

1. English Language Education

Ms. S. Yap

Our heartiest congratulations to the Class of 2024! It was with eagerness that they made the transition from learning during the pandemic days to a school life filled with exciting opportunities. New students, who joined us because they were attracted by our academic rigour, finally saw how vibrant secondary school education can be at DGS in the extracurricular domain.

Credit for the pleasing public examination results goes to the students for their diligence and initiative as well as to parents for their extensive support. Teachers and librarians, in primary and secondary schools, enthusiastically promoted English as a way of life rather than a subject. In the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education examination, four in ten students obtained Level 5** in English Language, with 87% attaining Level 5 and above. Coincidentally, 87% of our AL stream students attained Band 8 and above in IELTS. The HKDSE Literature in English class did well in the written examinations and SBA: more than half obtained Level 5 to 5**.

Our students understood that their remarkable English proficiency should be employed to serve a higher cause than be a source of personal pride. Upholding our school motto, daily giving service, many members of the Class of 2024 tutored disadvantaged groups who needed help in English and shared their passion for reading with children in a variety of community service projects.

When the local and non-local exchange trips resumed fully, students not only welcomed visiting delegates from local schools and abroad, but were also able to represent us overseas on study tours, competitions, conferences, and internships. There seemed to be no end to the learning opportunities available because of the joint efforts of different departments.

The annual Humanities Research Symposium for Youth was not only a collaboration between our school and schools in South Korea, Singapore and Australia, but also supported by teachers of English, Economics, History, Geography, Literature, Science, Chinese and other subjects at DGS. Held in South Korea in June, our delegates presented papers on the theme of yin and yang, covering research topics ranging from astronomy to Chinese history.

Our Model United Nations and English Debating Teams also drew on their learning across the curriculum to participate in local and overseas conferences and tournaments. While the MUN delegates won awards for the most outstanding delegates and honourable mention at conferences in Hong Kong and Singapore, debaters were junior champions of the Hong Kong Secondary Schools Debating Competition (Enhanced Format, Kowloon region) and runners-up in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Debating Competition (secondary schools). The annual Hong Kong Schools Speech Festival and the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups' English Public Speaking Contest continued to see keen participation from students in the junior and senior forms who were awarded the top three places. The publication of our 5A magazine, *Reverie*, encouraged students to write on wide-ranging topics, edit, design, collaborate and lead.

Individual students achieved laudable results in English-related competitions. In the South China Morning Post's Student of the Year Awards Competition, Shah Jiya Ketul was the second runner-up English linguist. So Pui Yin's essay was awarded distinction in the John Locke Institute Essay Competition 2023; Richelle Wo Hoi Yiu was named second runner-up (Senior Division) in the Department of Justice's Mediation Essay Competition; Rena Wong Yuen Ching's essay won The Harvard Global Women's Empowerment Essay Contest 2024 (school category) while Katelyn Yiu Hong Ching's poem earned her the Hong Kong Young Writers Award for poetry. Galie Chan won the gold medal in the 2024 Hong Kong Macau Reading Comprehension Competition and Serena Wen Ching Hei won the gold award in the Hong Kong Macau Outstanding Writers Competition. Hayley Yuen Yee Ting was chosen for the inaugural Hong Kong Team at the National Speech and Debating Association Competition in Iowa while Joy Wan Shun Yan joined the Hong Kong Team at the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championships in Australia. In the 21st Century Cup National English Speaking Competition (HK Region), Xiao Ka Yee Brianna was placed overall first (high school

category); Hillary Tsui Hoi Hei won the grand prize for secondary schools in the Hong Kong Chu Hai College English Speech Contest 2024 while Hilary Tam Yeuk Hey was named the most outstanding debater of the 39th Sing Tao English Debating Competition.

DGS formed the biggest school delegation in the Law Society's Greater Bay Area Study Tour and returned with the overall first and third prizes for group presentations on how the respective advantages of the legal systems in the Mainland and Hong Kong might be combined to support the development and construction of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area. Like their big sisters, three Secondary 1 students impressed with their fluency when they shared about their aspirations and leisure in a RTHK 3 broadcast, 'In the Common Room'.

Thanks to our students' diverse interests and the school's wide array of programmes, inter-departmental cooperation between English teachers and our RE, PE, IT, VA, and Chinese colleagues was also evident. Our prefects practised with their English teachers before doing the bible reading at morning assemblies throughout the year while our elite athletes honed their oral skills with their English teachers before sharing about their spectacular feats at the inter-school swimming and athletics competitions. Secondary 2 students consulted their IT and English teachers when making short videos for the EDB's FilmIT competition while the EDB's Poetry Remake Competition enabled students to combine their Visual Art skills and English poetry appreciation. When DGS representatives took part in a gruelling territory-wide tri-lingualism competition and in another tri-lingual public speaking contest with a sister school across the border, teachers from both language departments worked hand in hand to give feedback. DGS buddies welcomed visiting school delegates from the Mainland, Singapore and Australia into their English and English Literature classes, in addition to sharing the joy of calligraphy and our delightful Spring Concert.

Inter-departmental collaboration comes naturally at DGS because English is the operating language at school: many events, not to mention classes, are conducted this way. The inspired school leadership ensures that an English-rich environment expedites our students' mastery of a language that is not their mother tongue. The Class of 2024 has shown us what can be achieved in a community like DGS.