

A Career Like No Other



Teaching is a career like no other. A teacher is a motivator, a learner and a leader.

Just ask Mdm Lim Chwee Lian, 54, Head Of Department (English Language) of Seng Kang Primary School, the recent recipient of the Inspiring Teacher of English Award 2014 for the Leadership Award category. She has been teaching for 35 years and has found the career to be highly rewarding.

Motivating Students

Mdm Lim teaches without thinking much of it. Since becoming a teacher, she has found her purpose in life - to motivate and develop young students.

As an English teacher, she works to inspire students to speak good English. "I give opportunities and platforms for students to practise their oral skills and build up their confidence in using the language". She has appointed English Language Champions in her class - students who remind their peers to speak in good English in and out of the class.

Spreading a love for reading has also been an exciting process. Mdm Lim has worked with the English Department to transform the school library into a "fairy-tale land" named Our Storyland. By re-enacting the action in fiction tales, she has inspired them to flip open the book cover.

Besides, she has also worked with several passionate teachers to dress as characters from storybooks and put smiles on her students' faces.

Learning to Improve

Teaching offers many opportunities for self-development.

As a young teacher, Mdm Lim was given the chance to assume new roles. A team of senior teachers guided her and expanded her skill set. Beyond that, Mdm Lim was tasked to pioneer many school projects. "I have been given the breadth of experimenting with projects and learning from projects that failed," she shared.

Mdm Lim has also developed herself professionally during her career. She pursued an English Language and Literature degree while being a HOD and attended many learning journeys, both local and overseas, to widen her views on pedagogy. "Conferences and attachments have allowed me to look at educational issues more deeply," said Mdm Lim.

Teaching has given many valuable life lessons to Mdm Lim. As a tough teacher with a soft heart, she has learnt to be resilient during setbacks and never give up on students. Despite her decades of experience, Mdm Lim preaches humility and always seeks to learn from younger teachers. As Mdm Lim puts it, "If you choose to teach, you must never cease to learn."

Leading in Multiple Spheres

A teacher can be a leader within and outside of the classroom.

"It is my duty not just to encourage good English, but also to cultivate the reading habit as a school," Mdm Lim advocated. This belief has led her to take on the role as a facilitator for the Read And Think (RAT) programme, where students reflect on interesting articles.

Outside the classroom, Mdm Lim is a respected leader among the staff. As a HOD, she holds regular bite-sized sessions with her staff where she reviews commonly-made mistakes. "By raising their competency level, it will benefit our students," Mdm Lim explained. She also passes on the baton of empowerment to her staff, by nominating them to lead campaigns for good spoken English. Beyond her department, Mdm Lim also engages the canteen vendors and office staff to speak good English.

Simply Extraordinary

In 35 years of teaching, Mdm Lim has taught batches of students, who have grown and flourished in their lives. She has spread her love for English by spearheading impressive programmes to engage both students and staff in fun and meaningful ways, all while constantly upgrading her own teaching and leadership abilities. Mdm Lim's love for nurturing children and aiding teachers professionally spurs her on in this rewarding career, and continues to empower her in charting the course of learning.

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