

## Editors Column

## Teaching English to New Young Students: A Fantastic Experience



**Hajoong Song**  
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Poster Drawing session during the English lesson. [Source: Author, Hajoong Song]

In the XiaoZhen library in Beijing, China, a group of Chinese children aged from 7 to 9 years old can take English tutoring lessons from high school students who are currently enrolled in an international school. These high school students, including myself, want to receive community service hours, and children desperately want to learn English. A summer school

program is run by this library so children can be taught English for a whole day in the library during the summer break. By teaching these children for one month, I learned valuable tips for teaching English to beginners.

When I arrived at the XiaoZhen library for my first-ever English tutoring session, I was greeted by six Chinese children who were about

to learn English for the first time in their lives. I was worried about my Chinese skills to explain English to the children, and slowly connected my ppt to the screen. I started with the common alphabet letters and ended the lesson by explaining the main function of vowels and consonants in English. Although some children were very confused about the alphabet since it was a completely different language compared to Chinese, I tried to relieve their confusion by referring to some examples. As the two hours of teaching passed, the children were able to understand the alphabet and accurately sort vowels and consonants. I felt thankful for the children who concentrated during such a boring lesson. I promised myself to teach them a more interesting and tangible lesson to them in my next lesson.

By teaching many lessons for approximately 1 month to the

children, I learned that studying a new language at an early age could be a huge benefit. All of my students made significant improvements in one month in every area: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. I was proud to see my students consistently improving their English skills so I could prepare for the next lessons with confidence. One tip that I used wisely during the lessons was that kids loved competition. Whenever I divided my students into two teams and awarded them a point if they answered my question right, they suddenly got more engaged in the lesson.

Overall, the English tutoring sessions during the summer break have become a valuable asset throughout my life. I will effectively use this experience if I get a chance to tutor again in the XiaoZhen library or participate in any teaching activities.

## Student Reporter

## Summer Jobs for Teens at Wild Rivers



**Austin Ahn**  
Grade 9  
Orange County School of Arts

Near the end of the school year, students often anticipate the coming of summer break. Yet, when summer arrives, students can find that they don't have many productive things to do. I nearly faced this exact predicament; however, the opportunity to work as a sweeper at Wild Rivers transformed my summer, which helped me develop essential social skills while also providing a salary of \$16 an hour.

Wild Rivers, located in Irvine, California, originally opened in July of 1986 and closed in 2011. It has since reopened, containing fun rides and pools—the most notable being Pelican Plunge, Boomerango, Cooks Cove, and the Wave Pool. As soon as the park reopened, there were more developed rides to ensure customers had a great time, and teenagers were offered the chance to work and make money. This opportunity benefits future job and college applications as it demonstrates valuable work experience.

As a worker at Wild Rivers, I applied for this job during the school year because my friends and I



A general view of Wild Rivers, where teenagers can work over the summer to have fun and gain life experience.

[Source: Author, Austin Ahn]



Wild Rivers has an employee lounge to offer workers breaks between their shifts.

[Source: Author, Austin Ahn]

sought ways to make money over the summer. I had always wondered what the brightly-colored structures that towered over the nearby fields were when driving from the 405 freeway. That location then became the park where I would later work!

Wild Rivers offers various job positions, such as lifeguards and operating concession stands. I usually work around 10-15 hours a week, with each shift being five hours. Cleaning up trash is very straightforward since the park is relatively spotless at all times.

Walking around the park as a sweep is quite relaxing, given that the park is in an open environment near Great Park, which is also a new community in Irvine. Usually, I walk around seven miles per shift due to the constant cleaning required. During these five-hour shifts, a break is necessary.

The park offers discounts to employees for food, tickets for friends, as well as free entry to the park. For the food, I usually buy a sandwich wrap to eat on my 15-minute break, that helps to sustain me on my shift, which many

other workers also do. My coworkers and I, near closing time, start cleaning the places where most people visit, which tend to be the cabanas and chairs by the wave pool. "During closing time, I like to tidy the chairs and clean up bits of trash, so the park is nice and clean." - Justin Cortez, a coworker.

The jobs are very productive and help develop a range of skills. Next year, I aspire to become a park lifeguard to assist fellow peers and customers. I hope this experience of mine inspires you to visit the park one day!

## Student Reporter

## Claes Oldenburg, Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks



**Ivy Jihu Kim**  
Grade 12  
Yongsan International School of Seoul

In 1969, when the Yale University campus was punctuated by intense student protests against the violence of the Vietnam War, an uninvited, monumental lipstick sculpture appeared surreptitiously. Claes Oldenburg's Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks, a 24-foot tall sculpture, overlooked the Yale president's office as well as a prominent World War I memorial at the university's Beinecke Plaza. The monument aimed to serve as an impish platform for the burgeoning anti-war sentiments.

A permanent metal iteration of the sculpture stands in the Morse College Courtyard. Although less visible than when it was at its original location, it remains a significant part of the university's legacy. The initial sculpture, constructed from plywood and red vinyl, was not designed for permanent display and was removed after ten months from the Beinecke Plaza.

Lipstick (Ascending) on Cat-

erpillar Tracks resonates with prominent metaphors of lipsticks in Oldenburg's past works. Though he has designed larger-than-life vinyl sculptures of household objects before, this sculpture was his first public work. The juxtaposition of a stereotypically feminine, frivolous product like lipstick with the categorically masculine machine of a caterpillar track offers a mischievous commentary on America's consumerism and the military's bellicose narratives. Additionally, the phallic resemblance of the lipstick, as well as its similarity to a bullet, positions U.S. consumerism as a distraction from the government's involvement in the Vietnam War. By introducing two seemingly unrelated objects in the same work, Oldenburg transcended the boundaries between public and private, domestic and foreign, feminine and masculine, inciting much-needed conversations about U.S. culture, politics, and gender.

In the Yale Summer Session, where many students reside in Morse College, the monumental sculpture provides a window into the university's past. Many students pass the sculpture on their way to classes, the cafeteria, and the library. During large group gatherings, the gigantic lipstick serves as an easily identifiable meeting place. Even students unaware of the sculpture's artistic history are drawn to its striking presence, ensuring its continued relevance and prompting reflection on the socio-political issues it represents. The presence of Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks in Morse College Courtyard highlights the enduring impact of art as a medium for social commentary and historical reflection, fostering an environment where critical discussions about the intersections of art, politics, and society can thrive. With its bold form and provocative juxtaposition, Oldenburg's work contin-



A profile view of Lipstick (Ascending) on Caterpillar Tracks in the Morse College courtyard.

[Source: Author, Ivy Jihu Kim]

ues to engage the Yale community, spurring ongoing dialogues on the interdependence of art, culture, and politics. The sculpture stands not only as a historical artifact but also as a catalyst for contemporary discourse, encouraging students and visitors alike to consider the complex narratives embedded in unassuming objects.

Student Reporter

## High School Bookstore's Silent War Against Inflation



**Junsang Ryu**  
Grade 10  
Northfield Mount Hermon School



Although prices can be seen on some merchandise at the Northfield Mount Hermon School bookstore, that is not the case with snacks and drinks. [Source: NMH School Store Instagram]

It's 10:03 in the morning, and A Block classes have just ended. From freshmen to seniors, students begin to fill the bookstore; all of a sudden, it's bustling with people. As two seemingly endless lines form along the counters, there is barely any room to move.

The Northfield Mount Hermon School bookstore is always a popular destination for students. It offers a wide range of everyday essentials, such as school supplies,

merchandise, snacks, and bottled drinks. Although the store features a wide variety of foods and beverages, there surprisingly aren't any price tags displayed for these items.

"I was really confused in the beginning. Essentially, I don't get why they don't have snack prices listed," says Aaryaman Rathor, a Northfield Mount Hermon School senior. He also added, "The price of my Pepsi always changes."

Another student who wanted to remain anonymous wondered, "I would like to know why there are prices displayed for the school merch but not the snacks."

Despite these complaints, there is a very good and legitimate reason as to why it is a challenge for the store to display its prices. The answer lies in inflation and the skyrocketing rates of food prices.

According to the Consumer Price Index, food prices, especially those associated with junk food, rose 5.7% during the first six months of 2023. Nestle increased its prices by 9% during the first half of 2023, and Pepsi increased its prices by 15%. While an average sixteen-ounce bag of chips would run \$5.08 in 2021, it was worth \$6.41 in 2023. Due to these radical changes, Northfield Mount Hermon School was no exception and fell victim to inflation.

"We used to have prices listed for all of the snacks and drinks. But inflation kept affecting the snack prices, and we couldn't simply change the price tags every time it did," said the manager of the Northfield Mount Hermon School bookstore.

Inflation is an essential part of understanding modern econom-

ics. When inflation is low, the companies that produce snacks stamp the items' prices on the packaging, making it convenient for consumers to check their prices. However, as food prices have risen significantly these past few years, many companies have stopped stamping prices on these items.

It is important to note that the snack prices at Northfield Mount Hermon School are lower than what they would be in the outside world.

"We try to provide our students with affordable food prices as much as possible. I would say the snack prices here are slightly lower than an average convenience store. However, it's also important to consider the fact that the school store needs funding to operate, and all of this money originates from our sales. Any additional profit, I believe, goes to running other parts of the school," added the manager.

Although it may come across as inconvenient, there won't be any pragmatic solutions to this case unless inflation is tackled nationally. The bookstore is trying its best to provide the Northfield Mount Hermon School community with affordable snack prices.

Student Reporter

## How to Protect Your Skin This Summer



**Abigail Ro**  
Grade 9  
Yorba Linda High School

Summer brings the promise of sunshine, outdoor activities, and a lively ambiance. However, amidst the warm weather and recreational games, it's crucial to remember the significance of protecting one's skin from the sun's harmful rays. To delve deeper into strategies for maintaining healthy skin during the summer months, Dr. Silvia Soohyun Song, a dermatologist based in Southern California, presented multiple strategies for students and adults.

Dr. Song highlighted several common skin issues, one of which was sunburn. She explained that "without proper protection, like sunscreen and hats, individuals often experience redness, peeling, and discomfort." Additionally, she noted the risk of allergic contact dermatitis from chemical sunscreens and sun exposure and the importance of choosing appropriate skincare



A soccer player stands on a grassy sunlit field, expertly applying sunscreen to his shin before his game, next to his treasured soccer ball. [Source: Author, Abigail Ro]

products and which to avoid.

She stressed a comprehensive approach to protecting your skin from the sun and its long-term effects. Additionally, she recommended wearing wide-brimmed hats, UV-protective clothing, and sunglasses. When being

interviewed, she placed an emphasis on using sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher and reapplying it every few hours to maintain effectiveness throughout the day. Her preference leaned toward sunscreens containing zinc or titanium dioxide because they are less likely to cause troublesome effects from the sun, like dark spots. To those who are vitamin D deficient, Dr. Song addressed their misconceptions by explaining that even small periods of time outdoors will be sufficient, even with sunscreen applied as well.

Dr. Song noted that acne could worsen due to increased sweating, so she recommended cleansing to prevent pore blockage. On the other hand, eczema tends to improve in summer compared to dry winter conditions, so she mentioned it would depend on one's skincare during each season. She was sure to specify the long-term

effects of sun exposure, which included, "The number one reason sun protection is emphasized is because one can develop skin cancer, and it causes changes to your skin that damage [it] and eventually develops into skin cancer in the future."

Lastly, Dr. Song discussed when professional help from a dermatologist is advised, "If one sees new growth or a mole that's changing very quickly over time. Or if they have irregular borders, multiple colors, or develop symptoms such as itching, pain, or bleeding from the mole."

Dr. Silvia Soohyun Song, MD, provided insights into summer skin care, explaining ways to prevent sun damage and seek professional advice concerning skin changes. It's crucial for everyone, from outdoor enthusiasts to anyone just going outside, to take these precautions to support their skin health.

Student Reporter

## Accounting: A Worthwhile Career



**Olivia Lee**  
Grade 8  
Richardson Middle School

Although the word tax is seen on almost every receipt, this is not the only type of tax we may see. When people make money, they don't get to keep all of it. Instead, this money goes to the government to fund essential services. Although dealing with money and the government is very stressful, there are people who can help. If there is one job that could deal with these tasks, it's accounting.

For this job, it takes someone who is very patient and experienced. Hairim Yoon, a Certified Public Accountant who previously worked in one of the most prestigious accounting firms, one of the Big 4, called Ernst & Young, explains, "Being an accountant provides you the opportunity to

meet new people from all around the world and grow strong connections. I love working as an accountant because my knowledge and my experiences accumulate, and I am so grateful that I get to work with my amazing clients."

Yoon began her career working in the international tax field, helping expatriates to be compliant with tax laws. Now, she is running her own practice to support her clients. Her day-to-day job consists of a lot of communication with clients via email, phone, and in-person meetings, while her main job is to file tax returns and provide consulting. She helps clients be compliant with taxes as well as not pay more than they need to.

Most accountants have one

responsibility in common: communication with their clients and their team to get the work done. Yoon says, "The profession boosts both your social and communication skills. Communication is key because talking to your clients is essential when it comes to dealing with taxes. You need to be a leader who motivates the team and works well with them."

While rising the ranks at the Big 4 accounting firm, accountants are trained to be leaders and to communicate with teammates and clients. This is proven to be important because the 'Communication for Tax Professionals' class was mandatory when Yoon was pursuing her master's at the University of Southern California.



Hairim Yoon's CPA experience is proudly shown in her office. [Source: Hairim Yoon]

In order to be a successful accountant, you have to understand and be compliant with the tax laws and keep up with changes. Also, this job teaches you to be good at managing your time, being able to take down multiple tasks at a time, and making sure those tasks are moving at the same pace.