



TAYLOR'S
UNIVERSITY
Wisdom · Integrity · Excellence

SCHOOL OF
COMPUTING AND IT

UCM60102U4 Community Service Initiative

MARCH 2017 SEMESTER



REFLECTION JOURNAL

PROJECT

CYBER-EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT GOOD SAMARITAN HOME, KLANG

PREPARED BY

HENRY HENG HIAN WEE (STUDENT ID: 0321343)

LECTURER

Ms SUKHMINDER KAUR

A. Pre-Community Service - Briefing and Preparations

Monday - March 27, 2017

Having completed a Community Service module (then called Service Learning) in another institution three years ago, I was really excited, knowing that I am going to experience helping society all over again, only now being a second-year Computer Science student. Today we just got briefed on what was expected and required from all of us when carrying out the module.

There was quite a bit to remember, but the one thing that I took away from that briefing and, which I bet that I will, remember throughout the semester or beyond, is the fact that we were to serve the community by means of computing and information technology. We were not just supposed to do anything regular like cleaning the premises or cook for anyone, but utilise whatever we have learnt and got exposed to that relates with IT to create awareness for the orphans... something like that, I got the idea already. I had quite an unexplainable feeling – a sense of relief upon hearing that I did not have to endure one type of hardship like that last time I did community service, but a bit of disappointment as well through no longer knowing whether I would experience that overwhelming feeling of satisfaction after doing something I'd normally be reluctant to do.

I counted my choices, and most of them revolved around creating awareness and teaching orphans basic, practical IT skills. Teaching would be quite the problem, I thought, but it was not because I hate teaching – it was the fact that I already love teaching. In fact, I see myself being a teacher or a lecturer at some institution in the future. Yes, you heard me right. The way how I look at community service is that you have to try something you'd not normally do and are more likely to reject if given such an opportunity, and the aftermath should be a sense of satisfaction and a little hint of positive personal development. Logically, if people were to do something they are comfortable with, they would not really experience that feeling after doing something very, very difficult and accomplishing something out of it. Nevertheless, I made it a point to try to reassure myself that I may have something new to learn and experience – it is just me not finding it obvious yet.

I gathered six other classmates and started discussing amongst ourselves on which place to head to and what we would like to try and do. My team mates told me that they had not done any community service like the one we were about to do before, and that got me thinking that since I was the only one with experience with serving the community, I'd get the opportunity to help them gain that same experience and satisfaction feeling like what I went through three years ago. By default, all of us agreed on me being the leader due to this very reason.



Deep discussion with the team.

Friday - April 14, 2017

After two weeks of searching for places to go for our community service work, Chiew King and I finally found a place to go - the Good Samaritan Home, located in Klang. Chiew King and Li Jie went to the home last Wednesday to obtain vital information to take note of while preparing what we need for planning our sessions or what to expect there, more or less. Also, they were able to finalize the dates and times we can commit to carry out our community service work at the home. Thankfully, we need not worry whether we would need to skip or be late for any classes, as the proposed dates and times were either on public holidays or weekends, since the children have to go to school. One thing we had to take note that we were going to handle children aged between 9 to 17 years. We took it to our first official meeting today to discuss on what we wish to do during our sessions and what should be expected of them upon completing our ten-hour worth of community service.

We then agreed to teach them basic, practical IT skills, some of which were based off the module we had either completed or are currently taking – Online Presence Management. This was so as we also understood that the children do not have the chance to use the computer often to do anything. In other words, we were to expect computer-illiterate children and teens there at the home. On top of that, we decided that the way we would approach them through our sessions is to help them prepare themselves to handle various simple tasks involving the computer as soon as they turn 18 and end up in either the tertiary education field or at our current and modern workforce. To name a few, we took our approach to introduce simple and whatever that is deemed to be useful, such as e-mails and Microsoft Office PowerPoint, as well as to give them a short lesson on cyber-awareness.

Given the fact that the age group of the children and teens were too large, we decided to split the team into two, each assigned to handle the divided groups – primary and secondary school categories. I chose to go handle the secondary school category along with Marcus and Nisa, while Li Jie, Mwale and Syamimi chose to handle the primary school category. Chiew King would handle miscellaneous tasks in addition to photo and video taking.

Having dealt with children before from past experiences, I took the chance to tell everyone in the team my set of dos and don'ts when handling the children at the home. I found it to be the most if not one of the utmost priorities to be taken note of when handling children of such a background. I believed that it was important to earn their trust to earn their attention in order for us to be effective in what we do, and at the same time, not give ourselves a bad image from their point of view.

We got our final preparations ready, with our proposal submitted on Friday that week. Along with that, we obtained our T-shirts based off the designs submitted by one of the other teams in the class.



The team is being briefed on the dos and don'ts when being at the home.

B. Community Service Period**Monday - April 24, 2017**

That Monday, we marked our first milestone in our community service project. We drove to the orphanage by 10:00am and started our ice-breaking session with the children. What we had planned for the ice-breaking session was simple – to introduce themselves and give them a chance to show and tell what they think technology will look like to them, fast forward 10 years into the future through drawings. Papers and writing materials were given to them to draw it out.

Unfortunately, we forgot the fact that some of the children were too young to understand what we want, let alone know how living as a techno-savvy person can be. The younger children ended up drawing technology that they already can see today or anything else that they feel is more interesting. The older children, on the other hand, were not amused. Some of them did not want to do the task at all and started chatting with one another as if my team and I were merely just standing scarecrows. Also, our paper supply was depleted as some of the children took the chance to obtain another sheet of paper for various unknown reasons, and our writing materials were either rendered useless or reduced to insignificant bits. I had to use up all my notepad papers to cater for their 'endless' need of paper. To top it all off, we tried to show them what they drew after leaving them to draw for half an hour, and the session was prematurely ended after that.

Knowing that we should not leave them doing nothing, I told the team to take the chance to get to know the children and interact with them. As we interacted with them, some took a liking to how different we look and act as opposed to people they normally see every day or people they observe and perceive to be. Some were keen to question the different traits we had, which included Chiew King's hair, Li Jie's two-syllable name, and my 'premature' voice. I told everyone in the team to be as transparent as possible in order to earn their trust and not let them think that we are easily susceptible to lie under any circumstances. Also, through getting to know the children, we got to know that most of them love handicraft, particularly origami. I took the time to help fold two ninja stars for them to play with while talking to Nick, one of the people helping out at the home.

Between 12:00pm to 12:30pm, my team and I took the chance to replenish our energy by walking to the nearest 7Eleven store to get some snacks while the children had their lunch. Later at 12:30pm, we began to start our main roles and split ourselves to handle the primary school group and secondary school group separately. As soon as all of us had access to the Internet there, we started our formal sessions.

Marcus, Nisa and I taught the secondary school children on how to use Gmail, an e-mail service provided by Google. We taught them the basics of using the service to send e-mails and attachments, as well as to customise the look and feel of the interface after creating e-mail accounts for some of them. This was so as we were not sure on how to handle the phone verification part when registering them for their e-mails. As soon as they were introduced to moving images called GIFs, they had fun e-mailing each other silly GIFs to and fro. We were happy to have at least gotten their attention to practice using their Gmail accounts.

One take-away moment I can fondly remember is captivating the heart of one of the teens who seemed to have the same interest in the same video game. I took the chance to get to know the boy and interact with him often. The boy, named Samuel Phua, was really happy with the Gmail account created for him as well as the few pictures I decided to share with him through sending e-mails to one another using our Gmail accounts. I was able to reflect on my past self through him, as I was once a restless and curious, young boy like him at his age. (This year, he turns 14.) I also got to know Thomas, who look intrigued with my computer wallpaper and attempted to draw the cartoon-themed wallpaper. I could tell that he was into drawing, and he seemed really happy when I told him that pictures could be sent to and fro via e-mail. He was very keen and attentive to whatever I taught, and I appreciated that moment.

The session ended with the teens laughing over the silliest of jokes from their intentions through the sent GIFs. Our team took off to have a debriefing session at McDonalds later that afternoon, without Mimi as her parents picked her up before that. We took the chance to reflect on how we could have done better and what we can do in order to make sure our next session was more fruitful. I made it a point for us to have a small debriefing session each time we end a session in

order to obtain some important feedback that may be lost through short-term memory losses on 'insignificant' experiences.



Ice-breaking session with the children.



Children are busy drawing while the team and I take the chance to sit along with them.



Hmm... that looks interesting!



Marcus and Nisa introduce Gmail to the teens.



Keen teenagers take the chance to toy around with the newly made Gmail account. (Chiew King, what are you doing there?)

Monday - May 1, 2017

We started the next session immediately once we arrived at the home again on Monday, feeling more prepared than during the previous week. I took the chance to make more Gmail accounts for those who had not gotten them the previous week before moving on to the topic of the day – Microsoft PowerPoint. We took this chance to help them learn how to utilise this application to help them when the time they need to use it for their school homework or if any of their future endeavours arise in the future.

We took the chance to evaluate what they already know, given the fact that some of them had toyed around with the application before. We proceeded to teach them how to create slides that are effective for audiences as well as to customise the slides to their liking. I particularly took the opportunity to get them to create slides on a topic of their choice based off their interests. Samuel made a few slides that introduced himself along with his interest in Plants vs. Zombies, a game both him and I enjoy very much. Another boy who goes by the name of Phillip Tham, took the opportunity to place his tips on being physically healthy. Thomas showed off his love for football through his set of slides. At the end of the session, they were not finished with what they did, and we agreed to continue again the next time we would meet.

When I inquired Marcus and Nisa on how they were doing, they said that they were not able to get them to be interested with PowerPoint at all, and they were merely creating presentations with material such as random statistics and profiles of political people taken off the Internet. I told them that to captivate their interest, we ought to tell them what they can do with the application in favour of what they already like and love. This came from my experience loving what I like to do with computers – I had myself open to what I feel I can do best through technology when I was younger from helping my friends and family members on how to use the computer to achieve their daily needs and wants. I took it as a sign that I could help teach people to use computers and be able to look at myself being someone useful in today's world.

Overall the session went smoothly and better compared to last week. Still, the three of them who had to deal with the primary school children had a bit of difficulty in getting them to sit still

without needing to just play online games rather than learn how to type. It served to be one thing to ponder for the next few days before our next session – to handle the unexpected, apart from expecting it we should be able to think outside the box. We debriefed again, this time at 7Eleven, and again without Mimi before heading out for lunch.



The teens are hard at work trying to make up some cool PowerPoint slides.



Thomas (boy creating slides) is almost finished with his set of slides - he's making slides with the topic: "How to Stay Healthy"



Lunch time!!

Wednesday - May 10, 2017

Our third day at Good Samaritan Home soon came not long later, and our team prepared something special to teach the children on normal ethics when being online. We got the children separated to their respective groups, and each group had their own chat room where they were allowed to chat about absolutely anything they wish. Each computer used in the group has access to their respective chat rooms.

What the children did not know was that some of us in the team pretended to be malicious strangers who would randomly enter the chat room and try to fish out vital and/or private information such as where they live and what their names were. This went on for about an hour, and throughout that duration, some children were smart enough to give creative answers to avoid such, but there were some who willingly mentioned what their names were and where they currently live in. There were some of them who were smart enough to suspect that a few of us from the team were posing as the anonymous strangers suddenly appearing in the chat, but we managed to convince them that this was not the case during the time. Words were exchanged in a crazy scale until we stopped them from going any further after the hour was up.

After we gained their attention, we took the opportunity to tell them what they should have done and what they should not have done out online. We then took the chance to warn them about what would happen if they were not to comply over this - the dangers of revealing your true identity in full in open public via online. The children understood the consequences and promised us not to do what we told them not to do after that. Looking back when I first entered the world of social media, I was also quite naïve about what should and should not have been done online – I had to learn it up by myself through experience! I felt that the children were lucky that they had us explain to them what we had to self-learn to protect ourselves in the online world.

The main activity of the day ended quite early, so some of the children took the chance to complete the PowerPoint slides they were not able to finish during the last session, while the rest took to practice their typing skills on the computer. Typing is an essential skill needed to

communicate with a typical computer and if they are not able to do so efficiently, this hampers their productivity with computers in the future. They started practicing typing with an educational game, "Typer Shark Deluxe", meant to help players strengthen their typing skills by evading the enemies through typing words as quick as possible. We showed them what it was like to be able to use the keyboard swiftly and how they would benefit from being able to type better. At the end of the whole session, those who practiced their typing skills were aware of how to get used to the proper hand positioning when typing, as well as giving them confidence when typing. After we left the home that day, we took to debrief near our vehicles before we took off for the day.



The children's chat room, yet to be infested with anonymous people - us!! (haha..)



The children practice typing with Typer Shark Deluxe.

Saturday - May 20, 2017

The final session arrives, with all of us already starting to miss the children, even more so after the session ends. For the last session, the children were tested with a small multiple-choice question quiz to see what they gained from the previous sessions. The children were given a quiz set and were tasked to finish it within 40 minutes without discussion amongst themselves.

The children diligently finished the quiz paper, and most of them showed promising results after I marked the papers while Marcus and Nisa invigilated the teenage children. The other older, used-to-be teens now in college or working caught interest in the paper we gave the children. With that, we gave them an extra copy of the quiz for them to occupy themselves with, and after checking the papers we were able to confirm that they were well aware about whatever we taught the children.

Looking at the children completing the test papers quicker than expected made me remember how it was like to take my very first test upon entering my Foundation in Computing programme nearly three years back, when whatever we learnt was still quite elementary and easy to grasp. I felt that we had underestimated the children's level of understanding, since during the time we were supposed to create the questions, we were unclear if the children could handle too many questions that may be too difficult, or not. Learning from this, I was reminded to be humble whenever people make tests or examinations for me to do, as the preparers tend to worry about whether the paper was suitable enough for the takers.

After marking all the papers, we handed them back to the children and discussed the answers with them. Not long later, we had quite a lot of free time, yet again like the last session. We decided that we should take the time to bond more with the children by interacting with them. As for me, the children who prepared the slides from the previous two sessions wanted to present them to me like how my team and I present at an academic level. I had them speak to me in person and talk about the content they put into the slides. I helped them by giving them pointers such as looking confident when speaking, as well as the many techniques of presenting, just like what we were taught throughout our time at Taylor's University. Their nervousness reminded me

of how I was and sometimes still am being intimidated when having to present anything in front of a live audience. Through this experience, I also gained more confidence in speaking to people and improving my clarity in speech.

Just as our session ended that morning, Mrs Ong gathered all the children together to thank the team and I for teaching them a lot of valuable skills deemed worthy for their future undertakings. We posed for a group photo together, before officially ending our session with the children. We stuck around a little longer to talk more with the children and take photographs together while King arranged for all of us to be recorded, explaining their experience and final thoughts on the last day of community service. Cupcakes were also given to the children as a parting gift from all of us in the team before we eventually left the place, possibly for the very last time.



Be quiet – a test is in session!



More test takers!



Marking the completed quiz papers – the results so far were decently good!



"Nervous? Don't worry, I'm here to help!" Thomas (the boy beside me) attempts to present his interest in football.



The kids take time to present their work with me. On the right, Samuel Phua (bespectacled boy handling Nisa's computer) is helping his friends by showing what he has learnt with Gmail.



Thank you, Good Samaritan Home, for letting us have a great time completing our community service hours through spending quality time with the children!



Me together with Samuel Phua.



Me together with Thomas.



The team photo. :)

C. Post-Community Service (Final Reflections)

Friday - May 26, 2017

This serves as a final journal reflecting on my experiences carrying out the community service at Good Samaritan Home, Klang.

Reflecting back on what I had done together with my team at Good Samaritan Home, we were tasked to bring cyber-awareness to the children there and teach them basic IT skills deemed necessary when furthering their studies in tertiary education institutes and/or going to the modern workforce we all know today. During the first session, I was shocked to find out that most of the children there were not educated well enough on basic IT skills in their schools – even the teenagers found it hard to utilise simple applications like Microsoft Office PowerPoint and Word. Only then did I realise that what our mission was not to strengthen their IT skills they should have already had, rather it was to begin their journey into the cyber world where they would find necessary skills to be honed by the time they reach that certain age when they really, really need it.

Overall, I felt that this experience has brought me many different insights in life. During the ice-breaking session, my team and I were reminded not to simply assume that everything would go smoothly with just one plan without any backups. This was illustrated by how some of the children did not seem fascinated with the idea of drawing out what they think a computer would be in ten years time, looking at it as if it were only suitable for younger children whilst the younger children who were actually there did not know what they were supposed to do and started playing with the papers and writing materials we handed to them.

During the Gmail introduction session that very same day, a boy named Samuel Phua caught my interest as he professed his liking to the games I normally play on my current smartphone today. By looking at him and the way he acted in front of me, I could see a rough mirror image of myself at that age. Looking at myself today in contrast to how I was when I was at his age, I realised how much more mature had I grown throughout the years as being a good and bad thing together – the innocence of when we were younger was so captivating to watch and witness, knowing that we

were once great in that very unique way. I was lucky to have proper guidance from my parents, but he belongs to an orphanage home – in either way, he looks to the people at Good Samaritan Home to provide his needs. I felt the sense of responsibility over him as he approached me really often and paid attention to what I taught him. From this experience I gained a greater sense of responsibility over the people I am supposed to handle.

On the second day/third session, I helped to teach the children how to utilise Microsoft Office PowerPoint for their presentations they may need to create for school activities. From here I was able to see the determination flare shown by the children in creating their own slides based on the topic of their choice. Seeing them willing to share what they know with us really reminds me of my role as a PALS leader (tutor) at Taylor's University. Before entering Taylor's, I tend to help my friends with their homework back in school a few times, but never felt that it would be the best thing I can do. However, through this I learnt that anyone at any age can share knowledge what they know more to one another, regardless of whether you are younger or older than the person or people you teach.

The fourth session brought me an insight to how unsure all of us once were when we first toyed around with social media. Again, the experience I gained that day was another reminder to be responsible to take care of those under our care, as my team and I knew better about basic cyber awareness – the dos and don'ts while being online on social media. There is a saying, "Knowledge is both a blessing and a curse." I take it that it is our bounden duty to share what we know as a consequence of knowing more than the person we are addressing to.

During the last session, the children were supposed to be tested on their skills and what they had learnt in the previous sessions. From that day, I was taught to honour those who take the trouble to make preparations in order to test me, so that I may be able to be well-groomed for my future undertakings. I also learnt that there are people willing to support me whenever I need help, through myself helping some of the children present their slides to me during that time.

The immense hard work had finally paid off, both my team and the children at the home gaining something through our experiences bonding together. However, it is all for nothing if there is no one

willing to continue the good works – a non-continuous effort would mean nothing. I can say for all of us in my team that we would definitely love to return to the home, to continue or acts and efforts if we have to. Still, in time to come, we all hope that anyone else willing to help out at Good Samaritan Home will continue to help them be able to stand the many unforeseen, difficult trials against time in the future. All of us in our team also strongly hope that one day, we can see the children from the home grown up and doing the best they can in whatever they do in the future.