

THEMATIC READING- TERM 3 : CARING CITIZENS

CAPSTONE PROJECT EXPERIENCE 2022

By: Kiefer Quek, P4-3

What is Capstone Project? Capstone Project is a multi-faceted project that serves as an academic and intellectual experience for students, typically during their final years in Geylang Methodist School (Secondary). For Capstone Project 2022, the Secondary Four students were provided with a variety of topics that we might feel strongly for and would like to advocate to our fellow schoolmates. Some of these examples include disease awareness, disability awareness and animal abuse and cruelty.

My class chose to work on animal abuse and cruelty. We were tasked to raise awareness of animal cruelty through various forms, such as a short video (TikTok/IG Story), poster, brochure, infographic, Powerpoint slideshow or an online article. Our class decided to work on animal abuse as we felt that there is insufficient awareness of this topic. We feel strongly that no animals should be abused. In the news, countless stories of animal abuse were featured in our local media, be it abuse towards pets or towards wildlife in Singapore. These may range from an incident in which a man was caught on camera abusing chickens in Hougang on 22 May to the inconsiderate treatment of the marine animals at Pulau Ubin where many visitors were not aware of the proper way to treat these marine animals during intertidal walks and visits.

However, our Capstone Journey was not without challenges. A challenge that our class faced during the project is that we had to manage our time well between the project and our studies, as the Capstone Project took place relatively close to our examination dates. It was necessary for my classmates and I to learn to work well with one another and with perseverance, we managed to successfully complete the project by the deadline. One of the groups did a video about animal cruelty, and a QR code to the video is listed in this article for viewing. The group did an amazing job explaining what animal abuse is.

In conclusion, our class has learned to work well together and the Capstone Project experience has created many opportunities for my classmates and I to bond. We also learnt more about animal abuse and came away from the project feeling strongly that awareness should be made on the various societal issues that plague Singapore- be it animal abuse by ignorant citizens or even the lack of awareness faced by the disabled in Singapore. It was an enjoyable and meaningful experience and I hope that you, my juniors will also do your utmost during your own Capstone Project experience this year.



Video made by:
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Scan the QR code above to find out more about their Capstone Project

My Volunteering Experience

By: Vikhil Mahtani, J3-3

Some of my friends have questioned me about my volunteering experience as they were puzzled by the fact that I would choose to use my precious weekend on something that is not conventionally thought of as an exciting weekend activity. Most of my friends would spend their weekends at the mall with their families, but I'm proud to say that I found my time volunteering during weekends a meaningful investment of my time.

Prior to the pandemic, I used to volunteer at Sunlove Home with my family every third Sunday of the month. Sunlove Home is a charitable Home for the intellectually-disabled, aiming to shelter, protect and care for those entrusted to them. Initially when I started volunteering, my parents had to drag my sister and I along. However, after a few sessions, I began enjoying the volunteering experience where I got to help out despite my young age. I realised that even the simplest of things can make the residents of Sunlove Home feel happy. The event was organised by a family friend who asked us if we were keen to spend a few hours a month bringing smiles to people's faces. My father enthusiastically jumped at the opportunity as he was always looking for opportunities to help the less fortunate. The gathering took place every third Sunday of the month from around 1:30pm and lasted for two hours. There were many duties such as preparing food bowls, serving meals and finally, clearing the dishes once everyone had finished eating. At the end of our session, we would play music for the seniors to enjoy, and the volunteers and residents would sing and dance with one another. On special months like December, Christmas carols would usually be played and sung. Similarly for Chinese New Year (CNY), CNY songs will be sung and danced to.

After the residents have had their meals, we usually spend time communicating with them to find out about their lives in Sunlove Home. However, quite a number of the residents are unable to converse in English, and so they spoke Chinese or Malay. I could understand Malay. However, I was unable to understand Chinese and I would usually ask a staff to translate. Despite it being a challenge, it is still very possible to get over the hurdle. Like they say, where there is a will, there is a way. Another issue that I faced was a lack of experience when communicating with the residents of Sunlove Home. I was uncertain on how to respond when they were sharing their struggles and loneliness with me. For instance, one of them shared his difficult time when he was living with his family and was moved to the home as a result. His family hardly visits him and he is very lonely despite having so many newfound friends at the Home. I felt his pain but did not know how to comfort his. On such occasions, I could only remain silent, providing a listening ear at most. I find this to be a great challenge and I guess I would gain more experience as I spend more time with them and watch my parents' interaction with these residents.

This is a valuable experience as I learnt how fragile life could be. Maintaining relationships with family and friends may sound easy but it takes a lot of commitment. When I meet the residents, some of them are just happy. Simple things like being able to walk, have meals and share conversations with friends can mean so much. We should not take life for granted. We must always count our blessings and be appreciative of our family and all that we have. Be kind, you never know the battles others are fighting.

Through my experience volunteering at Sunlove Home, I felt that I have gained more than I have given as I learnt more about the residents' way of living. I have become a better individual after volunteering and developed better social and life skills.