

Learning together through paired-reading

伴讀相長



Rachel giving a heart gesture in response to the affection she received from kindergarten and primary school children
思希以心形動作回應幼兒和小學生對她的喜愛

The epidemic has been with us for over a year and has changed the way we live our lives. Where we once learnt exclusively in the classroom, we now also learn at home, with students and teachers separated by a computer screen. It is through these difficult times that physical and spiritual companionship are even more valuable. A class of student volunteers from EdUHK has participated in the 'Paired-Reading Without Walls' online service project to interact with and read books to children from ethnic minorities, low-income families, and with special educational needs.

The 'Paired-Reading Without Walls' online service project, organised by the Student Affairs Office (SAO), has recruited over 180 service leaders and students. Rachel, a third-year student studying BEd (Hons) in English Language programme, is one of them. Before the online sessions officially began, she and a group of other student volunteers underwent a month's training, attending workshops delivered by specialists in child education and learning to be attentive when communicating with children. The children's parents are present during the reading activity, so that they can take home the four books used, and employ the methods and approach the students have demonstrated. The aim is to nurture parent-child relationships, making children feel more comfortable in discussing the books' themes, such as honesty and caring.

疫情持續逾年，改變了我們的生活形態，以往我們在課室學習，現時則變成家中，學生與教師總隔著屏幕相見。在如此艱難時刻，身心靈的陪伴更顯得彌足珍貴。教大一班學生義工參與「伴讀無疆界」網上服務計劃，與少數族裔、低收入家庭及有特殊教育需要的學童交流，為他們朗讀繪本故事。

「伴讀無疆界」網上服務計劃由教大學生事務處舉辦，招募逾一百八十名服務大使及學生參與。英國語文教育榮譽學士三年級生黎思希乃義工隊成員之一。在計劃開展前，她與其他學生義工接受了長達一個月的培訓，參加由兒童教育專家主講的工作坊，學習與學童溝通時要特別注意的技巧。而在伴讀期間，家長亦會在旁，與子女一同參與。他們可借用服務計劃中的四本圖書，套用學生義工的講故事方法，在家中與子女開卷。當他們一同翻閱圖書，子女會更願意打開心窗，與家長討論書中主題，諸如誠實及關愛等，藉此增進親子關係。

Developing empathy

As Rachel's major is in teaching secondary school students, this was the first time she has worked with small children, and one from which she has gained new experience. When working with students from ethnic minorities who are not proficient in Chinese, if they encounter a difficult character, she first translates into English to help the child understand. Furthermore, she has to pay special attention to the child's background when selecting subject matter to avoid offending the child's religious beliefs. "For example, we did not choose any picture books that were related to 'pigs' to avoid being disrespectful to Muslims," she says.

Ms Angie Yeon Yuk-mei, Director of Student Affairs, said many student volunteer activities have not been able to proceed as planned because of the pandemic. Considering children's lack of social interaction during class suspension, SAO has moved this activity online to encourage students to give back to society. "Through this programme, they can also develop empathy and learn about the needs of different people in the community," says Ms Yeon. She also reveals that the project has received positive feedback and has served over 550 children from disadvantaged families to date.

建立同理心

思希主修的課程以教導中學生為主，此乃她首次挑戰與小朋友相處。面對少數族裔學童不諳中文，遇上艱澀的字詞，她會先翻譯為英文，幫助對方理解。在挑選題材方面，她亦用心考慮背景，唯恐冒犯他們的宗教，「我們避免選取內容提到『豬』的繪本，以免對回教徒不敬。」

學生事務處處長甄玉媚女士表示，因應疫情，很多義工活動未能如期進行。考慮到學童在疫情下或因停課而缺乏社交活動，學生事務處遂將是次活動移師網上，鼓勵同學回饋社區。她說：「『伴讀計劃』有助教大同學建立同理心，了解不同社群的需要，饒有意義。」她透露計劃反應正面，至今已服務逾五百五十名弱勢家庭學童。



The picture books used in the activity and made available to parents online
家長可從線上免費閱讀活動中所用的圖書

Tips of paired-reading

- Before telling a story, sing a nursery rhyme to set the right atmosphere and help the children focus
- Avoid adding extra content that diverges from the main storyline and breaks children's concentration
- Connect the story to objects with which the children are familiar, such as "birds fly in the sky like aeroplanes". This helps enrich children's imagination and strengthen their knowledge of the world around them

伴讀小貼士

- 在開始說故事前，可先透過兒歌帶動氣氛，幫助學童集中
- 盡量避免加插其他內容，脫離故事主線，以免分散注意力
- 說故事時可將內容與學童熟悉的事物聯繫起來，如「小鳥與飛機一樣，同樣在天空飛翔」，有助豐富學童的想像力，加強他們對身邊事物的認知