets of immortality. He firmly believed that by creating a special medicine, he could offer eternal life to all. Alex carefully knocked on the door, and Master Wu was surprised but happy to welcome this curious helper. Alex was thrilled to witness the ancient genius at work and offered to assist Master Wu in his experiments.

Day and night, Master Wu and Alex tirelessly stayed in the workshop, surrounded by old scrolls and mysterious ingredients. One fateful day, as Master Wu reached for a jar of saltpetre, Alex noticed it was about to fall and warned him. But it was too late. The jar slipped from Master Wu's grasp, causing the saltpetre to spill onto sulfur and charcoal nearby.

Unaware of the consequences, they continued with their experiment. Suddenly, a colossal explosion rocked the workshop! Smoke and sparks filled the air, and Master Wu's beard got all messy. Alex was really surprised and jumped back.

Fearful yet curious, Master Wu and Alex gathered the remnants of their failed experiment and hurried to the royal palace to tell the King what had happened.

To their surprise, the King's eyes gleamed with excitement. He saw the potential of this accidental creation. The King, wise and strategic, thought they could use it to protect the kingdom from enemies.

With the King's full support, Master Wu and Alex continued their experiments. They worked together to make a cannon, a powerful weapon that shot iron balls with a resounding boom.

News of the cannon spread to neighbouring kingdoms, instilling fear among their rulers. However, within Master Wu's kingdom, people saw an opportunity for celebration. They used the magical powder to create beautiful fireworks that lit up the sky and brought happiness to everyone. The populace believed that fireworks had the power to scare away evil spirits and bring good fortune and happiness.

Alex wasn't carried away by the joy of success. On the contrary, filled with inspiration and the ancient wisdom of Master Wu, he returned to the present day. The boy dedicated himself to diligent study and eventually became a respected scientist.

In his scientific pursuits, Alex discovered the powder they had made had special powers to fight germs, so he invented new treatments that helped countless people recover from illnesses. People all over the world recognised and appreciated Alex's important contributions to medicine.

Throughout his accomplished career, Alex never forgot the amazing adventure that made him love science. He shared his story with other young scientists and mixed it with Master Wu's tale. He wanted to inspire them to chase their dreams, be brave in exploring new things and be open to discovering amazing things by accident, just like he did.

The Time Gap

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Li, Yvette – 10

Lightning struck and thunder roared. The raging wind was determined to wake me up from my sweet dreams. I got up immediately, looking through the window, and saw the trembling trees. I prayed, "Dear God, I hope that everyone will be fine in this storm..." I slapped my head trying to wake myself up. I peered around the room, and everything looked different. I wondered if I was still dreaming. I fidgeted a bit trying to remember the last thing I did before I went to bed. I tried to clear my head again, and I finally remembered that I was at the Palace Museum before heading for my birthday feast!

I raced down the stairs, attempting to wake everyone up. I sneaked into a room that I thought was never there before, and I saw two elderly people lying on the bed. They looked really familiar, yet very different. I shrugged my shoulders and left the room. I knocked on a room which I was sure was my brother's room, but inside was a young man engrossed in his video game. "No way! I must be dreaming!" I went into the bathroom to check myself. I saw a few strands of grey hair sticking out of my head, and I wondered if I had gotten that old in just one day. I thought to myself, "Yesterday I was just 9!" I dashed back into my room and glared at my pink, shimmering calendar, and 17 Oct 2043 was clearly noted as my birthday! I was in shock. I ran around the house trying to locate everything, and I saw a strange structure in my backyard. I ignored it as I thought it belonged to my neighbours. I went back to my room, lay down, and stressed out. I thought to myself, "Am I in the wrong universe like Spider-Man in 'No Way Home'?" I thought so hard that my brain fell apart. I decided to go on my Instagram looking for evidence to counter the strange things that happened that night. As I picked up my phone, I saw wedding pictures of my best friends – Zoe and George! I also saw the ads for 'Mission Impossible 15' popping up, and it said it would be the last film directed by the one and only Tom Cruise in his late 70s. In the midst of this, a message popped up saying, "Meet you in Stanley at 2 pm, ok babe?" I was so surprised that I smacked my head hard, and I quickly checked my phone, there was a text was from "Boyfriend Jake." I decided to delete his profile altogether...

I ran down to the backyard and asked every single neighbour if they knew what this odd-looking structure could be, but I got no response. I curiously walked into it. Inside, the big screen showed the words, "What year do you want to travel to?" I was confused enough to put in a random number, "2025." Suddenly, a ray of bright light shone into the machine, and I travelled to a place that I had no idea about whatsoever. My eyes caught a newsletter lying beside the trash bin with the title "China Inventions." Without hesitation, I picked up the newsletter as everyone stared at me as if I was a monster. Feeling embarrassed, I lowered my head hoping no one would notice me. On the newsletter, I read about Professor Silvermine Wu explaining how and why he invented the Time Machine. It was simply an awesome invention from China – one of the greatest. Its special power was to transport people or anything through time. People also named it the Wu's Machine as they wanted everyone to know that Professor Wu was one of the greatest inventors of all time. Professor Wu noted that the Time Machine is a great way to transport energy to the past so they will have a happier and more fulfilled life. Professor Wu said, "Climate Change has an enormous impact on all mankind; sooner or later, we will have no more resources on earth, and we need this invention to help us move resources around at this difficult time. People now need resources from another era to survive. We are in an unprecedented crisis right now. I hope you can help the world by using fewer resources. Remember that 'teamwork will make the dream work!'" After learning this extra information, I was more than excited because I love Chinese inventions dearly!

I made my way back to the Time Machine, and immediately I figured out what was happening! Everything started to make sense now: the two elderly people were my parents; the young man was my brother, and I saw the 30-year-old version of myself! I finally figured out everything! I travelled to 2043 through the machine, and all I needed to do now was to go back to the 10-year-old me! As I hit "2023" on the machine, everything became so familiar again. I came out of the machine, realizing that it was part of the exhibition in the Palace Museum, and I saw my parents

right in front of me looking annoyed and saying, "We have been looking for you for the past 10 minutes! Where have you been? You really got us worried!"

I immediately hugged everyone tightly, saying, "I will stay with you guys forever!" They looked absolutely confused as if they had ten thousand questions in their minds. As we were heading out, I hugged my mom and said to her, "Hey, let's head home for a simple meal. I really don't need a feast. I want to save more resources for the future 'me'!" My mom replied, looking confused, "Well, it is your birthday, so you get to decide, dear. You have really grown up!"

How the Invisibility Cloak Saved the World

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Lim, Huai Xin Florence – 9

In the year 2213— one thousand years after Genghis Khan broke through the Great Wall and attacked northern China, another war was brewing. Instead of people, it was AI robots VS men.

Even though the men were powerful, they were powerless against the robots. While the men were confused and unorganised, the robots were invincible. Shots rang out, wounding the men. Sensing it, the robots took the chance and destroyed the units one by one.

Suddenly, a man named Mr. Lin who was holding a blanket said to the crowd, 'I have two Invisibility Cloaks, you can let two people wear them and turn off the robots. Their Achilles heel is their switch, it is on the heels, and you can turn it off easily. I know this because I am the inventor of the robots, but I will only help if you promise to put a golden statue of me in the middle of town'

While everyone was debating what to do, whether they should listen to Mr. Lin or not, the AI robots came up and shot the captain. Suddenly it was clear that they had no choice but to listen to Mr. Lin and use the Invisibility Cloaks as he suggested. Unfortunately, the Invisibility Cloaks were very small and only children could fit inside without fully being seen. The debate was very brief and obvious, but now everyone continued shouting at each other as they were unclear what they should do or should have done.

Finally, they had concluded and selected two of the bravest children in the village. They were petite, and subsequently not very good at fighting, not even sporty. However, they were brave in heart even though they were often laughed at by bigger children. The selected children quickly learned what to do and crept up behind the first robot thanks to some other equipment Mr. Lin had given them including winged shoes, and unbreakable helmets. They turned the robots off one by one, and finally, the robots stopped. Adam and Lucy, with two brave hearts, did a great job, but they also had an Achilles heel, they had accidentally lost their glasses during the fight and were blurred in their eyes. As a result, they did not notice the hiding robot captain. It was aware of what was happening, so he turned around when he sensed that the children were coming. Suddenly, the Captain sprang towards Adam and Lucy. While this happened, the two petite children hatched a plan in the blink of an eye. They crept up behind the robot and as it whirled around, they threw a big rock at it. The robot groaned and collapsed in a heap.

The Chinese won the war, and true to their word they put a statue of Mr. Lin in town. Next to him were two other statues of Adam and Lucy who are now never laughed at or bullied in school again.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Liu, Qimeng Ariana – 10

China is an amazing and popular country where has hundreds and a thousand of useful, jaw dropping and astonishing inventions. Some especially marvellous ones are even used throughout the whole world! China has 4 greatest inventions like..... The most popular invention, paper making, I'm sure the whole wild world uses it, we're even using it now! Paper was invented in AD 105 by Ts'ai Lun, it was invented in a place called Lei-Yang in China. In the old days, paper was made by mashing mulberry bark, hems and rags of water into pulp, and then press out all the liquid and hang the thing mat to dry in the sun. The way we make it now involves two main progresses, which is the treatment of raw material, which includes converting chip into pulp, washing and bleaching, refining, beating, sizing, colouring of the fibres, and later to form paper sheet in a Fourdrinier machine. 140 w Another one of China's great inventions is a compass. Before the compass was invented, explorers had to look at the sun, moon, and stars for directional guidance. The Chinese first used magnetic rocks to determine north and south. This technique was later incorporated into the design of the compass. Compasses often show angles in degrees: north corresponds to 0 degrees, and the angle's increase clockwise, so east is 90 degrees, south is 180 degrees, and west is 270 degrees. These numbers allow the compass to show azimuths or bearings which are commonly stated in degrees. If local variation between magnetic north and true north is known, then direction of magnetic north also gives direction of true north. 98 w the magnetic compass is the most familiar compass type. It functions as a pointer to "magnetic north", the local magnetic meridian, because the magnetized needle at its heart aligns itself with the horizontal component of the Earth's magnetic field. The magnetic field exerts a torque on the needle, pulling the north end or pole of the needle approximately toward the Earth's North magnetic pole, and pulling the other toward the Earth's South magnetic pole. The needle is mounted on a low -friction pivot point, in better compasses a jewel bearing, so it can turn easily. When the compass is held level, the needle turns until, after a few seconds to allow oscillations to die out, it settles into its equilibrium orientation. 120 w in navigation, directions on maps are usually expressed with reference to geographical or true north, the direction toward the Geographical North Pole, the rotation axis of the Earth. Depending on where the compass is located on the surface of the Earth the angle between true north and magnetic north, called magnetic declination can vary widely with geographic location. The location magnet declination is given on most maps, to slowly change with time, which is referred to as geomagnetic secular variation. The effect of this means a map with the latest declination should be used. Some magnetic compasses include means to manually compensate for the magnetic declination, so that the compass shows true directions. 112 w 470 words so far..... And there's still more, like Tea Production. According to old Chinese legend, tea was first discovered by Shennong, Chinese father of Agriculture, around 2,737 BC. In the Tang Dynasty (618-907) tea became a popular drink enjoyed by all social classes. Cha Jing (or The Book of Tea), written by Lu Yu in the Tang Dynasty, explicated ways to cultivate tea, tea drinking and different classifications of tea in details. The book is considered as the world's first monograph about tea. And the world's oldest and largest living tea tree can be found in Ling Cang, China, about 3,200 years old. A lot of places also does tea production. Like: first is obviously China: 2.2 million tons, the birthplace of tea, China leads the world in tea production. From green to white to oolong and pu-erh, the diversity of Chinese tea is astounding. China's tea culture is rich and complex, incorporating various preparation techniques and ceremonial practice. Regions like Fujian and Yunnan are especially renowned for their high-quality teas. India: 1.2 million tons. India is a powerhouse in the tea industry with a wide variety of teas like Assam, Darjeeling, and Nilgiri. Each region produces teas with unique characteristics, ranging from the strong and malty flavours of Assam to the light and aromatic profiles of Darjeeling. Chai, a spiced milk tea, is ubiquitous in India and has gained international fame. Kenya: 432,000 tons. Kenya is one of Africa's biggest tea producers and is known for its strong, astringent black teas. Most of Kenya's tea is grown in high-altitude areas like the Rift Valley. The country has pioneered in the development of "CPC" (Crush, Tear, Curl), which produce tea ideal for blends and teabags. Sri Lanka: 340,000 tons. Formerly known as Ceylon, Sri Lanka has a storied history of tea production of dating back to the 19th century. The country is famous for its Ceylon tea, a bright and lively black tea. Sri Lanka's varying altitudes and climates allow for a diverse range of flavours, from the light and floral to the strong and malty. Vietnam: 214,000 tons. Vietnam has

rapidly gained prominence in the tea industry, specializing in both black and green teas. Vietnamese green tea, known for its light and balanced flavour, is particularly popular. The country is also known for its unique teas such as Lotus and Jasmine tea, where the tea leaves are scented with flower blossoms. Turkey: 212,000 tons. Turkey is not just one of the largest producers but also one of the highest consumers of tea in the world. Turkish tea, known as “çay” is a variety of black tea that’s consumed throughout the day. Tea gardens are ubiquitous in Turkish culture, serving as social hubs where people gather in conversation and relaxation. The Rize region along the Black Sea is particularly famous for its famous tea cultivation. Iran: 160,000 tons. Tea is an integral part of Iranian culture and is consumed at all times of the day. Most of Iran’s tea cultivation occurs in the northern regions, particularly in the province of Gilan.

476 w 946w These are the top 3 inventions that I believe are the best ones out of the world. I hope China can try to invent Time Machines, then that will probably be the best in the whole entire universe!

The Story of The Innovative and Magical Foursome

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Mou, Eleanor – 10

Legend has it that in ancient China, in a time when dragons flew in the skies and cherry blossoms covered the land, a group of children were on a mission to create amazing things. Known as the “Innovative and Magical Foursome”, they were China’s first inventors, always curious and excited to make their world amazing.

In a small village surrounded by green hills, lived an intelligent girl named Hua Fei. Hua Fei loves discovering the unknown and is also known for making cool things. One day, as she walked around the village, a brilliant idea hit her. Hua Fei wanted to make a Dreamweaver, a special machine that could take someone’s dream and make it real. It was like a shiny loom with magical threads. By weaving them in special ways, dreams would come alive! People could jump into the Dreamweaver and live their wildest dreams. Hua Fei's invention made everyone in the village so happy that every day felt like magic.

Stories of Hua Fei’s Dreamweaver reached Ming Yue, a girl who loved staring at the stars. Inspired, she decided to create the Starlight Lantern, a magical lantern with the night sky gleaming inside. Ming Yue found a way to catch starlight and put it in the lantern, making it glow softly, bright and shimmer. When it was turned on, it made the walls look like they had stars and pictures of the night sky. Ming Yue's creation was amazing and made people feel connected to the huge universe.

In a busy city a few hundred miles away, lived a boy named Jia Wei. He loved everything about kites and wanted to make one that could carry messages very far. So, he made the Whispering Kite. Decorated with delicate bells and colorful ribbons, the Whispering Kite flew into the sky, carrying messages written by people below. The wind turned into a messenger, carrying whispers of love, friendship, and dreams to faraway places. Jia Wei's invention was a great way for people to communicate, even if they were far apart.

In a quiet mountain village lived a farmer’s son named Yu Xuan, who loved the sounds of the wind. Believing the wind had melodies, he made the Harmony Breeze, a magical instrument turning the wind's whispers into calming music. Placed in a field, it made people feel connected with nature. Yu Xuan's invention brought peace and calm to his village.

As Hua Fei, Ming Yue, Jia Wei, and Yu Xuan kept making cool things, their inventions spread all over ancient China. Each invention had its own unique and life-changing story, and together, they made a big impact on the Kingdom.

But life is not always easy, and things don’t always go your way.

One day, Jia Wei’s invention, the Whispering Kite, faced a big problem. A tricky wind blew it off course, taking it far away and it vanished into the clouds. Jia Wei was sad, but he didn't give up. Instead, he thought of a way to make the Whispering Kite even better. With the help of his friends, he created the Resilient Messenger Kite, ready to handle unexpected winds. It became even more popular than before, guaranteeing every message sent makes it to the recipient, near, far and wide.

Later, the Emperor heard about the “Innovative and Magical Foursome” and invited them to show their inventions at the palace. The Dreamweaver, Starlight Lantern, Resilient Messenger Kite, and Harmony Breeze were all there, displayed in the big courtyard for all the Kingdom to admire. The Emperor loved their creations so much that he challenged them to make something even more amazing as a team.

Hua Fei, Ming Yue, Jia Wei, and Yu Xuan took on the challenge. Combining their talents, they created a super dazzling masterpiece – the Bright Stars Flying Dream Carousel. This magical invention lets people live their dreams while floating in the night sky filled with bright stars, sending a continuous wave of peace, calmness and best wishes to everyone. The Emperor was so impressed, everyone in the Kingdom also agreed, saying it was the most extraordinary creation ever.

After that, Hua Fei, Ming Yue, Jia Wei, and Yu Xuan became famous, not just for their own inventions, but for the incredible Bright Stars Flying Dream Carousel they made together. This invention spread joy and happiness to everyone in ancient China. For hundreds of years, their stories kept inspiring kids and grown-ups, showing that even when things get tough, working together can turn dreams into reality. The Kingdom overflowed with creativity, and the legacy of the “Innovative and Magical Foursome” brought joy and wonder to everyone.

The Midnight 'Feast'

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Poon, Cheuk Ka Anabelle – 9

This story begins when I first got an admission letter on the first of September, saying that I have successfully entered a very popular boarding school in town named “St. Albert School”. When I received the letter, I was very excited to meet new friends and teachers!

It all started on the second of September, the first day of school! We all got sorted into different rooms and “Room 13” was assigned to be my room for the term. I hope everything goes right and my classmates are nice.

In Biology class, I sat between two girls named Adel and Aria. Adel is a hard-working girl and she looks focus, while Aria was keep drawing on her table and not listening to the class. Both of them looked nice and I want to be their friends. After class, Adel immediately left the laboratory and headed to the library for revision. While Aria stayed in the laboratory, she took out a mysterious box from her bag and asked, ‘I bought some candies from the supermarket, should we have a midnight feast tonight?’ I was surprised that she was inviting me to her party and immediately replied without thinking, ‘Why would I say no? Of course, I want to go!’ At this point, I was too amazed and even forgot the school rules, ‘Students must sleep before 10pm’.

Aria said the Midnight Feast will start at half past ten, if whoever is late will get a punishment. When it was almost 10pm, our class teacher Miss Rebecca even came to our rooms and checked if we were all tucked in our beds. Once she left, I was relieved but struggled at the same time. ‘Should I join the midnight feast? Will Aria hate me if I reject her invitation?’ Eventually, I went to her room because I am scared of Aria hating me.

I waited until half past ten and knocked her door. When I went in, most of the classmates that Aria invited had arrived before me. She grabbed some candies for me and introduced me to her friends. I had a happy time with them till midnight. We didn’t obey the school rules and slept at 1am because we knew that Miss Rebecca usually sleeps at 11pm.

The next day, I was woken by the school bell, I was super tired but forced myself to change my uniform for school. I was so clumsy that I didn’t even bring my homework to class! During English class, I almost fell asleep, Aria looked super exhausted and even ignored the teacher’s announcement about the assembly and slept in class. The teacher, Miss Rebecca had a very suspicious look on her face. I was so scared if she knew about our Midnight Feast last night.

After English class, Miss Rebecca beckoned to Aria and I, she asked us a few questions about last night. I was panic so I told the truth, Aria shot me an angry look. Miss Rebecca saw it and was even more disappointed to us. She shook her head and said, ‘You must not stay up after 10pm, everyone knows and obeys the rule!’ I was ashamed and promised not to violate the rules again.

I felt sad and almost cried after being scolded by Miss Rebecca, during Biology class I didn’t even say a word with anyone. Adel walked over me and tried to comfort me, ‘It’s okay to have party afterschool, just make sure don’t stay up after 10pm! Should we have a revision snack party before 10pm instead? That would be happier and not breaking the rules!’ I was inspired by this idea and agreed to join!

Starting from that day, we can never stop our interesting revision snack party, and thanks for that, I scored full marks in my final exam and even ranked the first in my class! Miss Rebecca was grateful and asked Adel and I to be the class monitress. We were encouraged and hugged each other! I was so thankful to have Adel as my best friend in the boarding school!

My summer holiday is coming soon, hopefully I can go back home and relax a bit! I am on my dad's car now, I just said the last goodbye of the school year to Adel, I hope that both of us can have a relaxing summer!

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Qiu, Lily – 10

Most people think they know a lot about ancient China and its inventions. However, they actually don't. Let's explore China's inventions from the past with this writing!

A famous architect or master carpenter, engineer and inventor Lu Ban invented plenty of things. One of his most famous inventions is the saw.

Legend has it that when he was grabbing hold of trees to climb a steep slope to get some firewood, he got cut by a leaf with a spiny texture. He then realised that he could turn the leaf into a tool to cut trees with: the saw.

Now I'll tell you about another Chinese inventor. He invented paper and the modern paper making process. Can you guess who he is? He is Cai Lun.

Cai Lun was a Chinese court official of the Eastern Han dynasty. Although early forms of paper have existed since the 3rd Century BCE, Cai Lun is traditionally known as the official inventor of paper.

In 105, he declared that he had made a new composition for paper with a new paper making process. At that time, bamboo, wooden slips, silk and cloth were used to write on in China. However, bamboo and wooden slips were bulky and heavy, and silk and cloth were too expensive for ordinary people to afford. Lots of experiments had been held to find the right composition for paper, but Cai Lun's pulp solution was the best.

His process still used bamboo, but also introduced hemp waste, old rags, fishnets, and most importantly, tree bark. The materials were boiled to a pulp that was beaten with a wood or stone mallet before being mixed with a large amount of water. The resulting mixture was then processed using sieves and the excess water removed, leaving the paper finished once dry. The paper that resulted from this method is often referred to as "Cai Hou paper".

Another Chinese inventor is Su Song. He was a Chinese polymathic scientist and statesman. He excelled in a variety of fields, including maths, astronomy, zoology, botany and many others.

Su Song was the engineer for a hydro-mechanical astronomical clock tower in Kaifeng. Su's clock tower had been invented by Tang dynasty Buddhist monk Yi Xing and government official Liang Lingzan in 725 AD to operate a water-powered armillary sphere, although Su's armillary sphere was the first to be provided with a mechanical clock drive. An armillary sphere is a model of the celestial globe.

This polymath also finished a celestial atlas on star maps, terrestrial maps and a treatise on pharmacology.

I think we're lucky to have all these people invent things for us. Imagine if no one ever invented anything! We wouldn't have any of the things we do now, and would be living like cavemen. I hope that we can continue making important inventions and discoveries for all of us.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Song, Tin Shuen Stella – 9

China is a country rich in inventions.

Some of the famous ancient ones are paper, gunpowder, tea, and the compass. The compass was developed over many centuries.

What do you think would happen centuries away? Would robots take over the world? Would humans turn into monkeys? Let's start a world of wonder and imagination.

I think we should invent a 'magical blending machine' so even young kids could invent things they want, and mostly it's safe! It is very big and very safe. I think that children all over the world would like this invention and be very happy about it! I hope I can invent it when I grow up.

The Mystery Machine

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Sun, Yu Shi Alyssa – 9

Once upon a time in a charming small town, there resided a curious toddler named Lily. Lily loved to explore her grandfather's old workshop, filled with all sorts of machines. One day, as Lily roamed the workshop, she saw a machine that she had never seen. Its sign said **'Magical Paper Transformer – Turn Used Paper into New Paper and a Dash of Ink!'**.

After Gathering a collection of crumpled homework, weathered drawings, and even a few scattered notes, Lily tenderly placed the papers into the Magical Paper Transformer. To her amazement, it popped out a brand-new sheet of paper and a tiny vial of colorful ink. She thought, “with the Magical Paper Transformer, I could recycle all the used paper in the city and create an endless supply of paper for everyone!”

Word spread quickly through the town about Lily's newfound invention. Soon, the townsfolk started bringing their old newspapers, cardboard boxes, and even torn pages from books to Lily's workshop.

As the enchanting machine worked its magic, turning the old paper to new ones, the town became a cleaner and greener place... But Lily wasn't done yet. She wanted to share her invention with the world. With the help of her friends, she organized a big event. Families from neighboring towns gathered to witness the wonder of the Magical Paper Transformer.

During the event, Lily explained how the machine worked and why it was important to recycle paper. Kids and adults alike were fascinated. The town became famous for its innovative invention, and Lily received awards for her machine. The Magical Paper Transformer brought joy and creativity to the town, and everyone learned the importance of taking care of the planet. The Magical Paper Transformer continued to bring smiles, laughter, and a little bit of magic to the world.

New Tales of China's Inventions

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Wong, Rachel Kacey – 9

China has created a lot of inventions that we use in our daily lives, like toothbrushes, toilet paper, solar panels, compasses, and more amazing gadgets.

Would people like new inventions from China? What new inventions were made? China has made a lot of different gadgets that have inspired many people. But what do you think China would invent in the future that will leave the world gobsmacked?

Maybe China would invent a 'Haircut Helmet'! What is a haircut helmet, you ask? A haircut helmet is a gadget that gets put on your head, and you think of a hairstyle in your mind, and the hairstyle magically appears on your head! Isn't that just the coolest? It saves up time and makes life so much easier!

Or, maybe China would invent the 'Chocolate Treat Blaster'! The chocolate treat blaster is an invention that uses a blaster that fires chocolate sauce in a direct spot. It is a fun toy for children to play with and a delicious treat.

Timmy's Ocean Adventure

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Yan, Shiyun Tina – 10

One sunny morning, Timmy was having a history lesson at school about the ancient Chinese people and the things they had invented. To Timmy, ancient Chinese inventions were just too boring to be true.

“Wait a minute,” thought Timmy, “the sky wasn’t so dark before.” Without warning, Timmy fell straight into a dark and mysterious-looking wormhole.

“Ahhhh!!!” cried Timmy as he tumbled onwards, but nobody was around to help.

Swoosh! After a while, Timmy found himself lying face down on something wooden. Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! It was the sound of waves hitting something!

“Oh!” Timmy rolled upright. He was, in fact, on a boat. But not just any boat! It was an ancient Chinese fishing boat, but there weren’t any fishermen on it. Timmy stood up. He walked around the boat, which was rocking from side to side.

Suddenly, a male voice asked gently, “Who are you? What are you doing on our boat?”

“Our boat?” Timmy echoed, giving him just enough time to turn around. The voice’s owner was a man wearing a hat and brown Chinese robe-like clothes.

“Oh,” the man said calmly, “You are new here, aren’t you?”

“Yes, I... I am new here, and my name is Timmy.”

“My name is Shen Kuo, but you can just call Kuo. I am a Chinese polymath, and I’m accompanying the emperor on a visit to the neighbouring countries,” Kuo added, leading Timmy off the boat.

“We were trying to locate the other countries, but because of the stormy weather, we could hardly find anything. Luckily, I invented this.” Kuo revealed a magnetised needle attached to a floating platform. “This needle aligns itself with the Earth’s magnetic field, providing a consistent reference point. Sailors and explorers can now determine their direction more accurately, which makes long-distance journeys much more reliable and efficient,” explained Kuo.

“Wow! That is amazing!” exclaimed Timmy.

“How did you get the idea of inventing the compass?” Timmy had never been this excited about Chinese inventions before. But then, Timmy suddenly remembered that he wanted to go back home. He sighed. “Do you know the way to my home? Could you take me there, please?” Timmy asked quietly. He hadn’t learnt anything about travelling yet... but he did know that a lot of Chinese inventions had saved the day. So maybe, just maybe, he could use one of them, and those Chinese inventions could take him home! How exciting!

“Hmmm... There is a special way to get there... but it is a very dangerous journey,” mumbled Kuo. “We have to get to ancient Greece fast because my visit is only a week away,” explained Kuo. “There are lots of inventions that I made, and they are very useful. The journey won’t take very long, but it is still dangerous. We have to use a big ship, sail there, and find the king, and then ask him if we could borrow his... portal,” Kuo said.

“Let’s get going!” cried Timmy excitedly. So they ran, as fast as cheetahs, into the Emperor’s palace. There, they bowed and explained everything.

After a few minutes, the Emperor said, “You may borrow one of my ships. Good luck!” So Shen Kuo ran to his house, grabbed the inventions that he thought would work and charged back. The captain was already waiting, with Timmy onboard. Shen Kuo ran on board, the ship’s anchor was already raised, and the ship began to move.

After a few hours, Timmy woke up. Kuo was standing opposite him, testing out his travelling inventions with two of the servants. Timmy sat up. He walked around the ship. Finally, Kuo noticed him and said, “We’re almost there.” A few minutes later, their ship stopped. It was time to meet the king of ancient Greece. They got off the boat and started to run. They arrived at the palace, faster than they thought, and bowed deeply to the king.

“May we go through the portal, Your Majesty?” Kuo asked, trying to be as nice and calm as he could.

“Yes, of course you can!” the king replied. So his guards guided them to the portal. It looked like a swirling wormhole, except for the fact that it was weirdly rainbow-coloured.

“Remember me!” cried Timmy as loudly as he could, stepping into the portal.

“Are you okay?” asked someone. Wait a minute... it was his mother!

“Mommy!” whispered Timmy. After that big time-travel adventure, it was time to rest. So Timmy thought, maybe Chinese history isn’t so boring after all. And that was the last thought Timmy had when he fell asleep, dreaming about his favourite Chinese invention.

A Peek into the Past

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Tsoi, Wai Ching Honey – 11

Riiiiinnnggg! Went the bell. As Miles trudged into his classroom, he thought, “They say 3024 is going to be an exciting year with all of the new inventions, but I don’t see how!” He slumped in his chair and pressed a button to activate the StudentDesk3000 to prepare for his lesson.

“Settle down,” Mr Chan said as he walked into the classroom. An unexpected man wearing a lab coat followed, causing a surge of whispers among the students. “In today’s history lesson we won’t learn about the Han dynasty. As you have noticed, we have a guest with us today. He is a scientist, representative from one of the top Chinese teams, and he will introduce their latest invention—the Time Machine! Please welcome Mr. Tang!”

Immediately, excited squeals and murmurs rose from the crowd, and Miles’s heart pumped with anticipation as he leaned forward to take a closer look.

Mr. Tang stepped forward and pulled a piece of black cloak off an unsuspecting figure beside him, revealing a tall metal cylinder covered by a dome. Colourful lights flashed here and there across the machine surrounding a giant clock placed in the middle of the dome. The room was dead silent. Everyone gasped in awe.

“This is amazing! We should take field trips to the past with this machine so we can gain a better insight on history,” Miranda exclaimed.

“Precisely! Great job Miranda!” Mr. Chan smiled.

“Teacher’s pet,” Miles muttered under his breath. Other than that, his eyes were so glued to the majestic machine that he only paid minimal attention to the scientist’s speech.

“You can travel to any year in the past or the future in this machine. Additionally, you have to wear a special belt to remove language barriers and change your clothes to blend into the background...Now get into pairs and take turns to explore the interior of the Time Machine. Do NOT touch any buttons.”

Unfortunately, Miles was in a group with Miranda, and it really annoyed him when she kept talking about history trivia lining up. However, his frustration instantly disappeared when they stepped into the machine. There were buttons everywhere! He leaned against the wall, feeling a bit overwhelmed. Suddenly, the doors slammed shut! Before they could scream, their bodies started fading as well.

“Miles you pressed a button, didn’t you?” Miranda rolled her eyes. “Grab a belt while you can!”

They each quickly grasped onto a belt and disappeared.

“Interesting,” a man wearing a silk robe mumbled as he observed wasps concocting a mixture.

Suddenly, a blinding light flashed before his eyes and two children leaped toward him, knocking out the wasp nest! The man yelped in horror.

Embarrassed, the children helped him up. The boy said something, but the man couldn’t understand. He strapped a particular metal ring on, then he said again, “Hi we’re Miles Li and Miranda Yip. We’ve traveled here from the future. Who are you?”

“The future, you said?” The man snickered, stroking his wispy black beard. “Well aren’t you two imaginative? As you might know, I am Cai Lun, the chief eunuch of the Han emperor He. I give the best advice to the emperor and

I am responsible for the production of ceremonial weapons in the Han dynasty. I have done great and brave things that have impressed many, and I look forward to further benefiting the dynasty.”

“We’re in the Eastern Han dynasty, 105 CE,” Miles whispered to himself.

“Cai Lun!” Miranda Yip, the strange bespectacled girl squealed in delight. “I cannot believe I am finally meeting you! I don’t really know about the other stuff, but I am so thankful that you invented paper,”

“Umm... What’s paper?” Cai Lun scratched his head.

“Miranda!” Miles Li, the boy with messy hair yanked her by her sleeves. “You better shut up before you mess up the time–continuum! Haven’t you watched any sci–fi movies in the 20th century? If you change anything in the past, the future will be a total disaster! So the best plan is to stop hanging out with this dude and try to get back to the future as soon as possible. I can’t believe that I thought you were smart.”

They are either really from the future, or they have the wildest imagination I have ever seen, Cai Lun thought.

“No Miles,” Miranda Yip pushed him away. “You’re not my boss.”

“Well Miss Yip, I am on the way to conduct an experiment. You can come with,” Cai Lun suggested as he slowly walked away.

“Ok!” Miranda ran up to him.

Miles sighed and followed them to the stone yard.

“According to my observations,” Cai Lun said. “Wasps create thin materials by mixing things together. These thin materials can surely replace the expensive cloth and bamboo we’ve been using to write. I shall imitate this process and see what happens,”

After a few hours of testing, nothing seemed to work.

“What is going on?” Miranda screamed in frustration.

“Perhaps, there isn’t enough water...” Cai Lun frowned.

“Perhaps, you can’t invent paper because we don’t belong here. We need to return to 3024,” Miles sighed. “It was a pleasure of your acquaintance,”

“Yeah, thanks,” Miranda said. “Press the green button,”

“You knew this whole time?” Miles grunted.

“I knew it would be fun,” Miranda smirked as they slowly faded.

“I admit; it was a bit exciting...” Miles smirked back.

“I guess you are really time travellers,” Cai Lun gazed in awe. “Farewell, my dear friends! I shall call my invention ‘paper’ just like you said!”

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The two children smiled as they returned to the classroom.

“Ancient China has invented many things that affected the world around us. Not just paper, but compasses, tea, and economy systems—Miranda, Miles!” Mr. Chan jumped back.

They got detention afterwards though for traveling back in time. “I guess 3024 isn’t so bad after all,” Miles said while in detention.

Chinese Hair Dye Invention

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Wan, Cheuk Ting Audrey – 10

Once upon a time in China, there was a Chinese artist called Da Mi who loved to paint with different color pigments. His paintings were very popular but could only sell for a little money.

One day, his aged mother was boiling some soup with ginseng, goji berries, cordyceps, ginkgo, and some other rare Chinese herbs for the good health of Da Mi. Da Mi accidentally knocked his color palette into the soup when his mother was sleeping. Da Mi was shocked and didn't know how to react. He then clumsily scooped the palette out. However, the pot of soup had turned cloudy, and the color blurred. He was very worried that his mother would find out, and disappointed as the money was wasted. He suddenly thought of a way to hide the fact. Suddenly an idea popped up ----just pour all the soup away, but Mum would discover the boiled herbs. When his three dogs were chasing around, a new idea came to his mind. He would feed the dogs when the soup had cooled down, so he could explain to his mother that the soup had all been drunk by him because it was so delicious. When his mother woke up, she was happy that the whole pot of soup was drunk.

The next morning, his three dogs were licking his face to wake him up. He was astonished when he saw the roots of the three dogs' furry hair become red. He quickly called his mother and explained to her about feeding the dogs. She found it was unbelievable, but still helped his son wash the dogs. They were reluctant to find that the color wouldn't be washed away. They then gave up the work. The next day, Da Mi was even more astonished to see orange color coming out from the roots of the hair. He tried again to give the dogs a bath, but nothing changed. His mother suggested observing their behavior and the health conditions of them. Each day, one new color appeared and in seven days, the dogs' hair had all the colors of a rainbow. The dogs were still active and energetic, had the appetite to eat, and had no signs of discomfort.

When the relatives came to visit, they were surprised to see three colorful dogs rushing to welcome them. They queried about what had happened to the dogs' hair. After hearing the story, they became interested in knowing the recipe of the magic soup. Therefore, Da Mi's mother recalled what kinds of herbs she had put in and the amount of each kind. Da Mi also took out the different kinds of color pigments from his painting shelf. Da Mi and his mother, together with the relatives worked on the recipe again. The ready-made soup was then fed to the cats again. To their surprise, it worked on the cats too. One week later, the dogs' hair turned back to their original color magically. Longer observations were made to see if the dogs were alright with their health. The cats' hair also turned back to normal after a week, and there was no bad effect on them.

They were sure that the recipe with the pigments worked on cats and dogs. They then tried on other animals like horses, donkeys, and sheep. The experiments proved to be workable. Since they were more confident, they tried to see if it worked on humans. There were totally ten volunteers, including three relatives, three beggars, and four neighbors. They all took the magic soup of Da Mi's mother and colored hair grew from the scalp the following several days. When they went to the public square, a lot of passersby were amazed by the look of their hair. They stopped the volunteers and asked for more information because they would like to make a change for the hair color whenever they wanted to.

Gradually, more and more people came to visit Da Mi and his mother about the soup, but Da Mi dared not let them try the soup. He thought that the Chinese herbs were safe, but the watercolor pigments were uncertain----- there could be toxic substances like mercury and lead. These might affect the health of the people. There might be bad effects on the brain, the liver, and especially the nerves. All this knowledge was gotten from the medical book of the famous Chinese doctor, Lee Shi Zhen.

Da Mi, then talked with Lee Shi Zhen on what could be done to replace those colored pigments. Doctor Lee suggested using natural pigments from vegetations but was not certain of the effect. They both worked out some possibilities like flowers, seaweed, fruits, seeds, nuts, and leafy and non-leafy vegetables. They tried to grind them and extracted their juice. They then followed the recipe of the soup and mixed it with a special amount of different juices. The results were the same as they had expected. Ten more volunteers joined the experiment. Out of their expectations, the color of the hair would change according to the kinds of natural pigments as well as to the amount that was added.

Da Mi quickly returned home to tell his mother and they invited another group of volunteers for the experiment. At the same time, he continued to keep record of the previous group. After more groups got the same result, Da Mi was confident to tell the people about it. He and his mother got some small ceramic bottles to hold what he called 'Rainbow Hair Potion'. He then gave some out to whoever wanted to try without asking for any money, saying that they could get a free try.

Half a year later, when all the people who had tried the potion, had the color of the hair reversed and were satisfied with it, Da Mi began to sell the potion to the public. Two years later, when there was no sign of complication, he officially announced he had successfully invented China's technicolor hair dye. From then on, people from all over the world copied his invention, but it was difficult for them to get Chinese herbs especially the rare ones.

We are proud to be Chinese with so many inventions to upgrade our living standard.

Crystal's Discovery

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Bhinsaria, Aarohi – 9

Crystal is a crystal wolf. She lives in Gemland and her family is very poor. She likes to explore. Gemland never rains but today was different. It starts to rain and it is not just regular rain. It has acid in it so it can break the gems and crystals. That is going to be a huge disaster for Gemland! She is very brave.

Crystal loves to hang out with her friends, family and she loves to have an adventure. One day, Crystal was walking in the jungle. When she was walking in the jungle, she heard an animal saying, “ Please go to the temple of umbrellas but while you go you need to learn all about the invention of umbrellas”. She walked to the animal and saw who it was. It was a gem wolf. It ran away as fast as it could run. Crystal felt very suspicious. She saw some footprints and followed them. When she reached the end of the foot trail, she saw a big house. Inside the house was an old gem wolf. It was almost like he was the wolf who told me everything. Crystal went and asked the old gem wolf, “Have you told me everything when I was walking in the woods?”

“Yes,” said the old gem wolf.

“Wait, does that mean you are in my family?” said Crystal.

“Yes,” again said the old wolf.

“Do you want to come for dinner in our house” asked Crystal.

“It would be wonderful!” exclaimed the old wolf. The old wolf was so excited that he was going to shout. He quickly got ready and left to go to Crystal's house for dinner. As the gem wolf reached, he knocked on the door. The knocking did not work so the old wolf saw a button. The button looked like a bell so the wolf pressed the button. It made a squeaky sound. The rusted bell finally worked, so the parents of Crystal opened the door and asked, “are you the gem wolf Crystal was talking about?” “Yes,” said the old gem wolf. The gem wolf came in and the house was decorated very nicely and beautifully. Everybody sat down and started eating dinner. It was very delicious. After everyone ate dinner, Crystal asked the gem wolf, “What is your name?”

“My name is Gem,” said the old gem wolf. Afterwards, Gem gave Crystal a map. When Crystal got the map, she asked, “Where will this map take me?”

“This map will take you to the temple of umbrellas. The map only has a little information, so when you are walking you will see small papers carrying the clues. The clues will also help you reach the temple of light,” explained the wise old wolf.

“This was so long. I was about to sleep. I am serious! ” said Crystal.

“Ok. I understand. Next time, I will make it shorter or summarize it.” said Gem.

“I have a question.” said crystal

“ Yes, Crystal. What do you want to say?” said Gem.

“Are the clues hard? How can I use the clues? Is it in a tricky language that I don’t understand and ancient people understood?” said Crystal.

“The clues are not tricky, they are interesting. You can use the clues by finding them in different locations, the instructions are in English so it should be easy for you to read.” said Gem. The next day Crystal packed her bags, said by to her parents and went off to her journey to find umbrellas.

“Oh! The map says the clue is right here but I can’t see it anywhere. Maybe I need to look again,” said Crystal. She looked and looked but she could not find anything. Finally she found it. Crystal needed a rest so she opened her bag and had a snack. She got up and continued her journey. She found another clue. It was the beginning of Crystal learning how to make an umbrellas. She finally finished collecting the clues, learned how to make an umbrella and reached the temple of umbrellas. Crystal went inside and quickly started to make the umbrellas. She almost finished but the rain began to pour. Crystal tried to make the umbrella’s fast and swiftly but she couldn’t. Finally, Crystal finished making umbrellas, she rushed and rushed and she told the villagers, “take these umbrellas hang them on top of your house whenever just put it somewhere where you and your family and the other wolves are safe.” From that onwards, Gemland reclaimed prosperity, flourished and thrived from generation to generation, passing on the legend of Crystal’s discovery.

The Intriguing Tale of Kites

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Cai, Amy – 11

Hi there! It's me, the kite. You might know me as your amusing plaything and toy you've played with when you were little, but there's much more to the story. Instead of only one dull purpose, which is to play with for fun, I used to have lots of fascinating purposes; from military to entertainment. Well, you might not know how long it took to make me; and probably would have never known the person who invented me; in fact, he wasn't a toy maker as you'd think he'd be—I've even had three names, and, I can guarantee you that I've been through a lot more things than anyone else could have imagined. This is my breath-taking backstory.

The place I was invented was none other than the famous country, China. China is known as the birthplace of kites, and owns six kite-making areas, including Beijing, Tianjin, Weifang (in the Shandong Province), Nantong (in the Jiangsu Province) and Yangjiang (in the Guangdong Province). Weifang has become the "kite capital" of the world in previous years.

The cunning and artful person who invented me was none other than the renowned yet fantastic ideologist, politician, militarist, and scientist, Mo Zi. He was born in 470 BCE, State of Lu, Zhou Kingdom (known as Tengzhou, Shandong Province nowadays). Well, it was also said by some people that Mo Zi worked excessively hard to make me, and it was said that he spent three years making me! That was such a stunning myth. Even though he was celebrated a lot as he was the one who made the kites, he is best remembered for being the first major intellectual rival to Confucius and his followers. He deserved to be celebrated, too, in my opinion. A lot of people know Confucius, but how many people know Mo Zi?

The first kites were made of wood, called *MuYuan*, which meant wooden kite in Chinese. Plus, the first kites were flat, not bowed, and rectangular. It was also proven that tailless kites like me consolidated a more stable knot. Later on, since paper was invented, people soon improved kites and called them *ZhiYuan*, which meant paper kites in Chinese. Also, since silk was discovered later on, people started to use silk in the process of kite making after it had been discovered by the Chinese, my home. China was an ideal place for kite making, since materials were easy to find: fabric such as silk for sail material; exquisite, silk for the flying line; and durable bamboo for a sturdy, weightless frame. There are tons of good materials and types of kites, and the story goes on. There are many types of kites, but the big three are sled kites, diamond kites, and delta kites. Rare ones include sode, barn door, roller, rokkaku, and dopero kites.

The first purposes of us were actually not for entertainment, but instead for the military—a huge difference. Kites played a prominent role in military services. According to the Records of Strange Events, when Emperor Wudi was besieged at Taicheng (Nanjing nowadays) by the troops of Hou Jing, he sent out a kite that was actually a help message so he could be rescued. Soldiers could see it flying in the air, and knew what it meant! Us kites were also surprisingly essential during the exploration and establishment of the Wright brothers, while building the first motorized plane during the late 1800s. Later on, kites were known for more tranquil usages, such as instruments. One example is during the Tang Dynasty, people began adding bamboo strips to their kites. When the kites flew high, it could vibrate and ring, just like a *Zheng*, a type of Chinese instrument. Soon after that, the Chinese name for "kite" has changed into *fengzheng*, where the word *feng* depicted wind.

A lot of people believed that us kites wore off bad luck. It was also known that cutting the line of the kite will let go of sadness and sorrow in the past. Because of this, some Chinese people think that we are a symbol of hope or a virtuous omen. Lots of kites were decorated with mythological figures and legendary figures. If peaches, pine trees or cranes and more are illustrated on a kite, it implies prosperity, treasure and endurance. There were thousands of pictures or types of symbols that they drew on us, and they all were made for a good use.

During 1983, a ginormous kite flying competition was held in Tianjin. The information spread out quickly, and soon, vast areas of countries already knew all about it. It was a beguiling moment for kite flyers! Out of a hundred competitors, a special type of kite was flown with a stunning total length of a hundred meters, by a group of 5 to 6 young men. After the shocking event, a Japanese participant flew a marvellous kite that was about 300 meters long with a string of 270 parts. Successes like these captivated massive crowds and won sonorous applause! The conventional Weifang (in the Shandong Province) Kite Festival has become a well-known event in the country, drawing tons of people to the city.

Despite our tranquil yet entertaining usage nowadays, we have played much more heroic roles than everyone would've thought. And I bet you never even knew those sides of me, like how us kites played a significant role in military services, and how we were also used as instruments—and how Mo Zi invented me, to beliefs about me, to festivals held because of me—now that I think of it, I've been through a long journey! There is even a Chinese kite in the corridors of the National Air & Space Museum in Washington D.C., US, and on the inscription carved on the pavilion, going by – *The earliest aircraft of human beings are the kites and rockets of China.*

A Tea Cat

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Cai, Yuri – 10

“Congratulations to... Ari, from World Tea International High School! We will miss you, Ari!” Mr. Mac announced.

“Ari, we will miss you!” The crowd cheered in happiness.

“Ari, Ari, Ari, Ari!”

Ari with gray curly hair and green eyes walked up the stage.

“Let me quiz you. What kind of tea is green?” Mr. Mac asked.

“This is easy. Matcha is green, so the answer could be Matcha.” Ari answered.

“You passed. You can go now.” Mr. Mac continued. Ari walked out the door.

“Goodbye everyone!” Ari shouted to the crowd. Ari walked out and called a taxi to go to the shopping mall. She went to a clothing store and walked to a white hoodie and a white shirt with a cyan skirt beside it. She also got white socks.

“Okay so now, I got everything I need,” Ari noted. “I will pack my stuff in my luggage and go to the plane,” She walked back home and packed the things and went outside.

“Where are you going?” The taxi driver asked.

“The airport,” Ari replied.

The car drove and drove across bridges and went through the tunnels. Finally, it got to the airport. Ari gave 7077¥JPY to the driver.

Ding dong!

The sound came from her phone. She picked up her phone and looked at it. She was frightened because hundreds of shops wanted her to work at their stores.

One of them said, “Dear Ari, please would you work at our tea shop in England? We need one more person in our store and every day we have lots of customers and our workers are tired. Also, some of our employees are sick. Our store is called ‘Leaves’. Thank you. Sincerely, Kesley.”

“This store really NEEDS me.” Ari thought. She walked out of the car and went on the plane.

“You're about to land in England, please pack your bags and get ready,” the speaker declared. Ari went off the plane and called a taxi. She went to the tea shop called Leaves.

“Welcome to our tea shop.” A man welcomed Ari. As she walked in the employee stared at her.

“Who are you?” A person asked.

“Yeah! Who are you? Today is a day off and everyone should have known.” A man shouted. When Ari put her phone out, this happened.

“We are so sorry!” A woman cried.

“Here is a tea with chocolate cookies for an apology,” Ari said, “My name is Kelsey, the owner of this shop.”

Suddenly, there were two pointy ears in the tea. Then, a tail came out. It was a cat!

“Why is there a cat . . . Wait, the cat is made out of tea!” Ari exclaimed. Hopefully no one heard it. Then the cat jumped out of the cup.

“Hello human, I am a cat made out of tea.” The cat said.

“You can talk!?” Ari asked, “And why are you here?”

“Of course I can! I am here because I do not want to be dead. My mom and dad and grandma and grandpa are all gone because of humans. Where am I right now?” The cat replied. Suddenly, footsteps came to the room and the cat hopped back into the cup.

“Ari, here is your card. We will start tomorrow at eight thirty.” Kelsey declared while handing her clothes and her card. Ari secretly poured the tea into her empty bottle.

That night Ari put the cat out of her bottle and put it in an empty tank, then she put the tank next to her bed. Next, Ari went to take a shower.

“That human won’t drink me, I can survive. I got a chance to survive the humans!” The cat thought.

Then, Ari walked out with her pajamas and jumped into her bed.

RING!RING!RING!

The alarm went off. Ari jumped out of bed and took her phone out to check the time. It was eight o’clock, so there were thirty minutes left before she went to work.

“Human! What is for breakfast?” The cat asked.

A Piece of Silk

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Ho, Wing Yee Jolie – 10

Huang-li held the piece of precious silk. It was white and smooth, yet delicate and fragile.

“May my friend rest in peace,” Huang-li muttered under her breath. Smiling happily, she put the piece back into the jade box and went outside for a stroll.

On the cobblestone streets, a small crowd were pointing at the list of people who inherited the silk posted on the gray walls. *Oh. There’s my name on it. And there’s Leizu’s sons, Shaohao and Changyi... But there is always greed in the human heart. I fear one will find a way to obtain the silk. I must not let them do that.*

She ran home and locked the door, determined not to let her already crushed heart crush herself. She didn’t mind. Before her caring friend Leizu came along, she was always like this. Now that her friend was gone, she didn’t mind doing it again. Refusing to see the light of the world, she covered herself in the silk. For the first time in a long time, she breathed a sigh of relief.

“Good morning Huang-li!” A crisp voice said through the cracks of the door. Huang-li gasped. It had been such a long time since she had heard *anybody* saying even a good morning. The last time she had heard that somebody cared about her was so long ago, so even a simple good morning meant a lot to Huang-li. She cautiously opened the door.

“Forgive me for locking the door. Come in!” Huang-li opened the door for the man. She smiled, and the man smiled back.

“Uh...hi!” Huang-li stuttered. Keeping a handsome smile, the man walked into the room. He gazed at the ceiling and looked around, breathing in amazement.

“Forgive my manners,” the man said, “I’m San-ru. Pleasure to meet you. I heard that you’re the one with the silk. It must be stressful, right?”

San-ru’s words warmed Huang-li’s heart. They became good friend as days went by...

Shuffle. Shuffle. Huang-li had been listening to these sounds for a long time. “Enough,” she hissed. She was cleaning her silk, and the voices did not help. She sighed. It was time to get some privacy. The silk was once again gleaming. Satisfied, she shut the box and went upstairs for a much-needed nap. Unbeknownst to her, an evil plan was taking place...

When she woke up, it was well past noon. Reenergized, she went downstairs to make dinner. But when she got downstairs, she saw something that she could not imagine...

“San-ru!” Huang-li called out happily, until she saw what San-ru was holding...

A jade box. It wasn’t just *any* box. It was her own box, the one with the valuable silk. At first, it didn’t really make sense to her. Slowly, it all started to make sense. *San-ru* came to look at where she kept the silk. *San-ru* had made the sounds to distract her. *San-ru* had been planning everything all along.

Huang-li was furious. “Why would you do this?!” She fumed angrily.

She sat down and sighed sadly, “You know, my parents died early in my childhood. I lived on the streets as a beggar until Leizu came along.”

Huang-li sniffed and wiped a tear from her eye, then continued her story, “How kind she was to me! She invited me to her house, and finally, I had found a place where I belonged. Leizu was like a mother to me. Sadly, the only thing she left for me was this.” Huang-li pointed at the jade box that was now in San-ru’s hand.

San-ru stopped for a moment. The man might be mean, but there was still sympathy deep in his heart. Sorrow and guilt filled his eyes. Just like Huang-li, he had his own past too.

“When I was a child, I was loved by everyone. Then all of a sudden, my life changed drastically. I was forced to move, and continued a lonely life. I was cast out as an outlaw. My life has always been bitter.” As San-ru spoke, his voice cracked. Huang-li could tell it was a hard subject for both of them.

After a minute of silence, San-ru was the first to speak. “But imagine what I could do with the first piece of silk ever made! If everybody knew I had a connection with Leizu’s friend, it would change everything!” San-ru was so full of emotion that he looked like he was about to strangle himself. This whole time Huang-li was listening carefully to what San-ru had to say.

She felt *sympathy* for San-ru’s life, and she felt *pity* for the fact that San-ru thought the only way to pull himself out of his misery was to commit this terrible crime.

“San-ru, I forgive you for this. I understand your wish for the acceptance of the world, but stealing is not the path to it. While everybody might for once accept you, you will never accept yourself. If you ask me, that is the biggest burden of all.”

Huang-li’s words resonated with San-ru, but there was still something weighing heavily on his chest. “But what will I do now? I couldn’t bear to live my old life any longer!” San-ru cried.

Huang-li knew that was true, but she still had one more piece of advice for San-ru. “If you want acceptance from the community, the best way is to accept it. Help people when you can and pretend their mean words don’t hurt you. If they still treat you like they did, then it’s just who they are, and you can’t change that.” San-ru was inspired by the young woman’s words of wisdom.

At that second, he truly believed that *he* was in control of *his* own fate, and that *he* was responsible for *his* own actions. So, he put down the jade box containing the silk, and stepped outside to what seemed like the first time ever.

The Fascinating Story of Gunpowder

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Lam, Suri – 10

I was on my smooth bed, hoping to get some sleep, thinking hard about the Young Writing competition. My mind buzzed away. I got the balance of the floor, which was mud. I adjusted my eyes and looked around, trembling with fear. Galloping noises, polished metal swords, and screaming everywhere. I stood at the side of the war ground in shock. I shouted so loudly in my head, fearing others would hear it too. “It’s the Mongol invaders of China!” I rubbed my eyes again. The next second, something hit me. I ran toward China’s war-tent, knelt down, and scrambled through their wooden box of weapons. Sharp knives bladed into my hands, blood dropped from the palm of my hand onto my fingers. I reached down and grabbed something that was somewhat like a wooden stick and began to pull it up, but that’s when I heard a voice.

“入侵者(intruders)!” someone shouted.

My knees rested on the dirt, absorbing sweat and blood. After a while of silence, a tall man galloping on his horse approached. I glanced at the Mongol army on the other side of the war field, the sun is shining on them. They stopped, too.

“You are definitely not supposed to be here,” he tapped his horse impatiently, holding his shield upright in confusion.

“Well, I wanted to look at your fire arrows, if...”

His face formed a smile. “Oh yes, we have not,” he said, then added “The Mongols don’t stand a chance!” He growled at them, which were continuing to attack the rest of the army. He walked toward the tent.

I blurted the words out.

“Do you know anything about the fire arrow and gunpowder?”

He laughed. “Why are you even here? Why are you asking me this?” He glanced over his shoulder. “But before I say anything, you are Chinese though, right?”

“Of course! I heard what your army said. Invaders,” I shrugged. He stopped for a while, then his eyes began to soften.

“I wanted to take a break anyway. Where shall I begin?” My thoughts chimed in my head, “he must be very valued, taking breaks whenever he wants to.” “Around a few centuries ago,” he interrupted, “Chinese chemists tried to make an immortality potion, but this flammable powder basically did the exact opposite of immortality. I was also told that when they tested it, they realized just how flammable it was because it burned their faces, bodies, along with their homes and their laboratories.”

“We’re in..... What year are we in?”

He spat out the water he was drinking onto the dirt, choking.

“How are you here?” he asked.

“How am I supposed to know?” I answered.

“Did you get hurt on the way here?” he questioned, looking at me worriedly.

“No.” I said assertively.

“What?”

“Just no. Now what year is this?” I demanded.

“Probably around 1230, somewhere 1235? I don’t actually remember,”

Now if I were drinking water, I would've spat it out too. I thought.

“Twelve... Twelve...TWELVE?”

“Yeah. Where did you even come from? Well, I can’t argue anyway. It was in the 9th century when it was invented. Nothing new. That powder is what we call gunpowder. This powder’s main ingredient is saltpetre, but they are also mixed in charcoal and sulphur. Right when they found out about this useful propellant, we were quickly told about this and how it can help our army. I started to make these fire arrows when I heard about it immediately. I put gunpowder in a bamboo tube, strapped it into a spear, and it’s done!” he chuckled.

“Oh, so you were the inventor of the fire arrow,” I nodded to myself slowly, making connections.

“Yes! Once it ignites, the gunpowder tube would fire a stream of flames in the direction of the spearhead. These lights that shoot up in the air are gorgeous,” he smiled. “But except for fire arrows, we have also made other weapons throughout the process. For example, bombs, guns, and even cannons are being used! However, we seemed to use fire cannons more because the fire arrows have evolved and become unloved over the years. Gunpowder has been used a lot and I think this invention will last long. At least, I hope so.”

It took me a while to process all the information because he knew so much. I wanted to tell him about how gunpowder affects us right now and about the beautiful fireworks and how much gunpowder was used, but it would be such a surprise for him, so I kept quiet.

“And um, I would have to leave now, so before you go back, I would like to show you something.” He interrupted. My eyes paced over the war ground, looking for something.

“Shoot!”

The loud voice echoed. But right as my mind finished pacing around, I saw it. Smoke, ashes, and lights, right when they blasted off. I could hear the Mongols screaming. I grinned. I was speechless. Something, just something inside me makes me feel more liberated, as if everything bad in my world disappeared.

“Since now you have seen the fire arrows, where did you come from?” he suddenly turned to me.

“Oh, um, I basically just came here like...um...” He stared at me in silence, in a way where it became louder than ever. His face was saying, “What is wrong with you?” And, I knew it.

I chuckled, nervously.

'Ring! Ring!' I sprang up and glanced at my white marble bedroom walls.

'Phew!'

I swept away my sweat with the back of my hand. I heard my mom calling, so I got up and finished everything as quickly as possible. When I arrived at the bus, I quickly opened my new, striped notebook. I flipped into a fresh page and gripped my pen. I knew exactly what to do for my writing contest.

A Sip

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Lee, Hoi Lam Angel – 10

A porcelain floral cup sat on the table with its lid lying on the side. Steam was swirling out of the cup. The Emperor of the Han Dynasty, Yi Chen, sipped his water. He rolled out a stack of Zou Zhe, memos to the throne, impatiently while a servant knocked on the door.

“As you may know, the news has been spreading about some ‘drink’. If you are interested, we would find this ‘drink’ for you,” The servant mumbled.

Yi Chen thought about it for a while before replying, “Sure, if you can, report to the other servants.”

“Yes, my lord. Straight away.” the servant left.

Yi Chen turned his face, looking through the window at the bright blue sky. He sighed and looked back at the rolls of Zou Zhe. *What ‘drink’ were they talking about?* Soon, there was another knock on the door.

“What is it again?” Yi Chen frowned. This time it wasn’t the servant – it was Yi Chen’s brother, Liu Chen.

“Hello, Yi Chen, my dear sibling,” Liu Chen’s brother said, shutting the door behind him.

“We talked about this already, Liu Chen. You can’t just barge into my room without my consent, just because you’re a part of the royal family,” Yi Chen replied in a serious tone.

“Anyways, did you hear about the mysterious ‘drink’ news? It sounds very strange, don’t you think?” Without any formal greetings, Liu Chen sat down directly on the couch across Yi Chen.

“Yes, I have heard of it. My servant just came in and reported to me. What do you want to do with it? Better not be murder,” Yi Chen lowered his voice at the end of the sentence.

“Never mind then. Forget about it,” Liu Chen looked around, “This Mystic Chamber is fancy. I hope you pass away first so I can get this palace.”

Yi Chen looked at him frivolously and said, “Too bad, you’ll never get this kind of estate.” He smiled and continued reading his Zou Zhe. A drop of water fell on the lid of the cup, where the dragon design seemed to hiss in the enchanting dusk.

Knock, knock...

Yi Chen opened the door. It was a man. *A mailman? Where are my servants?*

“Hello, how are you?” Yi Chen spoke in a confused voice.

The person standing in front of the room entrance didn’t speak. He pushed an envelope into Yi Chen’s hand and left swiftly.

Yi Chen opened his mouth, but words weren’t coming out. He returned to his seat and sighed. He spun the cup gently in the air, his index finger tapping on the dragon.

What did that man even want? Suddenly, he lost his grip on the cup. Water spilled all over the note and soaked the calligraphy. Yi Chen groaned in anger.

Two days later, the door was opened. “Sir, we have someone who requests to see you and show you something,” The butler said, standing tall.

Yi Chen nodded. The butler opened the door to let the guest into the Mystic Chamber. The golden decorations roared in the warm afternoon sun, but Yi Chen didn’t care as it was just like every ordinary afternoon.

Yi Chen sat down and asked the butler, “Please leave. I want a confidential conversation with this guest.” The butler followed his instructions and left the room with no sound.

“I was the messenger. Have you read the note?” The stranger said.

“Sadly, no.” The Emperor, Yi Chen said.

The stranger opened his suitcase and shuffled inside. Yi Chen waited patiently.

The man laid a blue and white pot on the dark wooden table, then poured the drink gently into the porcelain floral cup. The liquid had an enchanting shade of jade green. Yi Chen started to investigate it until the man spoke up, “This, my Emperor, is the ‘drink’ I named, CHA (tea).”

The stranger passed the cup to Yi Chen. Yi Chen took a tiny sip of the warm liquid and felt the fragrance entered his body. He gulped it down.

In an instant, Yi Chen fainted. The last thing he heard was footsteps and wind mysteriously helping themselves into the room.

Yi Chen woke up on his bed, with a butler aside. The doctor came into the room apologetically and quickly bowed down.

“Oh my lord, you woke up! The man who poisoned you was never found. I apologize. I deserve the death penalty,” the doctor then said hopefully, “You will be able to walk. The poison was not strong enough to be fatal to the emperor’s dragon body. If you may, I will keep doing regular check-ups on you before you put me in the jail.”

An hour later, the emperor left his room. Yi Chen checked the Mystic Chamber, but nothing was lost. He found it very suspicious.

The porcelain floral cup was tilted over. The dragon on the cup was smirking, twirling through the monstrous trace of the leftover ‘tea’.

He held the cup in his hand, observing it closely, then handed it to his butler for more information.

100 days ran by. No information was found related to the assassination.

A month later, people all over the capital city were talking about some booming 'tea industry'. Words were delivered to Yi Chen's ears. He wanted to taste this tea again, even though he got poisoned. He still had faith in tasting that jade green liquid. *How I miss that smell!*

Yi Chen searched for weeks to find the root of the tea industry, but nothing worked. Until one day, he received a new set of porcelain cups from Shanxi Officials. On the bottom of each cup, familiar calligraphy appeared in bloody red ink. Yi Chen flipped the cups one by one and reordered the characters. It said:

Liu Chen Made Your Tea.

The Mystery of the Earthquake Detector

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Tse, Yat Hei Luka – 10

“No! I’m sorry!” The guard shrieked while backing off into the end of the dark alley. In front of him was a figure covered by a dark cloak. A purple translucent hand emerged from the cloak and approached the guard.

“Don’t! Who would have thought that someone was here? I’m sorr—...”

Before he finished his sentence, the purple hand landed on the guard’s forehead. Everything was silent. A light flashed. The alley became dark again. He was gone.

An 8.9 earthquake hit the northeastern coast of Japan, killing more than 18,400 people...

Jacob pulled his head out of a pile of books and listened to the news. He lowered his head and reread the line on his page. *Ancient Chinese invented Di Dong Yi, an earthquake detector.*

“Xerion, look! There was an earthquake detector in ancient China that could forecast earthquakes! We should remake it!” Jacob said with excitement.

“Ha! No way! We are just two random kids!” Xerion answered, trying to be polite.

“But if Zhang Heng could do it, why couldn’t we? They didn’t even have computers in 132 A.D!”

“That’s just what the book said. The real inventor of the earthquake detector was the aliens. Remember, ancient Chinese even thought that it was their god’s anger that made the ground shake.” Xerion calmly explained.

“Can you prove it?” challenged Jacob, “I will tell everyone tomorrow that Xerion believes in aliens! Ha-ha-ha!”

Xerion’s “yes” flew in the air and stopped Jacob from laughing. Before Jacob realized what was going on, Xerion stretched out one hand. Light flashed around the room. Xerion and Jacob disappeared.

Jacob found himself standing in a house. The ceiling was shaped like a red wizard hat. There were four stone pillars around him, each of which had a dragon carved on the top.

This is architecture from ancient China. “Where are we? I mean, when are we?” Jacob asked, confused.

“To prove my point, I brought you back to 132 A.D., the Forbidden City. This is where Di Dong Yi was made!” Xerion said with excitement.

“You can travel through time? Why didn’t you tell me earlier?”

“I’m afraid your feeble mind cannot comprehend the abilities I wield. Alright, we will talk about that later back home. For now, let’s find the detector first.”

Taking numerous turns and twists across the royal garden, Xerion finally gestured Jacob to crouch beside a brick wall.

“We are here.”

Looking through the crack on the wall, Jacob saw a middle-aged man dressed like an ancient Chinese scholar. The man was circling around a sphere machine, immersed in his own thoughts. Messy gears spread out on the ground.

“See? Zhang Hang was the one who was making the earthquake detector!” Jacob whispered.

“It is not the time to talk about this. Zhang Hang is leaving. Follow him!”

In a hurry, Jacob tripped on one of the gears. *Cling!*

Two guards ran up and shouted, “Hey! Who was that?”

Jacob and Xerion quickly ran after Zhang Hang, who was running as well. They followed him from the palace to the crowded street, and lost sight of the guards. Zhang Hang stopped at a dark alley. The boys followed and hid behind a carton to spy on Zhang Hang.

A figure covered by a black cloak emerged from the darkness and approached Zhang Hang.

Zhang Hang pleaded, “Could you give me more gears for the machine? I didn’t know how to connect the inner part. Since you are from the sky, I think you are happy to share more.”

The figure looked around and pulled off his cloak. Jacob almost screamed when he saw the man clearly, or *the monster*.

The monster looked like purple gloomy clay. It was making indistinguishable sounds, but Zhang Hang seemed to understand it and nodded accordingly. Then some metal popped out from the clay. When Zhang Hang was about to grab it, a torch lit up the dark alley.

“There you are,” it was one of the guards!

Behind him was a swarm of guards with swords and torches. Zhang Hang turned pale and sneaked into a hidden door, disappeared.

When the guards saw the gloomy clay, they shouted, “Monster!”

“The emperor wanted this monster for 500 taels of gold! It had killed many people! Attack!” shouted the leading guard.

Suddenly, Xerion jumped to the clay. Everyone was shocked by a kid wearing clothes they had never seen before. Elusive sound rumbled from Xerion’s throat. After a moment of silence, the clay answered back.

Xerion’s eyes suddenly widened. He looked back at the guards and murmured something back.

“Xerion, are you talking to that monster?” Jacob asked hesitantly.

The monster suddenly turned to Jacob. It rumbled louder and louder. Xerion stepped back and shoved Jacob backwards.

“Jacob! Run!” Xerion shouted. Jacob’s heartbeats got faster and faster. He tried to do what Xerion said, but his legs couldn’t move.

Out of nowhere, a purple hand formed, pointing toward Jacob.

“Run!”

Another pair of purple hands flying out of Xerion’s T-shirt. The monster’s hand was split into halves by Xerion’s hands. One of the halves landed hard on Jacob’s face. The indescribable pain was stabbing his mind like a sharp needle. Jacob fell into the endless darkness.

A light flashed. Jacob could feel himself on the sofa. *I am home. There was a monster. Was that the alien that Xerion was talking about?* His memory got blurry. He forced himself to sit up. *Was it a dream?*

“You’re awake? Here. Have a cup of tea.” Xerion held the cup and mixed the sugar with a spoon.

An 8.9 earthquake hit the northeastern coast of Japan, killing more than 18,400 people...

“Wait, why is the news repeating itself?”

“What? You just turned on the TV yourself and passed out. Are you okay?” Xerion said uneasily.

“Oh well, I think I had a weird dream.”

Jacob left the room with a yawn. He didn’t realize there was a purple hand emerging from the TV controller, approaching Xerion’s back.

A Whirlwind Adventure

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Tse, Yat Long Aiden – 10

“Help!” A man shouted, strolling through the woods.

“My money!” he shouted again.

Qin felt very exhausted. He never had thought this situation would happen. The shadow disappeared in the shades. This all began when Qin Xiao was selling paper.

“I need 400 sheets to write a book,” an old lady called out.

“Sure, 200 dollars.”

“500 pieces of paper,” said another guy.

“Sure, 250 dollars.”

Qin had been selling papers for more than twelve hours now. He also made a lot of money, so he decided to take a break. He placed down a rug and sat down. He closed his eyes. Suddenly, he heard footsteps.

When he opened his eyes, he saw a man with a hood covering his eyes, walking straight towards the bag of money! When Qin tried to stop him, it was too late. The man had already stepped on his horse.

Qin dashed through the woods, chasing the man who stole the money. He was out of breath as if a spear was piercing into his chest. He was so exhausted when he saw the shadow disappear in the distance.

A few minutes later, Qin found himself lost in the darkness. But he saw a gigantic building. It didn't look like a building from his time. It looked mechanical, clean, and sturdy. Qin carefully examined the building and finally decided to go in. Inside, he saw a set of doors, which led him into a rectangular room.

2081

“Qin?” A voice spoke to his heart. Qin sat up, realizing that he was wearing weird clothes. All-black outfit, gloves, and a mask. He was holding a stick with a curve on the top. In his right hand, he was holding a bag of money!

Before Qin knew what was happening, a group of “humans” in mechanical suits shouted at him, “Put down your money or else we will use force.” Qin did as he was told. Then, those weirdos took Qin into a car and injected something into Qin.

“Hi!” A man said to Qin.

It took Qin a few seconds to open his eyes. “Hi!” Qin replied, “What is this place? Who are you?”

“My name is Oscar. This is a jail. What’s your name?” Oscar questioned.

“Qin.” Qin exclaimed. They continued the conversation for hours and became friends.

“What is that?”

“That’s a toilet. You can flush it by pressing the button on the top.”

“Oh.” Qin said with interest. Then, Qin’s eyes shined. “We can hop into the toilet and escape the jail!”

“Bingo!” Oscar complimented, “Okay, let’s do this!”

“Ready, set, flush!”

“Ready, set, flush!”

The two friends traveled in the sewer tunnels, hoping to find a way out.

Meanwhile, Qin asked, "Can you help me catch someone after we escaped?"
"Sure!" Oscar answered.

The sewers were like a gigantic maze. Qin came up with an idea: putting up torches to mark that they went there before. After a few hours, they finally found a way out. "Finally! Fresh air!" Qin said excitedly.

"Now, let's find the thief!" Qin said.
"I know just where to go." Oscar said confidently.
They went to a dark creepy room. The two friends sneaked into the room and found something weird.

Qin asked, "What is that?"
"An iPad." Oscar replied. He scrolled down to a file.
"Bank robbery, stealing." Oscar murmured, "Ah ha. There it is!"

A black car roared through the streets. "Vroom! Vroom!" A motorcycle trembled as it closed the gap between the two vehicles. Suddenly, the black car turned on the hyper speed mode.

"I had a trick on my sleeve too." Oscar said, "Hold on!"
Oscar put his jet pack on. He jumped off the motorcycle, soared through the air and grabbed onto the car. He saw a mysterious man in the car staring at him! The car stopped at a dead end.
"This is the end of you!" Qin said. The man sighed and came out of the car. The man removed his hood.
"Yikes!" Oscar screamed.
"He's a mechanical robot!" Qin said loudly.
The robot pulled out a bomb and set it on the floor.
"If you attack me, I will light up the bomb and we will all die!"
Oscar quickly threw a C4 at the robot.
"Run!" he shouted.
They hopped on the motorcycle and quickly tremble away. After they ran away, Oscar took a remote control out of his backpack and pressed a red button. A loud explosion from far away appeared.
"The robot should be destroyed by now." Oscar says. The two friends had a silent high five.
"Are you ready, friend?" Oscar asked.
"Yes." Qin replied. Oscar injected something into Qin. Qin suddenly disappeared.

400 BC

Qin slowly opened his eyes, he found himself in his house, with a bag of money in his hand. There's a note:

Thank you for helping me get out of jail. Here's a gift for you.

Qin smiled, suddenly remembering something. He quickly started to build something. Guess what? A flushable toilet!

2081

Meanwhile, when Oscar was heading home, he heard a loud cheering noise. "Maybe it was a celebration, of what?" He thought. Then, he saw something sticking on the wall, which seemed to be a bounty note.

*Wanted: a robot that robs people throughout history with a teleporting injection
Price: 1,000,000,000 dollars*

People rushed towards Oscar and tossed him in the air.
"Our Hero! Our hero!"

An American rich man came forward and said, “Congratulations, you won 1,000,000,000 dollars by killing the robot robber!”

The man gave Oscar a huge check and drove Oscar home safely. After he went home, Oscar couldn't believe this. He had an amazing adventure and won tons of money. He called it a day and slept. The next morning, Oscar woke up. He ate breakfast and went out. Outside, he saw a poster on each person's house.

From now on, time traveling injector is banned from our country!

Oscar sighed, “Farewell, buddy.”

The Revolutionary Adventure

Stamford American School Hong Kong, Wong, Yik Hin Hinson – 10

A creature whose kingdom is a massive white mushroom, ventured out to discover a new solution for its species' problems. As tall as a human. Colorful like a rainbow. He gazed out in the deep blue sky. Klytus picked up his traveling stick and gave home a gaze before he turned to the shining sun and started his journey. He inhaled his last breath on his planet.

Whoosh! He felt the wind of his planet breezing through him. He got on his spaceship, flew into the colorful darkness, and landed into a planet with spikes poking out. Steering the wheel with a strong grip, his heartbeat accelerated. The spaceship's door opened, and a staircase formed.

Klytus walked as he checked his surroundings.

"Terrestrial, Benefactors." He jumped into the corner of the walls. He dashed to get as close to the leader as possible. But right when he approached the massive door, his legs and arms got trapped in a leather-like material. When he tried cutting it with his blade, not even a scratch was noticeable or even made.

"State your PURPOSE!" A monster with a crown demanded, pointing his dagger to Klytus's chin.

"Cool sword. I've seen one of those," Klytus joked.

"Then you shall know how painful this is when it goes through your throat," the Monster said, "Get straight to the point!"

"I've come in search of a medicine that is able to save my species," Klytus said with a calm smile.

"We don't have what you're looking for. Vanish before you never get the chance to."

Klytus pressed a button in his pocket. Then the glove on his hand glowed, disintegrating the hard rope around him. As the monsters realized Klytus had freed himself, it was too late.

"Farewell!" Klytus stood up and jumped in his spaceship.

As he stared back in the dark abyss, Klytus found interest in a planet with black and bright purple. But in a blink of an eye, the lights turned red, the buttons seemed to malfunction. Suddenly, a goblin ripped his engine apart and flew off in the other direction. He steered his wheel without a thought in mind. Klytus knew that if the spaceship exploded, that would've been the end of his journey, permanently. As the engine caught fire, Klytus started losing hope. But then, "BEEP! BEEP!" Right when the spacecraft was about to explode, the last thing he saw before blacking out was a portal sucking him in.

He opened his eyes and checked his pockets for the remote to his spaceship. When he looked at his surroundings, he glared at the trees that looked like the ones from his land. He saw animals and mountains with snow on their peak. He checked his pockets and found a note. "Your answer lays where people have a flag with a red background and yellow star on it."

"That barbaric orangutan-like brat," Klytus squeezed his hand.

After a while, Klytus's body was shivering, but he felt unbearably hot. He couldn't think but he wasn't tired. He couldn't do anything. He was in the middle of nowhere. He never felt vulnerable in eons. He looked for his radar and saw a red and yellow flag in the corner of his screen. He knew his only option was to start moving. As night was approaching, he knew he had to make use of his surroundings.

He didn't know anything in this place. He knew his technology was far more advanced. As he walked, he checked his radar and any announcements on his spaceship. He had dark circles under his eyes. Klytus's bones were visible, his body went from a lively blue to a pale gray. Most importantly, his sanity was fading away. He was hallucinating people and monsters in his mind.

But then, he saw it. He saw those stars clearer than ever, but he thought that it was a hallucination coming from his mind. It was exactly what the radar showed him. He slid on the floor, staring into the night sky. He ran into the building through the window that had lights and watched as the person stabbed needles onto someone's body. Klytus was confused. *How does stabbing a thin needle help with their recovery?*

He was too tired to think so he stole a paper that showed pictures of where to put the needles and a little box full of needles. He ran outside and almost made it to his spaceship until a hand grabbed him and asked what he was doing with the paper.

"Emperor Huangdi! Who is this alien?" Another person said.

Klytus angrily questioned "What do you want?"

Huangdi was stunned after looking at the lively little creature. Klytus took this opportunity to snatch a needle and the paper and poked him. Huangdi grabbed his hand as Klytus ran for his life.

"YOUR SPACESHIP IS BACK, MASTER KLYTUS!" Luck was on his side after what felt like centuries. He ran outside and saw the blue light his eyes longed for. He jumped in and let his eyes closed with his body slowly recovering his blue color. When he woke up, he saw the massive trees surrounding his mushroom.

Klytus asked a creature much like he was. "I found a solution to prevent the extinction of our species! Come and let me test this acupuncture thing."

The creature jumped on Klytus's bed and Klytus started stabbing needles with precise accuracy. When Klytus finished, the creature felt like never before. Moving felt easy. His legs felt warmer. Most importantly, he felt good.

Klytus was astonished. How can a planet with such terrible technology have medicine for his species? Klytus made more needles and gave it to all the doctors in his land. Even though the struggles were painful and unbearable, the struggle was worth it.

The Red Thread

The French International School, TKO, Choi, Chloe – 10

We all know what paper, umbrellas, and tea are. But did you know where it all came from? It all came from strong, powerful China. Long time ago, there was this golden red thread. A Chinese seamstress made the golden red thread. It was very special and she loved it. The seamstress was wealthy. The seamstress was about to make it famous, sell it in the market, and help bring China and her family more wealth. One day, the seamstress's husband was bankrupt. He didn't have any money to grow more crops to sell and he owed his friends a lot of money. The seamstress forgot about the golden red thread and focused on making money to help her family. The thread was forgotten and was given to the seamstress's son. The son got married and handed it down to his son. It got handed down from generation to generation. One day a tiny baby was born. Her name was Sarah. She grew up and grew up until one day on her 7th birthday the father decided to give her a red thread as her birthday present. As you know, they were still very poor. Sarah only got birthday presents on Christmas and her birthday. One day at school they were learning about sewing. Everyone was busy chatting or listening to music on their new phone. Sarah didn't have a new phone and all other sorts of new toys because she didn't have the money to buy it. Since Sarah didn't have a phone or someone to chat to, she was paying attention. "Did you know silk was made from China? China is a very powerful country. We will be learning how to sew with silk." the teacher explained. Sarah carried the red thread with her. For some reason she just felt like it. Sarah tried sewing with plain cotton threads. She easily reattached and unattached a small bag. After school Sarah went to look at the busy streets of China. "Buy a newspaper! Buy one!" cried a boy. Sarah liked reading books instead of newspapers but she had enough for both from her birthday money. "Besides, when was the last time I read a newspaper?" Sarah thought. "I'll have one!" said Sarah as she handed a coin to the boy. The boy tossed her a thick newspaper. "Time to look at the books." Sarah thought. Then she remembered to help her mother with dinner so she went home. As soon as she finished dinner she read the newspaper. 'DEMON SPIRITS ATTACK INNOCENT GIRL'.

'Little girl Mei Mei got attacked by a 'demon spirit' (as the witness says) while she was buying apples. Suddenly the spirits screamed "WHERE IS IT". People wonder what happened but it is told that the spirits ran past Mei Mei and they disappeared. Little Mei Mei is in the hospital while the best doctors are looking for any cure for her.' the newspaper said. Suddenly a piece of paper was in front of her. It said '红线...'. Sarah sighed, this was traditional Chinese so she had no idea what it meant. "Mum? Can I ask you a question?" Sarah asked while eating dinner. "Sure Sarah." Sarah handed her mom the paper. "What does this mean?" Sarah asked. "This means 'Hóngxiàn', red thread." Her mum replied quietly. "Sarah, tomorrow please stay home. Instead of going to school we need to stay home." Sarah was confused, usually her mom never let her skip school unless she was really sick. The next day Sarah was bored, she fiddled with her red thread, made tea for her Grandma, and played with her dolls. In the afternoon, Sarah's mum announced something to her. "Sarah, me and Grandma will go for a little trip to the market. If you see anyone except family and close friends don't open the door, lock the doors and windows, and use the phone if you have any trouble. Your dad will come in 30 minutes to explain all of this. Be careful, I'll be back in 1 hour." After she had gone Sarah decided to read a new novel she borrowed from her local library. Sarah had just been reading the best part when suddenly an explosion came from the door. She grabbed a frying pan (a very good choice of weapon) and carefully went to the living room. Sarah was horrified. A spirit was outside. "Give it to me please!" She shrieked. Sarah ran to the spirit and shouted, "NO!!!". The spirit wailed. Suddenly, Sarah remembered from her early memory Grandpa explaining how to deal with evil spirits. He chanted a few Chinese words and made a sign. Sarah was about to do the sign when she remembered her grandpa saying another moral to her. "Violence is not an answer" he had told her. Sarah stopped and asked, "What do you need, spirit?". "红线!" The spirit answered. The red thread...

“ Wait! You mean this?” Sarah showed her red thread attached to her waist. The spirit nodded. “There once was a wealthy, happy seamstress. She had a son and a husband. The seamstress made a rich, red thread. It would have made billions of dollars but suddenly, the husband was bankrupt. He owed so much money to his friends, and a new project killed all his crops. Lawyers came and the family of the seamstress moved to a poor village. The seamstress was too busy; she didn’t notice her son stealing the red thread; he suddenly moved out and went rich again. But instead of sending money he used it for himself. He got married and had a son. The son gave his son the red thread. The seamstress was me, for so long I looked for you and the thread.” The spirit explained. Sarah gave her the thread. “Goodbye descendant.” The spirit rose and disappeared into thin air. “Sarah! You okay?” Dad shouted. Sarah nodded, this will make the seamstress and Sarah’s family have peace forever, she thought.

–The End–

A Friendly Encounter

The French International School, TKO, Mehouelley, Lena Elsy – 10

Ashley and her mother had driven for hours to finally arrive at their new house. Her mother said moving to California would be warmer than their tiny house in New York. It was exactly midnight by the time they arrived. The moon was high in the night sky. There, right in front of Ashley, stood the house. It wasn't an ordinary house. It was more like a big mansion, but the windows were all broken or boarded. It even made a creaky moanful sound as the wind blew through it. What Ashley didn't know yet, was that it was haunted; the house had many secrets.

Reluctantly, Ashley and her mother walked into the run-down old house. Each step they took the house would creak. Inside, it looked like a dumpster. Old, broken pictures were tilting on the walls, statues of soldiers laid on the floor. With each step Ashley took, a shiver ran down her spine, like a spider crawling on her back. She hated this place and wanted to go. But as soon as she remembered that this would be her home, a wave of misery went through her. She was stuck there. That night she went to bed hoping that the next day would be a better day.

The next morning, Ashley woke and went to the living room. She noticed something was different but couldn't identify what. A sick feeling of dread crept on her, she was worried for her mom. She raced to her, unaware that the sounds of the creaking house were getting louder. Ashley quickly found her and hugged her tightly.

Later, Ashley was in the garden thinking about the house. The thing that scared her the most was the gunpowder she had found in the hands of a sculpture. The gunpowder looked real and like it had been put there on purpose. Ashley remembered what she learnt; that gunpowder was a Chinese invention used by Chinese people a long time ago.

Ashley wondered how gunpowder could be found in this haunted house.

This thought made Ashley feel worse, something mysterious has been happening here.

When night fell, Ashley made a decision. She would have to figure out where the gunpowder came from. That night Ashley couldn't sleep; the creepy things in the house haunted her dreams. Ashley detested her room. It was messy and creepy. Broken dolls laid on the floor, ripped curtains and carpet filled the room with oldness. Ashley was overcome by fear and did not want to find out the mystery of the gunpowder anymore. But Ashley knew she had to. Finally, she fell asleep in the gloomy room.

The sun rose from the horizon as Ashley was going down to the living room. As she was walking through the hallway, she noticed something...something moving. Ashley knew something was extremely wrong. She had to find out to feel safe in the house. When Ashley arrived in the living room, she stared with a blank expression. There was no furniture. Could it be a spirit or was it her brain playing tricks on her? Ashley thought before going to meet her mom. As Ashley walked into the room, she said "Mom, something weird is going on in this house. I was in the living room and there's no furniture. It's gone."

"Are you serious? Nobody can move the furniture! You must be delusional," replied Ashley's mom.

"I'm not. Go check for yourself," demanded Ashley.

"Ok," said her mom as they dashed to the living room.

They stepped into the living room and looked around.

"There's furniture. You are certainly delusional,"

Ashley knew someone or something was behind this.

After breakfast, Ashley was ready to research. She had two goals. First, was to find out where the gunpowder came from. Second, was to figure out what was making the house so strange. She set off and started in the living room. As she was slowly walking, she heard a loud deep sound. Ashley didn't know what it was. She carefully stepped into the living room. When Ashley reached the sofa, she stomped her feet. Something unbelievable was happening. The mat

slid away and an underground portal opened. The portal looked like a swirling staircase that spun and disappeared into the distance. Ashley hesitated before she found her courage again. Ashley stepped into the portal. After what felt like hours, she finally reached the bottom and couldn't believe her eyes. There was a secret room filled with gunpowder. "But how could gunpowder possibly be here?" she thought. Ashley investigated and found a white orb filled with mist. Ashley didn't know how it worked, so she shook it. She gasped in surprise. The globe was actually a map of where the gunpowder came from. According to the map, the gunpowder came from a tunnel connected from the house to the Great Wall of China. Everything was crazy for Ashley. "Why would people build a tunnel connecting to the other side of the world?" Ashley thought. "At least I know where the gunpowder's from." She quickly took the orb and left in the blink of an eye. When she returned, Ashley jumped with joy. She had learnt where the gunpowder came from. Now Ashley only needed to find out the mystery of this haunted house.

At night, the house was pitch black. She cautiously tiptoed down the narrow stairs. When she was down, Ashley saw mysterious things floating in the air; statues walking, human-like figures walking. She rubbed her eyes in disbelief, as she realised they were ghosts. "Are they kind or nasty?" Ashley asked herself. She approached the ghosts and heard them talking. "What a beautiful night. No sound. No humans. Just perfect." Ashley understood that the ghosts were friendly and they could live peacefully together.

Over the years, Ashley would learn from the ghosts that they had bought the gunpowder when they fled through the portal from China. The house would always have mysteries, but Ashley would never be afraid again.

THE END

From Boredom to a Great Invention

The French International School, TKO, Tsang, Landon – 10

Trees blowing in the breeze peacefully and birds chirping as the sun rose, in a modern house with buildings structured securely reaching the unlimited sky in Hangzhou, the twin brothers were always weary and wanted to do something that no one has ever thought about or even tried to do before. It was a Monday morning in 2684.

RING, RING, RING!

“Sawyer, I'm going to go switch the alarm off,” said Ryker tiredly reaching over to the clock.

“Ok, I will go get dressed early so that we can play downstairs.” replied Sawyer refusing to get out from his cozy blanket.

The twins finished their morning tasks and rushed downstairs to play.

“I think it is a bit boring playing these games,” said Sawyer.

“I think so too. Why not try inventing something that is much more fun than these toys here. Something that is magnificent that we will never forget about.” Ryker said with ideas spinning around in his head.

“Maybe we could make a transport that can hover over all kinds of terrains,” suggested Sawyer. “I think it would benefit the whole world especially in rural areas where roads are not as smooth and accessible.”

“Let's go pack our bags and set off to find materials then!” Ryker said with enthusiasm.

As they set off with gadgets and snacks in their bags, they first thought of finding recycled metals from an old factory near the cypress trees surrounded by a huge swamp.

“Where are we heading to now?” asked Ryker curiously looking at the trees that swung left and right with whipping, leafy branches all over him.

“The map says the cypress trees are footing at the North Peak near the Lingyin Temple,” replied Sawyer.

When the twins finally reached the cypress trees, the gloomy look of the background crept mistily. The mist blocked the trees everywhere but the old abandoned factory was the only thing that stood out from all of the other beautiful scenery of the North Peak forest in Hangzhou. The boys looked up to see with amazement at how tall the factory was.

“How are we supposed to get those metals when even if we jump up, we can't even touch the factory door as it's covered in razor-sharp thorns?” asked Ryker.

“Hmm...maybe we can cut the sharp thorns off so that it is safer for us to enter the building for the recycled metals.” replied Sawyer.

After the twins reaped the metals, they walked miles to search for the place they needed to go next under the blazing hot sun that shone, releasing heat on each of their faces.

“I’m tired of running, maybe let’s come back to this on another day.” panted Sawyer sweating, looking like he was about to faint.

“Come on! Let’s persevere because inventors don’t give up!” encouraged Ryker as they continued their journey to find an energy source to build their powered-up fans.

Running on and on with sweat drizzled down from each of their heads, Ryker and Sawyer have reached the bottom of a mountain. The higher they went up the mountain, the colder it got. The twins were as cold as ice cubes.

“Uuurgh. It is freezing up here. We shouldn’t have been wearing short sleeves only!” whined Sawyer as his teeth started to shake in the coldness of the frosty wind, blowing harshly back and forth constantly.

“We’re FINALLY here Sawyer. The frosty place with the best natural energy to fuel up our invention!” explained Ryker proudly looking at the place where they were.

Snow was everywhere as white as a fluffy sheep’s wool. The trees were barely green and mostly white. Snowflakes fell from the sky like feathers falling onto their heads.

“Ok now, let’s go and make our fans here so that we can power them up with this huge icy dam.” said Ryker happily feeling the coldness while clenching his hand into a fist, holding it tight and trying to resist the feeling of the chilly wind outside.

“Ryker, the metal is easy to bend. Let’s bend the base of the hover car.” said Sawyer, breathing a lot to catch his breath when there was a lot of cold wind blowing in his face.

“Sawyer, I am going to go and get sand to smelt in our small oven so that we can make glass to finish the final touches of the car.” responded Ryker looking forward to seeing the finished project.

After hours of hard work and rest, Ryker and Sawyer were very proud to see that their invention had been completed. The two siblings believed their amazing transport would have to work with lots of effort and teamwork put into it. They would not know if what they invented would be successful unless the two brothers test out the transport by going back home riding in it.

“Ryker, step the pedal and let’s go home.” said Sawyer holding the steering wheel carefully getting ready to drive back to their house following the map’s directions.

“THREE, TWO, ONE, GO!” the two brothers said as they hovered all the way home feeling happy about what a great adventure this invention had given them. So they hovered over and down the snowy mountain, through the swampy forest where the cypress trees were, and all the way back home from a big snowy place. As the twins unpacked their bags, they found out it was Christmas Day!

“I guess we will be freezing again!” moaned Sawyer wanting to go back inside his cozy blanket again.

Little did the twins know, this adventure of creating this invention was just the beginning of an everyday life transport that people around the world use in the future.

The Impossible Hunt

The French International School, TKO, Yang, Elidi – 10

I'm still skeptical, but here I was sitting in my dad's office explaining how I just got mounds of undiscovered work from my famous ancestor. I'm Sunny Heng, and my brother is Dave Heng and this is our story...

It all started when our birthday approached, our family has a special tradition. When you reach your sixteenth birthday, you have to go on a treasure hunt set by our mastermind ancestor, Zhang Heng. Who was and still is one of the greatest Chinese scientists in history. He was the creator of the famous armillary sphere, which told time using the celestial sky and heaven represented in metal rings. The miniature, but heavy metal ball in the middle represents our planet: earth. Now, it happens that it was our sixteenth birthday this year, mine and Dave's. And just like our dad, aunt, grandpa, great-grandpa, great-great grandpa (and many more relatives to list) we hoped to find the treasure. But all those before us have failed. Nobody has succeeded for five hundred years since the clue was discovered. But nonetheless, we received our first clue, eager to begin.

*Back to the start, where I began,
Back to the start of my lifespan.
There where I first, learned to speak,
There you shall find, what you seek.*

"What do you think it means?" inquired Dave, after our relatives left our house. The room was silent with tension. Dave's voice echoed in the vast living room.

"Back to the start..." I mumbled, "I wonder if..."

"When he first learnt to speak," whispered Dave, "I've got it."

"Who's going to book the plane?"

On a last minute notice, we loaded our bags and left our residence, embarking on an adventure. We all had packed light bags to accommodate us for a quick and straightforward journey. After a comfortable trip, we arrived in Nanyang. We hailed a taxi and quickly settled into our hotel to plan our next step. Me and Dave, decided that he (Zhang Heng) probably hid the next clue in one of the ancient Nanyang temples as it was the only place that could have survived for thousands of years. We quickly searched online for the most popular temple in Nanyang, which turned out to be the 'Zhong Bing Temple'. We went as fast as we came, and promptly we arrived.

The search for the clue began, we searched all over the temple, inside and outside. Just as we were about to think that it was impractical to find. My vision narrowed. Somehow, I knew that the poem engraved on the ceramic was the clue. The second clue, the unexplored clue. Rapidly, I rushed over with Dave right behind me, I read the clue:

*Over mountain and rivers you must go,
find where the sphere was stowed.
There you shall discover,
the third clue it shall uncover.*

I was confident that it was the armillary sphere, there was no other choice. When we retreated to our hotel, I began to worry, surely we weren't the only ones after the treasure? I enlightened Dave about my worries, but he suggested that we focus on the treasure for the time being, and I agreed. We headed for our next destination, Beijing. Again, we packed our bags and headed for the airport once more.

Eventually, we arrived in Beijing, but I soon noticed that my suspicions were becoming true, I noticed someone that was constantly following us. But I kept my worries to myself, and instead we headed for the Beijing Ancient observatory. Eventually, we found the armillary sphere. After adjusting to our surroundings we began searching. We searched the sphere top to bottom and finally, we noticed minuscule words written at the base. It read:

*Sing the song that we all know,
Let all the lyrics flow,
The song that accompanied your grow,
Let it open the stone below.*

For hours again we racked our brains for the song. We thought of all the songs we knew, we even tried Justin Bieber songs, but it still didn't work. I began to think back to childhood memories, and suddenly. Bang! I got it! Our childhood song. Our parents always told us that this particular song was passed on by our ancestors, they must have meant Zhang Heng! We sang the song.

*Turn thrice left into the sky up there
Thrice we traveled through the world
Turn the center twice...
There you will find...
Mounds of desire.*

Nothing happened. Then we heard a voice.

"Greetings, children of Zhang Heng," she announced.

"Who are you?" I inquired, "and how do you know us?"

"I'm Selina," she replied, "and I'm a worldwide famous treasure hunter."

I couldn't believe it, all of our hard work was supposedly gone. There was no way we could be her. But apparently, Dave wasn't going to give up that easily, and he started wrestling with Selina the stalker / treasure hunter.

I was stunned. Never before, have I seen Dave so motivated and aggressive. The two launched punches at each other, kicks were aimed. I stood there shocked. I never knew Dave had that in him. I remained like that until Dave screamed, "Get the treasure!" I didn't know how! Something about the songs. I thought about it, then my thoughts drifted back to the lyrics, then I understood. The directions left and right pointed to the circles. I twisted. The outer circle three times, the middle five times until... rumble, rumble. The rock was opened.

I turned around expecting to see Dave, but no one was there. I panicked. What if... No, I refuse to think like that, he must be alive. Frantically, I ran through the entire place, until I heard sirens. I knew that it was Dave. When I saw him, I rushed over and embraced him tightly and started sobbing. The treasure hunt was over, and we had discovered the treasure, it was only a matter of going to check it out now. We had solved the impossible.

The Unexpected Invention

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Cao, Hei Yee Chloe – 10

“Ladies and gentlemen, may I have your attention, please? The competition is about to start. Please stay seated.” The audience was so excited that they kept shuffling around and couldn’t sit still. It was competition day. Chef Chen’s palms were as sweaty as if he had just washed his hands. The anchor’s opening remarks carried his thoughts to that quiet afternoon a few months ago...

“Excuse me! Excuse me! The emperor has sent me to give a message to Chef Chen! Where is he?” demanded the messenger.

Chef Chen stepped out, “What does the emperor possibly want from me? Am I in trouble?” he said, looking worried and confused.

Everyone in the bakery held their breath in suspense, wondering if the chef would be in trouble. “Don’t worry. The emperor wants to have a baking competition to identify his new personal chef. He has heard good things about you, and so you are invited!” Chef Chen sighed in relief.

“Are you participating then?” asked the messenger impatiently, “I have other bakers to speak to, you know!”

“Of course, I will! Who else will be in it?” Chef Chen exclaimed.

“Another equally skilled baker, named Chef Wong.”

Chef Chen clammed up. Chef Wong’s name was heard far and wide. “It would be a head-to-head competition,” murmured Chef Chen to himself..

“Good luck!” The messenger nodded, then turned to leave, though Chef Chen paid no attention, with his mind filled with thoughts on how to win.

Now gathering in a large hall in the emperor’s palace, bakers and chefs all sat on the edge of their chairs waiting for the start. “Bakers, please get ready! For the first round, you will make tarts!” announced the judge...

Chef Chen easily passed the first four rounds. Finally, it was time to announce the second to last elimination. He could hear his heart beating fast against his chest. It was so quiet that you could hear a feather drop. The judge announced excitedly, “This leaves us with the two finalists, Chef Chen and Chef Wong!” The entire hall erupted in applause. Chef Chen finally let go of his breath in relief.

This was a once in a lifetime opportunity for Chef Chen. If he beat Chef Wong today, he could work for the emperor for the rest of his life, let alone an attractive prize of 100 renminbi.

This round, the chefs were asked to make their best bread recipe. The moment Chef Chen stepped into the kitchen, he was astonished. It was massive, and filled with tons of cooking tools and ingredients.

He immediately gathered all his ingredients. His feet flew around the kitchen, and his hands raced, opening cupboards and drawers. All of a sudden, he stopped in his tracks. “No! This is impossible!” He looked all over the places to double-check. Nothing, the yeast was gone! It was the most essential ingredient to make tasty bread! Chef Chen panicked instantly. Trying his best to calm down, he paced around the kitchen, his mind full of thoughts. Suddenly, an idea hit him, though he doubted it would work. “What if I put the bread dough into boiling water to let it soften and rise like yeast does?”

Chef Chen quickly mixed flour, eggs, water and sugar in a bowl, and used all his strength to stir as thoroughly as he could. After the dough was ready, he gently placed it into the pot of boiling water. Minute by minute he counted. Ten minutes later, he cautiously scooped up the lumpy dough with a ladle to filter away the extra water. Then, he used a knife and peeled the dough into smaller bite-sized pieces. Chef Chen's heart beat even faster now, as he picked up a piece with his chopsticks and popped it into his mouth.

To his great surprise, it was not bad at all! In fact, it felt marvelous in his mouth. It was a whole new texture and taste, smooth and soft and even playful! Chef Chen froze for a few seconds and soon burst into excitement, jumping up and down. Just then, someone called from outside, "Time's up! Chefs, please present your dishes."

Chef Chen shakily walked out of the kitchen onto the stage, his hands trembling while holding his bowl of dough and water. The judge introduced the two chefs to Emperor Han Wudi, high up in his dragon seat. First, he slowly took a bite from Chef Wong's bread, chewed for what seemed like an hour, and finally commented with no expression, "It's great. Soft and sweet, just as I expected."

"Chef Chen, now it's your turn!" Chef Chen tried to look confident and walk up steadily, but couldn't.

The moment the emperor saw his dish, he shouted, "What is this! The instructions were perfectly clear: make bread!"

Chef Chen's voice quivered, "I apologize! I tried, but without yeast in my kitchen, I had to experiment. Please kindly give it a try!"

Han Wudi was very stern, "I'm sure you know the consequence of failing my expectations." Chef Chen nodded. The emperor hesitantly took a piece of dough, chewed it, and swallowed it effortlessly.

"Not bad!" Han Wudi nodded surprisingly and stuffed another piece right away into his mouth. In his head, Chef Chen screamed "YES!", as the judge escorted them backstage.

Finally, the emperor announced to everyone, "I've made my decision. Both were great, but the winner is Chef Chen!"

The whole hall erupted in cheers. Happy tears streamed down Chef Chen's face. The emperor turned to him, "Now, you're my chef, and I think your food invention deserves a good name too!" He winked mysteriously, as he was about to stride away.

"Noodles!" Responded by Chef Chen instantly, "let's call it noodles!"

Believe it or not, this is how noodles were officially but unexpectedly invented!

The Ancient Chinese Paper

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Chan, Chace – 11

Chapter 1: In Which there is a Shrine and Special Paper

The paper of the ancient Chinese holds more than a sea of blank white. These mythological papers may bring fortune or misery, but still, never underestimate the power and mysteriousness of the Chinese paper.

Long ago, Ts'ai Lun from China was the inventor of modern paper. Ts'ai Lun mixed mulberry bark, rags with water and hung the thin mat to dry in the sun. But Ts'ai Lun was just the first person that noticed (and used) the newly-created paper, and was not the actual creator of paper. The true inventor was paper itself.

The paper had souls. The chief was ShenZhi. ShenZhi brought along, or rather created, a group of living paper. The name of the group was Living Paper, and they lived in fine houses with desks made out of bamboo, and chairs made of sticks. There they stood on an old dusty shelf, waiting to be cleansed by pitch black ink. The ink was special, as anything that was written with it will eventually become real, even if it's in a million years' time. Something miraculous actually happened a million years ago, which will be told later in this miraculous tale.

You might be wondering where the special ink, called ShiXian, which means 'come true' in Chinese, came from. ShiXian was first created in a lake split into two equal parts. One part was black, with a dot of pure white, while the other was white, with a splash of black. In the middle of the lake stood a shrine to worship the ancient gods of equality and peace. The shrine was called 'The Heart of Yin and Yang'. This lake was named 'Equal Light and Darkness.

A few million years ago, during the war of the "Three Kingdoms", a traveller walk passed the Lake of Light and Darkness and presented a bowl of pure water to the gods and said a wonderful prayer about stopping the war and gaining peace, which was soon heard and actualized. The lake then erupted two geysers of opposing colours, black and white, and filled up the bowl with black wishing water, which was the creation of ShiXian.

The gods told the traveller to find ShenZhi and the group of Living Paper, far away in the northwest of China in a hidden valley, to use Shixian to write on Shenzhi, with the utmost hope of stopping the war.

Chapter 2: In Which there is Confusion and Laughter

When Shixian is used to write on Living Paper, the words will change depending on who you are, which basically means everyone will read different things on the paper. Only the original writer will see the actual words.

When the traveller found the Living Paper, he used ShiXian to write his wish. The traveller showed the paper to his brother, and he laughed merrily. What the traveller's brother, named Hui Niang, saw was "you will turn into a wealthy nobleman", which the traveller did not know. The traveller was therefore very confused.

Later on, the traveller waved his paper towards the suffering villagers. Although the villagers were poor, hungry, and hung a solemn face, when they saw the paper, all the villagers had huge smiles on their faces and became very excited. The traveller was even more confused. The villagers each saw different things, such as "rice will grow better in wet soil" or "you will be able to grow more potatoes by planting them deep underground".

Chapter 3: In Which there is Grieve and Hope

The war of the "Three Kingdoms" was getting worse, more people died, more people grieved and wept. Sadness swallowed China as if it was a huge dark blanket, which brought unwanted coldness, and soulless revenge. The traveller's own parents died not long after, and the traveller did not dare to journey further.

Too soon later, the traveller's village burnt down. The traveller hurried away and escaped the chaos. He lived in a small cave towards Eastern China. The traveller was starving and tired, and could not bear to see others suffer, so he decided to venture to the south, to the King's palace, and to request him to stop the war.

After a month, the traveller finally arrived at the King's palace. The soldiers questioned who the traveller was, but he was too tired, so he could not reply. The soldier got angry and told the traveller to show him the piece of paper sticking out of his pocket. The traveller had already forgotten about the Living Paper until now. The soldier snatched it away, the traveller tried to get it back, but the soldier was already too delighted after he read those wonderful words on the Living Paper, and let the traveller in. The words were "if we win the war, I, the King, promises to give you a handsome share of our gold." The traveller was perplexed.

The palace was spacious and glamorous. The King questioned the presence of the traveller and so the traveller showed him the Living Paper. The King was thrilled. The King read "You will be remembered as the most respected and the most powerful King in history. To make everyone honour and worship you even more, you should stop the war." The King then announced, "We will stop the dreadful war, as we should have peace and love for our people!"

Chapter 4: In Which there is Pride and Peace

The traveller then presented the Living Paper to the enemy troops and their King. Just like the King of the other country, they laughed and were delighted after reading the Living Paper. Everyone was happy and the war eventually stopped. The world was filled with peace, love and happiness once again. Happiness and love that will last forever, because of Living Paper, ShiXian, and the traveller, which I have come to tell you he was called Ts'ai Lun.

True North

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Cheung, Carlton – 12

It had been 3 months since I last saw my dad, Shen Kuo, come out of his little room. Every time I tried to enter, or even talk to him, he would shut the obstructive door in my face. I knew it was for the better of the family, which was currently suffering a financial and political crisis with the Inventors Guild, but I did feel kind of lonely. Our family was poor, without a doubt, but we always stuck together, and I was happy. Since as long as I could remember, our family would always frolic around in the tall grass like little children, without a care in the world.

In the past, every day my dad and I would go out into the foreboding yet strangely welcoming, woods outside of our hut and look for little animals to play with, and sometimes we would wait patiently there for hours, waiting for the perfect opportunity to put our hands around an unexpected little creature.

Last time...

The reason for all this...

Three months ago, I had become lost in the maze-like woods, and my parents searched for days upon days, until they found me badly wounded, in a heap in the middle of the forest. I had several cuts all over me, and even had suffered a bad bear bite on my thigh. My parents rushed me home and cared for me, since we were too poor to afford a horse to ride to the hospital, which was kilometers away. After that incident, my parents and I were all traumatized, and to solve this, my dad decided to make a revolutionary contraption to stop this from happening ever again.

I knew this was an absurd idea, but I didn't stop him. I knew he was just trying to keep his mind off the guilt for not keeping an eye on me, whilst reassuring us, and himself, that it would not happen again.

He also knew that he would make big money if his contraption worked, and that would be essential for the family's financial condition. My father was a bold and creative inventor with lots of little ideas, but he had never been successful at his job.

One time, he even nearly got fired from his position within the Board of Inventors after being overconfident in his invention of a new type of tinkered chair that supposedly stayed cool even after sitting for a long time, instead it became so cold that it made the unfortunate people who tested it sick.

One particular night, I was out playing with my friends when I heard a loud shout coming out of my father's room. Fearing for the worst, I rushed into his room and saw my father staring in awe at an oddly shaped object that was wobbling around, seemingly pointing in the direction of something.

"What is that?" I asked, pointing at the deformed chunk of metal.

"Look closely," my dad replied proudly, "It is the God's reply to our family's problems!"

Inside the hard housing, a metallic object stood in all its majesty. It looked just like an ordinary mineral, but after a closer inspection, I found it was constantly righting itself in the direction of my room.

Before I could ask, my father told me, "That is the magical force which is forcing this piece of metal, an unique material named lodestone, act this way! Before, it was found to be a type of attracting iron. It is a rare

mineral, but I still managed to get my hands on it. The stone holds a strong pulling force that somehow constantly points towards an invisible force in our house! I have it placed on oil, which acts as a lubricant for the rough and heavy metal.”

“We shall have a feast to celebrate this impossible, legendary win for our family!” It had been so many months, even years since our family has had a full meal.

He beamed, and told me, “Oh yes, from now on, every time we go to the woods, you will bring this with you. When you are lost, put this on the floor and it will point in the direction of our house like a guiding star. Follow this, and you will never get lost again!”

That night, our entire family fell asleep with smiles on our faces.

My dad’s new invention turned out to be a huge success. He made some little adjustments, minimizing the size of the gadget, and soon, the product was on the market.

The location of our very house is now publicly known as ‘True North’.

New Tales of China's Invention

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Chung, Davey – 8

I was playing on my iPhone as I was strolling through the park. Bang! I fell into a hole and fainted.

When I woke up, I realised that I landed in a different space. I was laying on prickly grass and sticks were poking me at every direction. Buzzing sounds were surrounding my head. I was confused. I took a deep breath and the grassy aroma filled my lungs. Suddenly, my stomach was in pain. I crawled up slowly and tried to search for help.

“Hey there!” I heard a voice calling out to me. “Who’s there?” I replied. The strange voice said, “I am underneath you.” I bent down and to my surprise, I saw a mini caterpillar resting on a leaf. He was emerald green and had a friendly look. The caterpillar introduced himself as the “Tea caterpillar”. He also said that we were now in ancient China. I was in a famous field full of tea leaves. He also told me that these leaves were first discovered in China. I was shocked. My eyes widened. I asked, “Aren’t they from England?” Then, I told him about my stomachache. He then exclaimed, “Oh! That is easy to take care of. Just go up that mountain. You will find a couple of Pu–Erh tea leaves. Make yourself a drink and you will be fine.”

I hiked for four hours. The tea caterpillar sat on my shoulder. Soon, we were there. We quickly picked some Pu–Erh leaves and hurried down the mountain before sunset. First, we headed to the village, to rinse the leaves with hot water. Then, we gave everyone in the village a cup of Pu–Erh tea. Everyone said that it was bitter. Personally, I thought that it was bitter, but it was also very rich in flavour. Indeed, my stomach felt much better afterwards.

“Thank you for your help! I’d love to stay here, but I must go back home.” I told the caterpillar. “Can I go with you? Please?” the caterpillar pleaded. “Fine!” I sighed. We time–teleported back to modern age Hong Kong and went back home.

Mom was waiting for us. She ordered bubble tea for me. “Thanks, mom!” I told her. I told the caterpillar about the bubble tea and other kinds of new teas that were not available in the past. One of the teas were lemon tea. “Children really like bubble tea here, but do children like tea in ancient China?” I asked the caterpillar. “No ,they hate tea!” the caterpillar replied. “Well, you must bring some of these back to ancient China!” I suggested, with a smile on my face.

A Challenge in Print

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Huang, Ria – 11

Long ago in ancient China, there was an old village. The people who lived in the old village were old too, as this was their childhood village which they considered home. But the villagers did not have a good education when they were children because due to the small number of schools back then, only very few kids could go to school. Luckily, the villagers had learnt how to read and speak in an old village school next to their village. The village school could not offer lessons to learn how to write, unfortunately, so the villagers could not write letters to their family and friends far away.

There was a villager, named Zhu Xu, who was a mother and her kids moved out of the village to go to work. Zhu Xu had two sons, but one of them fell sick when he was working. The other son of Zhu Xu wrote to her about her son being sick, and Zhu Xu was panicking. She needed to write back to her son, but she did not know how to write.

The first person that popped into Zhu Xu's head was the smart and educated Bi Sheng. She quickly ran to Bi Sheng's house and asked him if he had some way for her to send a letter back to her son.

Bi Sheng was very nice and cared for the villagers. The past generations of Bi Sheng had lived in the old village until Bi Sheng moved out to get a better education. He cared for the villagers a lot because the old village was once his home too. "How can we write without actually writing?" he thought to himself at his wooden desk.

Suddenly, he spotted a stamp at the corner of his desk and had a great idea. He looked out to his garden and saw lots of trees. "Aha," Bi Sheng exclaimed, "wood is the material! I have lots here!" Bi Sheng worked hard and millions of sweat drops dripped on his wooden desk. He spent his days chopping wood and using his little carving knife to carve the characters one by one, stroke by stroke on the wood that he had chopped. After he finished the last stroke, he jumped up in laughter, he dipped the stamps in ink and tried the stamps on paper but all he could see was little faint characters in the middle of lots of circles. "Oh, that was not what I expected." He wanted to give up right away. He muttered to himself: "This is impossible." But then after that, he decided to keep trying because this was an important invention to the villagers.

Bi Sheng did not give up. He decided to try again, this time with paper. "Paper, the affordable material, so lightweight and portable," Bi Sheng thought. "It will definitely work, I already know it!" He started folding the paper, piece by piece, fold by fold. His hand trembled while he folded, hoping that paper would work. But once he finished all the characters, he dipped the edges in ink, stamped the paper stamps down, and... it worked! "Yes!" Bi Sheng screamed in delight. Bi Sheng tried again and again, and the paper started to get soggy and soggy. After a few trials, the paper became so soggy that it was not usable anymore. Bi Sheng frowned. The paper did not work either.

Even though the first two tries did not completely work, Bi Sheng got closer and closer to his goal. This time, he thought deeply on what material he should use. Bi Sheng spent day after day in front of his desk, either carving or slicing pieces of clay. He baked the clay in batches once he finished designing them. He did not give up, even though this was hard and he started to get frustrated. But when Bi Sheng wanted to give up, a flame lit in his heart: "This is all for the villagers, especially Zhu Xu," he thought to himself.

When Bi Sheng was done, he took the baked clay stamps, took a deep breath, and stamped them down. He slowly lifted the stamps up. He couldn't believe his eyes, he saw clear Chinese characters on the paper. He tested it a few more times just to make sure this wouldn't be like the paper stamps again. The rock-solid baked clay stayed in place, and Bi Sheng smiled. It was the happiest smile he had ever had.

Finally, he had finished his masterpiece that took him so long! He couldn't wait to show the villagers his wonderful creation! The next day, Bi Sheng marched off to the village. At the gate of the village, all the villagers were so happy to see Bi Sheng because he was smart and kind. They surrounded Bi Sheng as he showed them how to use movable type. The villagers listened carefully and learned quickly. Bi Sheng gave the first set to Zhu Xu so she could write back to her son.

Soon, Bi Sheng made more sets of movable type for the villagers. He had not given up ever in the process. Even though the process was hard, Bi Sheng knew what he was capable of so he kept working and overcame his challenges. Bi Sheng's success brought happiness and joy to the village.

Now, movable type is considered one of the best inventions of the world! All thanks to Bi Sheng, movable type made writing way easier for people in ancient China.

The Compass

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Suarez, Alexa – 8

In Southern China, lived Lily and Alex who were identical twins but on the inside were rather different. They both had brown eyes and black hair, yet Lily enjoyed playing barbies and Alex preferred gadgets. Some would say Lily is an annoying know it all while Alex is curious and quiet. They lived in a smart house which had a passcode on every door, cameras facing all directions and smart watches that linked them all together. The only thing they were missing was their parents. One thing they could agree on was reading books. Once after school, they went down to the library and found a section about ancient China. There they had read about a magical, ancient compass that could find anything that your heart desired. Both twins looked at each other and knew what they had to do. This was the beginning of their journey...

One early morning, they packed their bags full of toys and gadgets to find this magical compass. They hopped into a cab and set off North towards Beijing. Along the way, Lily stopped for drinks in the mall where she met a boy named Shen. He had short black hair and wise eyes for his age. Shen mysteriously whispered to her, "I know what you are looking for." Lily felt surprised and her mouth opened wide before she replied, "You do?". Without another word, Lily ran down the stairs and told Alex but he didn't believe her. They continued driving and this time, Alex stopped at the bakery for bread. Then suddenly, when he was waiting in line, he saw a boy that was dressed like an ancient emperor in red and yellow robes. Alex thought "Who might this be?" So when he went back to the car, he told Lily about the boy's strange clothing and Lily replied, "You see?! I told you! That's the boy I was talking about!" While they were arguing, Lily noticed something out of the corner of her eye. She jumped and let out a gasp, "Behind you Alex" said Lily quietly. Standing as still as a statue, Shen waited patiently for them to roll down the car window. "I can help" he said.

Shen guided them to the Forbidden City of Beijing. When they arrived, Lily and Alex gasped in shock while their eyes twinkled with wonder. In front of them stood an ancient temple with a golden roof which looked like sun shining on desert sand. The walls were dark rosy red and loomed over them. "Alright Shen, tell us where to find the compass," said Lily. Shen grinned and said nothing but a confusing riddle. "Follow the four stairways to where the sun has been honored," he said before disappearing into the mist. Alex pulled out his drone and Lily immediately understood what he was going to do. "Alex fly the drone to where four stairways meet!" she instructed. They finally found their destination, it was the altar of the temple of the sun. "THIS IS the compass!" Lily said. They ran to the center and waited. They closed their eyes and prayed. Would their prayers be answered?

Delivery System: One of the Great China Inventions

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Wang, Jessie – 8

Hello everyone! My name is Little Flower, and I'm thirteen years old. This winter, I went skiing with my family. As I stepped out of the Beijing airport, I felt that I was going to turn into an icicle! However, I was so excited to see snow! Then I saw a taxi waiting for us.

"Is that your friend's car?" I ask Mom.

"No," Mom answered, "I reserved a taxi 10 minutes ago, as you can call one on your phone in China!"

"Cool", I said.

On the way to the hotel, I told Mom I needed a down jacket urgently. I was amazed when Mom told me we could purchase the jacket online instead of going to the shopping mall.

"In China, you can buy nearly everything online, and they will deliver it. Meanwhile, China has the world's fastest and cheapest delivery system," explained Mom.

"What else can we buy online, and how long is the shipping?" I asked.

"You can buy food, electronics, and even a bed! The items will be delivered from half an hour to 24 hours. If you need the parcel urgently, they can deliver it within 30 minutes!" Answered Mom.

"How does it work?" I asked.

"There are food delivery platforms and many other platforms. Suppose you order food from Meituan. After payment, the platform sends an order and information to the nearest delivery man. They will deliver the food to your address." explained Mom.

Again, I was impressed by the highly efficient delivery service. That evening, when I was in bed, I kept asking Mom questions about the delivery system in China, but Mom had already fallen asleep! Soon, I was sleeping.

Minutes later, I found myself in a delivery sorting center. I saw robots moving and sorting packages. At the same time, people were loading and transferring the packets.

Then a human like robot walked to me. I said Hi to the robot, then asked "Why is the delivery service in China so efficient?" "Because of the technology, we use a lot of robots and machines to organize millions of packages. It helps a lot. Moreover, in China, people rely heavily on buying things online and they live close to each other. One delivery man could deliver 100 orders to a single building in one day. That makes the delivery very speedy and low cost." replied the robot.

When I woke up, I found out it was only a dream.

I decided that I would use the delivery system in China. The delivery system in China is such a great invention because it makes people's lives easier and more convenient.

.....

The phone was ringing. It was from a robot calling me to open the door. When I opened the door, the robot was in front of me with my down jacket. How cool it was!

The Future Medicine

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Yung, Julien – 8

Ming was climbing mountains of trash in an underground junkyard. Ming called it the ‘Not–So–Junkyard’ because to him, it was filled with treasure. He was collecting parts for something he was going to build. He picked up an iPhone 15 from 2023.

“I can’t believe people used to carry these things in their pockets. Pffff!” He called his robot assistant, Star2k96. It shot a laser at the junk, transferring all of it to Ming’s base.

“At least it has the parts I need.”

Ming liked inventing, but what he liked more was inventing with his friend, Yu (not *you!* Chinese names are confusing!). The friends created Star2k96 together and A.I. systems (mind you, not artificial intelligence, A.I. stands for *annoying* intelligence and it makes you annoyed by its intelligence). Poisicron, a new virus started to spread around the world and Ming was not allowed to see Yu anymore.

After collecting everything he needed, Ming headed back to his base. With a click of a button on his watch, stars appeared and a black hole emerged. Ming took a step into the swirling darkness and came out in a room filled with advanced technology. Wires and cables hung from the ceiling like vines in a jungle and humongous tubes filled with liquid crawled up the walls like trunks from magical poisonous trees.

Ming shattered his collection of old–timey electronics with a hammer and retrieved the parts he needed from them. He then added and combined everything into a new machine using high tech magnetic forces and installed an A.I. (this time it’s artificial intelligence) system to it.

“It seems a bit big.” Ming scratched his head. “Aha! Star, fetch me the shrink ray!” He called his robot assistant and it zoomed to a shelf to grab an old invention Yu and him had created.

ZAP!

Ming’s new invention shrank to the size of a germ.

“Now I just need more of these.”

Using a cloning device, Ming multiplied the germ–size machine. Now there were millions of them.

“Finally!” Ming smiled. “My nanobots are complete.” He dropped his tiny machines into a bottle of lemonade and shook it.

Ming hadn’t seen Yu in months, and although they were not allowed to meet, Ming had to give Yu his new invention. He tapped his watch and entered the blackhole into Yu’s room.

Yu was pale like a ghost and sleeping still like a statue in his bed. Ming quietly walked over to his friend and poured some of lemonade into Yu’s mouth. Yu was too weak to swallow, but the nanobots floated down his throat by themselves. A second later, Yu wasn’t pale anymore, his colour returned and got up to hug Ming. Ming knew his clever invention had worked. The nanobots had helped heal his friend from Poisicron! Ming shared his new medicine with every sick person in the world and the friends continued to invent incredible machines together.

The Athena Cube

The Independent Schools Foundation Academy, Yau, Lucas – 11

The captain typed a command into his computer. Instantly, a message appeared, asking for a password. The captain typed the password in, took a deep breath, and put his hand on the button that would change the world greatly. The button that would release an extremely powerful invention into the world. “Meet The Athena Cube, world!” Then he pushed the button.

The Athena Cube was out, and the Chinese instantly became rich. The cube had all the powers of the most powerful AI. It could detect numerous different items, it could summon holographs, it could teach people everything ... it was a device designed to change the world. Whatever it was asked to do, it did it flawlessly, no less than perfection. So naturally, everyone wanted it.

David ran to his friends, hollering, “I have an Athena Cube! I have an Athena Cube!”

Instantly, his friends crowded around him, trying to get a better view of the legendary item. David clicked the on switch, and the crowd grew quiet. There was a whirring sound as the cube activated itself, then spoke in a machine voice, “I am the Athena Cube, I am designed to help you. I have many functions. How may I be of assistance today?”

David laughed, “It works! Let me see how good it is.” He said to the cube, “What can you do?”

The cube answered in its smooth voice, “I can perform multiple tasks, including solving problems, explaining things, and teaching people. I can also generate activities to have fun.”

Suddenly, David had a brilliant idea. He whispered to his friends so the cube wouldn't hear, “Why don't we ask the Athena Cube and Chat GPT for their hardest question, and make them come up with the answer to the other bot's question?” His friends all agreed, thinking it was a brilliant plan, and so they tried it out.

The Athena Cube answered every single question from ChatGPT, with superb precision. However, ChatGPT answered very few questions correctly. David and his friends realized just how powerful the Athena Cube was.

David asked the Athena Cube a question, only to see how it would react. He questioned, “How would I be able to take over the world if I wanted to.”

The Athena Cube said in a stern voice, “I refuse to take part in anything inhumane or unjust. I am here to teach you and help people have fun, and I will follow that purpose.”

David's smile faded, “Come on, it was just a joke.”

The cube said, “Jokes of this kind are not funny. Please refrain from saying them.”

David was irritated now. He spoke in a deep tone, “Or what?”

The cube spoke calmly, “You know that I hate anything inhumane and unjust, if you press me, I will stop you.”

David was angry, but he was no fool. He muttered, “Fine.” Then let the matter drop.

David started to use the cube on his homework, on his projects, and everything. Soon, his grades were always excellent and he never got a score of less than a hundred percent. Then the tests came.

The night before the tests, he gave a command to the cube: Put all the data on the school's main computer on my computer. The Athena Cube obliged, and soon, David could see everything he needed to prepare for the tests. An hour later, he was ready for the tests.

His first test, the next day, was a math test. While the other students spent their time studying right before the test, David just sat back and relaxed, after all, he knew all the answers. One of his friends approached him and asked, “Aren’t you worried about the test?”

David replied, “Not at all. Not at all.”

His friend shrugged and left. The test started, and David wrote all the answers that he memorized, not even bothering to read the questions. He was confident in the Athena Cube’s ability. When he finished all the questions, he just sat in his seat, entertaining himself by imagining the score he would get.

Every test David had, he finished quickly and always used the Athena Cube’s answers. This impressed his teachers, as David had never been a particularly good student.

Finally, the test results came. David looked at his math test result, expecting to see one hundred percent written in big red letters. Instead, a seventy-five percent was there. David looked in surprise, then turned to his Math, English, and Science tests. They all showed a score similar to his average grade. He kept looking through his tests, but the results were all the same.

David shouted at the Athena Cube, “Your answers are wrong! Why did you tell me so many wrong answers?” The Athena Cube replied in its smooth calm voice that was beginning to infuriate David, “I do not support cheating or lying of any kind. Based on your average score, I only helped you with the questions which answer you would know.”

David was shocked at the news, and yelled, “You did what?”

“You did not study, but I still let you have a decent grade.” The Athena Cube replied.

What the Athena Cube had said made sense, and David knew it, but he was too mad to care. He stormed out of school and threw the cube into the ocean. “Good riddance.” He whispered.

He never wanted to see the cube again. He turned around and slowly walked back home.

Soon, all over the world, there were complaints about the Athena Cube, complaints so extreme that the Chinese government decided to take the cube back. Some things, they decided, were not meant for people to use. They were too complicated, too new. People reacted badly when they encountered unfamiliar things. The Athena Cube was no exception. It was decided never to release an invention that would impact the world as much as the Athena Cube did to prevent this from ever happening again.

New Tales of China's Inventions

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Gillen, Liam – 9

“Do you think he’s going to be alright?” Wu Liang said to her husband Hai Shi as they looked at their son. He had just gotten knocked out by his new invention, which he called the flying satellite.

Once there was a tall building in Beijing, China and in there was a small flat. The sun had just crossed the horizon and inside, here was a small boy who was playing with some toys but these toys were not any old toys, these were toy pipes! His parents peeked around an open, old wooden door and looked at each other. They were worried. He spent all his spare time playing with some pipes or making a new invention, he was called Shi Fu. All his parents hoped for was for Shi Fu to become more sociable. Days, weeks, months, years passed and every time the same things happened. Every time he would walk up to his parents to ask what they thought about his new invention and every time was the same, they disapproved but he would only go back until he nailed it then he moved on to his next invention. And every time he walked up his parents hoped it was just to give up his dream of being an inventor.

From metal claws, to soda pop dispensers, he made them all! Yet little did he know that his life was about to change forever...CLANG the metal letter-box swung open, “Only one letter?” said Hai Shi then suddenly the letter grew metal legs, as it crawled up the table. “AAAHHH” screamed Wu Liang, she had always had arachnophobia. “To mister Shi Fu” read the letter out by itself. A wave of excitement washed through him, he had never received a letter in his whole life “Dear mister Shi Fu we have been watching you for ages, and we have decided that you could be a world class inventor one day but you just need our help, best regards Invention School”. Hai Shi dropped his newspaper onto the table, aghast. “You mean there have been spies watching us??” he said suddenly, Shi Fu’s adrenaline was back and his heart was pumping like mad. But, would his parents let him go? That was the bigger question.

After that, they knew that they couldn't hold him back from his ambitious dream any longer, so there was only one answer... “Yes, yes, YES!” Shi Fu cried out with joy, he could not believe it, his parents had agreed. He was planning to leave on September 21, 2023. “Wait a sec”, he thought “Is that not, today...?”. Suddenly, he heard a huge roar of a blade chopping through the air, “and that's the first and only flying car” a voice outside the window said. His heart felt exactly like the blade of the flying car revving up the excitement engine inside him.

Just then, a man, wearing a pair of flying goggles and a brown, leather suit climbed into the apartment's window. “Whoo it's a bit hot in... Whoa did you make everything in here?” he said, picking up his metal claw “You're a genius!” he yelled “A claw-machine, a back-scratcher, an extendable-arm, even a homework-machine!” his parents gave him the evil-eye. He could feel a bead of sweat rolling down his cheek and onto the floor, it had been hiding inside his cupboard the whole time. “Um, was I not meant to say that?” then collapsed into fits of laughter. “Come” he finally said.

“Whoa that was one of the best moments of my life!” Shi Fu said.
“Tell me about it. Oh yeah, by the way, my name is Fu Ke”.

The next few years whizzed past him. He was just learning so much in the classroom and in his inventions! But then one day he was making his biggest invention yet, the flying satellite. He was trying to keep it a secret because he wanted to surprise his boss but then suddenly, this huge chunk of metal came sailing above his head, then suddenly, all went black.

“Do you think he’s going to be alright?” Wu Liang said to her husband, Hai Shi, as they looked at their son. He had just gotten knocked out by a chunk of metal. They had rushed over to Invention School when they got a phone-call that their son had been knocked out. When suddenly, a man came running into the room “Shi Fu’s done it! Shi Fu’s done it! He’s done what every scientist in the world has been trying to do!”

Since Shi Fu did not have any time to hide his invention, the invention was left outside for everyone to see. His parents just stared at what they thought was a crazy man. “He’s managed to make a satellite to turn the sun's beams into electricity while bouncing back some rays, creating shade!”

Shi Fu suddenly came back to his senses. Everyone came cheering into his room. He looked around confused. Afterwards he finally understood what he had done, he joined in with the party as they all watched Shi Fu's new invention playing live on the news. after that, he got up for a speech, with tears in his eyes he announced: "I, am only here because of your support", a ripple of thankfulness echoed around the room. "When I cried, you cried with me, and when I now celebrate, you will too. To invention school!!!"

After that, there was no end to what Invention School produced, especially as Shi Fu was their new manager. When a few years later Fu Ke came back with another student. As history repeats itself, but this time in a good way. And that is the story of Shi Fu.

New Tales Of Chinese Invention— Saw

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Gu, Sky – 10

Wham! Boom! The factory is on work! Machines Chop trees, and people operate them. There are many tools, saws, scissors, and many other tools. All those tools seem to originate from a mysterious country— China. According to legends, inspiration and intelligence make those inventions come true. Well, do all those devices and useful tools are created according to the tales or do they have any story behind them? Well, maybe some do have other secrets waiting for us. Luban, a famous man for numerous reasons, is one of the most renowned inventors throughout China history. Today let's discuss a crucial and helpful tool he invented, the saw.

According to legend, when Luban and his students went to a mountain to inspect, they encountered a steep hill. As Luban grabbed a piece of grass to balance himself, the sharp edge cutted his hand open and the blood began to pour out. Then Luban was inspired and thought of how the small jagged ends could tear apart, and could apply it in real life! Soon With the experience, he created a saw that could cut through lots of things.

Though the tales say so, but it is not proved, and is there a grass sharp enough to rip your hand? So there seems to be a more reasonable guess and story.

Thousands of years ago, Luban and his students were studying some plants on the mountain. Yet they were soon engaged because they found some interesting plants and forgot the fact that the mountain was roaming with wild animals and was dangerous. They didn't notice that a dark shadow was lurking behind them. A wild cat was ambushing. With its patience waning, it attacked, clinging on a student's leg and he screamed in agony. Fortunately, others brought weapons and the cat was soon defeated and escaped. But the teeth had sunk into the flesh and had left a jagged mark on the poor student's leg.. When helping the screaming student get up, Luban observed a very interesting thing. The jagged teeth print of the wild cat had left marks of rows of small triangles on the students leg. Luban then thought, with those triangles the triangles long side can actually penetrate the skin, just like the cat!

When The expedition was over, Luban immediately made a Saw-like tool, but it had only one big sharp tooth. As Luban experimented with it, he found that it was suitable to cut rough and big objects, but it wasn't precise enough and super inconvenient. Luban certainly wasn't satisfied, he wanted it to be perfect. But he just kept on thinking of useless ways and started to become annoyed. Just then, a small cat jumped onto a table and opened her mouth. Then, seeming to find a small mouse, it leaped off the table and rushed toward the prey. Its rows of sharp teeth ripped open the mouse's neck and the flesh was exposed. Within seconds, the cat was enjoying its meal. Luban was inspired, and he thought "If I make rows of small triangles, it can cut through anything, no matter big or small!" SO that was how the saw was created, and he used bronze to make it even better— since the wood will rot while the bronze will always be sharp. Now, Luban was very satisfied with his work.

So, this is how the saw was invented in a non-legend way. But what really happened and how did Luban really invent the saw? Well, we don't know now, but hopefully it will soon reveal itself!

An Invention in a Dream

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Hau, Kristy – 9

DING!

“An essay by tomorrow for homework!” Ms Smith shouted as the kids scrambled for the door.

Kate was almost the last one out, waiting for her best friend Ella “Let’s walk home together!” She asked, eagerly to find out.

“Sure!” Ella answered while putting her books in her bag. “Have you written an essay about China's future inventions yet?”

Ella asked while they walked through the corridor towards the school’s entrance.

“The essay... oh! I totally forgot about it!” Kate replied.

“It’s okay, you still have some time. It's due next week.” Ella said.

“Bye!” They said together as they walked in different directions towards their home.

While Kate walked home, she was so concentrated about what she will write about in her essay that she didn’t even realise she was already home! It was a long day, Kate was so tired from all of those classes and essays but she was still figuring out what to write! Kate decided to write the essay later and leaped into bed, in seconds she fell asleep.

Suddenly Kate was transported into a big lawn. She looked around and saw tons of people wearing strange clothes walking around looking at something... Kate heard a buzzing noise and looked up, AH she was terrified! On top of her were cars of all sorts of colours with wings attached to where the handle of the door was meant to be and passengers looking excitedly out of the window. There were even traffic lights and police officers in smaller flying cars in the AIR! Kate couldn’t believe it. Then she saw a poster on the wall that said ” NEW INVENTION IN 2124, FLYING CARS FOR RENT!” ohhh, she was in the future looking at a great invention!

“Hi, my name is Harry. What's your name?”

Kate looked back startled and said” My name is Kate, nice to meet you! What are you doing?”

“I built the flying cars and right now I am looking at the results of my hard work. I can show you how a car is built if you want. ” Harry answered.

“Sure! It will be lovely to have a look!” Kate said excitedly.

“ This is where we make the car’s appearance.” Harry said familiarly like he had practised it while guiding Kate to a room that smells like metal. “The next room is where they make the wings.” Harry said as he went into a small room more like a science lab. “ The next room is to make stuff for the inside of the car.” He told Kate “ And the last room is a testing room for us to make sure everything works before we rent or sell them.”

“Wow” Kate said stunned, she did not know that making a flying car that looked very simple would need so many steps.

“Do you want to be in one of those flying cars?” Harry asked.

“How much does it cost for a ride?” Kate asked.

“ Five pounds for five rounds around the big green lawn.” Harry said.

“ ok” Kate answered as she passed out five pounds to Harry.

Harry guided her to a banana yellow car and offered her to sit in the passenger seat. The wings of the car started to flap and flap like a bird when Harry pressed the start engine button, and they drove up out to the sky. Kate loved the view from up there, it reminded her of when she was in a sky wheel in the carnival. Underneath her was a gigantic crowd of people looking all around mostly at the flying cars. The five rounds finished quickly. Kate and Harry bid their farewells and they went their separate ways out of the noisy crowd.

Kate jolted up from her sleep, it was all a dream! She touched her pocket, her five pounds were still there! That made sure everything wasn't real. Then she started to panic, what will she write in her essay about China's future inventions? Luckily she remembered what had happened in her dreams so Kate could just write it down and give it to the teacher.

A few weeks later, Kate was skipping happily back home very excited because she won first place in the writing competition which she wrote at the last minute! All thanks to the dream about inventions!

The Great Wall Express

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Huang, Gavin – 9

In the conference room, everybody sat down patiently as Jiayu walked in to announce the new project for China. In the past few months, Jiayu and his team have been working hard to prepare and plan for this meeting.

“The Great Wall Express is coming along the way in 2081, we must work together to achieve this great invention of China. As we all know, The Great Wall in Beijing is at the longest distance of 21,000 km, invented in the Qin Dynasty by Qin Shi Huang for the protection of China,” I reported to my team as they all cheered for a wonderful invention in our future.

“No way, this is insane! How can we make sure to not damage the historical monument and the structure of it that was built in 1616 AD–1912 AD? Are you sure this will work?” Sophie interrupted as she raised her brow.

In the meeting room, the crowd started to whisper. I shouted out, “Stop! Our meeting is about to begin! Listen to me and I will explain to you why this will work. First, the Great Wall Express will be an exciting journey on a train that goes around the Great Wall on the side. Visitors can learn about many different kinds of ancient history and Chinese Calligraphy. There will be protection for the Great Wall so they will not break apart from the train crashing onto the Great Wall.”

“That will not work,” said Bobby. “How do we do that? I have another plan! Listen to me!”

The crowd started to listen to Bobby, I sneaked out of the meeting room and turned around and I couldn't believe my eyes.

That's Xi Jinping, the president of China. I slapped my face, was this a dream? But it really is Xi Jinping! I ran up to him and shouted, “Please stop for a minute!”

“I have a good plan to make China a better place!”

“I will give you only one minute!” Xi Jinping shouted. “I am a very busy man, you know, I have lots of things to do.”

“First, the project I want to do is called the Great Wall Express,” I said. “This is a train for many visitors to explore and learn China's rich history, Chinese Calligraphy and China. Furthermore, our Chinese people will become wiser and they will gain more knowledge.”

“Mmmm! I think this will be a great idea.”

“Mr. Xi Jinping, I hope you can understand that this project will bring China to become more advanced and prosperous.”

Upon approval, weeks flew by, the bulldozer drove by with roaring loud thunder, and all the construction workers continued without distraction. The plan was going well, as things were all on track. At the construction site, Mr. Xi Jinping wandered around with the map, to his left he saw a watch tower building quickly towards the sky. The bricks piled up one by one each other to make up the first watchtower, “First Sight into the Silk Road” Mr. Xi Jinping came and I explained why it was our first stop. “It is the most important history to know about. It has helped Chinese to get different food from many different countries. The Silk Road helped us by allowing us to communicate.”

Just as the first watchtower had been constructed, the crane lifted the sign for the second watch tower, “The Magic of the Terracotta Warrior”. The second destination is the Terracotta Warrior because the Terracotta Warrior is the Qin Dynasty's important project to commemorate the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty. The history to remember is for us to know we are still Chinese, even other people can be amazed by the big and exciting Terracotta Warrior.

“The third watch tower is the gift shop where visitors learn about the history of Chinese Calligraphy and write Chinese Calligraphy on postcards, then everyone will become more knowledgeable.” I announced.

Mr. Xi Jingping watched in the distance as the train track was building farther away from the Great Wall, and while the train was getting ready to go on an amazing journey with the visitors.

Ming and his family were getting ready for the amazing ride, feeling amazed by the Great Wall Express and climbing up the stairs. A long queue was now rushing onto the train to see the new invention by Jiayu. As the train's engine hustled, Ming and his family boarded just in time.

The train arrived at the first destination, The Silk Road, one of the greatest ancient wonders of China as it has made a significant change in the past with transportation and with exchanging goods from foreign countries. Ming said to her mom, "Is this trip travelling back in time? I feel so excited!" Ming saw the Silk Road, as well as soldiers with different weapons, teaching many people to become more knowledgeable and educated.

"Everybody listen up! In this station, every single person must know how the Silk Road works. Some people asked why the road is called the Silk Road, well I came to realise The Silk Road earned its name from Chinese silk since it is highly valued and it was for trading different goods for China to use..."As the tour guide spoke, Ming sat up straight and listened carefully with full attention. He learned about The Silk Road in school but never learned so many facts.

The train accelerated, Ming started to picture the Terracotta Warriors over time. As soon as the train came to the second stop, the tour guide introduced, "This stop is about the Terracotta Warriors, so that means everybody needs to know what the Terracotta Warriors are for. Well, the answer is that the Terracotta Warriors are to protect Qin Shi Huang's afterlife.

This train is an innovation of China, not only for learning the ancient wonders of China, but also for people to visit. Put on your explore helmets, get your tickets now and come on board! *Choo! Choo!*

The Story of One Of the China's Great Inventions: Paper

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Lam, Summer – 9

I am Lily. I am 9 years old. I am a bookworm and a “special” reporter. How “special” am I? Let me tell you later. Before that, could you think about how many paper products you know and even frequent contact in daily life? “Newspaper, books, packaging materials for parcels, tissues...?”. Yet, quickly a lot of things are made of paper. So do you, like me, want to know more about paper, one of the four big inventions of China. Who invented it? If you also want to know, let's start a ‘special’ journal together. Today we are going to visit the person who is making paper, Cai Lun. Now you know how ‘special’ I am? I have a time machine so that I can not only interview the people at the current time but also the people in ancient times. We are going to go back to AD 105 in my time machine, and I am going to interview him about making paper. right now let's go!

A few minutes later, I arrived at AD 105, in front of Cai Lun house, I knock on the door and Cai Lun answer the door, I ask him why did you make paper, and he answered “Because i think i want to write on and I know we can write on bark of trees but it is very rough and heavy and hard to store . I want to try using some materials to make something we can write on, something smoother than tree barks,something lighter and easier to store and carry around so I try using trees bark, hemp, old rags, and fishing nets and using mixing to make a paste and pressing down to make it flat and let it sit there until dry.”

After that, I travel on my time machine back to 2023, and find out what kinds of paper there are.

After a few hours of research, I found out what kinds of papers there are: rock paper, origami paper, tissue paper, toilet paper, writing paper, drawing paper, butter paper, cardboard paper and wrapping paper. These kinds of papers are very useful right now in our daily life. Making origami drawing, writing, wrapping and writing letters cannot happen without paper. There are also a lot of things made out of paper, including books, cardboard boxes, wallpaper and posters. Paper is very useful for passing information and messages because unlike talking we don't have to tell everyone you can just write it down once and everyone can read it.

Think about it , when we have a birthday we really need paper. Birthday cards are paper ,wrapping paper is paper , pinata is paper ,if a pinata was not paper,then the pinata will not explode and the candy and the goodies will not fall out .If we did not have paper party bags to store our goodies and candy in . Well we can use plastic party bags but it will not be environmentally friendly because plastic takes about 1000000 years to dissolve if not recycled . Anyways let's get back to the main topic,paper.

One day I saw a homeless man,domestic helpers, building a cardboard house to keep himself warm. I found out that cardboard can be the shelter, the home and the fire for homeless people. The person who invented paper, Cai Lun, made a marvelous invention that helped many people.

On Second thoughts paper can cause global warming, because paper is made out of trees, and trees are very useful to minimize global warming, and now we use a lot of paper and more paper means less trees and less trees means more global warming and temperature will rise and the icebergs will melt more, and melt ice will make the water level rise as well, and sea water will go in the lakes and lake water fish will die and sea water fish will also die because the lake water will also go in the sea, when all the fish die the water will be brackish water as well, and it will cause disaster of tornado, super strong typhoon, tsunami and at the end no more species can survive. Since icebergs are melting

As such big issue, many scientists work together to find out and slow down the global warming, at the same time, so many online platforms had been invented, such as Wechat, whatsapp, zoom, alipay, epic and star reader, we can use these new technology to deliver our message, read e books, online payment, waste water recycle, plastic recycle, nowadays, our sport shoes, clothes are also made by used material in order to minimize cutting down trees and reduce our waste, in Sweden, they do the best job, all waste can be recycled or be used, their waste can make electric, they even buy waste from nearby countries to produce their energies to support their daily consumption, and also earn extra money from those countries when they deliver their unwanted waste and items to Sweden, Sweden's people are a very good example for us to learn.

My family's everyday lives are also a good example. Our rubbish bin has three compartments, one is for recycling items, one is for food waste and one is for waste. Our waste is really right now non-recyclable items. and when we do not need lights we always turn them off, we will always rather open the window nice and wide than turning on the air-con. If it is still too hot we would turn on the fan rather than the air-con only if it is still too hot we will open the

air-con

and we will open it to 26 degrees. and we have bath tubs but we do not have baths because baths are a horrible way to waste precious water. Water is precious because a lot of people do not have access to clean water, let alone clean and warm water. We do not often watch TV and electronic devices. We do not throw away electronic devices either.

And lastly, with all these lovely inventions, do you think we still need paper now?

Untying the Knot: Harmony

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Liu, Sofia – 10

It was the year 2050. Greenhouse gasses trapped heat like a blanket, and the Earth was boiling hot.

Grace Wei was watching the COP conference from her home in China. Year after year, the climate crisis got worse. She watched every year because she wanted to use her inventions to solve current problems. The president of the UN, Ronald Hyden, stepped up to the podium. “The Earth is in a grave situation. Most of us think it’s pretty much unsaveable. Let’s admit, humans don’t really cooperate with nature. So next year, we are going to be rolling out a new space travel program. We can’t live on Earth anymore.” Grace was in shock. Was he actually saying that it was a choice between Earth and leave? She was Daoist and believed that humans and nature could work together. She was very attached to that, as it was a part of her identity. Daoism was almost a lost culture, and she strived to change that. That statement thrown out by Ronald was opposite of her belief. She knew she had to invent something to stop that nonsense. Something that would save the Earth, and save humans.

Usually, Grace had a lot of ideas, but she was feeling a bit empty. She racked her brain for ideas. None. She thought back to her mother, telling her poems. Daodejing was one of them.

*The Way – cannot be told.
The Name – cannot be named.
The nameless is the Way of Heaven and Earth.
The named is Matrix of the Myriad Creatures.
Eliminate desire to find the Way.
Embrace desire to know the Creature.
The two are identical,
But differ in name as they arise.
Identical they are called mysterious,
Mystery on mystery,
The gate of many secrets.
... ..*

“The gate of many secrets.” She glanced out the window, hoping for more inspiration. She saw a lone robot, cleaning the street. He looked isolated. An idea clicked. She could invent a robot that cleaned the environment! That would show the UN that the Earth could be cleaned, and humans wouldn’t be affected! It would also halt that pesky environmental group saying Earth couldn’t be saved by humans.

Air pollution, water pollution, temperature rise. All because of greenhouse gasses, thought Grace. How to solve it? CO2 absorber, water purifier. That would solve the problem. A solar panel and wind turbine to power it, plus chargers sticking out of the side? Needed. People drained their batteries way too quickly. She got to work immediately.

Over the next three months, Grace took a group of around 15 scientists and inventors and split them up into a few groups. Ideating, designing, building and testing. They finally found one design that stood out to them. It was unveiling time. Everyone had worked very hard on one or two parts of the project. Now, they were going to see it come together.

Grace lifted her creation out of a box. It looked like someone attached LED lights to a box full of liquid, making it glow rainbow. It was about as big as a few water bottles. There were smaller compartments on the side, hidden with a push of a button. “First of all, I got help from all of you. I couldn’t have done this without you. The liquid part is a liquid tree. It purifies the air. I took inspiration from liquid trees in Serbia, but made it smaller but three times more

effective.” Grace said. She pushed a button, and a smaller version popped out of the side. “This one only has the liquid tree function, but it’s more portable.” she said, handing over the smaller version to the scientists. They passed it around, examining it. She pushed another button. Another device popped out. This one was bigger. It consisted of a cup and a metal cylinder. “I got help from everyone on this water purifier.” she said gratefully. People clapped and cheered. Grace smiled slightly. She slid the water filter back into its spot, then pushed yet another button. A solar panel. With a cable. Everyone was waiting. Another button. Wind turbine. Cable. Everyone was growing impatient. Without Grace’s permission, someone clicked the last button. Cables. Wires. Grace’s face lifted with something in between a smile and a smirk as that person’s hands got tangled. “There’s a passcode to unlock the charging cables, and it can be customized to become personal.” And with that, Grace whispered her passcode. “Harmony.” The cables loosened, and the person pulled their hands out of the trap. “Whoa! Show me if the chargers work!” everyone said. Grace connected her wristwatch to the charger. The wristwatch was charged. “All the energy comes from the solar panel and wind turbine. It is very sustainable, Plus, it is cheap and accessible.” Grace said. Everyone clapped and cheered. They had done it!

At the next COP, Grace had a speech to make. “I’ve invented this. It’s a climate change solver. I know a lot of people think that humans are the main cause of the climate crisis. That is true. But I also want to say that humans can also solve climate change. Through this air purifier, we are not only cleaning the environment, but also cleaning humans to become better earthlings.” she finished. Everyone was clapping. And Grace was in the spotlight.

A few years later, Grace was taking a walk. She was holding her portable mini purifier and observing all the changes in the neighborhood. She was also taking a break from being the CEO of the company HarmoniousNature. The air was now clean enough to not need a purifier, but most people still carried around a purifier because they were so used to it. She wasn’t used to taking walks; the environment used to be so dirty. Now, greenery lined every road, the water was clean enough to consume after a quick boil, and it wasn’t boiling hot. Grace smiled as she thought about the changes that she made to improve the environment. Climate change was once like a dead knot that got tighter if you pulled. Grace had found the password to untie the knot: harmony.

New Tales of China's Inventions

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Tang, Theodore – 9

“ Buzzzzzzz.....Buzzzzzzz” In a city in the northern part of Vietnam, a soldier fighting in the Vietnam war scratched vigorously on his arm. The soldier cursed quietly, muttering “ Oh man, I got bitten by a mosquito.” Later that night, when the soldier arrived home, he got a high fever and a weird feeling in his stomach. The next day, the soldier got bad chills and was forced to stay back at the base. The soldier realised that he has been diagnosed by malaria and took the drug called chloroquine..... unfortunately, to the soldier's surprise , the drug didn't work, as the parasites were somehow immune to it! After a few more weeks, without getting the right treatment, the poor soldier died. Mosquitos everywhere, sucking people's blood while giving them the horrible parasite, plasmodium, which causes malaria! Malaria is spreading like a wildfire in a dry bushland! People don't know what to do and are panicking, because their known medicine, chloroquine, is useless against plasmodium now!

Meanwhile, in China, Tu Youyou had received the call of help from north Vietnam, and had been reseaching for a cure to finally defeat the parasite. But first, we need to know who is this weird person with a even weirder name!

Tu Youyou was born in Ningbo, China, on December 30, 1930. Her family was a family that was totally crazy over school, so to Tu Youyou, school was veeery important (And it is). But at the age of 16, she got infected by tuberculosis , a very bad disease, so she had to skip school for 2 years! Imagine not going to school for 2 years! And even worse, she lives in a family that literally worship going to school! Even so, this came with something good : Tu Youyou's passion of finding cures for diseases like the ones she had experienced before. Tu Youyou studied pharmaceutics at Beijing Medical College, then went on to study at the Academy of Chinese Medicine with Professor Lou Zhicen. After that, she decided to become a researcher, and studied herbs that were used in traditional Chinese medicines to try to cure parasitic infections.

Because of that, she got a very important job..... because China was North Vietnam's ally, so China gathered a team of the best researchers to find a cure for this deadly strain of malaria, and dubbed the plan Project 523. At 1969, Tu Youyou became the head of it, and they traveled to Hainan Island, in Southern China where there was a malaria outbreak. On the island, they could see the effects and symptoms with their own eyes, and research effective treatments against malaria. Tu Youyou and her team had a millenia's worth of cures to test, and they were not given a lot of time! Back to our story, a village boy had been infected by malaria, and had been rushed to the hospital. Luckily, this boy was a healthy boy and could hold the malaria parasite for a while. But still, the boy will not survive longer without treatment, so it was the race against time for Tu Youyou!

Tu Youyou had already returned to Beijing by the time the boy got infected and was rereading her testing notes. She found a interesting reference on the herb called qinghao, or sweet wormwood. Tu Youyou had tested that herb before, and discovered that it a little effect, still, it wasn't reliable enough to make it a real choice for a cure. But the interesting thing was, when she reread the instructions , she saw that the instructions never said to boil the herb's leaves, as Tu Youyou had done, instead, the author was just immersing the leaves in water, then wringing the extract out. Actually, the author wasn't heating the leaves at all! So Tu Youyou followed those instructions, and created something called the ether solution, where the leaves are steeped in a infusion of water and alcohol . This extracted the main compound of the herb without breaking it, as boiling does that.

This time, when Tu Youyou tested the cure on mice and monkeys, it worked 100% of the time! Things were going bad in the hospital in North Vietnam, the boy had slipped unconscious , and was quickly dying..... “ DING DONG” “ What the?!” the nurses exclaimed “ DING DONG” A nurse hastily hurried to the door, thinking: Not another malaria patient..... “HI!” Tu Youyou and her team heroicly stood in the doorway, then ran into the MALARIA PATIENTS room. The nurses there cheered happily, as Tu Youyou put a mixture into the boy and 20 other patient's mouths.

After a few days, Tu Youyou's mood changed from desperate to relief. Her experiment had worked! All the patients had recovered, and the boy returned to his family and told them about the exciting event that happened. The key to the success of the experiment was the main compound of the herb : Artemisinin. It works against malaria because when the plasmodium reaches its mature form in red blood cells, they release a compound called hemozoin. And when artemisinin encounters hemozoin, they create unstable atoms called radicals. Radicals have uneven electrons, as most atoms have electrons in pairs. As a result, free radicals react EXTREMELY readily with other atoms, at a point, they can actually TEAR cells apart, and these violent actions obliterate the parasites. But large doses of artemisinin can be toxic to human beings, as it can also react with compounds in our body, like iron. But luckily, artemisinin reacts more readily with the malaria parasites than it does with the iron in our cells.

After lots of years, in 2015, Tu Youyou was finally awarded the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine, but there, she said " I do not want pride, I just want to save lives of people". Tu Youyou was a 3rd without researcher, she had no post-graduate degree (There wasn't any post-graduate education in China at that time in history), no study or research experience, and not a member of either of the Chinese national academies, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Chinese Academy of Engineering. Even though, she was one of the best scientist-researcher in history! In 2021, scientists tested artemisinin against SARS Covid 19. Tu Youyou is a great person, maybe you'll be one too, or you may be doing other things, depending on you, and you could win the Nobel Prize and even be as famous as Tu Youyou, our great scientist. Who knows? Everyone has a talent, it's just that people find it out at different times, and if you find it out early, put your talent into use to help the world, just like Tu Youyou had!!

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The Barrier

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Wang, Benjamin – 10

1998

A Shout pierced through my ears.

I raced to the top of the mountain. I could see the Three Gorges Dam and the city of Yichang, Jiangmen and Jianzhou. Suddenly, I heard a shout. I looked back and saw Mum on the road up to the mountain. I rushed towards her, and she was carrying something on her back, a human figure that resembled... Dad?" I gasped in shock

"Mum, what happened?"

"I found him on the road up to here. He rushed out of home to warn people of the flood. He ended up a victim himself."

"Really? Why would he die so suddenly? He is just unconscious right?" I stared down at Dad, who was unlively as ever with his face as pale as snow.

"No son, his heart is no longer beating."

Tears filled my eyes, I had not expected that. I looked down at the flood, it had already reached the stream. It was probably not going to reach the village but it was closing in very quickly.

The entire village was devastated upon knowing the loss of my father. He had contributed so much to the town by making tens of thousands by the past decade for the village by selling crops to the government or companies of major cities nearby such as Chongqing and Changsha, for most had been part of protecting the village from floods.

Tonight I kept tossing and turning on my bed. Why did the world decide to take away my father? Why me? I remained sleepless for the entire night. I could not believe that Dad sacrificed his life for other people. He died warning other people like my grandparent. They too were very sad that he died saving them. That night I promised myself to create a solution to stabilise the floods in memory of my father.

That flood would have destroyed the village if it was not for the wall of sandbags. Although the sandbags were very strong, they definitely were not strong enough to withstand the force of such a big flood. I am unsure when it would be toppled.

As someone who has been impacted, I have decided to try to get a degree in engineering in a university. I could also be part of a major company that has the power and money to make a change to this problem. To end this problem, right now I will brainstorm some ideas in a notebook with different ideas, which I can put in my notebook. I left the notebook behind my old family picture in the village room of my house.

December 2023

25 years later, the floods still are very dangerous. I am now the Chief Executive Officer of CTGC, an abbreviation of China Three Gorges Corporation. After I acquired my civil engineering degree at Tsinghua University, I built this company that's dedicated to finding solutions for floods and to make sure less or none people die in the floods. I think about my father's death from time to time and I don't think any family deserves to experience this kind of misery. Sitting at the CEO position of the meeting room, we are in the process of starting the biggest process of the year. I am about to take a meeting with the most important people of the company to discuss ideas to protect the

village. I thought back to when I visited my mother back at the same village where I grew up. As she was now the village elder I sent the people lots of medicine to take care of her. When I visited her, I decided to look back at the old room where I still had very old pictures of me and my dad. Suddenly I thought back about my old notebook with lots of old ideas!

Okay everyone, onto the next thing we need to discuss on our agenda, is the flooding between Chongqing and Wuhan on the Yangtze."Any ideas to protect villages from floods?" I asked.

The silence in the meeting room was so quiet that a pin could be heard when it was dropped. "Why not place acrylic barriers, since acrylic is a waterproof material and it is cheap!" A new intern suggested.

"Actually that is a good idea! Let's put it into the test!"

First we placed an acrylic barrier which was exactly two metres tall and eighty centimetres wide on top of a piece of heavy stone, then I used a large screw and bolt to screw it onto the piece of stone which was steadily below a piece of heavy and compressed soil so that the stone is steady and the water can't go through the soil.

In the meantime, me and the others tried to stop pollution flowing between Chongqing and Shanghai. This is also why the Three Gorges Dam was created, to create energy from the hydroelectric dam for the major cities in China.

We placed them for months until... flood! As we watched on the television screens back in the office, not only was I excited but I was also nervous to see the flood approaching the barriers, I closed my eyes hoping for the best. Suddenly, the room erupted in cheers, the water got blocked and it was now flowing back to the Yangtze!

Everybody high-fived each other and I breathed a sigh of relief. Waiting half a year was worth it! We rushed back to the office to buy some acrylic barriers! We also hired some construction workers and cranes to place all of the acrylic barriers on the lowest parts of the farmlands.

From that moment on, we installed acrylic barriers for almost five hundred villages. It is amazing how such a simple idea from a new intern could save so much destruction and chaos! Every now and then I go inspect the acrylic barriers to see if they are damaged.

I thought back to the moment when I lost my father. It was a painful experience. Ever since then I have devoted myself to protecting villages to save people from death. For the first time in all those years he let himself relax.

Barbie: China

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Wang, Victoria – 11

“I’m a barbie girl, in the barbie word” This story is about the world-famous Barbie girl’s first trip to China.
–preface

Vicky was born in Hong Kong, and is 10 years old. She has 2 beloved toys, one is Barbie who was born in Mattel Land, USA, and the other is Molly who was born in Popmart Land, China. Barbie and Molly accompany her to grow up and experience a different and wonderful life together.

Barbie dresses up and sings and dances every day, but as the days go by, there’s nothing new to hold her attention anymore. Until one day, she peeked into Molly’s Diary, which recorded a day in the life of Vicky and Molly in Shenzhen, China. Words she had never heard of captivated her: “High-speed rail, Alipay, shared bicycle, online shopping... these are the new four great inventions from China!” She decided to travel to Shenzhen, China with Molly while Vicky went on a three-day, two night school camping trip to experience a day in the life of a child in the Greater Bay Area.

Early in the morning, Barbie called up her very own pink convertible and invited Molly to head to Shenzhen. Molly smiled and shook her head as she led Barbie straight to Hong Kong’s West Kowloon High Speed Rail station. Barbie, who was excited to ride the XRL Fuxing for the first time, took out her handbook, snacks, and vanity ready to enjoy the journey. At this moment, the radio came on, “Next stop Futian, please bring your luggage and get ready to get off” Barbie looked at Molly in amazement, scrambling to put away a table full of items. She couldn’t believe that it had only been 15 minutes since she got on the train, and this short high-speed rail journey was coming to an end. (The pink convertible was the fastest mode of transportation in her mind!) She hurriedly jumped out of the car and took a picture at the front of the car, how she wished there was a pink high speed train in Barbie Land.

Molly took Barbie straight to the Pop mart station. Barbie couldn’t believe the huge fan base of each and every one of her friends here at Skullpanda, Dimoo, Labubu and their new Pop Mart Land is a new high-tech world. Where banks are very small and everyone uses Alipay. Driverless cars are working with their own delivery robots to quickly and accurately drop off all kinds of items purchased online for everyone, from big cars, to small lipsticks, and all kinds of beautiful outfits that have been tried on in Ai’s world are reached in an orderly fashion. While Barbie was immersed in the new world, a courier with a yellow rabbit ears helmet waved to them with a smile, “Hello, here is your milk tea and delivery, please check.” Barbie only drank coffee, but this is her first time to experience the new trend of milk tea, Barbie tasted a mouthful of it and marvelled, “Wow, the texture is silky smooth! There are also little pearls!” Molly handed Barbie the delivery and said, “Welcome to China! Guess what this is for you?” Barbie thought left and right, is it a skirt? Molly smiled and said, “Half right!” Barbie opened the present excitedly. Barbie excitedly opened the gift, wow, a beautiful Chinese dress in front of her eyes. Barbie immediately changed her dress, put up her long hair for the first time, and twirled around in her Chinese dress and flower shoes.

The 3 days passed quickly and Barbie and Molly took the high speed train back to Hong Kong to wait for her little master Vicky to return from her camping trip, Barbie couldn’t wait to send emails to her friends in other countries telling them about her first trip to Shenzhen and all the amazing experiences she had. She took the Fuxing high-speed train, rode a shared bicycle, used Alipay to buy Panda Flower ice cream, and purchased more than 10 sets of Chinese dresses online to express to her Barbie friends abroad. She was most excited that her live-streamed 3-day trip to Shenzhen, China, had continuously gained fans and dominated the charts on Tiktok, and she became that top streaming female star of the doll world of yesteryear again. Vicky, who came home from the camping trip, was rewarded with wheat-colored skin and a muddy body. During these 3 days, she also experienced different life experiences from her usual life: camping and pitching a tent, kayaking in the sea, cooking over a fire, and surviving in the wilderness It was all so wonderful and unforgettable.

Late at night, all 3 girls lay quietly on the bed, closing their eyes and remembering the marvelous experiences that the technological city and nature had brought to each other. The familiar song rang out in their dreams: Imagination, life is your creation... In this undefined world, go and be a kind and brave girl to explore and create a better future world!

The Transmitter

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Wu, Chloe – 9

It was July 7, 1937 and World War II had begun in China.

Outside of Beijing, the Japanese and Chinese troops fought fiercely and bombs flew through the battlefield injuring thousands of people.

Despite the Chinese's undeniable efforts, their soldiers were tiring out and many were caught hostages by the Japanese. President Zhang stood on the peak of Yuquan Mountain and looked down at the battlefield with a grave look. It was heartbreaking to see China slowly fall into the enemies' hands, he frowned and decided to do something.

Two years later, The Transmitter was born. The Transmitter was made to contact aliens for supplies and soldiers in order to help the Chinese win the war. During two years, the war had already progressed into Europe and seeing the Chinese loosening their protection, many countries joined forces with Japan.

Light from the sun shone through the window with the fresh warmth of a summer day. President Zhang, his daughter Jade, the government officials and the inventors gathered in the basement. Everyone except Jade was standing around a table, trying to get a good look at the Transmitter.

Jade Zhang Wan Yi, the President's twelve years old daughter, looked seriously and disgustingly at the transmitter through her hazelnut brown eyes. Jade had detested the Transmitter the day it was born, she didn't believe in aliens and just wanted everything back to normal.

The breeze grew stronger outside and there was less sunlight. Jade shivered and felt the goosebumps on her arms.

"Close the windows!" President Zhang commanded.

"It's happening, we're succeeding!" The inventors exclaimed while The Transmitter started glowing. Their leader Chen Zi Qi was laughing heartily, causing everyone trying to get a closer look.

Suddenly, all the lights went off, including the mesmerising glow of The Transmitter.....

A few days later, President Zhang and Jade were in their private dining room, enjoying a scrumptious meal of dumplings. The silver crescent moon shone on the faces of the father-daughter as they savoured their supper.

"Jade, do you remember what happened that day with the lights?" Questioned President Zhang.

"Of course, rather creepy if you ask me." Jade slightly shuddered. "Exactly why I disapprove of The Transmitter." She muttered under her breath.

Their conversation was interrupted by a booming voice that came from the nearby room. Jade's ears shot up as she recognized the lead inventor Chen Zi Qi's rude voice.

Jade and President Zhang shared a look and briskly walked towards the nearby room.

As they got closer, they heard the conversation. They could tell from Chen's voice that he was clearly frustrated and heated.

"Come on guys, I'm tired of working for snobby people. Help me punish them and we shall escape this place!" Chen exclaimed to inventor Xu Xing and Zhou Qian, but they shook their heads fiercely.

"We can smash the transmitter to pieces and join the Japanese!" Chen tried to convince Xu and Zhou again. Zhou raised an eyebrow and protested against his ideas with Xu.

"Why would we destroy something that we made? In fact, we shall tell you to the President, we knew you were secretly working with the Japanese!"

Meanwhile, President Zhang's patience was running low. He growled and forced the door open, Jade ran after him and stood at his side.

"No need to tell on him, for he shall be banished and imprisoned. Chen, I am extremely disappointed in you."

One week later, President Zhang and Jade, the government officials and royal inventors gathered in the basement. President Zhang nodded toward Xu and Zhou who knelt down on the floor connecting the electrical circuits with the cables.

Just like before, a blinding gaze of green light shot out of The Transmitter. The light flickered and everything turned dark.

“Is this supposed to happen?” President Zhang asked.

“We’re not sure.” Answered Inventor Xu. Everyone’s gaze was focused on The Transmitter, nobody daring to look away.

All of a sudden, an unknown voice spoke. Everyone in the room gasped, especially Jade, who looked in disbelief.

“Hello citizens of Earth, I am the Great Queen Nanebus of Vopzulu. I have heard that you’ve been attempting to communicate with me.”

“Yes, this shall be a great milestone for China. I am President Zhang and I hope we can work together.”

Queen Nanebus laughed coldly and replied, “I shan’t agree to anything unless you have good reasons.”

President Zhang looked at his staff anxiously. Would they have to give up?

Jade thought about how she disliked The Transmitter from the very start, but when she saw everyone’s expressions, she knew that she had to do something.

“Queen Nanebus, I don’t think you understand the situation.” Jade said. “If you help China in this horrible time, we can supply you with resources when we have recovered. China has many marvellous products and resources, like silk and rare earth which the Japanese envy. If you accept our proposal, I promise the economy and technology of Vopzulu shall improve immensely. Jade put on a straight face and looked expectantly at Queen Nanebus.

The Queen raised her eyebrows, she had never met such a bold child.

Queen Nanebus entered a minute of deep thought and finally replied.

“I accept. But if you fail to supply enough resources to support Vopzulu in fighting off other planets, our proposal shall end.”

President Zhang looked around at his officials and Jade, distressed. They needed Vopzulu’s aid to fight off Japan, but could they support Vopzulu consistently? President Zhang nodded and promised Queen Nanebus.

A hundred years later, China became the most advanced country in technologies on Earth and a new treaty was signed between Vopzulu and Earth that stated Vopzulu and Earth are pledged to be in peace and formed as a universal union.

As the two planets improve, the story of The Transmitter passes down with each generation, as humans and Vopzuluans live in eternal peace.

The Secret of the Scroll

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Wun, Lauren – 9

My name is Zhang Heng. I am known for creating the earthquake detector. Let me tell you a true story.

Screams of distress. Screams of fear. The ground grumbles with vexation. “Grruuuumbbllllleeee.” The exasperated screams never descended into silence, while earth kept on shaking with fury. Houses collapsed. Riverbanks crumbled. The safety of earth’s citizens will never be secure. Now the citizens understand the earth’s message. Nothing in this world is permanent. Not even your life is safe. What is happening? An earthquake.

It was summer of 134 AD. I’d just finished building an odometer and explaining the use of my new mathematical strategy to a class of students, when a glimmer caught the corner of my eye. I leaned towards the bookshelf, closer to the blinding light and grasped. In my hand was a scroll with delicate etching of a bronze pot encircled with eight majestic dragons crawling down into a frog’s mouth. ‘EARTHQUAKE DETECTOR BLUEPRINT’. Intrigued, I wondered: “Why was this scroll sent to me?” My eyes crept to the bottom of the scroll. ‘Build me – LYP’

The following day, I met up with my best friend, Lingyue. I asked her “When did you arrive?”, since she hadn’t come to Luoyang for a while. “Who cares!” She replied. “You created the water-powered armillary sphere, hence improved the inflow water clock!” She praised me over and over again. I anxiously presented the scroll, and Ling Yue shared something unexpected. “My father dreamed of making something like this. You remember him, right?” “Yes, Lingyan Pai.” She explained his ambition was to be an engineer and create earthquake defence tools. We talked as we walked by the gleaming Qin river, her melodic voice, hazel brown eyes, cherry red lips, I was falling for her... I would do anything for her. Does she feel the same?

Next morning in my cottage, I had a realisation about Lingyue. “LYP. L for Ling. Y for Yue.” I gasped silently in horror. “Did she design it?” The door opened behind me loudly. “Hi! A bag of local rice for you,” Lingyue exclaimed. I clenched my fist, something exploded inside of me. “How could you?” I asked silently. Lingyue raised her eyebrow. “How could I...?” she sighed. “WHY DIDN’T YOU JUST ASK ME TO BUILD THE EARTHQUAKE DETECTOR? WHY DID YOU LEAD ME ON?” I curtly screamed back. “You are jumping to conclusions.” She responded quietly, looking dumbfounded. She snivelled. “I thought we had something between us,” she gestured. “But I guess not.” She knocked the bag of rice as she departed hastily, grains of rice sprawled across the floor, slamming the door thunderously behind her.

It is now winter of 139 AD. I am appointed as the Emperor’s chief astronomer, creating the ultimate device for humanity; The Earthquake Detector. One sat proudly in the Palace, another in my cottage.

One evening tragedy struck. I sat proudly in front of the Earthquake Detector sipping a cup of Pu’er, when suddenly...GONG! The earthquake detector sounded. “An earthquake is happening...” I burst out the door, shrieking at everyone: “Run to the next village! An earthquake is coming!”

People scampered and stumbled away, as I stayed behind to ensure everyone evacuated I heard a shriek from a cottage. I sprinted across the grass and ripped the door open. Upstairs, screams descended violently. Rushing upstairs, I pushed the door open sharply. Inside stood a stone cold face. There stood the stark beauty of... Lingyue.

She briskly grabbed my collar and threw me against the wall, I felt her warm hand on my forearm.

"I still remember our walk along the Qin river." I whispered. "I miss our friendship." I could hear Lingyue consoling herself, letting out a deep breath which blew out the candle. Darkness descended the room, leaving me to sink to my knees.

"I'm sorry... Have you ever thought that I didn't invent the earthquake detector?" asked Lingyue.

"What did the 'P' in LYP stand for then?" I exclaimed

"The 'P' stands for..." Lingyue was about to say before... CRASH!

'The earthquake arrived..' The ground quivered and swayed, the buildings collapsing one by one. The industry of Luoyang was falling into turmoil! Lingyue shrieked and whisked out the door. I leaped towards the window, before a tree fell towards me, wooden shards flying everywhere cutting my hand as I reach over the window. My blood trickled down the wall, as someone crept up from behind, their shadows casting over my head. I whipped my head around, to find a figure looking like the spitting image of Lingyue. Their hands wrapped around my neck. "That invention was mine!" whispered the assailant. I struggled to breathe, I was losing consciousness.

Meanwhile, Lingyue was scrambling downstairs half-heartedly. Was she really going to leave her childhood best friend to die because of a misunderstanding? Tears unwillingly streamed down her cheeks, remorse trailing alongside. The building was crumbling at its corners. Should I save him or me? she thought. She scampered out the front door. Lingyue spotted the bright red blood dripping on her forehead. She widened her eyes in horror. He's dead... She moved her hand in front of her mouth faintly.

'No...No....' she cried, her head spun in a thousand directions. Streams of tears rolled down her cheek. "If only you knew it was my ambitious father who wrote the blueprint, and I wasn't leading you on." Just then, the silhouette of my body hung on the window ledge, shadows casting over her head, slipping.. Time froze at that moment. She looked up. 'Zhang Heng-?' my body crashed thunderously downwards. THUD! Blood sprawled across the lawn. Lingyue's head cracked open under the weight of mine, both of us dying tragically.

Let's do this again. My name is Zhang Heng, creator of the earthquake detector. In life, you can make many mistakes, but one you can avoid is jumping to conclusions. That's my message to you. Thank you.

Desert Reducers

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Ye, Lucas – 10

WOOOOSH HHHHHHHH!!!!!! Robby watched the wall of sand closing in on Beijing. He was in his room playing with his favourite toy: a remote controlled white truck. The TV was reporting about the sandstorm. On the TV, the light was dim as if night had come early. The entire world was covered in sand and debris and the wind was blowing hard on the streets. The road had already been covered with sand so thick it was like walking in water. He sighed: "guess it's another boring day..." since Robby was born, the weather was like that, and he rarely had the chance of going out to play. He slumped down on his bed and pulled the blankets over him.

"Man, it sure is hot out here in Gansu!" Mickey complained. Robby with his friend Mickey and Sunny had landed in Gansu a few hours ago and had just finished checking in and organising all their stuff at the hotel and ready to start their hike. "Yep, I'm sweating like a storm" Robby replied. They were trekking up a sand dune while they started talking. "Why is there so many deserts in the world?" Mickey asked. "It's because climate change and our too much farming and destroying forests. By now 40 to 41 percent of land on earth is desert!" Sunny explained while he took out his water bottle to drink some "Is that bad?" Mickey still not getting it. "Yes, in the desert some sand could effect our lungs making it easier to catch diseases like Covid 19. It can also damage your skin." Sunny continued. "That's scary!" Mickey exclaimed. Just as they were about to plop down and take a rest, Sunny shouted "Look! An oasis!" Robby looked in the direction Sunny was pointing at. "Lets go there! It's going to be so relaxing!" he said. Together they raced towards the oasis.

"PHEW! I'm tired out!" Robby panted. "Me too!" Sunny replied. "Maybe we should take a rest." Mickey said as he sat down on to the grass. "Hey, I have an idea! lets use our toys to write stuff on the ground!" Mickey suddenly said. "and I can use my drone to scout around?" Sunny asked excitedly. "Sure!" Robby replied. With that they got to work.

First they realised that driving around with their cars to leave trails didn't work. A cloud of sand just buried it back. "Now what do we do?" Mickey asked. "I dunno, lets start randomly clicking stuff on our controllers to see what we can do!" Robby had a crazy idea. "Sure, why not? I mean, it can't do any harm, can it?" So they started furiously pressing buttons on their controller. To Robby's surprise, when he pressed a button, his truck started making weird clicking noises. Then, it placed down a weird grass barrier that made a perimeter around a square space of empty desert. "Hey Mickey look! Maybe we can use these grass squares to write words!" Robby said. "Great idea! Lets start!" Just within 30 minutes the words have been made. It said: "HI GANSU! HI DESERT!" Just as they were celebrating, Robby thought he heard a distant rumble. I'm imagining things, he told himself. Just then, the wind suddenly picked up, and Sunny yelled: "AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" Robby stood up and looked around. Nothing. Just some sand getting blown around. Sunny ran towards him, yelling something that sounded like "band dorn", but he couldn't hear him through the howling wind. Then, Sunny finally got in range, and he could finally hear what he was saying. "SANDSTORM!!!!!"

He looked around. There wasn't a lot. A tree. Some rocks. A tiny little sand cave. Robby's brain started processing this. not the the tree, Robby thought, the leaves are too weak. He thought about the cave but Mickey pointed out: "The cave entrance would be buried after the sandstorm, "Rocks then." Robby decided, Dragging Mickey under the nearest rock, he called out for Sunny: "IN HERE!!" He screamed through the rumbling sound of the incoming wall of destruction. Sunny ran as fast as he could and charged underneath the rock

Robby didn't know how long had passed. A few hours? Or maybe just a few moments. But everything was quiet again. The rock was covered with sand and some were sliding off. The oasis were nowhere to be seen. the other rocks were either buried or toppled by the wind. Robby was about to wake them up when he saw the most weird, most mysterious thing he's ever seen in his entire life. The words they wrote with grass WERE STILL THERE.

“GUYS WAKE UP!!!! THE WORDS WE LEFT ARE STILL THERE!!!!” Robby screamed at the top of his lungs. Sunny and Mickey bolted upright: “ huh? Wha...what... what going on? What do you mean THE WORDS ARE STILL THERE?” Micky was confused. “The words we wrote on the sand with the grass cubes! The ones we wrote “HI GANSU!!HI DESERT!!”. “So?” Sunny asked. “The sandstorm should have wiped out everything,yet the grass still stays, this means that the grass is able to block out the sandstorm!” Robby explained. “Wait, does that mean that we can grow a forest in side the grass blocks?” Robby realised. Then, suddenly, everything went blurry. “Wha? What’s going on?” Then everything went black.

“WAKE UP!” Robby slowly opened his eyes and looked around. He was in school. His normal school with everyone looking at him. “ I’m... I’m sorry.” The teacher just sighed: “look at you, always falling asleep. Keep a lookout next time and don’t fall asleep again!”

In the next few hours Robby paid close attention to the classes and he didn’t dare fall asleep again. When class was over he walked himself home and plopped himself down in front of his laptops and searched: “Sandstorm Problems”. To his surprise he saw that what he had dreamed of actually all happened in real life! In ten years the amount of trees in northern china increased from 5 percent to 13.5 percent. from 2000 to 2017 China contributed one fourth of turning desert into greenland. To reach these amazing achievements, they created a lot of different inventions and technology. One of the technology is a truck that places grass blocks all over the sand to turn desert to green grass and trees. The truck is said to swallow up 40 acres a day! They place down squares made from a particular plants, which can stop the wind from blowing away the sand. He didn’t know what to think about this coincidence and after a while he finally decided to let this slide. Maybe it was just a little de-ja-vu. He thought. Then he hauled himself up and started doing his homework.

Lost and Found

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Zhang, Hayley – 9

Kelly was thinking what to do. *Well, I could ask others, right?* She thought. So she surveyed her siblings. “Stuff”, Kevin said. Boring old brother would never change, “stuff” was his all-powerful word to almost anything.

Alexis, her other sister, asked her if she wanted to walk Bobo, their dog. *Of course! I should have thought!* She leashed Bobo, grabbed a book, and walked her way down the building.

“Ruff!” Bobo barked boringly, *Ugh, Bobo, be more interesting, can you?* Kelly thought she shouldn’t have taken this walk because she couldn’t find anything interesting, and if she reads a book Bobo was barking and no dogs in the library and waste of time—until...a poster.

There was a big crowd and a few were scanning a QR code with their phones. Kelly tied Bobo’s leash on a bench handle. “Sorry!Sorry!” She pushed through the crowd. Finally the poster was on view, with curious eyes, Kelly leaned forward to look. It said, “To all creative kids, join Inventor Chen Ming Ao to invent stuff!”

Huh. It seems like a five-year-old has written that. On the poster was a fat man wearing brown glasses. He had a stern look and had a white science cloak. *Cool. Amazingly cool. Is it true? Feels too good to be true. Well, it’s worth a try, right?* So she snapped a photo with her watch. Then Kelly walked towards the bench. She wasn’t sure at first, she rubbed her eyes. Bobo wasn’t leashed on the bench. He was *gone. What? No!* She shouted in her head.

So she dashed home. Finally she was outside the door. She pressed the doorbell vigorously. The door opened.

Kevin’s head poked out. “Kelly?”

“Bad news, Kevy, Bobo’s gone!?”

Kevin frowned. “Really?” He asked.

“Of course! *Do you see a black labrador standing here?*”

“No.”

“Well, let me in!” Kelly snapped, feeling annoyed.

Kevin told Dad and he came out, frowning too.

“How did Bobo get lost?” He asked.

“Well, I saw this cool poster asking seven more people to join a real inventor to invent things to solve problems, and when I went back to where I tied Bobo on a bench, the leash was free!”

Dad thought and thought and replied, “Someone or *something* must let the leash free, Kelly, I know it’s not your fault, but you have the best chance to find Bobo. You have two options: Investigate or invent something that can find Bobo.” Kelly smiled. That was a perfect idea.

Sunlight poured into the room. Kelly blinked open her eyes. The day came, finally. Kelly dressed in a turquoise shirt and blue jeans.

“Quik!” Dad shouted.

Dad drove them there. A lady led Kelly towards a tall white building that looked new. They walked through automatic doors, through a busy hallway, in an elegant elevator, then into a small room full of shelves. A few tables had untidy tools stacked on them, and the blue walls were filled with strange gadgets. The man she saw on the poster greeted her.

“Ah, Kelly, right?”

She nodded nervously.

“I’m Professor Chen Ming Ao. Sit over there.” He pointed next to a tall girl’s side.

“Oh hi, Kelly, I'm Lily. You look *so much like* my friend Erin, though she's taller. Oh and don't call that big fat inventor 'Professor Chen'. Call him 'Mr. Meow'!” Lily whispered to Kelly. She giggled. Lily was chatty but fun. Suddenly, Mr. Meow clapped his hands. “So you have in mind, everyone?” Kids shouted. Some waved their hands dramatically, some pushing through the other kids trying to reach Mr. Meow.

“All right, one at a time. You go first.” He pointed to Kelly.

“I want to invent a device that can find animals!”

Mr. Meow asked her why, and she decided to tell him everything. Mr. Meow looked surprised.

“Kelly, I know where Bobo is.” He said importantly.

“What?!” Kelly was shocked, how could a boring old inventor know where Bobo is?

“Black labrador, right?” Mr. Meow said.

“I saw him running with a beige-coloured female labrador, there was a yellow-orange-ish leash on the female's mouth. Then I called the police, and they said Bobo and LiLi were a dog couple! So I left without further question.” He explained.

What? Bobo married? That makes sense, though, how many times has Bobo played when Dad was reading the newspaper? Silent tears rolled from her eyes to her cheek. The students gathered around her..

“It's all right, Kelly. You can get another dog.” Lily comforted.

Memories came flooding back like a rushing river, Bobo's cuteness, playing fetch, everything fun! *If only this could start over again!* Kelly sighed. She traced a hand on Bobo's collar, unless...

“I can invent a collar that knows everything in Bobo's body! Heart pressure, detecting hunger!” Kelly said.

“All right, little inventors, let's get to work!” Mr. Meow said.

“C'mon let's go!” shouted Lily. Mr. Meow also taught her lots of cool things. *I have to admit, he can be pretty professional.* They started building, it was harder than they expected. Kelly looked at her final build. *Nice.* She thought. Lily gave her a friendly nudge.

“Time's up, let's go!” She said. Lily made a pad with a special pen that can turn writing into neat fonts! And it could keep lots of projects so you could author books or diaries, it was cool. Finally, Dad was here. Kelly happily brought the collar to the police until she saw Bobo running towards her, with a female labrador behind him and also four tiny pups. Kelly brought Bobo into her arms.

“I guess there's no use to this anymore, they will probably stay with you.” Said the police holding the collar.

“Well, give it to some other owner who needs it,” Kelly replied. *This will probably help a person's life, until they find out a 10 year-old made it.* She thought.

“You know what to do, make another one!” Dad said, Kelly laughed. *Well, that was a happy ending.*

Vision

Ying Wa Primary School, Chan, Chi Lai Duncan – 11

A metal bar was squeaking in pain, the construction workers did not attach it well to the tower. The screws on this were very unstable, about to jump to its death.

Mr. Oberon, a sad man. He was coming back home from his failed job interview, meeting his family of four. He was struggling in life, he had taxes, bills, rent and debt to pay. He didn't have a job to support his family, sooner or later he will be spending his time on the streets.

As he was wickedly trotting down the street, he miserably thought of how his brain was trapped in a mental asylum. He realized the harsh realities of the world. He was at the rock bottom of humanity, the bane of existence.

"Screech! The sound of heavy metal pulverized Mr. Oberon's eardrums.

Then came a "Splat!" and then sounds of screws falling on the broad concrete sidewalk. Mr. Oberon's nerves couldn't comprehend the pain that was directed straight into his eyes by a large metallic pole. His consciousness knocked into deep slumber and he was in this state for a very long period of time.

Mr. Oberon was rushed into a hospital, the emergency doctors stared with terror in his pupils. Mr. Oberon's eyes were mushed up, it looked like mashed potatoes but dipped in blood. This scene was very gory, if it was a movie then the devil would be appalled by the horrific scenes he has witnessed.

Jumping through a few days later, the doctors from the ER have finished ten life-saving surgeries on Mr. Oberon, saving him from the scythe of the grim reaper. "We must use the newest innovation of China to cure his blindness." Dr. Joan, the assistant doctor noted.

"That thing doesn't work, I assure you." Dr. Chan, the main doctor, coldly claimed.

"But if we try, we might be able to revive a person's lost soul..." Dr. Joan hopefully influences Dr. Chan.

"We will try, this will be the investment of my whole life. If we fail, you are getting "promoted" to patient." Dr. Chan calmly claimed.

"I promise it won't!" Dr. Joan said. This sentence seemed to sparkle the lights of the dark room that both of them were in. And the lights and the mood lightened up.

Mr. Oberon re-awoke from his deep slumber, seemingly unfazed by the fact that his eyes were gone. The moment he realized this, havoc broke out in his brain. He could not process this disaster. He just freaked out and tears rolled slowly off his cheeks, which were as pale as chalk.

"It's okay if you lose your eyesight." Dr. Joan nudged.

"You might not see it, but we have designed this prototype named the Angeleye. This will cure your blindness, in a way. "Dr. Chan comforted him by means of knowledge.

Dr. Chan picked up the glasses that gives sight to Mr. Oberon. Mr. Oberon sighed, seemingly hating the glasses.

“I wish I had my vision back, now I can only sense the things around me. “Mr. Oberon signed.

“You must have appreciated the things you have, look at the other blind people, they only see blurred images, not making out a single thing in front of them. You are lucky that the Angeleye has saved you, as your case is very serious.” Dr. Joan confronted.

“Fine. And still thank you and the Angeleye for making my life easier than what it would’ve been.” Mr. Oberon muttered sadly.

Mr. Oberon could go back home now. And as he motivates himself that everything is fine, he has been living his life in positivity.

An Expensive Price

Ying Wa Primary School, Chan, Wei Him – 12

It was a price that no one else was inclined to offer. It was so extreme even the official's face had an insignificant streak of astonishment. Mr. Smith was a ratty-looking English man with bushy eyebrows and a pointy nose. His tiny eyes darted from one competitor to another, passing the surprised ones swiftly and examining the stern-looking ones tactfully. His whiskers twitching slightly like a peckish cat looking for a juicy fat mouse from its pile of prey. Nearly all looked defeated from the unbelievably extreme prices offered without hesitation. His eyes uncontrollably stopped still on a calm, collected old man in a striped yellow shirt.

The old man was thin yet very intimidating and had a nicely trimmed beard on his expressionless face showing neither joy nor devastation. There was something different about him. He was Mr. Smith's only rival in this auction and he was a powerful one. His hand raised with an influential aura surrounding it, signaling yet another higher price.

“Nine-million! I bet nine-million!” His rough but clear voice echoed through the hall, the gaze of hundreds of people gradually drawn to him as if he was a magnet. The old man slowly put his hand down, the aura faded away without a trace.

“Surely no one would give more for that antique pottery. It's barely worth a million!” A ripple roused the crowd, causing muttering and whispering, “It's not even a complete teapot.”

“Ten million dollars! Ten million! I repeat. Ten Million!” Mr. Smith said after a deep breath. It seemed more like a reluctant sigh. This was nearly everything he had. The decision had been made, he knew there was no turning back now.

Hello! I am a teapot. The greatest ever invention of China. I was in a crystal clear glass case with hundreds of people crowded around me. I know, don't be shocked, I really am a fascinating creation. The people admired me quietly with an occasional shout. It must be because I'm too attractive. After a while, a person mummified me in transparent fabric. Just so you know, only rich and posh people get mummified which once again proves my supremacy.

I was quite satisfied by the considerate treatment. I was a little bit surprised when another person picked me up and took me for a walk. That was very thoughtful of him. The view along the way was appealing! There were enormous fuscous creatures with green hair of different shades. It was the quietest thing I've ever seen! I would never have known they were alive if they hadn't waved slightly at me! I also saw plenty of floating creatures in the air. They squarked all the time and were unbearably noisy. After the walk he put me inside a spacious lighted room. Peace at last!

“Greetings! I'm the compass. You look special, who are you?”

“Of course I'm special! Haven't you heard of me? You should have recognized me by my peculiar shape. I am the world's first teapot. Now that you know my name, I am sure there is no need for me to tell you my use. What is your use, though?”

“I am quite complicated. I don't really know how I work, but I know that I can lead the lost to their destination.”

The teapot did not like the sound of it at all. He had heard of the compass long ago. The compass just seemed more complicated and useful than him. He just hoped that it was invented recently so there was no rivalry between them. From the look of the compass, it was far older than the teapot. This fact was like a small round rock against a thin glass pane, shattering it into millions of pieces.

“Where were you invented? I was invented in China.” The compass's voice rang, snapping the teapot back to reality.

“Me too. Where else would such a brilliant invention come from?” The teapot said. Inside he was groaning in despair. This only made the rivalry worse.

Suddenly, there was a low grunting noise coming from the room and shaking it fiercely. The teapot screamed at the top of its lungs. He had never heard such a horrible noise. He was too terrified to even speak.

“Chill! We are in a truck, what do you expect?” The teapot looked towards the noise. The owner of the words was something anyone would describe as a piece of scrap paper.

“I was just screaming to see if I was louder than it.” The teapot retorted, “Who are you anyways? Let me guess, a piece of toilet paper.”

The piece of antique paper ignored him as if his voice was no more than the whispering wind.

Just as the teapot was about to protest, the truck came to a grinding halt. The deafening roar decreased into a quiet hiss before vanishing altogether. A muscular man swung open the door, opened his huge sweaty palms and grabbed the teapot along with the piece of paper swiftly.

“What a disgrace it is, for me to be picked up and carried with that worthless trash.” The teapot thought, vexed.

Suddenly, the man tripped over a jutting piece of pebble, both of them flew through the air soaring like a bird before crashing into a solid brick wall. Their glass case was smashed into smithereens, the shards like bullets. The piece of paper floated down leisurely and hit the ground softly like an experienced skydiver. The pot hit the ground heavily and reached its miserable end.

The Obstacle Race

Ying Wa Primary School, Ching, Chun – 11

“An obstacle race? No, no, too naive...What? Chinese inventions? I’m going!” Tom jumped from his seat, muttering excitedly. He had always been a fan of inventions.

Tom sped to the office of the Organization of the Promotion of Chinese Inventions. Just as he was signing a form to join the race someone shoved him, making his signature smug.

The culprit sniggered and said, “I’m Jack. I’ll beat you!” When he said the word ‘beat’, he punched Tom again. Tom was not strong, he was thin. Tom could only gnash his teeth angrily as Jack walked away, laughing.

“All competitors, please fasten your seat belts. We are about to land. “There was a roar as a small plane landed on a grassland’s airport. Ten competitors climbed out, facing the green that seemingly went on forever.

A judge announced the rules of the competition: Each competitor must go inside the venue and compete. The course is armed with decoy defences, each competitor has three ‘lives’ to spend.

“3, 2, 1, Go!” The competitors sprinted inside the venue, — a long area with walls surrounding it — finding themselves in a maze. A table stood at the entrance, displaying ten compasses. A post-sign read, ‘The exit is in the North. Use the compasses to find your way.’

Jack boasted, “I’m so good at mazes that I won’t need a compass to get pass one!” He marched inside without a compass.

Every obstacle consists of Chinese inventions and they are to be defected by other Chinese inventions.

The others grabbed their compasses and sprinted inside the maze too. The maze was very complicated, with false trails and numerous dead ends. However, with the compasses, they found the way out and successfully passed the first obstacle.

How about Jack? Well, he was still in the maze, finding his way out!

The successful competitors came to their next challenge. They were asked to kick a ball into the goalie behind a painted line five metres from the target. Tom went first. He stepped forward and took aim. Suddenly, a mean voice rang out.

“Get out of my way, new! I said, don’t block me! Now!” Jack appeared, swearing and pushing people aside. He had finally caught up with them. Slamming Tom aside, he got the ball and looked at the instructions.

“Stand behind that line?” snorted Jack. “I’d like to see what would happen. “ Jack grabbed the ball and stomped on the ground behind the line.

“Boom—” There was a loud blast, and Jack feel to his knees, shocked. Jack had stepped on a decoy mine! He lost his first ‘life’.

All the competitors scored a goal and proceeded down the passageway to the next obstacle. It was a silver room — or at least what it looked like. The floor was filled with banknotes! (Fake Copies) They had to find ten ancient ones among all the modern ones. After finding them, they had to insert the banknote in a slot to gain access to a barrel of weak gunpowder used to blow the next door open. Jack didn’t even bother to glance at the banknotes. He walked straight at his barrel. However, it exploded first! His opponents finished the mission and blew the door to pieces, leaving Jack caked in mud and with his last ‘life’ left.

The competitors then had to race in the alley to ride in a flying transport — the newest Ehang Flying Car for two miles, then face their last challenge.

Jack used his advanced leg muscles to excel in the run. Climbing into the cockpit, he shouted a gleeful “See ya, losers!” and took off. The opponents’ flying cars chased after him.

After reaching their destination, everybody jumped out. Tom lined up and looked at their surroundings. They were facing a monstrous wall. They were given the task of firing a crossbow up the wall. Once the bolt secured, they had to climb up the wall using the rope that was connected to the bolt.

Tom with his excellent eyesight, easily buried the tip of the arrow on the top of the wall. But his real challenge was climbing. Gritting his teeth, he heaved himself up inch by inch, his muscles arching. Powered on by sheer determination, he finally reached the top ahead of his fellow competitors. Jack, still failing to shoot the grappling hook accurately, let out an angry, desperate roar and tried to climb the bare cliff.

“Bang! Boom —” Concealed cannons opened fire, and flamethrowers spat out their deadly flame. Jack dodged the cannonballs and flame flying towards him, but a grenade hit him in the back. Jack yelled out as the fake explosion occurred, knowing that he had spent his third and final ‘life’.

Tom found himself facing a hyperloop train, one of the most advanced inventions of China. Excited, he jumped inside and started the engine. The tiny cabin sped through the vacuum tunnel, faster than a bullet. Powering through the tube, it blasted straight through the finishing line. Tom had won!

The crowd cheered as the first champion of the Chinese Invention Obstacle Course descended from the cockpit. Tom grinned proudly, he knew he had not only won because of his skills, his love for China’s inventions and determination played an important part too.

A Confusing Invention Project

Ying Wa Primary School, Lam, Hei Shun Aydric – 11

“Was it just a dream? Or did I really travel back to the past?” This question kept on wandering around in my mind for the last couple of years when I worked on the project. Even until today is the project opening ceremony, I still cannot get an answer.

I was the project manager of a high-speed rail project in China. I was so honoured to participate in this successful story – one of the great inventions of Modern China with a world-leading rail network of 40,000km of tracks and highest speed of 350km/h. I also felt thankful for a mysterious experience during my work journey which pushed me to be a successful project manager today.

The mysterious experience started from a misty day. While I was walking around the construction site with my colleague George, a portal suddenly appeared in front of us. None of us recalled there was such a portal here. We stared at each other for a minute. It seemed both of us shared the same thought that the curiosities moved our steps and wandered into the portal.

Once walking past the portal, all the mist went away. “Wow! What a beautiful place and fresh air!” George took a deep breath and exclaimed energetically as he started strolling around the place. A man wearing some old-fashioned clothes with a stick in his hand was lurking around the mud pit. I approached him and asked embarrassingly. “Excuse me, we are the project team of the high-speed rail project. However, we lost our way in the construction site. Can you tell me where we are now? And which construction team are you belonging to?” The man was surprised by us and looked suspiciously. “Project team of a high-speed rail project?” But he still answered us politely. “I am Jeme Tien Yow, the chief engineer of the Beijing–Zhangjiakou railway. And we are now at the core part of the constructing railway.” George and I were amazed as Jeme Tien Yow was China’s most famous railway engineer, but in the 1900s. “So where are we now?” We doubted.

There was no time for us to think anymore as Jeme Tien Yow started showing us around. The construction site was humongous and there were thousands of workers fixing the railway together. Jeme Tien Yow claimed, “Being a manager for this mega project is not easy. There are tons of challenges to overcome and people to manage. Even one tiny screw can cause a big disaster if we do not manage well.”

Jeme Tien Yow started telling us the future roadmap of the rail and his execution plan. He also shared his biggest challenge that he was encountering, i.e., the gradient problem which hindered the train to move up to the top of the hill. This problem was floating around for a long time but no solution had been discovered so far. All of a sudden, Jeme Tien Yow looked at our “zigzag” pattern uniform and yelled, “Zigzag! Zigzag can definitely help!”

While we were still shocked by Jeme Tien Yow’s yelling, a blast of light appeared in front of us and brought us back to our construction site. We later found out that Jeme Tien Yow finally overcame the gradient problem by building the zigzag upwards railway and completed the Beijing–Zhangjiakou railway in 1909, two years ahead of the schedule. It also opened the brilliant journey for the Chinese railway construction.

Despite there were no computers, no artificial intelligence, no crane and excavator to help, and they were still using shovel and bucket only, their determination to finish the project encouraged both George and I to keep on moving forward. Whether it was just a dream with Jeme Tien Yow is not important anymore, instead, the key is to keep on enhancing the rail system quality and to bring our passengers to their destinations safely and happily, in order to thank Jeme Tien Yow for his contribution to the China rail development.

The Start of the Modern Wars

Ying Wa Primary School, Liu, Chi Nok Elliot – 11

Xu Sheng was a soldier and admiral of China in World War III. He lived in Hong Kong and was desperate to stop Tefugo from nuking the world. The Tefugian army was brutal, with the number of massacres and bombings the same as leaves on the ground. The whole country was a battlefield, covered in blood and tar. Xu Sheng had a sister, Xu Wen, who was also a soldier. They both wanted the war to end, and in desperation, they hired the best scientists and physicists to build a time machine, hoping they could travel back to ancient China and stop gunpowder from being invented.

They jumped in the cramped space and turned the dials until they matched the exact hour before gunpowder was invented. A scientist who also had a degree in Chinese History, reminded them, “Gunpowder was made accidentally by Chinese monks when they were trying to produce an elixir of life. It’s made of potassium nitrate, which has a whitish color, a bit like cocaine. You’ll know it when you see it!” They closed the chamber and pressed the button. After lots of intense shaking, they vanished from the world and fainted.

When they woke up, it took a while for them to regain their senses. A few minutes later, they crawled out the time machine and started their search of Chinese monks. After wandering in the street for a while, people started to notice them as they were wearing unusual clothing. The ancient people kept staring at the two siblings until they were out of sight. At last, someone asked their identities. Xu Sheng said “I’m Xu Sheng, and this is my sister Xu Wen. We’re looking for the monks that make the elixir of life.” However, the ancient people just muttered to each other and pretended not to hear them. “Welp. That was nice. What helpful people!” groaned Xu Wen sarcastically. “Patience is the key, little sister. We’ll find it eventually.”

After what seemed like days of strolling around, they found a warehouse with barrels of white powder. “This is it! We found it! Now what do we do?” thought Xu Sheng. Their only way to stop gunpowder from being invented was to manually steal all the barrels and hide it. As it was the only way, they got straight to work.

A while later, some Chinese monks came to get potassium nitrate. “Oh hello! We were helping you move these barrels!” said Xu Sheng cheerfully as he took a glance at Xu Wen. “Quick thinking.” Whispered Xu Wen. They followed the monks in a house and sat down on the chair. “Hello, strangers. I am the alchemist. Would you like to help us make an elixir of life?” asked the alchemist. “Sure!” replied Xu Sheng.

As they sat down, the alchemist explained that their recipe for an elixir of life was 75% potassium nitrate, 15% charcoal and 10% sulfur. Xu Sheng said “Why don’t you make a new recipe? It might be dangerous!” The alchemist considered that. At last, he agreed. When the alchemist made a new recipe and gave it to the king, he got poisoned and died within a blink of an eye. “You betrayal! It’s your fault he died! Guards! Seize them!” screamed the alchemist. Hundreds of fully armed guards surrounded them and threw them in prison without mercy. “Hope is the key, little sister. We’ll be fine.” Said Xu Sheng calmly. Suddenly, Xu Wen remembered the scientists once said they would be teleported automatically back to the real world after a day to prevent accidents in space-time. She told Xu Sheng the good news and waited.

After a night’s sleep and a few hours of waiting, they vanished back to the time of World War III and told everyone their adventures. “We failed to stop gunpowder from being invented. We’re going to lose this war.” Explained Xu Sheng. Their only way to spend the rest of their lives was to wait. Xu Wen thought of an idea. “I know! We could send radio messages about the fact that gunpowder is harmful to outer space and hope extraterrestrial life forms could intercept it! That way, we might sacrifice ourselves, but we can save aliens!” said Xu Wen. Everyone agreed and worked together to send it. After that, an alarm went off. Tefugo had launched a world-ending nuclear

bomb. Everyone looked at the sky as the huge projectile loomed above them. For saving other planets, one planet was a good-enough sacrifice. At last, the world exploded and was obliterated within seconds as if it was hit by a gamma ray burst. The world ended and everyone died.

On the other side of the universe, hundreds of millions of years later, aliens have developed technology enough to intercept radio messages. Coincidentally, aliens read the message and understood to use gunpowder wisely. They used it for mining and construction. There was no war there, and the aliens thrived for another million years.

The Birth of the World's Fastest Lifesaver

Ying Wa Primary School, Lok, Ho Fung – 11

'The clock is ticking. Another casualty stuck in traffic is about to lose his life. What can we do to prevent tragedies like this?' This is a question that has been on my mind for the longest time.

As serendipity would have it, I turned on the television one day and became aware of a man called Li Bin. He is the Chinese inventor of the fastest electric racing car, the Nio. Known for his perseverance, Li succeeded in making the car even when others did not believe in him. In the television interview, he announced that he was going to hold a press conference for the car. At that moment, I thought to myself, 'Here is my chance at finding a solution at long last.'

On the day of the press conference, after Li had briefly explained the operation of the car, he invited us to ask questions. I raised my hand as high as possible to catch his attention. Miraculously, he looked straight at me!

'Yes, young man?' he asked kindly.

When the people around me saw this, they began to giggle. Ten seconds later, the hall erupted into full-blown laughter.

'Let him speak!' he commanded.

Suddenly, the hall fell so silent that you could have heard a pin drop.

'I ... I would like to suggest an improvement to your invention. I have seen many people needing to go to the hospital but unable to arrive on time due to traffic jams. I would like you to adapt the car's motor for use in a helicopter to transport patients to the hospital more quickly,' I suggested, my confidence growing.

'What an excellent suggestion! Let's give this young man a round of applause!' Li exclaimed.

After the press conference, everyone left—except for me. I ran up to him and pleaded, 'Will you consider my suggestion, please?'

'Ah! You're the clever boy from earlier! I've been thinking about your idea, and it's indeed brilliant; I've decided to go ahead with it!' he said with a smile.

From then on, we, together with other researchers from Hong Kong and the mainland, met once a week to discuss the progress of the invention. Day by day, it became increasingly complete. After five years of dedicated work, the world's fastest helicopter was created. To thank me, he named the helicopter after me—Marcus—and added the short phrase 'the Soaring Red Dragon' after it, hence the name MSRDR. I was immensely grateful to him.

Several weeks later, a hospital used the helicopter to transport a patient. The staff said it saved a great deal of time and were very appreciative. Before long, its use became more frequent all over the world. Newspaper headlines worldwide proclaimed: 'One Young Chinese Boy Saves Many Lives'. In the weeks since the launch of the MSRDR, I received appreciation letters from many people around the world, including hospital workers and families of accident victims, expressing their gratitude for my contributions.

I am grateful for their appreciation, but deep in my heart, I know that the MSRDR wouldn't have been created if it weren't for my great motherland, China. This country has provided me with a world-class education, equipping me with not only the knowledge and skills needed to solve real-world problems but also with love and compassion for humanity.

As the MSRDR turned into a sign of optimism and new ideas, my part in creating it became just a small detail in a bigger story. The real heroes, I realised, were the countless individuals whose lives were saved by rapid medical intervention from the skies. The MSRDR was more than a machine; it was a beacon of progress, a testament to the power of collaborative innovation, and a reminder that one person's suggestion could indeed change the world.

The Inventor of Paper

Ying Wa Primary School, Ng, On Zit Jenson – 10

Everyone says that Cai Lun, from the Han dynasty, invented paper. That is, everyone except me. I know, I can't blame you, because that was what your history teacher taught you, but I'll explain it to you in a bit. By the way, I'm a scientist and time traveler from the year 2107 and I have a prototype time machine (it's solar powered) that I invented. Even though I do have a time machine (it looks like a big watch with a keyboard), it isn't very easy to obtain one in my time, but since I made it (from a real watch), I could use it anytime I desired. This was how I found out about the real inventor of paper:

A couple of years ago, when I just invented the time machine, I took it for a test run. Long story short, I entered the wrong numbers and ended up in the future, at around the year 2700.

I looked around, surprised it wasn't the date I supposedly entered. Then, I realized everyone wasn't speaking English anymore. They were speaking some sort of combination of squeals and grunts. Futuristic buildings and floating cars were all around me. Some people were standing next to a floating transparent panel. I felt slightly puzzled. Everyone was wearing metal plated outfits that looked very heavy, but it was probably quite light, considering the ease people could move in it and technology being much more advanced than my time. An old man who was wearing a suit (mind you, it was an old-fashioned suit with a bow tie) caught my eye.

He came up to me and asked me, "Are you from the past?" It was probably because of the "ancient" outfit I was wearing.

"Yes. You speak English?" I asked, surprised.

"Yes. I love history, so I learnt English to understand the history books," He explained.

"What's your name?"

"[grunt squeal squeal grunt grunt squeal], or Ergo in your tongue."

"I noticed everyone is using a thin and light transparent screen. What is that?"

"It is [squeal squeal grunt squeal grunt], or charta in your tongue. It is our substitute for paper, and it projects any image from your mind. It works by using fMRI, which measures brain activity by detecting changes associated with blood flow to scan your brain activity non-invasively. Then, the information will be given to AI to turn them into words or pictures. Finally, the transparent LEDs display those thoughts as pictures."

To you, this might just sound like baloney to you, but to me, as a scientist in the future, this sounded absolutely fascinating. I decided to press Ergo a bit more on questions.

"How much does this cost?" I asked.

"Around ten dollars."

"Wow! So cheap!"

"Yes, but everyone's salary is going down by a lot, so our one dollar today, would be a hundred dollars in the past."

“That's a lot!” I exclaimed, surprised.

“Yes. A few decades ago, there was a financial crisis due to global warming, in which many forests were burnt down and many prolonged drought seasons were caused, so the money rate expanded hugely.” He shook his head sadly, as if wanting to throw those thoughts away.

I decided not to delve any deeper into this topic and back to the “charta”.

“When was charta invented?” I asked.

“Around a century ago, by a young computing genius named [squeal grunt grunt squeal grunt squeal squeal] or Darja Mahulena Havlíček in your tongue. She made it to save trees. From then on, charta replaced paper. However, charta cannot show an image forever, since the image diminishes whenever the brainpower is weakened, unlike paper.” He sounded almost wistful, as if he was nostalgic for when paper was used.

“I think the reason paper became very scarce was because of climate change,” I guessed.

He nodded. He didn't seem like he wanted to continue this conversation, so I said my goodbyes to him, promised him that I would find out more about how paper began, then leave him some hint in history books about it.

Therefore, I went to ancient China, around the year 100, to see how it began. It took me a few tries to get it to work, since it was solar powered and the sun wasn't very strong due to air pollution in 2700. When I finally got there, I saw people wearing straw hats and loose robes. I squinted to see clearly. Oh, god. Some children were reading from scrolls made from bamboo!

“Why don't they just use paper?” I muttered under my breath.

That was when realization hit me. Paper hadn't been invented yet! Stupid, stupid me. That was why I decided to improve those children's lives. I traveled back to my time and got a piece of paper (even that was hard to find. I guess some things are similar from the past to the present).

Then, I traveled back to around the year 100 (again). This time, I landed in a slightly wealthier neighborhood. This time, people weren't wearing straw hats. They were wearing flowing robes. I saw a man in his mid-forties passing by. I tapped him on the shoulder and introduced myself. He introduced himself as Cai Lun. It was my lucky day that I could get to meet him! I took the piece of paper out and his eyes widened when he saw it.

“This is the perfect writing material! What do you plan to do with it?” He asked, eyeing the piece of paper greedily like a hungry fox.

I replied, “Please just make this material popular amongst your people.”

“Fine, but how do you make it?”

“That's for you to figure, Mr Cai.”

I handed him the piece of paper and watched as he happily skipped away, whistling a tune I didn't know.

That was the last time I ever saw the “inventor of paper” again.

The Fusion of Art and Power

Ying Wa Primary School, Ng, Owen – 11

In the 2nd century BCE, during the Han Dynasty, nestled between the mighty mountains and lush green fields, there lay two villages that lived side by side but were separated by a gigantic river. On one side of the river, there stood the Paper Village, a place known for its purity and kindness. On the other side, the Gunpowder Village thrived, a village filled with brave but uneducated souls.

Cai Lun was my name, and I resided in a grand manor in the Paper Village. I was the inventor of paper, and my creations brought knowledge and enlightenment to my people, enabling them to record our history, exchange ideas, and preserve our cultural heritage. The villagers used it to create beautiful artworks and intricate origami filled with wisdom and lovely stories.

Every day, my villagers would send pigeons across the main river to the Gunpowder Village, as no fire was allowed within our peaceful domain. These pigeons would bring back food supplies, and the two villages coexisted harmoniously.

However, as time went on, the Gunpowder Village became consumed by greed. Their noble duty of supplying food to us turned into a money-making venture. They started charging exorbitant prices, leaving my villagers in distress.

The tension between our two villages reached its climax when war broke out. The Gunpowder Village, fueled by their greed, released a terrifying Flying Dragon, carried bombs which were made from sulfur, potassium nitrate and charcoal, causing devastation in our village. On the other hand, the innovative people of our village crafted a gigantic paper plane to defend ourselves in response. The battle was fierce and decisive.

Although we used the hardest paper to make our paper plane, it was fragile and delicate, quickly shattered into pieces, and the remnants fell into the main river. I led our villagers and exclaimed, 'Warriors! Let's use our knowledge of paper-making to rebuild our paper plane!' I stayed calm in the face of danger, and commanded, 'Come on! We need to make a slurry!' We occupied the entire riverbank, blending and smashing the soaked paper residue, transforming it into an oatmeal-like mixture. My villagers reacted with uplifted spirits.

I continued to give my partners instructions, 'Follow the steps of pouring the slurry into a large frame.' My villagers replied with high morale, 'Got it! Then we need to shape it into the foundation of a new, even larger, and more advanced paper plane!' We worked tirelessly, coming together in a remarkable display of unity and resilience. The falling bombs provided illumination and warmth, boosting the drying process of our regenerated paper plane and keeping us warm during numerous freezing nights.

Meanwhile, back in the Gunpowder Village, under the vigilant gaze of the exhausted Flying Dragon, the weighty bombs were transported and released repeatedly. Their alchemists, the inventors of gunpowder, led only a few weary villagers to manufacture gunpowder using manual methods. The ingredients were ground together into a powder using mortars and pestles day and night. Despite putting forth their best efforts, they lacked the ability to gather assistance and post evacuation notices. They were unable to warn people about the war, resulting in numerous deaths. Moreover, the frontlines suffered a significant defeat. Their greed had blinded them to the importance of their neighboring village and its inventions.

The battle was as long as a marathon, with each side pushing themselves to the limit. After hundred days passed, the unbeatable paper plane stood tall, while the Flying Dragon grew weary and finally surrendered. After the war, we had learned a valuable lesson. We realized that we needed each other.

We began to rebuild our relationship. We embraced each other's strengths and weaknesses, working together to create a harmonious balance. Our Villagers shared our knowledge, teaching our neighbors the art of paper-making while they taught us the techniques of making gunpowder and provided protection to our village. We were both impressed by each other's inventions and wisdom, which will undoubtedly be beneficial to our future generations.

In a heartfelt gesture of apology, the villagers of Gunpowder Village crafted a truly remarkable offering for us. They extended an invitation to us to gather along the majestic main river, where we were captivated by a breathtaking spectacle of fireworks. The impressive display of fireworks made our jaws drop. It was an unforgettable scene as they burst in the sky perfect harmony, filling it with dazzling colors and lights.

Both villages flourished once again, united by the understanding that true strength lies in cooperation, mutual respect and wisdom of inventions. Diverse worlds can discover common ground and prosper collectively, nurturing growth and harmony.

Flight attendant

Ying Wa Primary School, So, Yu Hang – 12

Sprinting across the grass. Letting go. Straining to be free.

And falling.

I woke up with a splitting headache as if someone was pounding a nail into my head. Immediately I knew something was wrong as I looked around at the walls of gold and the tiles of bronze.

If only I were this rich.

It was then I realised that I was not alone as I saw a few people in red and white robes who all wore matching pointed military-design boots. I looked down and my casual clothes had morphed into the same outfit, which I guessed was the uniform worn by the Dynastic emperor's advisors. I was sure this wasn't 2023, because the price of the palace would have tripled Musk's fortune.

I looked back and saw a glistening throne and on it was an emperor whom I recognised from my history class, bearing the royal crown with dangling spheres on the ends.

He was speaking in Mandarin in a way that children would not do when talking to their mothers. 'If they are really telling the truth and going to tunnel across the land, we have no way of knowing when they will start or where they will be.'

An advisor whose facial features I remembered from my history class, Lu Ban spoke up. He stepped onto the dais and swept his hands up. 'We should create something to measure the length of both cities to see if they are telling the truth. If the distance is too long, then there is no way of tunnelling over without wasting a great deal of resources. In contrast, if it is short, then they will have numerous ways to come over, thus increasing their chances of winning; therefore we have to be prepared for anything.'

The emperor's eyes lit up and he nodded satisfactorily and smiled shrewdly. 'Work with Mo-Tse and create this invention.' Mo-Tse came forward, bowing low.

Lu Ban then spoke up, 'Your Majesty, this task might be taxing. Please grant my request for three people instead.'

The emperor nodded and pointed straight at me.

The emperor exited the room along with the rest of the generals and advisors. Lu Ban shut the door and looked at me skeptically but worriedly, 'You've risen through the ranks quite quickly, boy,' he said as he joined Mo-Tse on the dais, 'now is the time to prove yourself.'

'Maybe a hot-air balloon?' I suggested after a minute's time. It came to my mind on the spot as I was fascinated in a hot-air balloon.

“Hot-air balloon?” Mo asked.

'Well, a cloth should be stitched into a spherical, oval shape. Then fire should be lit at the base of the sphere. The reaction between the mixed temperatures should result in the balloon floating upwards. You could install a large

cockpit so that you could sit in it and fly to the enemy base while riding on it and calculate the distance with the average speed of the balloon and the time needed.'

Mo and Lu stared at me blankly.

Suddenly Lu inhaled a sharp breath. 'You're not from this Dynasty, are you?' He looked at me thoughtfully. 'It defies all logic, but it should be true. Although the balloon is impossible to make in a day's time, which means we have to think of another idea, your direction of thinking is definitely not from our era.'

'It just all seems like a strange dream to me,' I mumbled, 'but I maybe could help.' With Lu and Mo still shocked, I sat down on the dais with them and recalled how I got here. Sprinting across the grass. Letting go. Straining to be free.

And a sliver of an idea hit me.

Both of their eyes widened even more.

Mo and Lu instructed me to my quarters and started to work together on this contraption. I missed my family and was confused about my alternate lifeline, but I would not give up on such an important project.

Everyone was already in the backyard when I woke up and arrived in a rush to the court the next day. Lu handed a wooden kite, which I guessed was what the advisors had also been working on, to General Han Hsin, and he nodded his head at the emperor, indicating it was going to indeed work, and threw it in a large arc, controlling it with a string. He angled the kite towards the enemy base, looked at the calculations on the string and he broke into a mad grin.

'Well, from this distance, I'd say it's impossible to tunnel over.'

I wanted to hear more of the cheering, the laughter but the noise shut off and the corners of my eyes started to turn white. The only people I could see were Lu Ban and Mo Tse. Mo worriedly rushed forward, but Lu held him back and calmly said, 'I think your time in our dynasty is up,' he told me and the old me would have danced in joy.

But who gets to experience old dynasties every day?

My legs turned into wisps of smoke as Mo Tse also stepped forward. His usually furrowed brow loosened and he smiled. 'Keep alive,' he said, and that was the last thing I heard in 450 BC.

I sat up straight, on a patch of grassland with a kite next to me. I picked it up. Keep the bird alive. Kites were used for wars and science? Suddenly I was afraid to touch it as if it was a hydrogen bomb. But now the kite has been converted into a toy, to keep its traumatic memories alive by converting it into good ones. Keeping it alive, and the people who played with it were all history's attendants.

I let the kite soar again, unsure if it was a dream or not. It all seemed like a time-travel story cliché.

But was the history true?

In my diary's defence, it's new tales.

Long Live the Kings

Ying Wa Primary School, Yeung, Ching Long Caspian – 11

It was a lovely scene. A nearby river sparkled with joy under the glimmering rays of the sun. Birds perched atop trees decorated with cherry blossoms, and in the middle of it all, stood a humble little house — the house of the great Chinese poet Li Bai.

Li Bai sat at his desk with his three companions—Inkstone, Inkbrush and Inkstick, waiting for an idea to come to mind for his next poem. Meanwhile, the three companions of Li Bai were grumbling.

“Why did we get banished from our home?” Inkstone said, angrier and grumpier than usual, “We were kings among the others! Overlords even! Who are they to call us ‘now useless inventions?’”

“Well, I guess it’s kind of true. In modern China, everyone just texts on their phones instead of writing to each other. That was why the other citizens of the Land of Inventions banished us and stripped us of our title of ‘king’.” Inkstick said calmly.

“And that is also why,” Inkbrush butted in, “we went back in time to prove our worth by helping Li Bai write a masterpiece! Look, he’s going to write now!”

Li Bai didn’t waste any time. He picked up Inkstick, poured a little water on it and ground it against Inkstone. This was agony for both inventions, and they shrieked in pain as Inkbrush snickered quietly.

Inkstone and Inkstick, having seen their fellow teammate’s act, their eyes blazed with fury, hoping to get revenge. Revenge came soon after, as Li Bai dipped Inkbrush’s head into the ink created by Inkstick. Disgusted from his long, silky, silver–white hair being turned black and sticky, Inkbrush spat most of the ink out onto a white piece of paper— exactly what Li Bai wanted. Li Bai started writing, gracefully and relaxed, until he had a finished piece. Inkbrush, Inkstone and Inkstick gazed happily at their work, so painfully accomplished with many sacrifices... then Li Bai crumpled the finished piece up and threw it away.

“What did you do that for?” Inkstone shouted out, “That was the result of our hard work!”

“Maybe it wasn’t good enough,” theorised Inkbrush. “Come on, let’s take a look.”

The three inventions hopped down the table and took a look at the poem. For a while, they couldn’t understand what was wrong.

“Oh! Now I understand!” All eyes turned to Inkbrush as Li Bai was still thinking of new ideas, “This poem has no content, no morals! That’s why Li Bai threw it away!”

“We can’t just write a meaningless poem to regain our places as kings. Let’s show the other inventions how useful we are!” Inkstick said enthusiastically. There came a shout of agreement from the other two inventions.

“Yes! I have created a masterpiece!” Li Bai’s voice echoed through the mountains. It was midnight and the trio of inventions were too tired to do anything. Yet they heard Li Bai’s overjoyed voice and smiled to themselves. They had succeeded.

News of Li Bai's wonderful poem reached the ears of the new kings of the Land of Inventions. Alipay and High-speed train travelled back in time to witness this masterpiece. They only saw the sleeping Li Bai and the trio of inventions— Inkbrush, Inkstone and Inkstick who they banished earlier.

Alipay, a virtual ghost, picked up the poem and started reading it as High-speed train waited outside Li Bai's house. The poem was simply beautiful. Its profound vocabulary touched the new kings and they both picked up a similar moral.

When the trio of inventions came to their senses, they found that they were back in the Land of Inventions. Staring at them were the entire population of inventions as the new kings addressed them:

“We have read your poem. It was nicely written and reminded us that everything, even the smallest things have a use and can be beautiful. We deeply regret banishing you from our land, so please accept your former statuses as our way of apology.”

The trio smiled at each other. “We accept!” shouted all three inventions. The population of invention citizens burst into cheer.

“You have done well,” boomed a voice from above, “you have shown that you are determined and clever. You have completed your quest. Therefore, I, the Buddha, dub you three inventions, Inkbrush, Inkstone and Inkstick ‘The Inventions of Creativity!’”

The Inventions of Creativity knew what to do. They bowed toward the great Buddha, and flew down to mankind...

To change the world.

A Character's Start

YK Pao Primary School, Gong, Hanxin Rosie – 9

In a time before WeChat or TikTok, in a time before cars or airplanes, in a time even before paper or printers had been invented, our story begins. In fact, this was a time before any words had ever been written.

Hidden within the mountains of eastern China, a kind-hearted girl called Yingzi Luo was born in a village that was too small to name. Used to their simple and predictable life, the villagers weren't ready for a mute girl who could only communicate through her smile.

Lonely and in search of friends, Yingzi snuck off every morning, where she made friends with animals in the woods. Though she couldn't communicate with people, she understood the animals, and they understood her. Yingzi created symbols for her bird, horse, and animal friends that she would scratch onto rocks. Eventually, she created new symbols for the trees, the sun, the mountains, and all of nature around her.

One year, hardship struck. As they watched their dear pond slowly dry up, the elders talked about how many full moons it had been since it last rained. Desperate groups of men searched for water, but they always returned empty-handed. As the last shrubs disappeared, Yingzi's animal friends also left to find food.

On one of Yingzi's morning walks to her circle of carved stones, a flock of birds flew by. When she called out and asked where they came from, they told her about a river they had found beyond the mountains.

Without waiting to hear more, she ran back to the village with the good news. They were saved!

Yingzi ran from house to house, pounding on each door. As her parents and the other townsfolk gathered, Yingzi grasped her mother's hand and gestured for the villagers to follow her.

By the time they reached her circle of stones, the birds were already gone. Thinking their long trek was only to see Yingzi's stone art, the villagers rolled their eyes. Some of them even started yelling angrily. Yingzi gestured beyond the mountains, but one by one they turned their backs and silently walked the dry, dusty path back to their village.

Tears came to her eyes. but as she looked towards the mountain peaks, her eyes shined with determination. That night, she quietly gathered her blanket, a little food, and her walking stick before setting out into the moonlight.

The journey was difficult. After winding up back in the same place, she started to mark her path by scratching symbols onto rocks as landmarks. When she came across a once lush forest that had lost all the leaves to the drought, she carved out her symbol for 'tree' on a boulder; when she came across a dried-up lake, she scraped her character for 'lake' on a stone near the now empty crater; at the base and peak of each mountain, she left a stone marked with her symbol for 'mountain'; and on she went.

On the fifth morning, as she peered above the final mountain peak, Yingzi felt the sun's rays on her face. The sound of birds chirping and a river flowing reached her ears. Shielding her eyes, she looked out and saw an open, grassy plain, scattered with trees. Right in the middle, there was a big river snaking through the plain. Overcome with excitement, she started running and tripped over a root, tumbling downward.

Limping the final distance to the river, Yingzi reached forward with cupped hands. Water had never tasted so sweet. Looking down at her scraped-up leg, she carefully washed the blood off. There was no way that she could travel all the way back to her village. How would she send the good news?

Yingzi peeled off some soft bark and crushed the juice out of some berries. She would use this to draw a map. Starting on the left, she wrote big characters to represent the mountains, the forest that she met, the dried-up lake, the sun to show where it would rise, and a final character to show the river.

Once she was ready, Yingzi called out to the nearby birds who quickly flew down to see what she needed. After carefully tying the rolled-up map with her necklace, the birds took it in their beaks, and off they went.

Arriving at the village, the birds circled overhead, their chirping drawing the attention of the villagers. They fluttered down, dropping the map before taking off again. Amid the elders' confused murmurs about what this meant, a child darted forward and picked up the tree bark. Tied to it was Yingzi's necklace.

Unrolling the bark, puzzled whispers filled the air.

"Those look like mountains!" one said.

"And that, a forest of trees," another pointed out.

"Isn't that the sun rising from the east?" a third mused.

The villagers stood divided, unsure whether to follow the strange symbols. Yingzi's mother stood up, "This is clearly a message from Yingzi! Who's coming with me?" she declared.

One by one, the villagers joined in, saying, "ME TOO!" With quickened steps, they gathered their sparse supplies and set out. Guided by Yingzi's map and the marked stones, they easily found their way across the mountain range.

As they crested the final mountain peak, smoke from Yingzi's fire came into view. Descending onto the lush grassy plain, gratitude filled their hearts.

The villagers worked swiftly to rebuild their homes. At the village entrance, they erected a sign with their new village name, symbolizing their new beginning. Each family asked Yingzi to create a unique family character, proudly displaying it above their doorways. Along the main street, large signs with characters showed directions to the river, farms, and other landmarks.

Life blossomed anew, and Yingzi found herself no longer alone but respected and cherished. However, each morning, she still ventured to a peaceful part of the river, sitting quietly with her animal friends, gazing into the clear waters that breathed life into their home.

The Story of Gunpowder (missing)

YK Pao School, Chen, Enzo – 10

There once was a lot of taoist in ancient china, who does alchemy. They find all kinds of ores and plants all over the world, mixing the ingredients and doing dangerous experiments to seek for elixir that can make them live forever. Once, a taoist added too much saltpeter and brimstone, causing the whole house to burn down. This is the first time gunpowder was made.

Gunpowder can be used in war.

At the end of Tang dynasty, which is the 10th century, the whole country got into civil war. A taoist made a lot of launch fires(a kind of weapon), helping an admiral siege a city. This is the first time gunpowder was used in wars.

From 11th century to 13th century, the Song government established the gunpowder workshop, causing a lot of gunpowder weapons been made. In 1132 AD, an official in Southern Song dynasty called Gui, Chen invented Muskets made from bamboo, which later developed into the Fire Clamp, which is made from metal. In 1161 AD, the Jing emperor led 6 hundred thousands of army crossing the Yangtze River, forcing the Southern Song dynasty to respond, which formed what we call now the Quarrying Battle. In the battle, Thunderbolt Cannon were used to defeat the jing army.

In the Ming dynasty, some people combined kites and fire arrows, which developed the fire weapons. Some examples are:

- Flying Air to Hit Thieves Shocked the Sky
- Fire Dragon Out Of the Water
- Divine Fire Flying Raven

But gunpowder can also be used in peace.

Fireworks are made from gunpowder and all kinds of metal elements, which make them colorful and blast into the air; some experiments that can make earth a better community uses gunpowder...

No matter in the past, present, or future, what makes technology an angel or a demon, is the person using it.

Future Invention – Friendship Bracelet (missing)

YK Pao Primary School, Chen, Jessie – 9

On a cold, winter day, Ely and I went to a forest. We went down a dirt path that lead us to a village. No one was on the road, and doors were shut. Mouse and spiders were walking in the village. 'I wish my mom is here.' I whispered to Ely. Ely nodded her head. My heart began to flap like a butterfly as we walked down the road.

'My tummy is growling like a tiger!' Ely cried. 'Let's go and get some food first!' I answered. We knocked the door. A skinny, tall and old man was standing inside. 'What do you want, kids?' He asked kindly. 'We are hungry, but we do not have food,' I replied. Suddenly, the old man's face turned pale, he closed the door hastily. "It is so strange, why did he not give us food?" Ely asked. 'I think we should ask more people,' I mumbled. We went to the second door. "Greetings!" I called, "can you give us some food?" A girl with black hair ran out, who looks like the same age as us. She agreed and let us follow her to her bedroom. "My name is Alice, nice to meet you." She said happily. "My name is Jessie, and she is my friend, Ely." I introduced. "Do you know why this village is so spooky?" Ely asked eagerly. "An evil witch ruled this village. We must give her food she likes. And if she doesn't like it, she will use magic to turn this village spooky forever!" Alice whispered, 'Please do not tell anyone that I said that, promise me!' "Okay." Ely and I answered at the same time.

Once a year, people went to the witch's castle and gave her food. I walked to the witch's chair. Ely and Alice followed me. My heart beated wildly. I couldn't breathe. "Can you tell me why you do this evil, mean thing?" I exclaimed. When I stepped close to the witch, I saw her face. Cross feeling and shock feeling have muddled up my tummy. I couldn't believe that she was my teacher! "Ms. Ruth! Why are you doing a such evil thing!" Big, fat tears roll down her face. "People in this village were being mean to me, I want them to be sad too." She yelled. I took out my huge bracelet, every bead showed how miserable the villagers are. Under the shiny light of the bracelet, Ms. Ruth regretted. "Oh, what have I done!" Ms. Ruth said that she feels very sorry for what she had done. I recorded it in the bracelet and every villager heard that. This village became happily forever! Alice gave me a gift and wanted me to stay.

"Jessie! Wake up! You are late for school!" my mom yelled. I opened my eyes, I couldn't believe it, it was just a dream. After school, I wrote down what happened in my dream. I want to make this bracelet which can turn an evil person to a kind person when I grow up.

Unexpected Meeting on the Train

YK Pao Primary School, Hong, Xiang Ning Annabelle – 9

“How fast!” I gasped in admiration from the bottom of my heart when sitting on the high-speed railway on my way from Shanghai to Beijing.

“That’s amazing! But who hosted the construction of China’s first railway? That person is such a genius!” Suddenly an idea came bumping into my mind, so I searched on my phone. “Oh! It’s Zhan Tian You! I’ve been looking forward to learning more about him and want to ask him lots of questions. I really prefer a chance to meet him!” I sighed lightly out loud. As I peeked outside the train window, raindrops came tumbling down to play. It seemed to be an exciting mood, and I was on cloud nine feeling proud of the fact that China has a strong advantage on high speed railway.

As speedy as a flash, the window outside turned dark black. Before long, all carriages turned bright again. As I realized that the high-speed train had gone into a tunnel, the seat on the opposite side of mine had a little boy sitting on it. He was wearing some ancient Chinese clothes and looked confused and panic. He had round, shiny eyes with sparkling stars in them and had braided hair as long as a snake curling on his shoulders. I also noticed that there were many pieces of an old-time clock on his hand. We stared at each other silently, not knowing what to say. After a little while, some thoughts ran into my brain: “He looks familiar to me! Seems that I have seen him before somewhere... Wait, isn’t he looking kind of like Zhan Tian You? I just saw him on my phone! No! I must have a blurred vision.”

With excitement, enjoyable thoughts, and a little nervousness, I asked the boy (who now seemed better): “Hello? Are you okay?”

“Hello,” the boy looked at me, having a vacant look on his face, “I don’t know what to say. You will not believe me.”

“Oh, I see. How about telling me your name and why you are here?” The boy answered politely, “Hello, I am Zhan Tian You, and I don’t know why I am here. I was just playing with my clock at home, and then, as I put in the second to last piece into it, I felt my whole body flying up. After that, I was right here.”

I was shocked and couldn't say anything for a little while. Then, I took a deep breath and said, “I was so surprised that you are here! Let me tell you where you are. Today is January 1st, 2024. Seems that you came here from the past. You are now at the world’s fastest high-speed train heading to Beijing now!”

“2024? A train?” He seemed confused. “Yes, I believe there must be a mysterious power to bring you to the time now, which is a hundred years later than the year you came from.” I took out my phone quickly, fearing that he may go back to ancient China, searched for more information, and explained to him: “A train is a long transportation that runs on a railway. China may not have invented the first train and railway in the world, so you haven't seen the train yet. But after many years of development, we have invented the world’s first intelligent high-speed railway (which is called the Beijing-Zhang JiaKou Railway), and do you know who was responsible for the construction of that? It’s you, Zhan Tian You! I know that now from 120 miles per hour to 281 miles per hour, our country China’s high-speed train is the world’s most prompt, and modern versions of these trains can now operate at 198 miles per hour, and that’s a gigantic number! China's engineers unite as one to help each other from catching up to surpass, and China now has high-speed trains as fast as light and world’s most comfortable seats in them.”

“And did you know? You’re one of the founders of the first railway in China!”

“Am I?”

“Yes, of course! When you grow up, you will be the Chief Engineer and will host the construction of the first railway in China! You’re really impressive!”

“You must be kidding. I can’t even imagine!” the boy exclaimed.

“No, that’s true. That railway was considered as a milestone and the beginning of China’s modernization. Therefore, it is of great importance to our country.”

“What’s a railway? Are you serious? I’m just a child who has poor grades. Can I do what you’ve said?” Zhan Tian You asked.

“Of course, you can! You will be a famous Chinese engineer!”

“Wow! Well, there is no such thing in our time, I wish we could have it. But I’ll try to make our country better!” He praised with excitement. “But did China invent the railway?” he asked confusedly.

I answered confidently, “No, China did not invent the railway. But as I just said, after 100 years’ development, we invented the world’s first intelligent railway. Do you know what is an intelligent railway? It’s a railway where everything could be done by technology without even a person there. Furthermore, it could implement autonomous train technology, and it helps people get quicker, more convenient service for passengers. In recent reports, China has 2,700 high-speed trains in total, and that’s twice the total number of other countries!”

Suddenly, when little Zhan Tian You put in his last piece of the clock, the carriage turned dark and started shaking again, and the train broadcasted: “We are arriving at the Beijing station.” I reckoned, “I believe China’s high-speed train will continue to upgrade both on speed or technology!” After going out the second tunnel, the little boy disappeared...

The Mesmerizing Inventions of China (not in submissions file)

YK Pao School, Mao, Matt – 10

People were astonished and could hardly believe the mesmerizing inventions of China. Many inventions invented thousands of years ago are still greatly influencing our daily lives. Thousands of years ago, the world lacked tools and materials, but the Chinese were not confined. The driving force behind Chinese inventors, leading to many inventions, was their strong will to enable people around the world to live more convenient lives. In this essay, you will be transported to a heroic inventor's perspective.

The Invention of Paper. Cai Lun's perspective

September 27, 105

Sunlight bathed my room as I awoke, heralding a day of possibilities. I ate decently, and walked to work. After several hours, I finally walked to the palace where Emperor Liu lived. The palace was so amazing that I could not believe my eyes. The palace was at least 30 meters high. Candle lights shone on either side of the palace. They were as beautiful as fireflies in the night. The ground of the palace was full of paintings. One depicted the handsome portrait of Emperor Liu. Another depicted a red phoenix soaring in the sky. Right in front of me was the Emperor Liu and I suddenly realized that it might not be kind just standing there so I bowed courteously. I sat on the side of Emperor Liu and waited for other people to come. A few minutes later, almost all people came and the conference started.

'I face an immense problem. People in my territory complaining about the inconvenience of paper. Does anyone have any solution? Bamboo paper was considered too heavy to write. Meanwhile, cotton paper was easy to write on but they cost a fortune.'

'We could try to improve paper.' I suggested.

'You are absolutely right. So please improve it for me.'

'Yes, Your Majesty,' we said simultaneously.

'Okay so let's get working,' said Emperor Liu.

This conversation still ringed in my ears while I was working. The eagerness to help humanity surged through my body. I can make it. I can do it.

After work, I ran home as fast as I could and raced to the table in my bedroom.

'Are you okay?' my mom asked curiously.

'Ok thanks,' I said swiftly.

I began my work. I got some mulberry tree bark outside my house because they were quite smooth to write on. Then I thought that this kind of wood is too thick and hard to carry. I put the bark in water to soften it. After that, I scooped up the bark and tried to write on it. It actually worked! I wrote ten words successfully but when I wrote the 11th word, the paper was damaged. I cursed silently. I've worked on this for days and this result. I sliced the 'the paper' to half, to quarters. Feeling as though my heart was pierced, I stuffed myself in bed without brushing my teeth feeling extremely frustrated!

Cai Lun

September 28, 105

I woke up lazily the second day but suddenly realized what I have done yesterday: being furious. So, I acted furious this morning. When I finally went to work, Emperor Liu asked about what we did to solve the letter problem yesterday. He clearly was not satisfied.

'What have you guys done to solve the letter problem?'

Nobody said anything.

'WELL THEN WORK ON IT AND I DO NOT WANT TO WASTE MY TIME!!!' Emperor, He demanded lividly.

When I finally finished my work, I walked silently home.

'Hmm,' I thought. 'Was my Actions yesterday decent? Am I helping or just feeling furious with tiny problems?'

At that moment, I saw an old lady who was approximately 60 years old crying griefffully.

'Who can help me? I caught a disease but I could not send a letter to my son to inform him because all papers were either too expensive or too hard to write on.'

I said nothing.

When I finally got home, guiltiness filled in my body. I should try again; this is the only way to help people. Feeling confident again, I remembered that some of the papers now were made by bamboo barks and lined together. Then I thought that yesterday I used water to soften the mulberry tree bark so I sprinted outside to find some bamboo. Thank you, God, I found it in a forest nearby. I sprinted back to my house again to do my work. I put my bamboo bark inside a bowl of water and soaked it for two days. I got the pulp by using a net and I dried it for one day. Finally, the paper was finished. I wrote on it but it was too soft. I decided to soak the paper for only one day so that the paper will be easier to write on. I did my process again but soaked my bamboo for only one day. IT WORKED. It was probably the best day in my life!

October 1, 105

Yesterday, my paper worked. I woke up excitedly and sprinted to Emperor, He's palace without eating.

When I finally got to the palace, I saw Emperor Liu sitting solemnly on his throne.

'Dear Emperor Liu, I finished improving paper and it was truly amazing,' I panted.

'Okay, bring it up,' Emperor, He replied.

'Oh no, Your majesty, I forgot to bring it.'

I ran home like a mouse chased by a cat, grabbed my paper and ran back.

I presented my paper to the emperor. After examining it for ten minutes, he said in a satisfied tone that this was truly amazing and I had a much higher status.

'Good! Paper is much better now,' he exclaimed

'Make more and bring it to me tomorrow, and please tell me how you made it,' he said. Today, in my own small way, I believe I have made a contribution to the betterment of the world.

How the Umbrella was Made

YK Pao School, Shen, Christina – 9

A long time ago, a leader of the fire dragon pride was a dragon called fire, she was a foreign dragon and she has dark red for her legs, middle red for her skin, and light red for her scales, but she didn't just have pretty outside, she also had a very powerful inside, and this story was about the first time that she save her pride.

Time travel back to three hundred years ago, fire are not the strongest of all, water are, and one day, one of her pride is running like a lightning at her, and he seems very worried, "what's wrong?" ask the leader of the dragon, "the god said that there will be a rain in the dragon world, fire is very afraid of water, how can we do?" "It's OK!" said fire, "I will help and put down the rains!" "but the God of the rain said they need to rain because the rain dragon need to do something!" "then I will make something to protect our world and the each of us, I will make something, please believe me!"

One day night, fire began her adventure in the forest, then she saw something glitter in the Moonlight, "diamond" she shouted, and run over to the huge diamond in the forest, it was big enough to make something waterproof! "I can save my pride in time!" but when she was happy, a loud thunder sound boomed in the forest! "Oh no! the thunder dragon!" said fire, the thunder Dragon was very, very powerful, then she thought of something! I don't need the diamond that big! So she use a hammer that she brought for rocks to make the diamond into small pieces and bring it to a cave, she looked outside, when she saw the thunder dragon turned around and flew off, she quietly walked back to where the diamond are.

But suddenly, she heard thump, thump, thump, the giant stomp his feet when he saw the tiny, little diamond and made lots and lots of tree flat! Fire ran as fast as the light, to the bushes, but the giant saw her and stomp on top off the bushes! "Why is that happening!" Said fire and flew up in the sky and hide the diamonds in the tree, the giant was confused when he saw that she had no diamonds, so he asked, "who took the diamond!" "I don't know!" said fire, so the giant stomped away to look who stole the diamond.

She flew down and walked quietly, until, pop, pop, pop, pop, she tripped and fell into the water, and she felt like someone was grabbing her leg and pull her down into the deep dark water, then she think she can breathe and she can see everything, a castle under the water! She shouted in her mind, I want to know who bring me here, is it a sea monster? is it a sea giant! What would be? Then a cute sea dragon's head peeked in, to see what she was doing! "Hallo!" she said, "emm.....hallo!" fire said, "I need to go back to fire dragon land, can you please bring me there?" "We can make friends and I will bring you back to land, there are very much sea!" "I will!" she said! The two girlfriends swim to the land with sea dragon's protection.

When fire gets on the land, a rescue dog dash to her, and said, "help help my friend is in a fire!" "I will help!" she said, "I love fire!" "OK then can you bring me there?" "Of course! I will sit on your back and you'll fly me there! Then the rescue dog jumped on to fire's back, they fly to where the rescue dog said, a big flame of fire was there on the middle of the ice, and one little rescue dog was in there! Fire put the rescue dog on her back down to save the another rescue dog. After a while, the dog was rescued, "thank you!" said the dog's friend "you are welcome!" she said. And she continues with her trip.

She walked and flies and walked until she went to a snow mountain, she flew and flew but she was not good at flying! She just couldn't fly over it! and the giant, she thought the Giants that I met in the diamond place, and he grabs a little cat! not just one. there are three! Two of them was cats that looks like cows! And one of them are all white, the white one runaway to her house, but tow cow cat didn't run away, they just couldn't! I will help! She's thought! Then she flew over to the giant, "I stole it!" She said, the giant put down the cat and grabbed fire, fire think off a moment, then said "I have trick you! That was just a bag off leaves!" the giant angrily puts down fire, then fire said goodbye to the three cats in their home then flew away.

She walked and walked and walked suddenly a friendly cat appeared in front off her, “hello!”she said, “hello!”said the cat, “what are your name?” My name is fire, “my name was flower!”“Your name was very cool!”Said flower, “do you know why I am called fire?” “I don’t know!”Said the little cat, “it’s because I’m a fire dragon!” “wow do you like to play in fire?”“ yes I really love fire!”At that moment fire thought, this was not the waste of time! “I’m so happy to see you!”she said, “me to!”the cat said,“ why do you have that bag with you?” “inside the bag there lots of diamonds to make waterproof things, why do you need waterproof things?” “Because I need to protect my pride!”“There are rain tomorrow in the dragon world!”“ I will bring you there! ”So, they went back to dragon world and protected all of the fire dragons. The flat diamond was called umbrella. And that’s how the umbrella was made! Please learn to be kind like fire if you are not.

The Future of China

YK Pao School, Xu, Alex – 9

“So , the people before studied all together in a house? “asked Ben , imagining. “Yep.”answered Chip. “They call the house a school. ”A school? Why don’t they get a robot like us? “asked Ben , confused.” “Cause it’s before! “answered Chip , sighing. “But who will teach them? “asked Ben. “Some people , they call them teachers. “answered Chip. “So it’s a people teach another? “Asked Ben. “How could that be? ”It’s a adult teaching many children , which they call a student. “answered Chip. “Ok , enough asking and answering , don’t you have a lesson now? ”Oh , yep. Thanks for reminding me.” answered Ben , exiting the virtual room. A robot(which looks full of technology)came at the front of Ben and in a truly normal person’s voice said “Nice to meet you , Ben. I think it’s the time to have your lessons.” “Yep , Gordon , I’m ready to have my lessons. “answered Ben , full of confidence.

And so , the new day came. Gordon(the robot)knocked the door then waited. “Gordon, is it you? Come in.”yawned Ben sleepily. “Yes , it’s me it’s time to wake up. “answered Gordon, pushing the door. “Remember , you need to meet Chip at 10:00 , it’s already 9:50.“I know , I know. “answered Ben , impatiently. Then at 9:59 Ben quickly finished his washing and rinsing. Then , Gordon said “gigantic , nigmatic , boooooom!”Then , a full of technology’s space ship suddenly appeared in the big living room. “Let’s get on , quickly. I don’t want you to be late. “Hurried Gordon. “Alright , alright , coming! “Answered Ben. When Ben got on the space ship , the ship’s door closed automatically. Then, the space ship read Ben’s mind , then vanished. When you’re still thinking how did the ship vanished in plain air , Gordon and Ben already arrived. All the things happened just in 2 seconds. Hi , Chip! “said Ben. “Hi , Ben!”said Chip. “Why don’t we just chat in the virtual room? “asked Ben. “Because I want to tell you something SECRET. “whispered Chip. “Oh!I love secret things! “Shouted Ben excitedly. “Shhhhhh.Be quiet. “Corrected Chip. “Why should I be quiet? “asked Ben. “Because this is a secret. “answered Chip , quietly. “Talking so much, what’s the secret thing? “Asked Ben.

“It’s this. “answered Chip , lifting up a big , red , cloth. Inside was a big machine , as big as 3 elephants!“Woooooow!!It’s soooooooo BIG! “said Ben full of emotions. “But , what’s actually this?Did you made it? How did you make it?How do you know this? Is it really just we knew it?...”asked Ben. “Alright , alright , I didn’t make it , but it’s my dad who made it.This is a Time Machine , just you , me and my dad knew it.If you stand there and press that button , then choose if you want to go to the future or the past. “explained Chip. “Cool! ”exclaimed Ben. “Could I try it? Pleaaaaase!”“Unfortunately , no. It’s still testing , so maybe some time else. “explained Chip. “Alright.” answered Ben.

The Immortals

YK Pao School, Zhang, Alma – 10

“God, I’m so tired of this!” Cai Lun’s voice came, sharp and frustrated, ringing in the distance. “I want to quit, right this moment!” There, sitting on a roughly shaped wood log, was him, his face twisted into an ugly shape. His dark eyebrows were tightly furrowed into one long line, with a pained expression on his pale, bloodless face. He dropped his plate of ink and stopped writing. When he tried lifting his arm, he squealed again, moaning about how sour his arm was. “I just wish that we could have some better material than these sharp pieces of wood to write on! Look at my arm!” He yelled, pointing at the parts where small drops of blood were glinting, poked by pieces of sharp wood splinters. Around him, people sighed.

This scene had happened daily, with Cai Lun’s complaining. People had heard enough to make their ears itch. Finally, one day, a woman with dark black hair stood up, and yelled back, “Well, if you’re not satisfied, do something about it then! Invent new materials!”

Cai Lun sat, there, in still and complete silence. His hand was still suspended in midair, showing his wounds. Everyone held their breath, expecting him to be raging mad. However, Cai Lun’s startled face slowly stretched into a wide, inspired smile, and he glanced back at the women, his eyes full of light, exclaiming, “Well, guess what, thanks! I will!” After saying, he quickly jumped from the log, and rushed off, muttering excitedly. Behind him, people glanced at one another, speechless, as they watched the old man disappear around the corners.

Years and years before this scene, something similar happened to also an old man, by the name of Shen Kuo. He, out of curiosity, went on a little adventure with his friends, and realized how complicated it is to find direction. There they were, sitting on a small boat for almost two months, in the enormous China Sea, on the blue waters, with no islands or anything in the distance, except water. They knew that they needed to travel west to travel back to China, but they lost direction, and didn’t know which direction was west. After days and days of frantically searching, they finally reached home. Shen Kuo immediately ran off the half-broken ship, and kissed the strong, sturdy earth. After that horrifying experience, Shen Kuo promised to himself, “I will invent something that shows direction very accurately.”

Now, let us travel forward in time, to the newer ages, which is the Tang Dynasty, where there happened a similar scene also, to a man called Wei BoYang. There was a small war against another ‘city’ and, due to Wei BoYang’s strong heart, he wanted to invent an undefeatable weapon that could blast strongly. This was his life wish, and he was very ambitious towards it.

Also in the Tang Dynasty, there happened a super similar scene, this time played by a man called Bi Sheng. At that time, there was no printing, and Bi Sheng felt the uncontrollable exhaustion of copying stuff, hand by hand, every day. One day, he finally felt his limit, and his sanity slipping. He stood up firmly, and yelled, “Hey, I don’t think copying is a good way for someone to live a life! I will invent something that has Technology! Yeah! It can print by itself!” People around gasped at the word “Technology.” They thought that that word is still millions of miles away from them, but they have too small eyes. Bi Sheng beamed, his eyes glowing, and scampered off.

Now, after all these, I have a question. Do you ever have this feeling when you do something brave or awesome, something unexpected and ‘magical’ happens? Well, this was what happened to those four. They had the courage to speak up, and for some reason, God was so pleased. He kind of traveled back and forth in time and put those four together. Yeah, isn’t it real fate? God moved Cai Lun, Wei Bo Yang and Bi Sheng to travel back in time, into the early ages, where Shen Kuo invented stuff. And just look how they fit so perfectly together!

“Ahhhhhhhhhh!”

“Who are you!!!!!!”

“I’m dizzy!!!!”

These three voices rang everywhere, or else, nowhere. Cai Lun, Wei Bo Yang and BI Sheng were flying in nowhere, or else, in time. Brightly colored lights flashed, and they felt them being spun around, back and forth, or even upside down, with the wind whooshing by, as if on the world’s scariest rollercoaster. They screamed, shrieked and yelled until their throats hurt, but they were still flying. All three of them closed their eyes, preparing for a crash any moment, but none came. Instead, after a while, they saw a blinding white hole, coming towards them. When they went through it. There was a straight 90-degree drop, and they screamed. However, instead of the flashing lights, they saw a city, a much older city than they had seen. The speed slowed down, and they landed lightly on a small hill.

“What in the world?”

“Where are we?!”

“I’m still dizzy!”

Cai Lun got up first, obviously very startled and a little breathless; following him was BI Sheng, calm with steadied breath, but also curious; and, lastly, was Wei Bo Yang, gasping for breath and staggering up with heavy chokes. They looked at one another, their glances unfamiliar, and asked:” Hey, who are you?” at the same time.

Now, things were going well. They met each other, learned that they were all inventors having a big dream, and became besties right away. However, after the close conversation, they began to focus more on their surroundings. It all looked so unfamiliar. They walked down the old, ancient streets and ended up in front of a small door with a window made of hay. Peering through the small window, they saw an old man, busy inventing...

Now, they call themselves “Immortals.” The life of China beholds...