

# Salt & Light



**ISSUE #4**

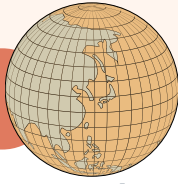
**FEBUARY 2023**



Cover by: Teo Yew Kee (4.2)

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# TURKEY AND SYRIA: A SERIES OF DEADLY EARTHQUAKES.

Written by: Chloe Peh (2.4), Megan Lee (2.4), Krithi Sugenthiran (1.5)

Designed by: Kiera Koh (4.1), Natalie Yang (4.4)

Many worldwide, even in PL ourselves, pray for those affected by the devastating earthquakes, yet some of us may not know what really occurred.



In short: An earthquake struck Turkey and Syria, bringing the death toll up to 49,000 and 7,000 respectively. Rather than simply acknowledging the death toll as a statistic and number, it's important to realise that people all around are devastated to lose their family members so suddenly and innocently.

On 6th February 2023, a deadly earthquake of a 7.8 magnitude rocked the Turkey-Syria border, causing the homes of thousands from both sides to topple and be wiped off. Many people were terribly injured and thousands died. As of 20th February, the region has been stricken by a total of three earthquakes; considerably one of the worst natural disasters in modern Turkey.

Weeks after the devastating earthquakes hit Turkey and Syria, more than 84,000 buildings have either been severely damaged, need urgent demolition, or collapsed, according to officials. Millions have been displaced or are homeless. The most vulnerable, including around 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey's border region, as well as, 4 million conflict-affected people (including Palestinian refugees) within Syria's opposition-controlled area.





Here in Singapore, we are extremely fortunate to be protected by natural disasters due to our geography. However, despite all the chaos, many countries such as Singapore, Germany, Australia, and Canada have offered help and contributed resources and aid to help the survivors. For instance, the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) deployed 'Operation Lion Heart' to assist in the disaster rescue efforts.

On top of Government assistance, we individuals can step up to support the ongoing crisis. Firstly, we can donate items such as winter clothing, tents, mattresses, food and hygiene products to non-profit organisations such as Giving.sg. Secondly, we can try and donate to the Singapore Red Cross - all donations will go directly to the Singapore Red Cross' local humanitarian work unless stated otherwise by the donor. Last, but not least, we can pray for their well-being, while staying aware and updated with the situation, in order to spread awareness to those around us.

The earthquake has definitely brought unbearable suffering and hurt for those affected most. So, for most of us who are extremely blessed with safety, we can choose to initiate awareness about this topic and contribute to aid to support those in need.

# Singapore Budget 2023: What's in store for us?

## The reality of our economy and a glimpse into its future

Written by: Felicia Low (3.1), Elizabeth Ban (3.2), Clara Holmberg (3.6)

Designed by: Teo Yew Kee (4.2)

What comes to mind when you hear the date February 14th 2023?

Most of us recall being preoccupied with preparing friendship gifts for our friends on Valentine's Day, or for us PL-Lites, worrying about the upcoming Weighted Assessments. That said, did you know that the Singapore government was also hard at work at the time? Mr Lawrence Wong, Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Finance minister, delivered the annual budget statement for 2023 in parliament on 14 February. With an assurance plan for GST and inflation, various forms of support for households, businesses, and workers alike, as well as improvements to workforce resilience and tax system changes in general, Singaporeans will be looking forward to a multitude of benefits in the upcoming months! Wish to learn more? Read on to find out more! (Remember to look up the underlined words in the glossary for unfamiliar terms!)

## Some Background Knowledge about Budget 2023

Due to higher-than-expected revenue in FY2022 (fiscal year 2022), Mr Lawrence Wong forecast a budget deficit of around \$0.4 billion for the upcoming fiscal year (FY) 2023. The government expects the total spending in fiscal year 2023 to be \$104.1 billion, a 2.6% decrease from fiscal year 2022. The Manpower Ministry's budget is expected to be cut by \$2.3 billion, while the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth's budget are to be cut by \$1.6 billion.

The government anticipates an operating revenue of \$96.7 billion in FY2023, a 7.1% increase over previously revised estimates. Increased revenue will be generated by increased collections of the goods and services tax, asset taxes, and corporate and individual income taxes. Large Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) will be subjected to a domestic top-up tax beginning in 2025, as well as a global minimum effective tax rate of 15%.

### What this means:

The budget will be reduced as a result of increased spending and a higher profit estimate. As a result, the Manpower Ministry and the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth will receive less funding, and international companies in Singapore will be required to pay higher taxes in order to generate higher revenue for our country to function on.

## Assurance in 2023

Singapore's cost of living is rising due to the tighter labour market and more developed economy, something many of us simply call “inflation”. Mr Lawrence Wong stated that the government will be assisting Singaporeans in weathering this and cushioning the impact of the new Goods-and-Service-Tax (GST) rates, which are expected to rise to 9%, in two major ways – the enhancement of the permanent GST Voucher (GSTV) and Assurance Package schemes.

The permanent GSTV was implemented with the intention to permanently defray GST expenses for lower to middle-income Singaporeans. With this upcoming improvement, the GSTV – Cash quantum will be further increased by up to \$350 depending on household income. This will benefit about 1.5 million adult Singaporeans every year!

The Assurance Package which provides transitional support for all Singaporeans will be further increased from \$6.6 billion to \$9.6 billion in order to account for the higher inflation, address immediate cost of living concerns as well as provide additional support. Assurance Package cash received by Singaporeans will be increased by \$300 to \$650 for all those eligible. Community Development Council (CDC) vouchers will also be increased by \$100 in 2024, so Singaporean households can expect an extra \$300 in CDC vouchers in January of next year.

### What this means:

In the face of the increase in GST rates and higher inflation, Singaporeans will be receiving more support to cushion its impact on their lives.

## A more resilient country

Singapore has the option of pursuing a more resilient supply chain by focusing on reliable trade partners, revitalising domestic production capacity, or looking for trade partners who are geographically closer to home and have simpler logistics. Increased trade between China and ASEAN is a significant trend, and Singapore's membership in the ASEAN region helps integrate it into international talent and trade flows. Along with that, the redistributive Budget 2023 has been planned to support more workers from vulnerable demographics, such as individuals with disabilities and ex-offenders, as well as older workers. It was mentioned that investing in and focusing on good people is a key part of Singapore's economic strategy, and thus, Jobs-Skills Integrators and Platform employees are being created to enhance employment and wage possibilities and used to fill positions in industries with a labour shortage respectively.

### What this means:

In order to create a more resilient economy, Singapore will be zooming in on two areas: Trade and production and Workforce resilience.

For the first area, the government will be working more with trusted trade partners as well as those with easier to trade with and closer to Singapore distance-wise. Plans are also being made to produce more items for Singapore within our country itself! The latter means that the government plans to support disabled people, ex-offenders, elderly, etc. who are working. They also plan to create new jobs to help with workforce shortage and employment issues.

## **A fair tax system that fosters economy growth**

Singapore has raised the goods and services tax (GST) to ensure adequate funding for senior citizens while maintaining a balanced budget. Singapore's minimum corporation tax rate will be increased to 15% beginning of 2025 and GST, as well as, other taxes such as vehicle tax will be increased. The GST registration barrier may also be lowered resulting in compliance costs for Singaporean businesses as well as implementation costs for small and medium-sized businesses. Smaller businesses benefit from GST exemption, which allows them to control costs and reduce inflation.

### **What this means:**

The GST has been raised so that the elderly can be provided and cared for, and companies in Singapore will be raised to 15%, starting from 2025. The government might also raise more taxes in the future and lower the GST barrier so that smaller businesses can benefit from paying lesser taxes and focusing on their profit!

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the SG Budget 2023 focuses mainly on the revival of our economy now that everything is starting to return to normal as compared to the COVID-19 period. Singaporeans can look forward to more financial support given to them to ease the inflation and employment burdens. More is also being done to strengthen our economy for the future.

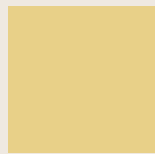
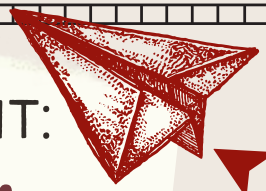
If you found this topic interesting and wish to learn more, simply head to the Ministry of Finance's website on budget 2023 for more information!

### **Glossary**

- *Fiscal*: of or relating to taxation, public revenues, or public debt. fiscal policy / of or relating to financial matters
- *Fiscal year*: 12-month accounting period that companies and governments use for financial/tax reporting and budgeting purposes
- *Operating revenue*: the revenue that a company generates from its primary business activities
- *MNE*: corporations that produce goods and services in more than one country
- *Defray*: to pay or provide money for a cost or expense
- *CDC vouchers*: vouchers distributed to every Singaporean household to subsidise the cost of daily essentials – these can be used at all participating heartland merchants, hawkers and supermarkets island wide.
- *GSTV - Cash quantum*: under the GSTV scheme, a cash quantum is paid to Singaporeans aged 21 and above with annual assessable income of up to S\$34,000

EXTRAVAGANT, EXPENSIVE, EXUBERANT:

# The Prices of Art



A painting glows in the limelight, and its colours revel in all their glory. In the sea of captivated faces the painting gazes upon, numbers fly up and a cacophony of stupendously high prices rings in the air. This is what it is like to bid for an art piece at an auction. Many a famed artwork have auctioned before: from Van Gogh's 'Orchard with Cypresses' to Banksy's 'Love is in the Bin', all of them have starred in an auction at some point in their histories. But one may find their prices simply mind-boggling – who'd buy a delicate little painting or sculpture for hundreds of thousands of dollars, and why?

Well, the truth is that their prices are defined by many factors, but we will list some of the more common reasons:



Cultural and historical importance is one of the main reasons for the hefty prices of artworks. The 'Creation of Adam', 'Mona Lisa' and 'Birth of Venus' are all iconic Renaissance era paintings. Kandinsky's impactful abstract masterpiece 'Bild mit weissen Linien' from 1913 was driven by a prolonged bidding battle to \$41.6 million. Part of this is because of Kandinsky's historical artistic significance. His art is important as it was a pivotal driving force that led to the deep foundation for later modern movements, particularly Abstract Expressionism and its variants, like Color Field Painting.

These movements produced artists that are still household names in the art world, like Jackson Pollock. Without having artists making well known art pieces, art would not have as much of an impact on humans in this current day and age.

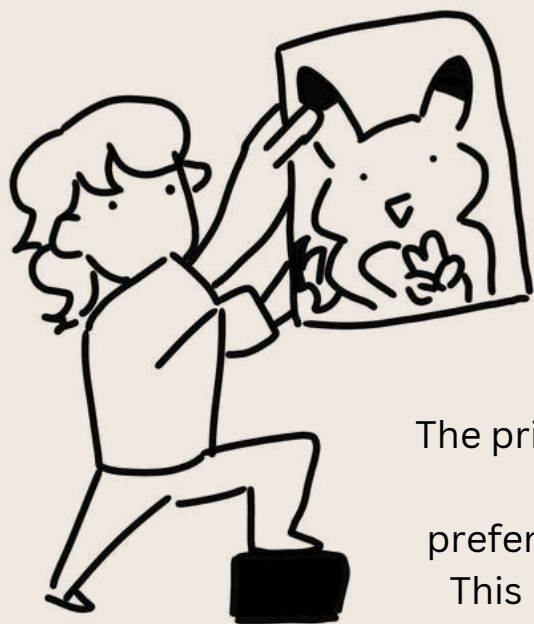




In the world of aesthetics, the price of an art piece is also sometimes worth the weight of its artist's reputation in money; in other words, the more prestigious an artist, the more expensive his work will be. For an artist to be reputable, his work must have a distinguishable style, or exhibit masterful technique. Take Yayoi Kusama, as an example. Kusama's style is characterised by colourful dots and patterns that pop all over the canvas, be it an installation or a painting. Her contemporary style is instantly recognisable at a mere glance, giving it individuality and charm. It catches people's eyes, shaping and expanding her fame, which is exactly why her pieces are worth thousands.



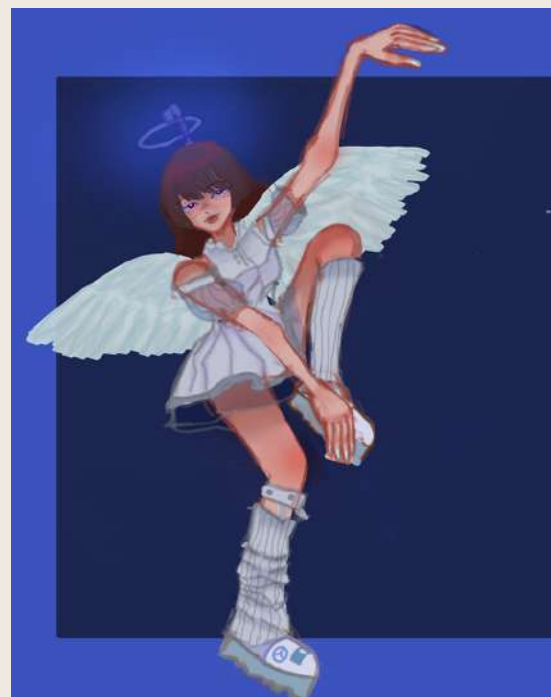
Of course, Kusama is but one of many artists to become renowned this way. Other artists, such as Jean Honoré-Fragonard and Salvador Dali, may not be as famous themselves, but instead have their pieces' reputation precede their own. Their names may not ring a bell, but surely you have seen Honoré-Fragonard's 'The Swing', or Dali's 'The Persistence of Memory'. Big names, of course, would have their works sold at high prices – they are dexterously skilled, widely-admired people, would anyone dare to price their work as "cheap"? Not at all! Their pieces are hailed as masterpieces, eager eyes looking to purchase other similarly captivating works would see much value in them.



Yet, another factor determining an art piece's price is inflation, defined as 'the rise in the price of goods and services over a period of time'. This can happen in different ways, but it can also mean that the cost of art goes up over time.

The prices of many art pieces are influenced by the art market, which can be unpredictable, and the preferences of consumers which can change very often. This makes it difficult to predict what the price of art might be in the future.

Some artists create very expensive paintings because there is a lot of interest in their work, while others may only sell a few paintings every few years because they do not have as much of a following. The value of art is based on a number of things, including the style it portrays. For example, a painting that is realistic may be more valuable than an abstract painting. This is because people want to buy realistic paintings more than abstract ones. In addition, the market for art can also change over time, depending on inflation rates. Many artists may have to raise their prices to keep up with inflation, no matter how much they may make from their art.



The value of a piece of art is based on a number of factors, including its condition. For example, a damaged painting cannot be sold for as much as an undamaged one because there's a higher demand for the former. This means that the price of art will go up if there are more pieces available than there are buyers. Similarly, the value of an artist's work may increase after they die, as fewer pieces will be produced in the future.

Like a collage, the art world is a plethora of faces and magnum opuses, assembled to form the flourishing industry it is today. Though artists may be young and old, sketch drawings or sculpt statues, all of them have a common goal: to create. Countless pieces already have shallow monetary values tagged onto them, but to the artists themselves, their works are priceless. After all, no amount of zeroes behind dollar signs would ever compare to the heart and soul poured into their very own creations.

Written by: Claire (4.4),Eva(2.2),Kristeva(2.8) Special thanks to the artists for their art shown here:

Top right - Bridget, 3.2

Bottom Left - Jaime 3.1

Designed by: Jean (3.3), Edlysia (3.4)

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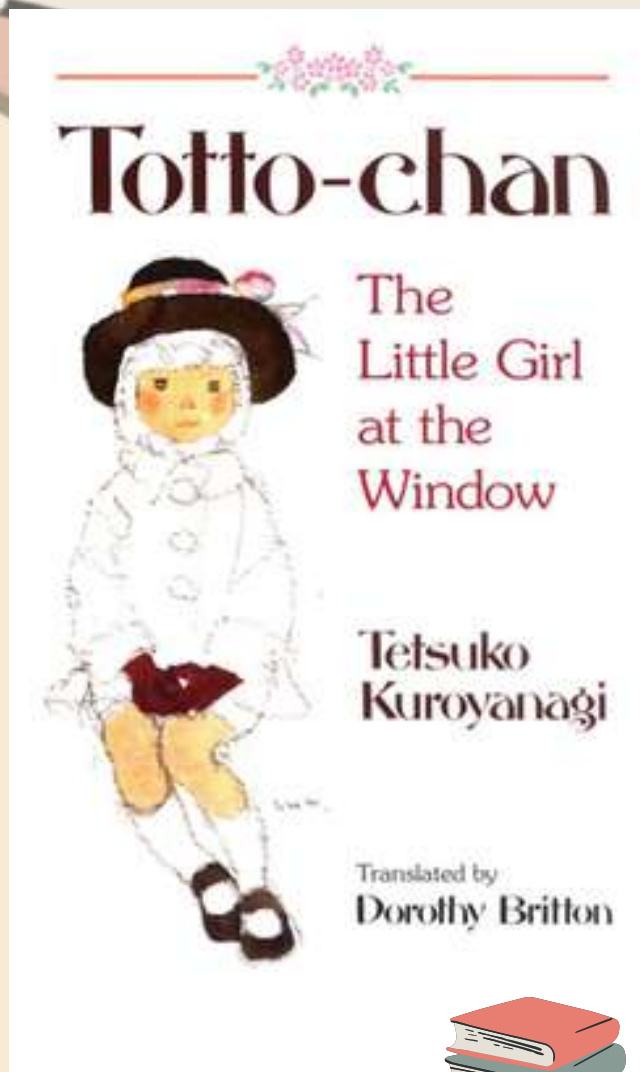
Book review by: Chloe Peh (2.4)

## Totto-Chan: The Little Girl at the Window

This book is an autobiographical memoir by Tetsuko Kuroyanagi, and as inferred from the title, it follows a little girl named Totto-Chan.

Being a notoriously childish student, Totto-Chan was expelled from her previous school and joined another school. However, here's the twist: Totto-Chan's new school was not like the others. Here, the children decided what they wanted to learn and had lessons inside a rail car! In addition, the students led such happy and cheerful lives, unaware of the chaos going on in the world.

The story is set during the WW2 period. Read on to uncover more about this intriguing story!



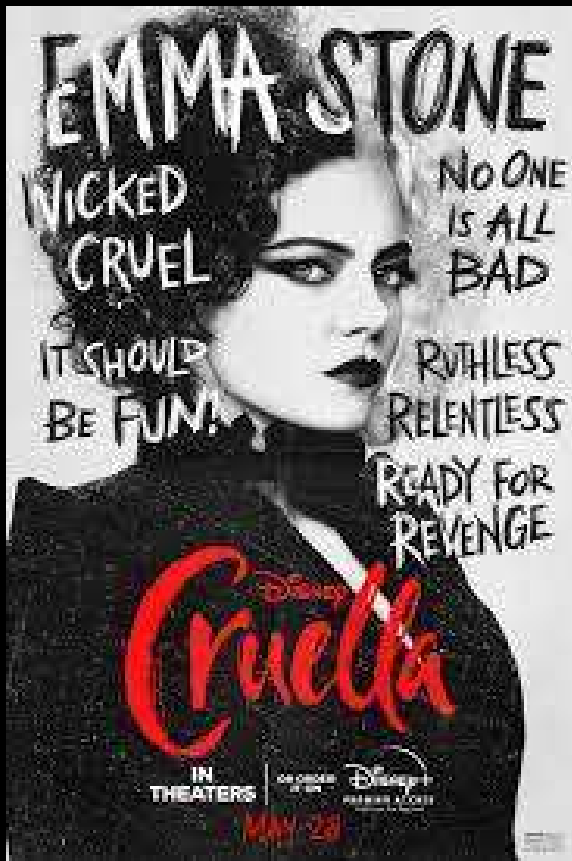
The Japanese name of this book is an expression used to describe people who have failed at things.

Fun fact!

Personally, I enjoyed this book very much as it taught me to see things from different perspectives, and this was also one of the only books able to draw me into reading! This book also made me feel many emotions, as if I were on an emotional roller-coaster. Hence, I'd say this book is great for those who want an easy-to-read, yet fascinating, novel.

# CRUELLA (2021)

Written By Clara Holmberg (3.6)



To the Disney and Emma Stone fans, the latest movie adaptation of the classic tale of Cruella might just be the perfect weekend watch for you! A young, smart but outcast named Estella desires to become a fashion designer, but unfortunately ends up orphaned in London. There, she encounters a pair of thieves who appreciate her 'abnormal' personality, and together they survive in society by stealing from people in the streets of London. Nearing the end, we discover the tragic truth about her Mother - which led to her lonely beginnings.

I really enjoyed how the characters were so dedicated to their art form: costume designing and fashion. Delving inside the fashion industry, the design sketches and works done fascinated me with the way the costumes looked. This led me to watch more videos about the fashion industry and how it operated. Not only that, the movie also features a really sweet theme of family and the lesson that anger should never overrun the love you have for the ones around you, and that family does not necessarily mean that you have to be related by blood. Also, this movie has won various awards for costume design, such as the Academy Award for Best Costume Design 2022, so if you are into fashion, I suggest you add this to your to-be-watched bucket list!





# Racket Boys

This series is a story following the main character, Yoon Hae-Kang, a baseball player who transitioned from the city to the country side due to his father's job offer as a badminton coach. His father Yoon Hyeon-Jong (the coach), finds himself shambling as his new school's Badminton Club only has three players. Meanwhile, the coach's wife, is the head instructor of the girls' badminton team at another middle school, a team of top ranked badminton platers. Do watch to find out what happens!



I like this series as it is quite relatable since the characters who are mainly sixteen years old, work together towards a common dream and try to understand themselves more, just like how many of us are doing right now.



Our own goals and dreams might not be to excel in badminton, but this series can definitely provide us comfort, be it through admiring the close bonds of the characters, or through the inspiring dialogues featured.

Personally, listening to Yoon Hae-Kang's pep video to Han Se-Yoon, "I think you train harder than anyone and give it your all. You've already done enough, and you're already awesome," reminded me that it was all right to lose sometimes even after giving my all. While watching this series I hope that you can consider all the hard work that was put into making this series come to life.



( Images in polaroid frames were taken from Racket Boys)

Designs by: Jean Wong (3.3), Edlysia Goh (3.4)

# A DIALECT DISASTER?

Written by: Heidi Foo (4.1), Amelia Chan (4.2), Evelyn Naga (4.2)

Designed by: Kiera Koh (4.1), Adele Wang (3.6)

## I. Slang as second nature.

While buzzing with peers, most of us slip into informal phrases, also known as *slang*. *Slang* is an informal form of language (or dialect) consisting of colourful words and phrases typically used during conversations with friends and family. They are all around, but one place where *slang* is noticeably absent is in the classroom. The tricky part of becoming proficient in this language is that it is not taught in any class, but is still ubiquitous. With no official guidebook or manual to the art of *slang*, most find themselves muddled and lost in translation, with nowhere to seek help from.

*Slang* has been an innate part of language and culture growing up, and has evolved greatly since it was first invented. Between Gen Z, Millennials, and Gen X, there is a distinction between the *slang* of today and the *slang* of yesterday. Individuals who fail to keep up with the latest trends on bustling social media platforms may struggle with the meanings and usage of recent *slang*. With the combined effect of the lack of resources on slang, what was once a vibrant form of speech has turned into a never-ending race, where individuals are constantly in search of new terms.

In order to contextualise this phenomenon here in PL, the PL Parcel team personally sought a few of our own teachers to give them a quick quiz of Gen Z slangs.



(Permission from Mr Diva was granted!)

## 2. Slang of our own teachers!

On a sunny Friday afternoon, we quizzed a handful of our teachers – Mr Diva, Ms Lin, and Ms Kok – on today's slang, often incorporated in conversations nowadays, for example: rizz, mid, beef, and infamously, slay.

"I have no idea", said Ms Lin when asked whether she understood what rizz meant. Similarly for Ms Kok and Mr Diva, our teachers were fairly foreign to this secret dialect.

Fun fact: An exception to this was the term slay. Most of our teachers understood this term as a form of positive affirmation from the frequent use of it by our PL-Lites all around!

For a supplemental understanding of what each of the terms signifies more accurately, here are some definitions of common slang:

**rizz** – one's ability to portray charisma; to describe a person who is charismatic and confident to attract a romantic interest

**slay** – a word of affirmation; to say that something or someone is awesome, amazing or very good

**mid** – short for mediocre; often used to describe something that is not terrible, but not that good of quality either

On top of that, the PL Parcel team further brought our teachers back to their time, embracing the slang they used with their own friends. As many of our teachers spent most of their lives in the Little Red Dot, the informal dialect from their generation mainly originated from the Singaporean culture. Some of these include examples such as: lepak, keng, chiobu, zai, and GDLL. The following are definitions of these words.

**zai** – to describe someone that is amazing, or good at something

**keng** – to fake a sickness in order to skip class, not participate in activities, etc.

**lepak**  
– to chillax;  
loiter  
casually and  
not do  
anything

**chiobu** – an exceptionally beautiful and attractive female, lady, or girl

**GDLL** – an acronym for 感动流涕 (gǎndòng liúlèi); to be moved to tears

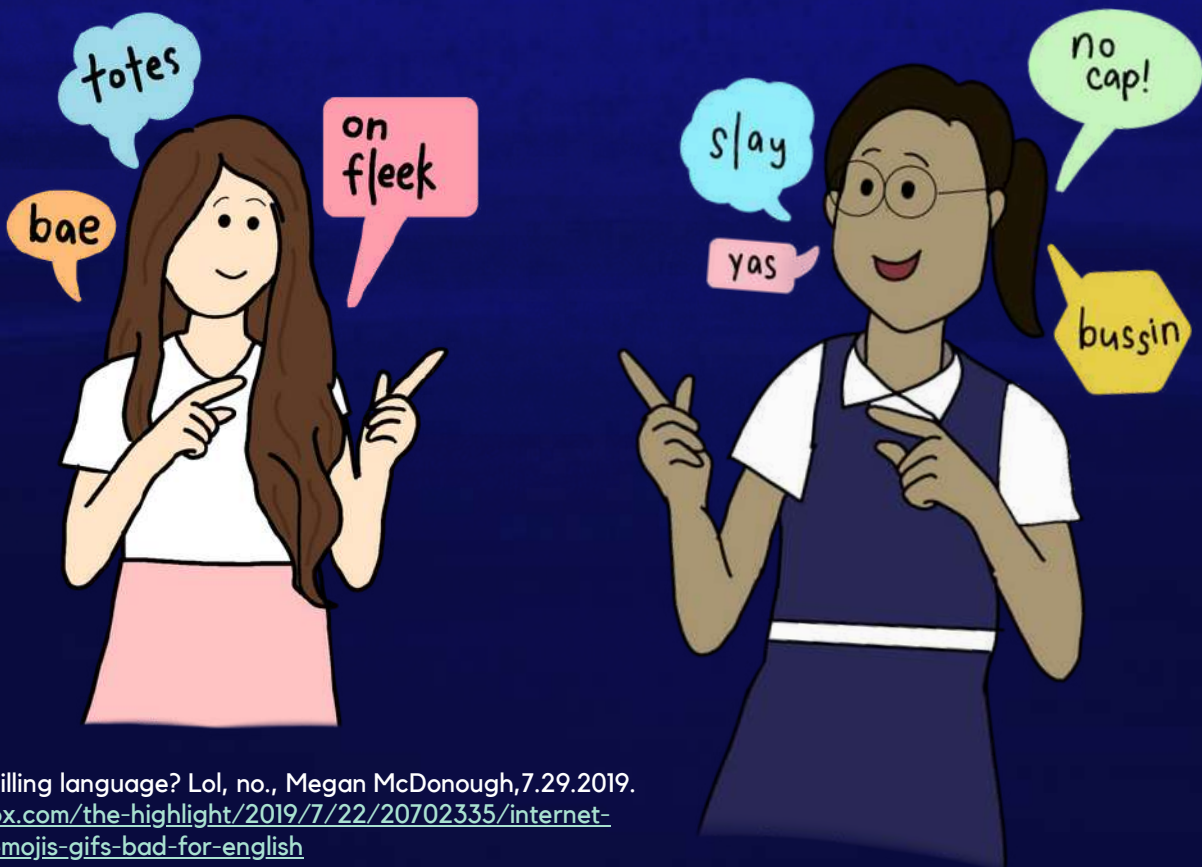
### 3. Does this mean we are using Broken English...

Now that the use of *slang* is essentially a communicative epidemic, many wonder whether these informal abbreviations of a language are making us speak broken English.

As defined by Macmillan Dictionary, *Broken English* is 'slow spoken English that contains mistakes.' Hence, the wrong use of English includes inappropriate verb forms, pronouns, and prepositions, such as a sentence structure of 'me want to seeing you'. However, *slangs* are simply informal abbreviations that convey an idea efficiently between people. Phrases such as "That's cool, bro" and "That movie was fire!" do not necessarily neglect the established commands of English, but rather allow us to linguistically express ourselves better, and faster.

### 4. Conclusion

The *slang* of today and yesterday, which are worlds apart, may result in generations struggling to communicate with each other. Still, amongst those of the same time, the existence of *slang* does indeed make communication a lot more effective, more so enriching the principal language itself. Even so, it is imperative to note that there are places where it should not be applied, such as in formal research papers, when talking to those of authority, or in many other unsuitable situations.





# UNKNOWN FacILITIES in PL!




Written by: Janelle Ang (2.1), Zoe Chan (2.2), Charaine Neo (2.2)

Designed by: Chen Wenqi (4.2), Myu Quek (4.2)

There are many facilities in our school, specially provided for students. In this article, we will be sharing more about two of these amenities. We hope that through this article, you will be able to learn more about these two facilities and make good use of them.





Many of you probably have books at home that you no longer find yourselves reading. They are likely crammed at the back of your bookshelf to make space for your newer books. Am I right? This may be because you are unsure of what to do with these books. But don't fret! There are plenty of options, like donating them to the National Library or a local orphanage. However, these options seem a little far away from the comfort of our homes, don't you think? Well, did you know that there is a simpler solution? There is a book donation area in PL where you can drop off your old and unused books!

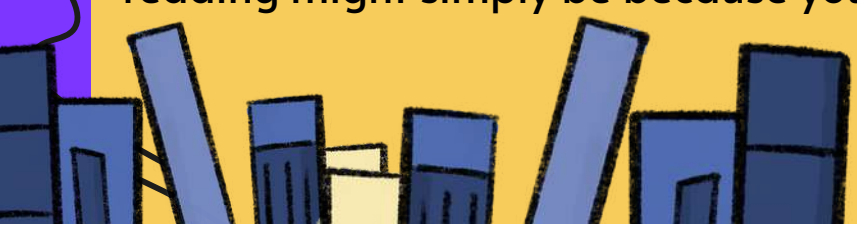
The book donation shelf is located outside the canteen, behind the PLD charging station. As they say, 'One man's trash is another man's treasure'. Likewise, the books you donate might reignite a passion for reading in another PL-Lite!

Here are some general guidelines for the donation process:

1. The books you donate should not be badly damaged. They should have all the pages intact, including the front and back cover.
2. Please only donate books that you think that others would enjoy reading.
3. Arrange the books properly on the shelf and make sure that they are not just dumped there

From the interviews we have conducted, we realise that not many people know about this book shelf where you can donate books. However, after we informed them about this, they mentioned that they would be more inclined to donate their books since it's more convenient.

The books donated can be read by anyone in our school and if you want, you can even take the donated books home for good! Even those who find that they don't particularly enjoy reading are encouraged to participate in this book donation drop. The reason why you don't love reading might simply be because you haven't found the right book yet!



Next, let us talk about a facility in the canteen that many of you should be familiar with — the newly installed snack vending machine near the sinks in the canteen! Ever since the vending machine was installed, many students have been waiting in long queues to use it and it's not difficult to understand why everyone loves this new vending machine! It is filled with a plethora of different mouth-watering snacks, ranging from tortilla chips to instant noodles. Many people find it convenient due to the fact that after a long, tiring day of school, they can purchase a snack to enjoy on the way home, rather than walking all the way to the nearest 7-11 or to the convenience shop opposite the school. In the past, they were not able to buy a snack to munch on on their journey home as all the canteen stalls close early.

However, contrary to the general public, there are some who feel differently about the vending machine. "Sometimes, my snack gets stuck in the vending machine. As there is no way to retrieve it, I find that I am wasting my money because I can't get a refund," said a secondary 4 PL-Lite. From the people we have interviewed, some stated that they do not use the vending machine as they bring their own snacks to school and have no reason to purchase additional ones. As for others, they feel that it is faster to buy snacks from the vending machine rather than queuing up at the snack stall. All in all, there is a wide range of opinions on the vending machine here at PL.

Without a doubt, the book donation shelf and vending machine have been designed to make our student lives more convenient. The book donation shelf allows us to donate our old books and hone our generosity while the vending machine provides a quick and easy way to satisfy our hunger after school. While these facilities might have some drawbacks, they definitely add to the ease of our student lives. Hence, we should definitely be thankful for all the facilities our school has kindly provided us with!

# Anxiety: Let's talk about it.

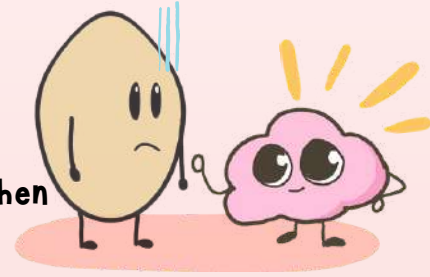


Written by: Aisha (2.1) Priya (2.2), Renee Yong (1.8)

## What is anxiety?



We often hear people say, 'I feel anxious' or 'The anxiety is unbearable' when nearing important deadlines or facing something they've been dreading,



but what do they actually mean? What is it that they're actually going through?

Generally, anxiety is known to be the feeling of **unease, worry or fear**, that could be either mild or severe. Anxiety at times can cause you to have a nostalgic feeling, make you feel giddy or extremely tired. In severe cases, one could experience panic attacks, short term hyperventilation, or faint.

## Misconceptions about Anxiety

Most of the time, people do not take the issue seriously when others say that anxiety is building up in them, or when they point out that their constant headaches are due to anxiety. The people whose friends or family come up to them to talk about their anxiety, or the people themselves who suffer through anxiety brush it off and say, "Oh, you are going to be fine. It's just a short term thing," or when they experience a physical symptom they say, "It will go away in a minute. It's fine." Well, the truth is, **things aren't always like that**. If those suffering through anxiety do not obtain proper attention or comfort, they could face long term adverse effects of their anxiety. Long term effects of anxiety include dementia, organ failures, sleep deprivation or even being in depressive states. So, if anxiety is not treated right, it can lead to multiple serious complications to one's daily lives..

## So, what causes anxiety?

We have talked about the effects of anxiety and how it is sometimes underestimated, but what actually causes this feeling we know as anxiety? Anxiety is normally caused by stress and trauma. At times, people who unintentionally face their phobias may also experience anxiety and though the physical effect shown

to others is short term, mental and physical health can affect the person for a longer period of time. Anxiety is like a switch and each switch has a trigger. It is like a branching system where the word anxiety is connected to different events or worries in your life which your mind decides to remember with wires, and this is stored in your subconscious mind, ready to act like a lightbulb when something causes you to recall that certain memory and turns on the anxiety. Anxiety turns on and off, and the more it's on, the more the long term effects develop.

**What are the triggers of anxiety?** Anxiety can be triggered by the remembrance of difficult situations that a person went through, which to different people can have a different meaning and tolerance level which affects the severity of the symptoms of that person's anxiety. Memories like the death of a loved one, physical or emotional abuse, discriminating events, or stress from deadlines and specifically for teenagers; exams, can be ones' trigger for anxiety.



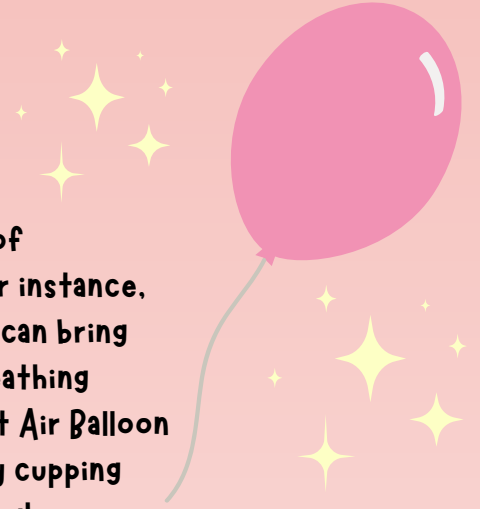


The worst part is that **we can rarely be certain on what one's trigger is.**

At times, one can have a full recollection of the event or flashes of the event which triggers their anxiety. Now, we know how anxiety works and the various factors that lead to it. So, what are some ways one could deal with anxiety?

## How do you deal with anxiety?

There are many types of anxiety disorders, for example social anxiety and panic disorder, and many more. Although there are distinct types of anxiety, the ways to help people overcome them are rather similar. For instance, if a person is experiencing a panic attack due to extreme anxiety, you can bring them to a quiet place to calm them down by carrying out different breathing exercises. There are many various breathing exercises, for example Hot Air Balloon exercises – sitting in a comfortable cross-legged position, starting by cupping your hands around your mouth. Afterwards, take a deep breath in through your nose and slowly start to blow out through your mouth, growing your hands outwards in time with an exhale as if you are blowing up an enormous hot air balloon.



If it doesn't work you can always **find a teacher or a counsellor for help.** If you do not feel comfortable, you can call hotlines, for example 1-800-985-5990. It might be more comfortable for some, who do not want to share their issues with people they see in person. One can search for other breathing techniques and see which one is better for you or the person you are trying to assist.

## What are the coping mechanisms of anxiety?

However, breathing techniques are not the only coping methods for anxiety. In fact, breathing techniques do not work for everyone. At times, it depends on the trigger of one's anxiety. One must find the coping mechanism that works best for them. Some such coping mechanisms can be, keeping physically active by going to the gym, or eating healthy food. Picking up a new hobby can also be a way one can cope with their anxiety. The key to finding your coping mechanism is finding something that can distract you from your worries.



That is what coping mechanisms do. They bring your mind away from the problem that is causing you anxiety. Away from that anxiety circuit and brings you back to the moment and thus, easing your anxiety. Using coping methods can also improve your span of focus and improve your performance in daily activities. Coping mechanisms can vary from person to person. Some may find that

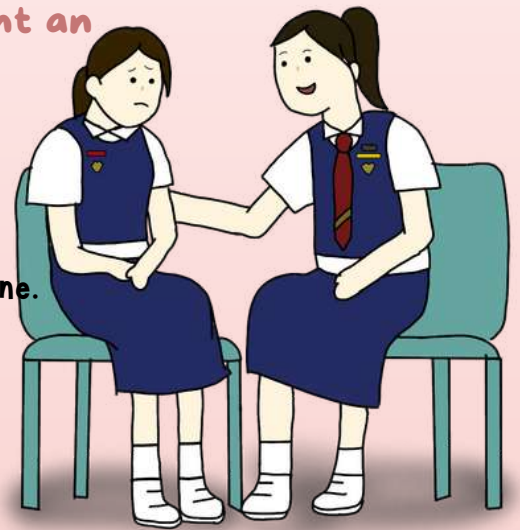
something as simple as spending time with friends and family without the need to talk to them about their problem can actually reduce the toll of anxiety very easily.

Another thing is, teenagers must NEVER resort to using illegal ways to deal with their stress and anxiety. Smoking and consumption of alcohol is firstly illegal and secondly, will take a HUGE toll on one's health to the point that they can die from organ failures due to these coping strategies. This should never be done by anyone of any age, let alone teenagers. So one must find strategies that help them and do not affect their health or mental state further.



## What can YOU do for someone who is facing anxiety?

Yes, social anxiety and anxiety due to exams can be dealt with by doing simple breathing exercises or using distracting methods. However, there are some cases where these two mechanisms do not work. For example, if one became anxious because of verbal abuse he/she suffered through at home, how will breathing exercises help? Maybe it will get them ready to talk, but it does not help subside their anxiety. Such personal triggers for anxiety make it hard to get through to that person. So sometimes when facing anxiety, one just needs someone to be there for them; to let them know that if they want to talk there is someone there ready to give an opening ear. **In our school, we have the Peer-Lites, Peer Support Leaders, Well-being ambassadors who are always ready to listen to you. If you want an adult to talk to, we have the School Counsellors and the form teachers ready to give you their time. However, you don't need to have a title or be an adult to help someone.**



If you see your friend looking down, ask them if they are feeling fine. If they do not feel like talking, it does not mean that they are pushing you away. It means that they need space. Instead of ignoring them after that, be patient with them and give them their time to adjust. Make them feel cared for. Don't push for an answer on why they are down as that will just increase their anxiety. Have fun with them. Make it like nothing has changed and that everything is fine. The preferred method would be to just sit down with them for a while, just give them some time to cool down and make sure that their mood has changed before slowly approaching the topic once more. Ensure that, by the end of the day, whatever they were anxious about is off their chest and if they get emotional about it; angry, sad, or frustrated, make sure you finish what you started and give them a shoulder to cry on, or a table to bang, or share their frustration. Ensure that when you say your goodbyes at the end of the day, your friend says it with a smile on their face.

## Conclusion

Anxiety comes in **different forms and is thus dealt in different ways too.** Most importantly, one should not be alone when facing anxiety. Those facing anxiety should realise that their feelings are valid. Many go through anxiety and there are always people who can either sympathise or empathise with those suffering from it. When facing severe anxiety, it is essential that one does not give up, but instead try her absolute best to obtain a healthier mental state. Ultimately, anxiety is not something to be ashamed of. There are in fact, many different ways for one to cope and move forward with anxiety. It is just a matter of whether you believe that you can achieve it.

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# PL Parcel debunks health myths!

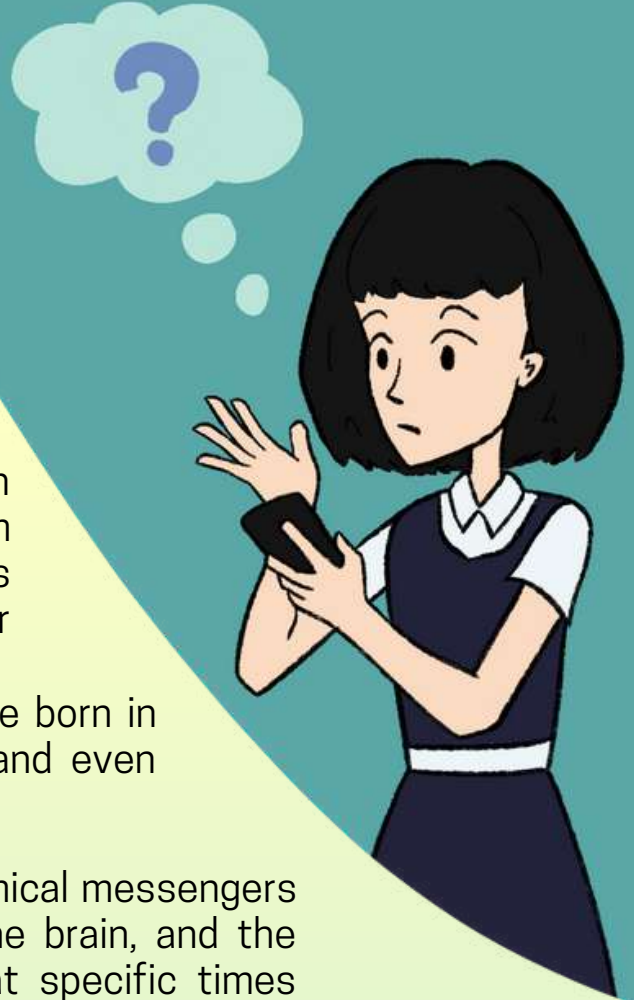
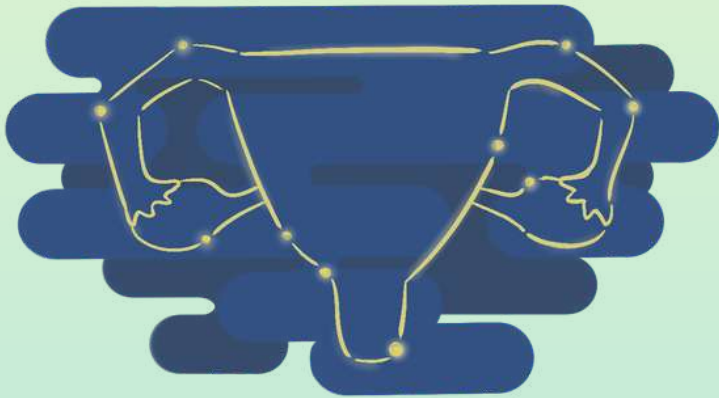
Written by: Evelyn Naga (4.2) Ow Yong Yu An (1.3), Naomi Zoe Ng (1.4)  
Designed by: Kiera Koh (4.1), Claire Chew (4.4)

## 1 'We are able to predict periods based on astrological signs'

Can we really predict periods based on astrological signs? At first thought, it might seem quite possible. However, astrology itself has been rejected by the scientific community for this one reason. There has been zero evidence to support that the month, date and time we were born in has anything to do with our success, career and even when we get our periods!

Periods are based on hormones, which are chemical messengers in our body. The pituitary gland, which is in the brain, and the ovaries make and release certain hormones at specific times during one's menstrual cycle. These hormones cause the lining of the uterus to thicken. During every menstrual cycle, our lining breaks down and sheds. This is what results in our period. As such, when people claim that we are able to predict our periods based on our astrological signs, they are saying that our hormones are released based on when we are born. However, as just mentioned, research has shown that our hormones have nothing to do with that.

In 2016, a study was conducted and it proved that our periods indeed have nothing to do with our astrological signs. The period tracking app, Clue, collected data on menstrual patterns from its users and scientist Dr. Marija Vljic Wheeler analysed the data and concluded that "period start dates fall randomly throughout the month, regardless of the lunar phase" even though some people claim that the findings came "in defiance of traditional beliefs". Ultimately, we should always be prepared anytime for it.



## 2 'Deodorant or Antiperspirants can cause breast cancer'

The mere concept of a routinely-used product – deodorant or an antiperspirant – bringing about a deadly disease, breast cancer, sounds quite frightening to a lot of us. However, fret not! Researchers have found that there is in fact, no solid evidence correlating breast

cancer with products like deodorants or antiperspirants. Rather, some factors leading to one to be at risk of this life-threatening disease include: old age, genetic mutations, reproductive history, and many more of which are mostly beyond the control of those potentially at risk.



Deodorants are products that get rid of particularly armpit odour, but not perspiration. Antiperspirants, on the other hand, contain aluminium-based compounds with active ingredients that prevent sweat from being produced on the surface of the skin through blocking sweat glands. This brought about concerns from many people in the scientific and non-scientific community that if the skin absorbs these aluminium compounds, there is a potential for the oestrogen receptors of the breast cells to be affected. Still, as mentioned previously, there is no coherent relationship between breast cancer and the aluminium in antiperspirants. The main reason for this is that breast cancer tissues do not appear to have more aluminium than normal human tissues.

Both deodorants and antiperspirants work in different ways to reduce body odour. At the end of the day, it is just natural that our body perspires as it is an innate feature of all humans. However, there are indeed ways to minimise and combat the body odour that may bother those around us, or the people we often spend time with. If one wishes to present themselves hygienically, in such a way that they smell reasonably pleasant, she could utilise products such as deodorants and antiperspirants. When in doubt, one could switch to alternative products such as natural or do-it-yourself deodorants. Nevertheless, it is essential to note that 'natural' does not always mean safe. Ultimately, each of our bodies work differently, requiring distinct needs which others may not.







## About Us

PL Parcel is a student-initiated project —  
Our school's very own student publication!

We aim to cover a wide range of content and share timely topics with our readers. We also hope these publishes can spark PL-Lites to discover the joy and benefits of reading, as well as to keep up-to-date with global and school-related matters.

We'd like to thank everyone who put in the effort and contributed to this publish, and those who read our works!

### PL PARCEL '23

*Teacher Advisor:*

Ms Reena Kaur

*Editor & Asst. Editor:*

Amelia Chan (4.2), Heidi Foo (4.1)

*Content Editors:*

Chang Zi Qing (4.1), Evelyn Naga (4.2)

*Design Editors:*

Kiera Koh (4.1), Myu Quek (4.2)