

Fiction

Group 1



Zheng He Voyages

A.D. & F.D. of Pok Oi Hospital Mrs Cheng Yam On School, Au-Yeung, Sunnie – 6

Zheng He was in China. One day the King asked Zheng to lead the troop and go for voyages.

The first voyage was in 1405. The second one was in 1407. The third one was in 1409. The fourth one was in 1413. The fifth was in 1417. The sixth one was in 1421 and the seventh one was in 1431. Zheng was cool.

Dream with Zheng He

A.D. & F.D. of Pok Oi Hospital Mrs Cheng Yam On School, Ng, Veronica – 8

In a very hot afternoon, I stayed at home to read a story book. The name of the book is 「鄭和下西洋」 (The story of Zheng He). However, I was so tired and fell into sleeping.

I made a dream. I saw a man who was not tall and wore ancient Chinese clothes. He could play Kung Fu like Bruce Lee. He could tumble and jump up and down very quickly. I'm very interested in his Kung Fu fight and felt very excited. I asked his name, he is Zheng He. I asked him to teach me Kung Fu and we talked about Kung Fu so much. We became good friends. Unfortunately, the king ordered him to go to Southern of China, visit countries and make business trading. I wanted to go with him too! I asked if I could travel with him and he accepted my request. So we wrapped up our luggage and started our voyages.

We had sixty big ships and over hundred small ships. Our crew had about four thousands people. We planned to spend one year for this voyage.

When the ship was sailing in the sea, we could see lots of seagulls flying and following our ships. The waves are so huge and the wind was so strong. I felt very excited. During night time I laid on the deck and saw a lot of stars, they smiled to me and twinkled like diamonds. Then I fell into sleep. Later on, I woke up. The sun was rising from the sea, the sky was in orange colour, it was very beautiful. Suddenly, Zheng He shouted loudly. He saw an island nearby us. We moved towards the island. There was a very beautiful place. We parked at the shore and walked around the island. There were some animals and plants. We took some rest and played at the beach. Suddenly, a big wave came and attacked me. I was fallen into the sea. I was very scared and screamed. It was very dangerous and I was yelling for help.

After that I found I was laying on the sofa. It was a dream only. I told mum about the dream and decided to learn swimming so that I can swim in the sea.

Pirates Come

A.D. & F.D. of Pok Oi Hospital Mrs Cheng Yam On School, Wu, Tiger – 7

When Ming Treasure fleet passed the Strait of Malacca, Zheng He encountered a group of pirates.

The pirate's leader was Chen Zuyi, who own the biggest fleet in Asia. They usually robbed merchant ships, killed businessmen and did lots of bad things to local people.

Chen Zuyi was greedy at the treasure in Zheng He's boat and decided to rob Zheng He's fleet. But on the other hand, Zheng He also wanted to destroy them to benefit the trading and local people.

Chen Zuyi firstly wrote a letter to Zheng He, and promised to surrender, but secretly prepared to attack the ship by night.

In the night, more than a dozen pirate ships were quietly heading for Zheng He's fleet. The pirate ships were small, diving flexibly and running fast. Chen Zuyi was very arrogant. He clenched his sharp knife, his two greedy eyes started at the tall and magnificent treasure ship, and his brain was full of treasure. But Zheng He got a secret report early and prepared for the battle in advance. When the pirate ships entered the ambush circle, a red light rose on the high mast of the treasure ship, followed by many lantern torches. The dark sea turned to be a bright day. The pirate ships were surrounded by a large ship fleet. Less than an hour the pirate fleet was defeated. Chen Zuyi was captured. Zheng He also pushed the advantage and took off Chen Zuyi's pirate base in the old port of Malacca Strait.

By the moment, the biggest pirate fleet in Asia was destroyed completely.

The Chinese Adventure

Bradbury School, Guo, Joshua – 6

Getting Ready

On a stormy day I move all my important things onto the ship. My ship is called Evan 1. The most important things to bring are the gold and silk because I will give them to all different countries for making new relationships.

I am the captain of Evan 1 and I feel excited about this adventure. This time I will bring some shooters to fight, two chefs to cook, and some sailors to look out for evil pirates.

Swapping Things

Now I am sailing to Japan to give away some of the gold and silk. Before we get to Japan the evil pirates suddenly came to attack the ship in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The evil pirates blocked my way to the island of Japan. My sailors started to attack them back and defend the evil pirates. The Japanese sailors came to help me and we won and defeated the evil pirates.

After that my sailors and I arrived at the island of Japan. I came here to give the gold and silk to the Japanese because I want to thank them for helping us fight the evil pirates together.

Crossing the London Bridge

After eating sushi in Japan my sailors and I started our next journey to London. I found out that my chef forgot to bring food so now we needed to swap things to get food.

When we have enough food we gave it to the chef and the chef started to cook. Then we give them some gold and silk because they gave me a lot of food.

After that we crossed the London Bridge. Now we are ready to go to other countries to give the gold and silk away.

Going Back Home

After visiting a lot of places now we will go sailing back to China. On this adventure I feel happy because we ate sushi and we gave a lot of gold and silk to many countries.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Bradbury School, Kaur, Jasmin – 9

As Johnny Depp said , “ Life’s pretty good and why wouldn’t it be? I’m a pirate after all!”

Well, pirates used to travel the seas looking for precious items. But in the early 1400’s a fleet of ships set sail from China. I carried boxes and cargoes of gold, silk and other precious things for the people on board to give away as presents. There were seven voyages by the Ming treasure fleet.

Sometimes they met nice and peaceful people and gave them the presents they had brought. In other times they had to fight battles and deal with nasty pirates. Luckily the ships also had weapons.

But this group of travellers did a wonderful thing by winning themselves a place in history. Historians, looking back, said China truly ‘ruled the seas’ in those days.

African Adventure

Chinese International School, Sun, Isabella – 7

Our ship arrived on the east coast of Africa. It was very hot and dry. The captain took five crew members with him to explore the new land. However, by the next day, they still had not returned.

It was my job as the ship's detective to find them. I took three soldiers and the captain's dragon with me. When we reached the shore, a group of dark-skinned men marched toward us and spoke using funny clicking sounds. We could not understand them. But luckily our dragon was able to translate for us!

"We have captured your captain. If you want him back alive, you have to give us all the food and treasures on your ship" they demanded.

"That is not fair" I replied and made a signal to the soldiers. They threw a gunpowder bomb near the Africans, which exploded with a loud blast. The Africans were very scared. We made them take us to our captain and crew members to free them.

But because we were kind and generous explorers, we asked the Africans, "Why did you try to take our food and treasures?"

They explained that previously their country was peaceful and there was enough food for everyone. But an evil, cruel, and powerful pirate named Blackbones had come to power and things changed. He was so selfish and greedy. He and his men took all the food and goods from the Africans.

After we talked with the Africans, Captain Tang and I came up with a plan. We took many gifts from our ship to give to Blackbones, such as silk, porcelain vases, and tea. We gave them to him and he was pleased. However, because he was so greedy, he wanted even more. So we invited him to come aboard our ship. We had a plan.

Once Blackbones was aboard our ship, he was distracted by all the treasures. Our ship's doctor quickly stuck acupuncture needles into Blackbones' body, and suddenly he could not move at all. He knew he had no choice but to surrender. We forced Blackbones to give back all the food and treasures to the Africans and his pirates had to leave the country.

The Africans celebrated their victory and threw a big party for us. They wore colorful costumes made from bird feathers and danced for us. There were fireworks and music. The Africans cooked a delicious feast including animals such as antelope and warthogs. Our cooks showed the Africans how to make Chinese noodles, which they loved.

After a few days of exploring the African lands, it was time to go. Our new friends gave us two giraffes to take back for the Emperor. We set sail for our next adventure.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Creative Primary School, Chan, Kavan – 8

In the Ming Dynasty, the Yong Le Emperor initiated the construction of the treasure fleet. He asked Zheng He to lead the fleet to get treasures from different countries.

Zheng He first went to Vietnam and made friends with the king. The king welcomed Zheng He's treasure fleet with elephants to ride to his kingdom. He gave them pearls and precious stones.

Next, Zheng He led the treasure fleet to India, but while going to India, they met large waves and nasty pirates. They fought the pirates and won, but failed to catch the leader. When they arrived in India, the ruler of India gave them a vase, baskets of pineapples, silk and ivory.

After their voyage to India, they went to Africa where they brought animals like leopards, ostriches, giraffes and zebras.

On the sixth journey, they met those nasty pirates once again. However, this time it was not only a few men, but an army. Zheng He was losing and just when all hope was gone.....Bam! An elite team of heroes came from another dimension to stop the fight. There was a knight named Blast Zone, Wash Buckler the pirate, a tornado birdman who went after the name Wet Ranger, Magna Charge the robot, a wizard known as Hoot Loop, a cowboy named Rattle Shake, 3 martial artists: Stink Bomb, Night Shift and Fire Kraken and last but not least, a skier named Freeze Blade.

They fought side by side with Zheng He and captured the leader together.

They finished the seventh journey and went to China, where Zheng He said goodbye to the Swap Force. When Zheng He sent the gifts to the Yong Le Emperor, he thanked them and the Swap Force and was very impressed with their success on the voyages.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Creative Primary School, Fung, Michelle – 8

I am Captain Ariana, a graceful voyager aged 23. I especially like hunting for treasure and sharing it with my crew. Everyone called us 'Ming Treasure Voyages Fleet'.

One day, I was ordered to see Emperor Shan with my assistant, Cora. Shan said, "Good day, Captain Ariana. I have a little mission for you."

"What kind of mission?" I asked.

"Last time I dreamt of my father who told me to get the rainbow seashell from the sea world 'AQUARALL'. The rainbow seashell has the technology to show how to make ships, speedboats and even submarines. Once you know the technology, I will promote you to be the leader and give you more people to build bigger teams. To enter the sea world, you have to get three keys from Africa, India and Arabia."

We set off to the first stop, Africa. The African people greeted us gracefully. We explained to them the purpose of our voyage. "Good day, young lady! Let me bring you to our village where the Drum Dance Challenge is held." an old man replied. We followed him and found other teams there too. "These are the rivals you must defeat to be prized the key." the old man reminded us. After all drum dances ended, the results came out and.....we won! We got the heart-shaped key.

We sailed off to the second stop, India. There, we saw women in pretty dresses. One of them spoke, "Hello my dears, I bet you are here for the Silk Embroidery Competition to win the special key." We nodded then followed her. All rivals started sewing when the bell rang. Luckily, we won again and got the star-shaped key. Off we went to the last stop, Arabia.

We followed the town's people to the Coffee Making Race. I told my crew that I did not know how to make coffee. Cora spoke up, "Captain, I have been studying how to make coffee for years. I can make it if you allow me." When the race ended, we all smelled aroma from Cora's cup. The judge announced, "The winner is.....Cora!" We were given the seashell-shaped key.

Finally, we could enter the sea world 'AQUARALL' with three keys. There we saw a sea turtle guarding the rainbow seashell. It said, "Hi, I am the wise lord turtle. I know you want the rainbow seashell, but to trade, you must turn in the three keys." The wise lord turtle put three keys together which magically turned into one big shining pink pearl.

The wise lord turtle continued, "A creature in our kingdom had stolen the pink pearl and broken it into three keys. Now we can save our kingdom. Thank you!"

Back at Emperor Shan's palace, we reported, "Your Majesty, we accomplished the mission successfully.

"Well done! I will carry out my promise" Shan said.

Being a leader, I was ready to learn the technology to make different transportations to build the strongest 'Ming Treasure Voyages Fleet' ever.

A Mysterious Island

Creative Primary School, Lee, Bridgitte – 7

Wong Yue Jia was an intelligent and brave young boy. He liked the sea and always dreamed of going on a sailing adventure. One day, a Sea Captain came to Jia's village asked the villagers to join the Ming Treasure Fleet to sail the Seven Seas to help spread the joy and kindness of the Emperor. He promised the meals were free and the sea would be full of adventures. Jia decided to join.

The next day, the Captain set sail for the Seven Seas. Jia was excited as his dream finally came true. But a month passed, and the Fleet met no one or saw any land. The crew was bored, and some wanted to return to the village. Suddenly, Jia yelled from the lookout, "Land!". While the sea was covered with a thick mist, Jia was able to spot some green grass and white shells on the island. All the sailors were happy to see land again and they all wanted to go to the island. They wanted to walk on solid ground and meet some native people. But the Captain was afraid the island was dangerous, and he needed someone to stay on board to guard the treasures of the Emperor. The Captain asked Jia to explore the island as he was the smartest sailor on board. Jia could also pick seven other sailors to go with him.

The sailors rowed a small boat to the island. The island was round and slippery, but there were many shining shells and shimmering pearls on the island! Jia also found many precious gemstones like sapphires, diamonds, emeralds and rubies stuck in the rocks! "Wow! We will be rich!" all the sailors cried. While the sailors were busy digging out diamonds from the rocks, Jia felt strange vibrations from under his feet. Suddenly, the whole island was moving! It must be an earthquake! The sailors were petrified, and they all screamed. Jia told the sailors to run back to the boat. But it was too late, the whole island was shaking, and many sailors were thrown into the sea. Then a giant head appeared and growled. This was not an island but a giant turtle! Jia and the sailors were standing on the back of a giant turtle! The Sea Captain quickly ordered the sailors on the ship to shoot cannons at the turtle. The turtle screamed louder and shook its body even harder. Jia did not want to hurt the turtle and signaled for the Captain to stop shooting. Jia asked all sailors to be quiet and he started to sing! Jia had a lovely voice and he sang beautiful lullabies to soothe the giant turtle. Finally, the turtle calmed down and stopped shaking. Jia and the sailors ran back to the small boat and rowed back to the ship.

All the sailors thanked Jia because he was brave and clever. "Whew! What an extraordinary adventure!" Jia smiled. Now he was looking forward to the next adventure ahead.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Creative Primary School, Mok, Aquila – 7

During the “Injim War (1592–1598)”, the Koreans, with no hope to expel the “Wokou” from their land, turned to the Ming (Chinese) Emperor for help. Wokou were Japanese pirates who rifled through the coastlines of China and Korea at that time.

Young–Wook, only 16, was an ordinary **Sowi** in the Korean’s troop. **Sowi** was the most junior officer rank in the army. His taekwondo impressed no one so he decided to join the army. He was not a born hero but he had a special gift with animals. He could whisper to dogs, understand cat meows, talk to birds and hypnotize a sheep.

At the break of day when Young–wook was still slumbering, a pigeon came through his window, he scooped up the bird and unhitched the secret note from its claws, “My troops will visit Jinju on the first day of winter.” Young–wook realized that disaster was about to strike so he ran as fast as his legs could carry him, all the way to the castle.

The Korean emperor was stunned because even his top advisors were running out of ideas, he needed to send his messenger to seek China’s help. On hearing Wokou’s evil plot, the Ming Emperor immediately ordered Zheng He to bring 5000 men and 50 junks to rescue Jinju and they arrived only two weeks before winter began.

It was the first day of winter, the Wokou army arrived at last, the Koreans pretended that they were not prepared at all for battle. The Wokous were completely thrilled because they took down the city in record time. They plundered the place and brought all the valuables onto their ships. The triumphant Japanese pirates celebrated all night. On the next day, they set off for home.

After sailing for half a day, the Wokou’s fleet was confronted by Zheng He’s crew. The pirates wanted to escape but they were in the middle of nowhere. The troops settled in a nearby island and the real battle began.

Zheng He’s army was the finest at sea yet they were not familiar with fighting on land. Young–wook had a plan instead as he spent a lot of time communicating with all the wild animals onboard during this voyage. In the middle of the night, he sent the panicky antelopes and zebras to chase the enemies out of their tents. The petrified Wokous sped with their tails between their legs but the fierce lions and leopards were greeting them in all directions. The Wokous wanted to head for the shore but it was too late, the hungry rhinoceros were awaiting. This time, Yong–Wook led Zheng He and his team to victory. The pirates reluctantly gave in and once again, peace and prosperity spread across the land.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages: Mission to the Outer Edge of the Universe

Creative Primary School, Wong, Jasmine – 7

Once upon a time, an astronaut called Zheng Yuet from Earth was sent to explore and bring back riches from the seven planets.

After ten hours of traveling, Zheng Yuet finally landed on a rocky planet. It smelt of petrol, something the Earth was short of. She stepped out and met Petroly, the President of the planet.

“Hi, are you living here?” Petroly asked.

“Um, I’m not, but I come to explore!” Zheng said cautiously.

“Do take some petrol as my humble present of friendship.” the President said chucklingly.

“Thank you.” Zheng Yuet replied, overwhelmed by the alien’s generosity as she carried buckets of petrol away.

She quickly drove her spaceship to the second planet. Once arrived, the Leader Hydrolen cheered, “A visitor! How wonderful!”

“Uh, hello...” she said stepping out to a sea of clean, sparkly water.

“Are you sure... you are going to exploit this beautiful planet?” she muttered under her breath. Then she thought about her mission. “Alright, getting some fresh water won’t do any harm.”

When she landed on the third planet, she found so many of Earth’s endangered animals.

“Hello!” said Pedana, the Chairman of this place. She gave Zheng Yuet a hug.

Completely forgetting her mission, Zheng said, “Do you mind if I exchange this I-pad for that Chinese pink dolphin?” “It’s OK!” Pedana laughed. They agreed on the mutual trade.

Next, she went to the fourth planet, which was covered by forest. Tlee the Village Chief greeted her.

“So many trees here... I’ll take some!” Zheng Yuet stammered, offering Tlee a computer.

“No problem, my friend.” Tlee said, packing the trees and flowers in a lavender bag.

Oxmen the Commander on the fifth planet welcomed Zheng with an airy voice.

“Oxygen. Oh! Oxygen,” Zheng sang elatedly while Oxmen was pumping the air into a huge tank of her spaceship, neglecting even the idea of fair trade.

She arrived at the sixth planet and met Nongevity, its Tribal Head.

“I want some long life, please?” She asked impudently.

Nongevity took his wand and bellowed, “Lony Tiffano!” Some smoke flew into a bag. He wrapped ‘long life’ up and gave it to Zheng Yuet.

“What can still quench my thirst to exploit?” She grinned when she got to the seventh planet. It was a dry, cold and ruined piece land with only a few habitants. A shabby child called Evol stood in front of her. “Do you want to stay in our cabin tonight? It is warmer there.” he said with an innocent welcoming smile. All of a sudden, Zheng Yuet felt the fatigue from this long journey. The spaceship was fully loaded with ‘treasures’ but something was still missing. She spent the night with the poor kid and his family, and gave them all the clean water, fresh air, plants, animals, energy and longevity they needed.

“I discovered I come all the way here to find one thing, love”, Zheng Yuet told herself as she decided to make this exotic planet her home.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Diocesan Boys' School Primary Division, Bok, Nathaniel – 8

It all began in the second year of emperor Yong Le's reign when His Majesty ordered Chief Envoy Zheng He to take care of the infamous and cruel dwarf pirates, the Wokous, who had been looting our ships and killing our citizens, even old women and children, near the East China sea.

"You've to make it back, at least, for your family, who are longing for you to come..." said Envoy Zheng he before we set for the trip. Yes, I don't want to leave my family, Zhu Xi was still two and a half and how could he know what his father looked like if I hadn't make it back home?

The ship jerked violently along the angry waves. But suddenly----- our compass had broken as the heavy wind. Oh god! How would we go there without the compass? And more unlucky, the Wokous were just dashing to us, in their ship, behind us!

Our gunner fought with them bravely. But the Wokous had firearms better than us, and the shooting sound was everywhere. Envoy Zheng He drove away quickly from them as fast as he could, and I pulled the string between our and the Wokous' ship, and we escaped from them.

The wind was growing much stronger. And our compass? We could only use the map. The boat sailed along to the Arabian sea, and I saw many army of enemies, the Wokous, what should we do? The bloody battle finally began again. Some people there shouted and snarled. There was a huge commotion.

It was a difficult battle and I would be ending my life if Envoy Zheng he hadn't help me. He was a very admiral fighter. He helped us win! The Wokous haven't done yet. It was lucky for us that their weapons are in the hand of the unskilful pirates. Zheng He was not only a good fighter but also good at plotting our fight against the Wokous. With his help, I was confident to follow his directions.

The cargoes and golds and treasure are all taken by my friends. We went back to the ship without being noticed and sailed all the way back to China.

His Majesty loved the trip. But the Wokous did not finish. I continued seven times sailing to the ship of the Wokous. The gold was taken back every time. The war was hardy every time.

It was a few months later and I had won the Wokous. The nasty Wokous had disappeared. And China is like the past, a glorious country.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Diocesan Preparatory School, Ng, Ho Yin – 8

Trust me, I had been on the Ming Treasure Voyages two times. I went to Africa and Vietnam.

On the way to Vietnam, we encountered some strong waves that led us to put into a beach quickly. Soon, we walked to the nearby town, I was surprised to see almost everyone was at home facing some big black boxes showing some crazy moving pictures.

It was very difficult to find the palace, so we tried to ask if some people would tell us if there was a king in this country. I thought that was impossible because we were not in China. However, that guy knew what we were saying, and even answered us. He said that there was no “ruler” there. So, we thanked him by giving him gold and silk. I didn’t know why, but he let us go to his house and gave us a black box. He said it was a television, or TV for short. Carrying a TV with you while walking a long way is not a good idea. Unluckily, that was what I and some of my crew members had to do.

On the way back, the strong waves were still there. It shook our ship back and forth randomly. The TV flew off the ship and landed in the sea.

Since we did not get anything during our first landing, we continued to Africa instead of going back to China. Once we disembarked, we only saw grass, trees and animals. It was very quiet until some of us went back to the ships, three crocodiles chased after us. Nobody got hurt because those giant crawlies were very slow.

We hid from them in a village. I was hoping the villagers would not kill us for being strangers, and a second later I remembered the crocodiles. I peeked out of the village to see if the crocodiles had quit chasing us. But when I did, a huge one stared at me. I entered the nearest house and showed the crocodile to a villager.

After he saw it, he grabbed a spear and yelled. Not long after, all the villagers ran out of their houses with spears. Then they battled the nasty reptiles until they surrendered.

For saving us, we gave tons of gold to them. The villager chief was so happy that he gave us plenty of cooked rabbit, potatoes, carrots and bread. When heading back to our ships, almost twenty rabbits appeared before my eyes. Most of the people in the crew used to catch rabbits, so they were running big circles.

Back on the ship, I was hungry. I meant extra hungry, so I ate some food the village chief gave me to help myself survive on the way back to China.

Ming Treasure Voyage

Dulwich College Beijing, Alwadi, Daniel – 6

As the Ming treasure ship 'Bahadad' floated on the rocking oceans filled with bucks of shiney gold and jewels .There was a sudden shout of" land ahoy "!"All the sailors rushed to the deck and jumped on some little boats and started rowing with excitement.In the of the excitement there was a little cabin boy who spends his time peeling potatoes and washing sailors smelly socks. His name was Leo. The captain called captain Smollet rode on a great horse with a map in his hands.When they were passing by they even saw some crazy villagers which wanted to fight them.Luckily they brought weapons with them.It was a savarige battle until the last crazy person was killed

Smollet took a look at the map it said that there was a treasure box about 2 miles long hidden deep inside the ground!Smollet was desperate to get the treasure.He thought he would get the treasure himself but he was wrong !Everyone wanted the treasure so they set off.....When they rounded up the treasure spotthey just saw a big black hole with bugs!Smollet was full of furi he threw the map on the floor and stabbed It with a sword and screamed useless there must be someone stealing our treasure someone called.We will never sleep until we find it said the captain.After they looked for a while they suddenly heard some Laughing all around them.what "should we do " asked a sailor "what do you think we should do " said another sailor "RUN" he shouted everyone started to sprint as fast as he could they stopped at the shore and was panting very very hard.the captain said to load the ship.

After they finished loading the ship they set off to sea.They we're going up and down up and down until disaster struck!The ship bumped on a big rock and started sinking!Everyone was running around like crazy. Luckily they had a smaller boat but it couldn't fit all the people. Everyone said there would be someone that would sacrifice himself. All of the sailors looked at a big fat sailor he said he didn't want to but the crew lifted him up and threw him down to the rocking ocean.There was a few bubbles there was a huge big last bubble until there was silence silence silence our junk gigantic splash of water up roads are in Normas huge green slimy and smelly the sea serpent. It crashed open the boat and split it into half! Everyone drown except for Leo and captain Smollet. They had nothing left all of their treasure has drowned. But thank God they were holding a wooden plank and they were not dead. After a while kaboom thunder and lightning danced around the sky Leo and Smollet held tight as they could to the wooden plank. It was like it was raining cats and dogs are they lucky enough to survive?

When The thunder stopped they were soaked it was such a relief and they drifted safely back home .

The Voyage

Dulwich College Beijing, Li, Damien – 6

Glaring at the bustling museum hall, Percy sighed: “This is going to be boring!”

Following his mother into the Ancient China exhibit, Percy walked to the center of the hall, where an exquisite vase with swirling blue patterns and vivid drawings of sail ships was displayed.

“Who did this vase belong to?” Percy wondered as he walked closer to the vase.

Suddenly, there was a whirl of colour, a flash of golden light, and a gust of strong wind. Percy was sucked into the vase.

THUD – Percy landed on the dusty deck of a gigantic ship. Dancing in the air, a yellow banner with the Chinese character “Ming” hung on the mast.

“Where is mum?” Percy wondered with butterflies in his stomach. Around him were hundreds of ships lined up on the crystal-clear sea.

An arrogant looking, middle-aged Chinese man dressed in a long robe with fine embroidery interrupted his thoughts. “Are you spying on us?” he yelled in a deep voice.

Trembling in fear, Percy responded in Chinese: “No! My name is Percy. I am from Whistler, Canada. Can I join you? Please?”

“Canada? Where is that? Does everyone in your place have blonde hair, pointy noses and pale skin like you? I have led me fleet to 30 countries in six expeditions but never been to Canada. You will take us there.” He beckoned Percy closer and nodded, “On behalf of the Great Ming Dynasty, I, Zheng He, sail to our neighboring countries for the seventh time to deliver silks and porcelains, trade for herbs and spices and reunite our friendships. And from now on, you shall be my guide to Canada!”

Hoping to find a way home, Percy nodded reluctantly: “Yes my Lord!”

As days went by, Percy followed Zheng He to amazing places like Java and India, met people speaking different dialects and tasted scrumptious cuisines.

However, one gloomy day, a panicked shout came from the deck: “Pirates! ARRRRRRRRRGH!!!!!!” Percy ran up and saw greasy pirates jumping onto the ship. All of a sudden, a long-beard pirate grabbed Percy and put a sharp sword to his neck.

Percy closed his eyes in agony: “Mum, I can’t go home anymore...”

“Let him go! He is only a boy!” Zheng He bellowed as he charged to the pirate, armed with a broadsword.

Hours later, Percy woke up gradually on a blood-soaked deck. Not too far away, Zheng He, with a sword piercing his chest, leaned against the mast. Tortured by the unbearable pain, he said his last words: “I always knew dying on the ocean was my destiny. I will never make it to Canada. Please take the vase from my cabin and give it to your king as a present of friendship from Ming.”

With tears all running down his face, Percy limped to the cabin, found the strangely familiar vase and held it gently. Suddenly, he was sucked into the vase again and THUD—back in the museum.

“May you rest in peace!” Percy mumbled.

Voyage Story

Dulwich College Beijing, Lu, Nini – 6

“I can’t believe it!” I yelled. “We’re going to Africa!” It was a sunny day on our ship, one of the Zheng He boats. Finally, I knew where we were going. Oops, I forgot to introduce myself. My name is Harry Menzies and my father is Gavin Menzies and he is the captain. That night, the cook, who is an expert at cooking, made us clams and salmon for dinner. After a few weeks, the sight of land filled my eyes. “Land ho! Land ho!” So we walked off the ship, packing everything. A new adventure was about to begin.

Soon enough, we found ourselves in a small village. “We come in peace.” said dad. Just at that moment, a voice yelled “Charge!” Five seconds later, spears rose into the air. We began to fight with our swords. Soon the villagers ran into their huts. “But what are we going to do next?” I asked dad. “Egypt.” He said. “Brilliant, but why? I’m confused.” I continued. “Because then we can find some nicer people we can build an alliance with. We can also get some other cool stuff that can’t be found in China.” “Great! Let’s go!” Everybody chorused.

The day after the next day, we were packed up and ready to go. The ride was a long one. I have to admit, even though I went on some really long ones before. In fact, this one was the longest ride on land I’ve had before. It made us really thirsty and we stopped from oasis to oasis to set up our camp.

About a month later, we were in Egypt. The Nile roamed across it and the sky was as blue as an ocean. Finally! Dad offered all kinds of things to the people, but none of them enjoyed it. Then the chief yelled something. Amazingly, a wall made of soldiers appeared right before our eyes. A battle was starting. Soon, I heard swords clashing, screaming and yelling. The battle seemed endless. There was a week of fighting. Finally, the battle ended. It ended when one of our members snuck up behind the chief and scared him. He went crazy and ran away. Seeing their leader gone, the Africans retreated and ran away. The word of victory spread as quickly as wind. We also had a feast to celebrate. The next day, we left for our ship.

About a month later, we were back on our ship. We sailed peacefully for a day or two but on the second day, a horde of pirates attacked. “Oh no, not again!” I yelled. My dad told me to be quiet as he gave the signal to head forward at full speed. But the pirates were already firing their cannons. Luckily, they were arguing about who would get to keep the loot. While they were distracted, we quickly sailed away. When the pirates realised what happened, they yelled even louder than before. Meanwhile, we were sailing off to China.

Ming Treasure Voyages

Dulwich College Beijing, McIntosh, Leo – 7

As a raging battle went on in the distance, the ship sailed peacefully and headed off to the west [Arabia]. As the wind blew, the tired sailors got up to do their jobs. As I trudged up to the main deck sleepily, I heard the captain call my name. “Joe come over ‘ere”. I ran up and walked towards him and asked what it was. He told me I needed to clean “the birds nest” right now

I said I would and climbed up the ladder to get to “the birds nest”. I thought “When will there be some excitement?” I got the mop and brush out and started cleaning. When I finished, I went to the captain to ask where we were heading. “To Arabia lad”! I went to my room and took out a map. There was a while to go before we got to Arabia. I went to bed and said to myself “This is going to be a rough ride”. Finally I went to sleep, snoring softly.

When I woke up, I looked out of the window and saw a horde of ships swarming towards us. I ran to the captain’s deck and knocked on the door. He asked “Who is it”? I replied “Joe, sir”. He sighed, trotted to the door and opened it, and pulled me in, closing it afterwards. He asked me what it was. I gasped “There are loads of ships coming our way”! He stared at me for a bit, then went to see for himself. His mouth dropped open. He then shouted “Get the weapons out, we’re going to send them to Davy Jones’s locker”! There was a huge huddle to get the weapons. I simply just walked round them, pushed past some people and took a pistol. There were no cannons left, only rifles and guns.

I ran to the side, I was ready to fight. Well, first I hurled. I put a bullet in the pistol and fired with a shaky hand. I saw it hit a man on the ship and quickly ran to the left in case his friends saw me. I felt worried and scared because I was afraid that I would get shot.

I looked around and saw bullets flying everywhere. I saw a cracked tile at the bottom of their ship. I aimed my pistol and shot it powerfully. BOOM! The ship gave way, plummeting into the water. I heard a lot of screams, cheering too. My friends ran to hug me and I got a pat on the back from my captain. He said “great work Joe.” There was still one more ship left. This was bulkier, more powerful and carried more men. The captain whispered in the ear of the cannon man, who nodded his head and shot a cannon ball towards the side of a nearby mountain. The impact caused a rockslide which rolled on to the other ship and sank it. The men cheered and celebrated.

Harry Potter and the Ming Treasure Voyage

Dulwich College Beijing, Rong, Jason – 6

I am Lele Zhu, Captain of an entire fleet of vessels of Ming Treasure Voyage. The mission of the voyage is to give out gold and silk as gifts to other nations.

Here the story begins... It was the year 1424 and I was 32 years old. One day I was onboard thinking ways to improve our military readiness when suddenly a sailor shouted: "Pirates, Pirates" It was true. Our ship rocked as a bomb exploded near our ship. As the captain, I had to shout: "All hands onboard! Do not panic!"

I tried to light a torch to tell the other ships that pirates were attacking us. But just as I stepped onto the deck, a light blinded me and the crew onboard. A child about 18 years old stepped through as if it was a portal. He was carrying a stick. When onboard, he pointed his stick at the pirates and cried: "Expecto Patronum!" Little waves came out of his stick and got bigger and bigger. When the waves finally hit the pirate ship, it overturned the ship with an unbelievable force.

Seeing that the pirates were defeated, the boy turned to us. "You are in immortal danger." "What? Why? How can I thank you for saving us?" "Now *that* is a little thing." He grinned at me. At least I learned one thing: That stick was a wand. The boy stayed with us for a long time and I found out that his name was Harry Potter.

One day, it was noon and I invited Harry to lunch. He said he could make lunch for us but we needed to escape from a person called Voldemart after we finished lunch. Some of my crew didn't believe him. "Rubbish!" One shouted. "Stupid zit!" There were boos all around the table. I shot them a look and they immediately shut their mouth. After all, it was Harry who saved us. I tried to make up for what they said: "Err... sorry. My crew—" "No need." "Then can you please start cooking?" He, of course used magic to cook.

The next morning, we went whale-watching. We all saw a lot of whales but when I saw the last one, I fainted. It was faintable to humans, so I have to let Harry write: *I got my Nimbus 2000 broomstick and went searching. I wanted to find it... But it found me. I attacked it with spells but nothing happened. Then it attacked me. Terrified and scared, I pierced a sword...In the end, I won.*

"Land!" A sailor shouted. Once we made onshore, we carried bags of treasure to the land, ready to give them to the people living there. But the indigenous people thought we were pirates and tied us up. They threatened to burn us alive. After some explanation, we convinced them that we were sent by the mighty Ming Emperor. At the end, we made good friends.

Voyage

Dulwich College Beijing, Soldati, Valerie – 6

It was an exciting morning for Annie as her class was going to the Asia Art Museum to finish their topic “The Great Ming Empire”. Plenty of exhibits were displayed in the museum but the most impressive one was an enormous ancient vase cracked but still gleaming, reflecting the girl’s wavy red hair. It boasted an amazing picture of the Ming Treasure fleet. Annie had a strange feeling – the vase was inviting her to touch it. Of course, it was forbidden but she couldn’t help it. To the girl’s amazement, her hand drained through the ancient ceramic. Soon her whole body was in.

Once her eyes opened, the girl realized that she was on an ancient vessel which looked familiar to her. It was the ship of Zeng He from the vase. At that moment, the mariners spotted Annie and froze to the spot. According to a legend, one day a red-haired girl would bring them luck. The seamen gave her warm welcome.

The ship was sailing peacefully, when suddenly the tropical sun faded, thunder rumbled fiercely. A dark gloomy rainbow arched in the distance. The boat got caught in a strong current which brought it under the rainbow. It was a gate to the Sea of Nightmares. Soon everyone was fast asleep, everyone but Annie. Who’ll navigate the ship?

From bad to worse: in the distance jagged rocks emerged from the grey fog and were approaching menacingly. The girl had to act quickly or the ship would crash into a rocky island! She desperately looked around for help, but all she could see was sleeping seamen. Suddenly, a fresh breeze caressed her hair gently and whispered, “You must burn an enchanted feather, and the magic smoke will wake up the sailors”. “Where could I find the feather?” cried the girl but silence was the answer.

Foggy air grew colder making the girl shiver and deepen her hands into the pockets. Her fingers, almost numb of cold, felt something smooth and ticklish. To Annie’s surprise, it was a small feather of her pet budgie. The enchanted feather to burn! Luckily, in her scout camp there was a class of how to start a fire. She just needed to rub small pieces of wood which Annie had spotted earlier in the quarter deck. Shortly, green smoke swirled from the burning feather forming an emerald cloud around the ship. One by one the sailors started to move, their minds emerging from the depth of nightmares. Before long, the men crowded around Annie and Zeng He stepped forward, “The legend was true you saved our lives, Red-haired Girl, thank you!”

Soon the life on the ship was back to normal. Annie was helping the steersman when something sparkling on the head deck caught the edge of her eye. Her curiosity brought her behind a stack of barrels. There a rainbow stairway shimmered in the sunlight. “Where does it lead to?” a question flashed in her mind but she already knew the answer...

Dingding's Voyage

Dulwich College Beijing, Wang, Emma – 6

Dingding was a smart boy with a brave heart and lots of creative ideas. He dreamed being a famous sea explorer. He has an old book about the Ming treasure voyages. He read it many times.

One dark night when he read it again, he found something glowing on the floor. It was a golden key! After he picked it up, the house started to rock side by side with huge waves outside. Suddenly a huge, dark shadow rose towards Dingding.

When he woke up, he was in a cozy room with a warm blanket. Just then a soldier came in. He said: "You were sleeping for 3 days, we thought you would never wake up. I am not exaggerating." "Are you a movie star? Why are you wearing a strange costume?" asked Dingding. The soldier laughed: "What the movie mean? You looked more unusual." Suddenly Dingding realized the old book had brought him to the ancient times. "Where are we?" Dingding kept asked. "We are in 1406 and this is Zhenghe's ship." Dingding was shocked.

Zhenghe was very proudly to introduce Dingding around. "We have more than 200 ships, half of the ships carried 20000 soldiers and rest of the ships were store the food, drinking water and the horses." They became friends.

They were following the voyage map for couple of days. On the sunny morning Zhenghe saw an immense green island full of coconuts trees. The local people did a warm greeting when they landed. They help the soldier to amending sails, cleaning the deck. The island emperor gave them a shiny twinkling diamond. Dingding advised Zhenghe to organising a fest to celebrate the friendship. They prepared traditional Chinese food and puppet show. The emperor said "Thanks for everything! Your food is delicious especially the steam rice. "Just then Dingding whispered to Zhenghe : " we could send people to teach them planting and cooking rice. ""Good idea!" said zhenghe. Since then, all the islanders could have steam rice on their tables.

One morning Dingding saw a grey shadow far away. He ran to Zhenghe and called: "There is a shadow on the horizon" Zhenghe trained his telescope on the horizon. The pirate ship was towards to the fleet. Zhenghe asked the crew rush to prepare the cannon, load their pistols and practice their sword fighting. They drove closer to the pirate ship in the high speed. "Kill them!" Ordered by Zhenghe. They began to fight with the pirates. With a gigantic BANG. The powerful fire bomb target the pirates ship. It scared the pirates run away. "We won!" Everyone shouted.

On the lazy afternoon Dingding was fishing with Zhenghe. He saw shiny object looks like diamond in the fish mouth. It was the golden key! Dingding know it was a time to go home. "I will miss you little man ! "Zhenghe sighed. They hugged each other tightly. Suddenly the key began to grow, dingding back home with his parents again!

Voyage

Dulwich College Beijing, Wong, Ashton – 6

One early morning, the burning sun rose above the sea level, the bright sky turned orange. Suddenly a mysterious ship slowly appeared near the sandy beach. The next day, the ship was still there! On the ship was a man called Goldbeard the pirate. He was finding treasure, until he heard a shout it was Blackbeard the pirate.

Blackbeard the pirate roared as loudly as he can, he got angry, Blackbeard got a mighty pistol and shot Goldbeard but it missed. He got so angry and mad and he got on his large, cool ship. He was very smart, he aimed for another good shot it nearly shot him but hit a green tree. Blackbeard screamed and yelled he got so grumpy. He argued with Goldbeard and challenged him.

Goldbeard had a trick, he put some oil, some sand, mud and ice. Blackbeard slipped and shot himself, he fell and landed in a shark's mouth. Blackbeard was gone!!! Blackbeard escaped. Blackbeard ran away but there was a trap. He fell in the trap, and got eaten by another shark. He got so furious and angry.

Later that day, everyone cheered and they were all so joyful. They were so delighted that Blackbeard vanished! Everyone yelled at Goldbeard and laughed "you are the best", some people praised "bravo", even some screamed "you are a hero". Goldbeard got a reward. It was a nice, pointy, sharp sword. He suddenly found a letter in his pocket. It said "On December 31st you will have a competition. It was a competition that was about whoever pull out the sword will be the king of the pirates. Everyone tried until Goldbeard pulled out the sword. He was the new king of the pirates. So many people celebrated and cheered for the new king, Goldbeard!!!!!!!!!!!!!! They all loved Goldbeard. 7 years later he got so tired. He didn't give up, he still treated people very kind. Suddenly there was a loud sound, Goldbeard send out his pirates. They charged and saw a pirate dragon!!!!!! It was Blackbeard's dragon. It was huge, it attacked. Goldbeard shot a bullet from his pistol and the dragon vanished. He was so proud of himself that he said "I can do it!" Suddenly at the back came a loud sound it was Pisty the captain. He was one of the Blackbeard's best friends. Pisty said I have come here for the revenge. They both started to fight. Some of Goldbeard's pirates fought too. They shot each other. Pisty and Goldbeard had a duel. Goldbeard used his one last bullet and shot Pisty in the chest.

Everyone went back home and celebrated their best day ever. They were so happy and delightful, that they celebrated it for the whole entire lovely night. Even Goldbeard and his pirates celebrated their best day ever. Goldbeard and his pirates went back on their lovely ship and had a very nice feast. The next super day it was the first day of 2019. Everyone in the lovely village was so happy. They even had gatherings with their kind villager friends. They suddenly found out that one of the pirates were in disguise. The chef put some ice and soup on the floor and pirate slipped and was locked in prison. They were so happy that, Goldbeard and his teammates danced, sang, played and chased. They couldn't stop playing, dancing, chasing and singing until the next morning, and lived happily ever after!!!

Ming Treasure Voyages

Dulwich College Beijing, Xiong, Alan – 8

On a sunny day, I looked out of the window and saw the blue sea. It looked like the waves were slapping against the boat swiftly. Every time it slapped the Bottom half, A satisfying splash! Sound would ring into my ears. Then me I was a gunner on board. Oh, no. The worst gunner on board.

Suddenly, I heard a shout: “land! LAND!” I moaned: “Oh, not again.” In the last few weeks, we had went to more than a dozen islands but they all seem to be uninhabited. “We were trying to give out gold.” The emperor said but we thought we were trying to waste food. When we went out, the captain’s first mate, Yum li, who was a big gruff, muscular guy who was said to have his toe cut off in a battle and no one dares to ask unless you want to have a sword in your head. Said: “Hey lazy snail, you better get out or you will be eating maggots for every day.” I grumbled. He uses disgusting threats against us every day.

As I climbed in one of the rowboats, my cabin mate eagle beard said: “Hey, Rotten maggot, you taking that big o’l hand book of sea monsters again? Awhh! Why are you bringing that old book? Awhh!” “Just in case, you know.” I replied. Then the person shouted again: “this is blue!” What is blue? Questions filled my head. As we rowed towards the island, I giant monster appeared. It was a monster! Not an island! : “Who dares to wake the Yemocha from its sleep! This monster was just a squid with wings. I looked in the handbook I saw the Yemocha and began to search for the category weakness. Weakness... Oh! Here! It says that the Yemocha was afraid of eagle sounds. Where do we get an eagle? OH, I think I know where? A cabin mate does an annoying noise, and it’s like awhh! “I said: “Hey! Eagle beard! Get here right now ! ” “Coming! Awhh!” He replied. As soon as the monster heard “awhh ! “He hid under the waves and never appeared again.

Ahhh. That was quick. I know you’re asking: “Hey! What happened to the handsome guy ever since? Okay, guys, thanks for the compliment. Well I learnt something, which is when you do something, always get as much information as you could about that thing first. In other words, always be cautious. After sailing ten peaceful years, we arrived at a land. But that piece of land was not blue. It was normal, well except people who came out of nowhere and said: “I am going to kill you.” Well, that is another story to talk about.

The Quest of the Ming Treasure Voyage

Dulwich College Beijing, Yao, Circle – 7

One Sunny morning, Amelia was playing with Sam and her cat Goldie. They were playing happily when Goldie spotted something. Amelia rushed to her and Sam followed. In the middle of Goldie's tiny paws was a magnificent, golden key on the ground. Amelia was curious about everything unlike Sam who was a bit scared and doesn't know what to do. Amelia picked up the key as it shimmered in the bright sun, but an amazing thing happened! The key began lifting itself up and, in a flash, they were standing in the middle of the vast ocean. "Meow, meow" came a voice, Amelia looked around and saw Goldie meowing at a silver sword lying in the sun. She looked up and saw sails dangling from the top. "*Oh no!*" Amelia thought, "*We must be on a pirate ship!*"

"Pull the sails!" Came a shout out of nowhere. Amelia knew that it was the pirates, so she quickly hid under the nearest piece of sail. Unfortunately, the people found them. A knot tied in Sam's stomach as Goldie began to hiss and she quickly hid behind Amelia. "Hello," said the man, "I am David and I and the captain of this ship"

"Then why are you so nice if you are the captain of the pirate ship? Pirates are nasty!" said Sam surprisingly, "They stole things and....."

"Oh, we're not pirates!" said the captain, "We're from China and we give out treasures as gifts. Let us show you around our ship." They followed them around the ship. As they went, they saw tons of treasures and some weapons too.

Suddenly, out of nowhere came a 'bump'. The ship hit an island but luckily, it didn't wreck. So, they continued until Goldie began to meow. There was a ship far away, but it was a real pirate ship! All of them quickly got out their weapons and prepared to fight. The pirates attacked rapidly and the voyagers, who were not good at fighting, were no match for them. Then, Goldie grew angry and knew she must help. She jumped on the pirates. The pirates had never seen a cat, so, were frightened. Goldie pushed some into the water to die. The others were bitten and killed. Some of them who didn't get caught ran to their ship as fast as a cheetah and sailed away. "Good job Goldie! That was clever!" Amelia said as she gave her a fish. Goldie purred and started to chew. "Your cat is clever. Let's sail again." So, they continued until they again heard a loud and scary, worrying and fierce voice sailing behind them. Goldie again jumped onto their ship and took all their weapons away. The pirates sailed away unhappily. David gave a golden ball to Goldie.

They traveled five days and they got to the shore of India. At that time, the key glowed and took them home. It was the end of their adventure.

Escaping the Pirates

International Christian School, Chen, Lucas – 9

As pirates invaded a Ming Treasure Boat in China, they found their victim, Jacob, hiding as pirates stole his phone. When a flickering red light filled the ship, Jacob found himself in a tiny and dingy cell. As the boat sailed rapidly on the dangerous waters, Jacob tried to keep his balance while taking out a hidden knife from his shoe. Staring at his scratches and bruises, he raised his knife. When the thoughts of death suddenly twirled in his mind, he thought of Sandra his wife he left behind. As he finally could raise his knife before a thought zoomed in his mind, he sliced the unsecured cell gates into several parts. When the cell tumbled down, Jacob crawled out cautiously as the pirates ignored him.

Hiding from the guards and flickering red lights, Jacob opened a trapdoor that led to the lower layer of the ship. When he saw more red lights in his way, he immediately reacted by jumping and crawling over and under the lasers like a bandit. At the next stage, Jacob gazed at a robot, he recognized the face, the body, everything, he knew that robot's name, Natural. Immediately leaping on the robot, he landed head first on the floor. As Natural moved in front of him and creepily stared at Jacob, "Something needs to happen." he thinks.

In the meantime, a group of pirates gathered to drink wine to celebrate the capture of their victim. As the bottles of wine tumbled down the stairs, Jacob heard the sound of stampeding feet charging toward him. As a pirate appeared down the staircase, a wine bottle he threw flew in the sky charged toward Natural hitting him in the face. When the wine bottle accidentally hit Natural, Jacob sneakily ran away as fast as a leopard without the drunken pirates noticing him.

Reaching for a random vault in his way, he pushed and pulled the hexagonal door barely making a difference. When he noticed a code bar, the bar showed the numbers "16, 18, 5, 19, 19, 0, 17, 0, 1, 14, 4, 0, 26". As the numbers swirled in his mind, he finally figured out the code. The numbers meant "Press Q and Z", "Will something *horrible* happen to me?" he thought. Finally after a long decision, "Yes." Jacob thought, so he typed "Q,Z" in the code bar.

When the vault automatically opened, he saw a boat with 2 paddles, a pile of Renminbi, some armor and a scythe. With his scythe, he crafted a hole in the wall and rowed away from the pirates' ship using his boat and paddles. When a larger ship appeared, Jacob saw another Ming Treasure Fleet Boat appearing! As he stepped on the ship's stairs, he demanded to set off for Beijing. When Jacob returned to his homeland, he lived in a mansion he bought with the pirates' stolen Renminbi and lived happily ever after.

Ming Treasure Trouble

International Christian School, Law, Caleb – 9

On the dusty, deserted, streets of Germany, Professor Goberg drilled a bolt onto his nearly finished robot. As metal and steel tools clanked loudly, the professor screwed on the last nut. Standing in the sunlight, his robot, Nachocheese, gleamed like gold. As the professor walked off for a quick water break, Rivyener, the professor's rival, flipped open the front panel and started rewiring the robot. As he caught a glimpse of Goberg returning, he quickly muttered a few orders to Nachocheese, closed the panel, and ran. When he returned, Goberg pressed the on switch. As lights flashed and Nachocheese's eyes widened, he obliterated the professor's handiworks. As the robot hit, a piercing scream from the professor filled the air. Nachocheese cackled. As Nachocheese's jetpack soared into the air, Nachocheese said: 'Next stop..... China!!! The gold will be all mine!'

Meanwhile in China, the Ming Treasure fleet prepared for departure. As admiral Zheng He yelled 'Prepare yourselves,' the crew pulled up the anchor and set sail. Peacefully sailing, the boat cruised across the clear waters. Relaxing and singing, they celebrated day after day on deck. As a helpless voice from a lady slowly flowed into the ears of the crew, they quickly sped to a rock, where a broken ship lay. 'We'll help you!' Zheng He shouted as they carried the girl to the ship.

After a night of good sleep, the admiral woke up, only to find that his precious collar disappeared! 'Where's my jewelry?' Zheng He zoomed off to search for his collar. Running on the boat, the admiral finally found his collar on top of the mast. As a thousand thoughts whirred inside Zheng He's head, he headed the ship toward Beijing.

Many miles away, the wrecked boat in which the Ming treasure fleet rescued the girl, transformed into an electronic plane that glinted.

As the ship approached the harbor, Zheng He screamed: 'We have arrived at Beijing!' While the crew loaded the cargo off, Emperor Yongle congratulated the crew as servants took the girl to a room inside the palace. Later that night, a fire sprung up in the throne room. After the crew hurried to put out the fire, they skidded to a halt seeing their rescued passenger standing in front of them, holding a torch. As the girl said 'Give me all your gold and weapons,' she morphed into the robot Nachocheese! While troops shot and fired bullets at the robot Zheng He pounced on Nachocheese and his crew rushed out of the palace carrying the emperor. With a thousand bombs flying in the air, Nachocheese detected severe damage. With a shriek, he flew away screaming 'I'll be back.'

Several days later, Zheng He's mood lightened as he walked to the emperor. As Emperor Yongle placed a medallion on Zheng He's chest, the crew cheered loudly for their brave, courageous leader. 'Zheng He,' the emperor declared, 'Leader of the Ming Treasure Fleet.'

Pirate Adventure to Madagascar

International College Hong Kong, Ashby, Eli – 8

This is the story about two of the most courageous, adventurous, and brave pirates who worked for the Yongle emperor in the early 1400s. Captain Fan, and Seamate Lam.

They went on a voyage under admiral Zheng He's command to look for a very special treasure buried somewhere in Madagascar, on the east coast of Africa. In fact, the place was so much trouble that no pirates could return. People believed there might live a monster, and they called it Tremours. Finally, Captain Fan and Seamate Lam boarded a treasure ship and everyone was very worried.

As they docked, they packed their supplies. A gun powder bomb, matches and knives. They camped on a sheer cliff in the jungle for one night so that the Tremours does not attack them.

Both Captain Fan and Seamate Lam were walking across the plateau in the morning, and they slipped down a hole the Tremours had made. The monster's size was bigger than their ship.

"Ouuuooow", said Seamate Lam.

"Can you walk?", said Captain Fan. "Yes", said Seamate Lam.

"Let's go and find some treasure." said Captain Fan.

They walked along a big dark tunnel and suddenly felt the ground shaking.

"Let's run!", said Captain Fan.

They ran until they saw another tunnel on their left, and they ran down it.

"Why is this tunnel so small?", said Captain Fan.

"And the other one is so big".

"Look", said Seamate Lam.

"There's an egg".

"It looks like this one is smaller so that the babies have to go through it", said Captain Fan.

And the baby Tremours can come out but can't come back in as they grow so fast.

"Look!", said Seamate Lam.

"There is the treasure!" Captain Fan said.

When they were stuffing the treasure into their bags, the eggs were already starting to hatch.

"Let's run!", said Captain Fan.

And every second the baby tremours grew bigger.

They found themselves running back into the big tunnel. Suddenly, they found a big Tremours slithering in the tunnel. Quickly, they got out their knives and stabbed the big Tremours, so that they could hold on and ride it to escape.

"I've got an idea!", said Captain Fan.

He got out of his gun powder bomb and matches from his bag, and lit it.

Captain Fan threw the gun powder bomb into the air, and it exploded. It made the roof of the tunnel collapse on the baby tremours. The big Tremours was heading right out of the tunnel. By then, the baby ones came out through the dirt, and they looked very angry. They jumped off the big Tremours and ran and ran toward their ship. The baby tremours were very close to Captain Fan and Seamate Lam and they were very close to the ship. One of the sailors brought up the anchor then when one tremours was about to eat them, they jumped onto the ship just in time.

Sailing away, they both said. "We are not going back there again!"

Adventure for Gold

International College Hong Kong, Bentote, Ethan – 7

It was around the 1400s, just before the Ming Dynasty.

One night a mysterious magical pirate wizard came and turned some little kids into pirates. “Arrr,” said the Wizard as he turned them into pirates.

There were six of them. Three who were mean and nasty and three of them who were good pirates. They found Chinese junks and sailed away. They were never seen for 1000 years.

Chapter 2 “ At Sail”

One day the good pirates; Zhang Pe, Ping the Shapeshifter and Pheng Er were sleeping. And the bad pirates attacked the ship. The good pirates woke up because they wanted to know what all the commotion was about. When they went out to see, they saw the bad pirates. Then the good Pirates decided to attack wearing their pajamas!

They fought for day and night, years, even decades and centuries. They used swords, they used axes. But those good pirates just couldn't get those bad pirates off their ship. And do you know why they wanted to attack? Because they have gold, they have Copper Chinese coins, they have whatever sparkly stuff you can imagine. Then Ping the shapeshifter turned into a whale and blasted those mean pirates away! Zhang Pe and Pheng Er said “good job Ping”!

The bad pirates swam so much they swam all the way back to their ship. They sailed away again and they really really wanted that treasure chest. So they sailed away back to the good pirate ship. As normal the good pirates attacked again and again and again but those bad pirates would not give up. And then the good pirates went to treasure island and hid their treasure behind the wishing tree and sailed back away. They then hid in a Wifi cave where nobody could find them ever again. And those bad pirates were looking so hard they did not check their phones or their weather app so they didn't know there was gonna be a big storm. It was brewing in the Indian Ocean. On that day the storm arrived, they went into a whirlpool and got sucked in and were never seen again!

The good pirates knew they wanted to look at their phones because they were just sending a message on Pi-mail. They looked on their reminders and saw something on “pirate dead”. They went into “Pirate Dead” and saw under names of pirates dead; Pheng Shi, Shing, Captain Crook. “Hurrah!” shouted the good pirates

Zheng He and the flying ship

Island Christian Academy, Cheng, Alethea – 7

On the seventh day of Zheng He's voyage to Siam, his ship was in a raging storm. Everyone on deck was soaked. The wind was so ferocious that the rudder kept on spinning and no one can find the way. Worst of all, there was a dark shadow coming right for them! It was Captain Hook's fleet! The crew was very scared. Zheng He had 300 men while Captain Hook had 100,000 men! Zheng He was greatly outnumbered. Captain Hook's fleet was coming closer! Zheng He thought of a plan. Half of his men would sneak onboard Hook's fleet and his other half would fight the pirates. Zheng He had to deal with Captain Hook. Zheng He and his men sailed towards Captain Hook's fleet, ready to strike.

Zheng He's plan worked! Half of his men sneaked onboard Hook's fleet while his other half fought the pirates. Zheng He marched onto where Hook was standing and drew his sword. Hook and Zheng He were like angry tigers. With one swift move, Captain Hook knocked Zheng He's sword out of his hand. It looked like Captain Hook was going to win.

Peter Pan arrived! Peter Pan quickly sprinkled Zheng He's ship with pixie dust. Quick as a flash, Zheng He leaped onto his ship like a kangaroo. There was on other problem, Zheng He's nine ships were still on the sea! His ship was rising fast! Zheng He quickly thought of a plan. He would tie all his ships together. Then, he asked Peter Pan to sprinkle some pixie dust on his nine ships. Soon, all his ships were floating in the air! Captain Hook looked at the sky with fury! When Peter Pan wasn't looking, he grabbed Tinkerbell and sprinkled some of her pixie dust, Captain Hook wasn't very smart. He had left nineteen ships on sea! Soon, the sea battle had turned into a sky battle! Zheng He and Captain Hook were fighting on the plank! But, Captain Hook wasn't looking where he was walking and slipped off the plank! He got eaten by the sharks.

After Hook was killed, they freed Tinkerbell. Zheng He and his crew shouted, "Hooray!" Peter Pan said, "Could I take you to Neverland?" "Yes!" Zheng He said excitedly. So Peter Pan and Tinkerbell led them to Neverland. As thank you gifts, Zheng He gave him pearls from Africa, silk from China, vases from Malacca, pepper from India, and his own travel diary of all his voyages. Peter Pan was delighted and gave Zheng He a bag of pixie dust so he could come to Neverland whenever he wants. Soon, they set sail for China and said goodbye to their friends.

Dairy of Admiral Zheng He's Voyages

Kau Yan School, Wan, Kalysta – 8

It is the 15th day of the 9th lunar month. Today we saw some strange shark-like creatures. Admiral Zheng He said they were playful and entertaining. They jumped out of the water every few seconds and made sounds like a mouse squeaking.

It's the 19th day of the 9th lunar month. Today a storm came suddenly, it rocked the boat back and forth and ripped one of the sails. Sailors were busy mending the sails. Before sunset, Admiral Zheng He said, "Some giant boats are following us! They look like pirates." By then, most of the crew were tired and asleep.

Everyone was wakened up by the pirates yelling "Charge!!!!!" as they ran across the plank from the Pirate Ship to the Bao Chuan. The soldiers on board tried to kill the pirates by cutting the plank of wood that connected their boat to ours. Eventually the plank began to fall and quite a number of pirates immediately fell into the water. However, one despicable pirate managed to jump and grab hold of the rope and stay on the lower deck of the Bao Chuan without alerting us.

When we all settled down to sleep again, the pirate climbed quietly to the upper deck and crept into the Treasure Room. In the Treasure Room he saw our Giant Panda and lots of glittering gold. He was distracted by the panda. It looked like a huge monster to him. He screamed loudly, and woke up the sleeping guard.

The guard quickly caught him, tied him with stiff ropes and woke up Admiral Zheng He.

Admiral Zheng He told the guard to lock the pirate in the cage next to the panda.

The pirate was terrified to be in a cage next to the big, fat monster who kept chewing on juicy bamboo leaves.

Admiral Zheng He asked, "Where do you come from?"

The pirate, with big round eyes and teeth chattering from fear, said, "The Paracel Islands, Sir."

The Admiral looked at the pirate and saw that he was actually very small and had a piece of rope tied around his waist to keep his trousers from dropping down. Admiral Zheng He said, "We will take you back to the Paracel Islands, but you must never be a pirate again!" The pirate promised.

It's the 20th day of the 9th lunar month. Admiral Zheng He told us that we didn't have enough bamboo leaves for the panda so we needed to go faster. We dropped off the pirate in the sea near the Paracel Islands and let him swim ashore. The boat was too big to go too close to the Islands as the water was very shallow.

Admiral Zheng He said, "We need one more sailor to go faster. No more writing, Scribe. You are one of the sailors too!"

So this is my last entry in this interesting diary as we sail towards Mogadishu to present the Giant Panda to the important ruler there.

The Voyage of Speed Smith

Kau Yan School, Yeung, Adrian – 7

It was a sunny day. Speed Smith had a crew. They were going to the west, England. He, aka Speed Smith, set sail. He was bringing a golden cup, a golden sword and many mini golden statues to the emperor. One day, they saw a pirate ship. They battled and battled. And then it came the Kraken! It destroyed everything except Speed Smith and his crew. The pirate ship was destroyed. The Kraken was gone. They sailed and sailed again. Suddenly, they saw a gigantic tornado. They sailed away from the tornado fast. But they could not outrun it. It spun them in the middle of the sky. After spinning for a while, they were pulled back to the sea. Luckily, no one was hurt. And, they sailed and sailed again. Speed Smith saw a crocodile. The crocodile attacked the crew in the lower deck. And Speed Smith took out his powerful sword to kill it by stabbing the sword into its mouth. The crew was saved. When Speed Smith thought it should be almost in England. The crew saw the land. "Oh yes, we are here." Speed Smith shouted out. They finally delivered the golden cup, sword and statues to the emperor successfully. The emperor was very happy.

The New Tale of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Korean International School, Mok, Chelsea – 8

“HELP! HELP!” Zhen He was drowned. Thousands of voices were calling from the stormy sea on the Ming Treasure Voyage to India. All the men were drowned but luckily all of them together with the treasures they brought from China were floated towards the shore one by one.

When they woke up, they found their jewels sparking like diamonds on the shore. Nobody had any idea of where they were until Zhen He laid out his leather map. It was India! So the fleet gave some of the treasures to the King there. The King was so pleased and decided to invite Zhen He to his Sultan Palace to have dinner together. There was a huge feast on the golden plates, however Zhen He did not feel well during the party. He told the King, “I am sorry, we better leave now because I am not feeling well and I don’t want to infect you”.

The King ordered his vizier to take him to the public bath to take a hot bath with some India spices. The spices were known to have a healing power and the King thought that it would be the best medicine.

During the bath, Zhen He felt a bit better, and he said to himself, “Awesome! The spices must be working and I must bring some back to China!” After that, he said to the King, “Thanks so much ..Arc...Arc....Archooo!!!” The King knew that Zhen He must have caught a cold, so he asked his pretty daughter dressed in fine silk with veil to prepare some India herbal tea plus some ginger for him. After drinking, he felt much better and prepared to say goodbye to the King to continue their voyage. While they were leaving, the King invited Zhen He to marry the Princess and he accepted delightedly because the Princess was so pretty and caring.

So Zhen He, the India Princess and the fleet continued their journey to their next stop. Unfortunately, on their way to Africa, they got another obstacle. A gigantic tsunami approached. The fleet tried to change direction of the ship to turn back to India but it was already too late! The water tornado damaged the ship with a little hole and sea water started seeping into the ship. Luckily there was a little naughty child called Tau-Tau crept into the ship when they set sail. Tau Tau was the only one in the ship who was brave enough to dive into the ship body to block the leaking hole to save the entire crew. Everyone cheered and clapped their hands like a long procession of parade when they landed Africa safely.

The fleet gave the African King their treasures and the King was very pleased. The King asked Zhen He if he would like to marry his daughter. Zhen He said, “Thank you but I am not worthy for your greatness because I had a very beautiful and caring wife already!” the King understood and they became good friends forever...

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Korean International School, Wong, Ho Wang – 7

One day, the king from China told Zheng He to deliver presents by using a smelly ship. Zheng He was excited because it was the first time ever to board a ship. He invited two of his best friends, Tai and Chu to join the journey.

The journey eventually started after few months of preparation. The ride was choppy and it went up and down. Chu was furious. "I don't like it here and it's so smelly!" He shouted out crazily. Suddenly, a heavy rain started to pour." Zheng He! There was a really big rain coming to us!" One sailor screamed. " On no! What are we going to do?" Zheng He cried out loudly.

The waves crashed the ship and washed all passengers including Zheng He off to a desert island where it was dirty. "Why is this island so dirty and how are we going to get out?" Zheng He questioned yet no one answered.

When everyone was trying hard to figure an escape plan, "Ahhhhhh! It's a cobra and its venomous, run!" screamed Zheng He as loud as possible. But the cobra only travels one mile per hour, it came up to Zheng He's smart mind. He ran up to the cobra and stepped on it, the cobra was dead. "Hooray! I killed the cobra!" shouted Zheng He. Yet they were still stranded on the dirty and horrible island filled with all the dangerous animals and plants. "I guess we would be here forever " Zheng He thought. Suddenly, Tai screamed. "I am trapped by a gigantic pitcher plant, it is eating me up!" Zheng He rushed to the plant and tried to open the pitcher plant, but it would not budge open. Suddenly, Zheng He got an amazing idea, he grabbed grains of sand and threw them inside the pitcher quickly via it's slits. The pitcher plant was sick and the person trapped inside pushed the pitcher plant opened and finally was saved. Zheng He jumped happily. But they were still stranded on the deadly island. "I want to leave here, I m starving. " Chu claimed. "Don't be so worried, our ship might come to our way as the current suggests." said Zheng He. They waited for hours and hours but no luck.

On the second day, luckily, their ship was washed to the nearby beach by the dirty island, everyone saw the ship from the distance and screamed. When the ship finally arrived, everyone shouted, "Hooray, we can go home now!" As soon as Zheng He boarded the ship, he decided to continue the journey and he mastered to deliver colossal pile of presents to all of the designated countries on time.

Finally, they sailed back to China and Zheng He told the king what has happened and the king was very delightful. Zheng He was thrilled because he completed his mission. The king praised him as a true warrior and named him as "Best Sailor".

The New Ming Treasure Voyages

Korean International School, Yun, Zia - 7

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there were seven pirates. One day, they went on a trip. They were delighted that they had gained lots of gold until there was a big storm. In a massive wave, the ship sunk. Everyone except for Chris was on a big part of the boat. Chris was on the plank. He jumped overboard and swam toward a nearby island that he spotted. A huge styrofoam chest floated to him. He grabbed it in the shallow water and dragged it to the island. Chris opened the chest and found camping supplies and a torch. That night, he got some coconuts from a tree and cracked open with a piece of wood. He made a camp with the supplies and started feeling better. The other people in the crew were still at sea, with no land anywhere to be seen. The captain whose name was Ming Chang said, "Toko, Suki, Orlando, Jazzman, Jackie and Chris. Chris? Where in the world is Chris?!?!?" Said Ming Chang. "Captin!" Said Jackie, "Chris is gone! WHAT?" Said Ming Chang. Ming Cang threw Jackie off the boat. Good thing Jackie was a great swimmer. Jackie swam for hours until she saw an island. She went on the island and saw Chris. "Jackie, how are you here?" Asked Chris. Suddenly, the island started moving. "Chris, what is going on?" Asked Jackie. "This is not an island, this is a whale!" "WHAT?" Asked Jackie. The two went off the back of the whale and swam away. The rest of the crew found a little village. They robbed everything in town until nothing was left. Jackie and Chris were on the open seas until they met with the rest of the crew Ming Chang was out of his mind, so he asked to have a fight. WAIT! "if you be bad, bad stuff will happen to you." Said, Jackie. I don't care, get her!! Shouted Ming Chang. Chris grabbed his sword and said, "if you do anything to Jackie then you go off this boat." Chris pushed Ming Chang of the boat. Hip Hip Hooray for Chris!!! Shouted everyone. After, Chris returned every single piece of gold Ming Chang stole. Chris lived a happy life while Ming Chang was eaten by a shark.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Marymount Primary School, Lau, Hei Yan Zita – 8

My name is Sia Chau, a.k.a. Chueng Chau. I am the captain of a fleet of seven treasure ships because my father is too old to be captain, so he has appointed me to look after the fleet.

Actually I am a girl, but I have to disguise myself as a man when I am not in my private cabin. My fleet of treasure ships are used to trade things from countries to countries in exchange of treasure and bring them back to China.

Join me as I travel the world! Just step into this diary and I will be waiting for you inside! Let me tell you a secret – I carry a bottle of poison wherever I go in case somebody finds out I am a girl. You know what I mean if you understand how dangerous yet adventurous my journey is.

Day X (Tuesday) rainy

Disaster! We have just met some nasty pirates who are plotting to rob our ships! They sneak into our ships and take the loot. We have no choice but to cannon against them and...BOOM! Luckily, I do not need to use my little bottle of poison this time.

Day Y (Saturday) cloudy

We have arrived Vietnam! Guess what? There is a rumor that their streets are paved with gold, it seems the country is rich, so we decide to greet the King and see what we can exchange.

We present lovely bowls, vases and cups made of jade to the King in return for some fruits that I have never seen before – they call those fruits as “melons”, “bananas”, “pineapples” and “rambutans”. We also see some white elephants which are very rare in China, on the way to the palace.

But I have a headache when I see many golden statues of idols which are unknown to me. I reckon as a waste of gold, just like the Chinese decorate their houses with gold. Maybe the Vietnamese and Chinese share similar culture of using gold to express their social status but it is useless on me!

Day Z (Monday) stormy

I am very excited about a newly invented bug poison! The idea comes when one of the pesky bugs bit my arms which caused me a bit dizzy when we arrived the Philippines. Since some local people have been killed by this kind of pesky, poisonous bugs, I decide to invent a new type of poison to kill the bug and, it works! My father must be very proud of me.

Ending:

After all these experiences, I can tell my father that I am capable of surviving in other countries like the other strong sailors do. This is a dangerous yet adventurous journey which I will never forget. Now I really miss my home and maybe it is time to take a rest for a while. I will miss all the people and places which I have visited but no place is as warm as my home. Goodbye!

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Chan, Charlotte – 8

My name is Zheng He. I am the commander of the Ming Treasure Voyage. It was just a common day, no one would have guessed it was the day His Majesty the Emperor Yong Le would let us set sail. He heard that we wanted to travel to the end of the world, which is said to have infinite treasure. However, the crew on the Ming Treasure fleet mostly just want to go to the end of the world, finding answers to the mysteries of Earth and the truth about everything. Whenever we see a kind village or home, we give treasure to the inhabitants. Sometimes we will need to battle other pirates, who snatch gold and gems and especially of the latter. Let me tell you an account of what happened in the first voyage.

We set sail the very next day. Luckily we did not enter any raging storms. Unfortunately, we bumped into the mythical hooked snake. The snake is said to be vicious, but easily tricked, as it will do anything for food. Unluckily, we did not have food, let alone food that a hooked snake would appreciate. As the commander, I was expected to solve the problem. The crew panicked and my heart was beating like a drum, as the hooked snake struck, again and again, until the boat was battered. Suddenly, I had a stroke of inspiration. I called out to my most trusted friend of the crew, “Yang Zhen, get rice, a pot, a fishing net and make a fire.” “Yes, Commander Zheng He,” Yang Zhen replied with a salute. After he finished, I began to put the pot over the fire, the rice in the pot and the fishing net over the pot. I let the rice cool, and told the crew to pretend to sleep. The hooked snake tried to take the rice, but got stuck in the fishing net, so we managed to get passed it.

After many days, we finally saw a village. The few inhabitants wore thick animal fur coats. The land was cold, barren and desolate, as if it was blowing its frosty breath at us. Of all the gossip and rumours I have heard, of all the scrolls I have read, of all the countries I have been to... Never, never have I known such a place existed. I could tell that the other crewmembers felt so too. The inhabitants warmly welcomed us to their home and offered us hospitality. As the day turned to night, in the sky not very far away, I began to see beautiful, divine lights, the colourful ribbons of smoke waving from the sky. Or were they flames of the good and evil dragons battling in the heavens? I desperately yearned to know the answers.

Chu Chu

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Ching, Hayley – 7

In ancient China, when the Ming Dynasty was as strong as ever, there was a little boy called Chu Chu who was living in Nanjing, one of the biggest cities in the Dynasty. He dreamed of becoming a pirate and he wanted to sail a boat to the ocean. One day, he asked his parents, “Can we go to the ocean?”. His parents said, “Of course not! There will be sharks jumping around trying to eat you! It is so dangerous.” Chu Chu was very disappointed and so he sneaked out during the night.

On his way to the ocean, he met some pirates. “May I join your group? I can help you cook a delicious meal” Chu said. The head of pirates replied “Of course not! We will not let a seven year old boy cook for us. It won’t taste good!”. “I’m nine years old, not seven, you silly pirate!” Chu yelled back. The chief felt insulted and was very angry, so he swiped his sword at him. He caught Chu Chu and put him into a prison cell in his pirate ship.

Chu Chu was locked in the cell for almost a year. He only knew the ship was sailing but not its destination. One day, there was a lot of shouting and yelling inside the pirate ship. A group of soldiers suddenly appeared and rescued him. The pirates were all caught. The soldiers brought Chu Chu to their leader.

“I’m Zheng He, the leader of the soldiers who just rescued you. We are travelling around the world!” Zheng said. “We can only take you home after we finish travelling, and it might take a few years”.

“Alright. May I travel with you then?” Chu Chu asked. “Sure, but you have to listen to me” Zheng replied.

So, Zheng continued the voyage with Chu Chu. They travelled all over the oceans and explored different countries. Chu Chu was very excited at first but he began to get bored, and so was not able to help with anything. One day he asked Zheng, “May I help you with something?”.

“Perhaps you could play a Chinese game with the local children, so they will know more about our culture?” answered Zheng.

Since then, Chu Chu had been playing with local children every day. He taught them how to play Chinese chess and freestyle shuttlecock. He realised that he loved this job very much. Chu Chu had a great time and enjoyed meeting different people and learning about different cultures. He travelled around Eastern China, South East Asia, India and even to Arabia.

A few years later, Zheng finished the journey and went back to China. Chu Chu was taken back to his home. His parents were so surprised and relieved, as they thought Chu Chu was dead. “Oh, honey, where did you? You should tell us all that has happened” asked his mother.

“Well, I travelled all around the world. It was a fantastic journey” Chu Chu explained. His parents did not believe him at all and they did not let him out of their sight again.

The Ming Treasure Voyages

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Fung, Bethanie Mei-yu – 6

Long, long ago in Ancient China, there was a young and handsome voyager called Zheng He. He was born in Yunnan Province in 1371. He was very smart and served the Prince well. Later, the Prince became the Emperor of China. The Emperor wanted to show the rest of the world the power and glory of China. He named Zheng commander of a fleet and told him to explore the world.

Zheng He started to pack Chinese food and gold to show people in different countries. He wanted to show how good Chinese people are to the people he would meet. They traveled for a long time across the ocean. One day, after the pouring rain, the weather became much better. Suddenly, a pretty rainbow appeared in the sky! Zheng He asked the Chinese people on the ship where they were; the Chinese people said they had arrived in Africa. They left the ship and saw one African person. He gave the traditional Chinese food and beautiful silk to the African person. He greatly thanked Zheng He, and he decided to use the silk to make a warm coat for the elephant. Then, the other animals got jealous and angry! They all chased after Zheng He. The African people stopped the animals and apologized to him. They asked him if he needed to go back home and he said yes. Finally, Zheng He said goodbye to the African people and went back to China.

The Ming Treasure Voyages

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Puhar, Aaron – 8

A long long time ago, in the 14th century, Zheng He commanded a colossal fleet of ships which set sail for India, looking for a famous palace which housed fine supplies such as silk, gold, silver and other fine items. Near the Indian coast, whilst looking into his telescope, the Captain spotted a mud-brown wooden ship, with ten sleek white sails, just ten kilometres away. “That merchant must be affluent and ripe for the picking.” Zheng He muttered to himself. He ordered his sailors to disguise themselves as merchants and then, when they were close enough, they would put a heavy cannonball inside the old, bronze cannon and, with an ear-splitting BANG, the merchant ship would crumple, allowing Zheng He’s sailors to steal all the glittering gold.

As they neared their target, the sailors were as busy as beavers, one aiming a cannon at the merchant ship, one colouring the sails in beautiful colours and changing the name of the ship, and one looking out to sea with his telescope, checking for other merchant ships to steal.

Coming silently alongside, suddenly Zheng He signalled his men to halt the boat and ready themselves. They loaded their guns, polished their swords and sharpened their arrows; they were ready. They all then clambered carefully and quietly onto the merchant ship. A few seconds later, the captain of their target vessel looked around and was astounded to see such a devastating sight. He Zheng He and his burly crew, with mighty guns, swords, bayonets, and sticks, ready to charge. The sailors of the merchant ship were frozen to the spot and all Zheng He’s men had to do was to tie them up.

After that easy battle, Zheng He told four of his sailors to keep guard whilst the others gathered all the fine goods and supplies they desired. Hauling them from the merchant’s ship deck was not easy, but they finally managed it. Drenched in sweat, they hauled all of the divine goods, food and other supplies onto their own marvellously decorated ship, where some of the crew had already started celebrating with rum and a huge feast at the grand table. Delicious smells of roast pork and rice wafted from the steamy kitchen, as they wolfed down the sumptuous food in a trice.

A month later, upon arriving back at the lavish palace of the Chinese king, Zheng He and his men were all awarded a gold bar each as a reward for finding such bountiful treasure. They were rapturously happy to receive a compact, sparkling and extremely expensive 24 carat gold bar each – and so ended Zheng He’s successful plundering voyage to India.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Po Leung Kuk Choi Kai Yau School, Wong, John – 8

One day, I found myself on the bed of a ship. I looked around and found everything was made of wood covered with antique Chinese silk. Then I looked at myself and I was shocked because I was dressed like a Chinese admiral of ancient times. On the way to the deck, everyone bowed to me with great respect and called me Admiral Chou. I grabbed one of my underlings and asked, 'What year is it?' He replied looking oddly at me, 'Sir, it is 1408!'

I was directed to the main cabin by Lieutenant Cheng. All the commanders and generals looked worried and they were discussing about the attempt of the pirate ship approaching us quickly. One of the generals told me we had lots of golden jewels, precious hand-made silk and lots of porcelain and china in the treasure chamber and they were gifts for the Japan Royal Family from the Yongle Emperor. Our mission for this voyage was to bring those treasures across the East China Sea and deliver them to Yokohama port.

While we were planning our defence strategy, suddenly, a pirate cannon shot at our control tower. Then, the pirates started boarding the front deck and a big fight started. Our front team was hit badly so I asked everyone else to gather around the middle and started shooting back with our full strength at them. However, they were much more skilled and well planned, therefore, most of our crew members got killed and I needed to retreat to the emergency chamber. I heard them banging the doors, searching around and around, but they didn't seem to find the treasure chamber.

Suddenly, I saw a beam of light shining through the door and someone opening it – "BOOM! I found him!" said one of the pirates. They had caught me.

Their captain ordered a few strong men to tie me up, splashed me with cold water, whipped me with spikes and hit my head with an iron-made pistol. They also threatened to kill me with a sword if I didn't tell them where the entrance to the treasure chamber was. I was cold, scared and helpless, hoping my mom and dad were here with me to get me out of this mess.

Out of nowhere, I started feeling a warm stream of blood pumping out from my heart flowing through my body. I could also feel a pair of gigantic hands grabbing my arms, shaking me and then I felt totally dizzy. I closed my eyes wishing everything would be go away quickly. When I opened my eyes, I saw a big round chubby face right in front of me. "Dad!" I shouted.

I was overjoyed to find myself lying in my bed within a close distance to my mom and dad. However, big trouble was ahead of me because it was already nine o'clock in the morning and I was very late for school. When I jumped off the bed, I saw a bunch of my medals that I treasure a lot, lying at the corner of my bed. Then I asked myself: was it a dream or did someone really try to find my treasures last night?

A Fight Till India

Regents Primary School of Shenzhen, Chang, Zhe Han Devin – 6

My name is Zheng He and I am known in China as one of the most successful marine explorers, diplomats and fleet admirals. When I was young, the most esteemed Yongle emperor wanted to establish diplomatic relations with the southeast countries in the west Pacific. He trusted me with this mission. I was made in charge of the navigation, and was given my own fleet to set sail. Although I was initially afraid and doubtful about whether I could be successful in this voyage or not, I was equally excited, primarily because it was my first time to sail.

After setting sail, the journey went very smoothly. Aside from some waves and what felt like a never ending horizon to explore, the endless sea was generous and we were blessed with the calm waters throughout most of the journey. However, this peace and quiet ended to an abrupt halt upon entering the Indian Ocean. Sounds of the canyons and the sight of black flags from the pirate ships alerted us that we were under an attack. 'There is a group of pirates in front of us,' a soldier reported to me anxiously. I gathered up the courage and replied, 'Don't worry, our fleet is well-equipped, our soldiers are brave and we will not be back down without a fight. Now let's defeat the pirates!' Two hours later, our soldiers and crew of the ship were able to defeat the pirates, and eventually forcing them to retreat.

'Long live the emperor,' the voices echoed the ship. It shocked me and made me understand the meaning of 'Unity is strength'. There is no enemy that we can't defeat as long as we fight together as one.

After the battle against the pirates, we sailed through the calm waters and finally arrived at India. It was a relief to land in the territory of India safely with the crew and soldiers on board. This voyage was truly meaningful and an experience I will never forget.

Sharks and Pirates

Regents Primary School of Shenzhen, Hu, Rui Harry – 6

I followed Lord He to the south of the Atlantic Ocean, and it was smooth until one day...

On this day, we were caught in a very rough sea. You could see, there were sharks all over the sea, and these sharks were huge. They were swimming around our ship. We all stood around the sides of the ship to watch. We were moving forward, and the sharks were following us.

All of a sudden, a few big ships came up, with skulls and crossbones sign on the bows, and the crew of the ship shouted, 'Oh no, pirates!' Lord He immediately came to the bow to look, 'Yes, they are the pirates, we are ready to fight!' For a moment, the crew was ready, and the gunners were in position to lift the awning that sheltered the muzzle, adjust the muzzle position and mount the cannon. We were ready to fire!

All of a sudden, something strange happened and we saw the sharks rushing towards the pirate ships. Some of these sharks were hitting the ship; some were trying to jump onto the ship. The pirates also continued firing as we heard the sound of guns. We stopped the ship and watched. After being hit by a pirate shell, the sharks experienced extreme pain but they still kept going forward and rushing to the pirate's ships.

'Wow, it was amazing and crazy!' We all looked silly!

After a period of fighting, the pirates retreated. They turned around and ran away. The sharks were still in the water, cruising around and playing as if they were celebrating a victory!

In order to thank the sharks for their help, Lord He ordered us to throw the beef, horse meat and mutton off the ship to the sharks. The sharks were very happy to enjoy the delicious food. We steered the ship and continued to sail the Atlantic Ocean!

Friends Adventure

Regents Primary School of Shenzhen, Kim, Ji Hoo – 7

Zheng He, a brave explorer of the Ming Dynasty, dreams of traveling the world. ‘There are many kingdoms in the world and I desire to congregate with their rulers. It is important to affiliate ourselves with others in order to call attention to China,’ said Zheng He. He went to the palace, persuaded the king and finally got his permission to build a ship.

Upon reaching the approval of the emperor to set forth on his mission, he first meandered through the woods to cut down trees to build his ship. He ended up experimenting and testing different wooden materials as he later found out that not all kinds of wood were able to float upon putting weighted goods on top of it. Zheng He went through trials and errors but never gave up. To his surprise, he finally got the idea from eating bamboo rice one day. He wound up using bamboo to build his ship. He was able to finally set sail!

Down in the city, a young wide-eyed boy named Cha Cha took the sailor recruitment test but was declined. He was too young and short but they determined to become a sailor. One night, they slowly and curiously sneaked onto one of the voyage ships, not daring to make a sound to avoid being detected. Suddenly, a sailor popped out and shouted, ‘Thief! Thief!’ They scurried hurriedly and tried to escape from the sailors, running all the way from the supply ship to the warship where they ended up in a ship that carried all the horses. He was exhausted and he slowly crept into a dreamless sleep. Not long after, the peaceful sunrise shone in the barn and woke him up. Cha rubbed his eyes and cleared his sleepy vision. From the window of the barn, he could see the endless rivers, beautiful villages and gigantic mountains. He finally landed on an island with the other crew members. Later on, they started to trade goods with some local people...

A powerful storm was bearing down on the island at dawn the next day. They told the local people on the island that a tsunami would be coming. Knowing how dangerous the tsunami waves were, the local people took no chances and boarded Zheng He’s ship to escape from its’ wrath. As the tsunami tore through the nearby lands and shook the ship to its core, there was a sudden gush of water that entered the lower deck of the ship. The ship was punctured and the sudden influx of water made the ship start to sink. It was so dark, so cold and so scary. Everyone was panic but Cha stayed calm throughout the ordeal. Thinking quickly on his feet, Cha bravely blocked the hole and saved everyone. When the storm and tsunami stopped, the local people gave Zheng He a unicorn as a gift of gratitude. This horse that had a horn was a precious treasure. The Chinese people had never seen such a unicorn before, and so when he took it back they were astonished. Due to the success of this mission, talks began for the next adventure to other lands. Zheng He and his crew were overjoyed and looked forward to their next big adventure.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Regents Primary School of Shenzhen, Kim, Kyung Min Kai – 8

'Zheng He is planning for a new trip!' When I heard the news I was thrilled. I went to see Zheng and asked him if I could go along with him.

'I have many talents. I can help you, Mr. He, I'm a kung fu boy. My secret weapon is my yo yo and the function of my weapon is awesome. I can climb everywhere and see things that no one can. I can be your spy.'

'Can you give me a demonstration?' Zheng said .

So I showed him my talents.

'Ok !! You can come with me, I need people like you' Zheng added.

The next day, we started our voyage. At the beginning, the sea was quiet, calm and tranquil, but suddenly a storm appeared out of nowhere. The lightening and thunder became very scary. Moreover, it disappeared in a second. I was very scared. 'What happened?' I asked. 'Don't worry! It's just a storm.' Zheng replied. Zheng ordered us to set sail to the nearest island.

After a long scary night, I was hungry so I went deep into the forest to find food. I found lots of fruit there. While I was picking the fruit, I saw something move behind the trees. I swung my yoyo toy towards the trees and I saw what it was. They were the native people. Many of them were holding swords and slings. They were wearing clothes which I had never seen before and they looked scary. Some of them were eating unicorns and there were blood stains on their clothes. I did not understand how could one eat unicorns! They are so pure and nice creatures!

I remembered the legend that says if you drink their blood you would become immortal. So I went back and told Zheng what I had seen. Once he heard my story, he said, 'Hummm!!! I have an idea!' Let's save the unicorns. Let's divide our army into four groups and surround the native people.' We have come in peace but now we need to fight with these people.

When the fight started, I found a place to hide myself. Then we came up with another idea. We decided to go to the other side. I could hear the natives shouting. I hid in a hole and saw ten of them coming towards us. So we started to fight back harder. Finally, we won the battle and we saved the unicorns. The unicorns thanked wholeheartedly and said good-bye to us.

Our journey continued, the new horizons were to be discovered and I was so happy that we could save the unicorns. It was an unforgettable experience for me. I know we were blessed by the unicorns and I wish they could be with us in our next battle.

The Sailing Missions

Regents Primary School of Shenzhen, Lin, Zi Hao Horace – 7

Early in the 15th [century](#), a huge fleet of ships set sail, and I was in this fleet. It was the first of a series of voyages in China and also it was my first voyage.

The voyage was led by Zheng He, the most important Chinese adventurer and one of the greatest sailors the world had ever known. I admired him when I was a child, and I was very excited to experience this voyage with him. I wanted to share one of the most dangerous adventures we have been.

I remembered one of our seven voyages: Before we set off, the sea was still calm, but when we left for several days, the sky was dark suddenly and then came the storm, we were all preparing for the storm, and suddenly a giant megalodon shark swooped at us. And the ship was constantly shaking. Zheng He kept us calm. Then I saw him stabbed the shark's head with a sword when the megalodon shark came back to us again. The megalodon shark's blood stained the sea. We were all happy, but a gust of wind hit, and there was a whirlpool that rapidly moving towards us. Zheng He quickly turned around the ship, but it's too late. We were all sucked on the ship.

Time passed slowly, we were too tired and we all felt asleep. When we woke up again, we were in the Devil Island. Altogether Zheng He, ten soldiers and I left on that island. After a few minutes, two soldiers stepped onto the vampire tree vine. They screamed and died all of a sudden. Although the rest of us gazed in horror, we didn't know what was going to happen next. By that time we were hungry and so we kept looking for some food. Suddenly a big snake appeared in front of us. When we fought with the snake, three soldiers died. Zheng He got injured also when he was trying to protect me. Luckily, I killed the snake with the sword in the end. We got a key and a map from the dead snake unexpectedly. We walked into a cave and accidentally found a treasure box. We opened the treasure box with the key and there we found a nautical topographic map inside. We then tried to merge with the large forces using the map got from the snake. With the help of the nautical topographic map, we successfully completed the next seven sailing missions.

We had experienced many adventures. The first adventure was the bad weather, we met the storm and the battle. The second adventure was the pirates, and with the help of the weapons, we defeated them at last. The third adventure was the dangerous animals such as the vampire tree vine, the sharks and the snakes. The fourth adventure was the people from other countries. Some people were hostile.

Of course, we did many preparations before we set off. Many tools facilitated us a lot for the success of this voyage, such as compasses, ocean maps, and weapons. But the most important resource was our good sailors.

Through this voyage, I learned to face all kinds of difficulties and challenges bravely.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Regents Primary School of Shenzhen, Wang, Hei Chen Anna – 6

As the chief officer of this ship, I have many duties, including the navigation of the ship in the break of dawn. When I am on watch, I need to give my full focus and concentration when it comes to maneuvering the ship to safely avoid traffic and navigational obstacles. What I love most about my job is the idea that it helps me achieve a better understanding of the responsibilities I hold and the repercussions of what my leadership can bring. I know that if I do my job right then it will bring me incomparable glory.

Life on board is multifaceted, it broadens my horizon, opens my mind and brings with it a lot of unique experiences that I would never dream of experiencing on land. With this ship, I am able to travel around the world with the prestige and power of the Ming Treasure Fleet. I have seen different spectacular sceneries, met with different people belonging to different countries and enjoyed the beauty of different cultures and customs around the world. It has truly been a rich but humbling experience.

The sunrises and sunsets at sea were the most beautiful especially when the sunset transcended into different colours as it descended in the horizon. It is one of the most amazing and grandest sceneries that I had ever seen in my life. However, life at sea was not always pleasant, sometimes we encountered gigantic waves driven by gales with a height up to dozens of meters. These gigantic waves had left an indelible impression on me. The impression was felt so deeply that it made me realize how both destructive, powerful yet awe-inspiring Mother Nature could be.

While we journeyed across the seas, we carried with us a large quantity of gold, silk and other precious goods from our homeland. Whenever we arrived at a different land, we sent these materials as gifts to the local people to show them our kindness and sincerity, hoping to ease a path for diplomatic relations in the future. The locals tended to be moved deeply by these presents and in turn showing us with hospitality in the form of grand parties and celebrations. They served us with their delicious food and sent us all kinds of gifts. I thought the most interesting gifts were zebras and giraffes that we got from Africa during our first voyage. I had never imagined that there can be such a majestic animal whose height could reach 4–6 meters. When we returned to our homeland, all of the people were amazed to encounter these animals. These giraffes were subsequently sent to the Imperial Zoo. We successfully formed new relationships with many countries. They were amazed at the richness and power of our country. Many countries in turn, promised that they would send representatives to visit our country to show their admiration and strengthen our relationship with one another. It truly was a rewarding journey.

I would never forget the life in the Ming Treasure Fleet. These memories would be forever cemented as the best treasures of my life. The fleet continued to sail and was set to carry on its seventh voyage. I looked forward to reaping the rewards of what this new journey entailed on to another adventure!

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

Regents Primary School of Shenzhen, Xu, Zi Yun Cloudy – 8

In China's Ming Dynasty, there lived a great explorer named Zheng He. He led the largest fleet and crew in the ancient world history and made seven voyages which lasted for 28 years at the sea.

After years of preparations, Zheng He's first voyage departed in 1405. At the beginning of the voyage, they loaded the ships full of fine Chinese silk, porcelain, and goods and gifts and trading with the locals. On the eve of his departure, Zheng He thought pensively about his upcoming journey and remembered the blue and white porcelain pot that his father brought back from Mecca. Comparing with the other blue and white porcelains at home, the pot looked special because its blue colour was vibrant and rich. His father explained that the secret of its vivid colours came from a special kind of blue pigment. However, he didn't know where he could find it as it was a long lost secret. With the location of its origin in his mind, the stunning blue and white porcelain appeared in Zheng He's dream that night. He decided to go abroad and find this special material. He wanted to produce the beautiful porcelain with the stunning blue colour in China, too.

The second morning, the fleet set sail. On that day, the sea was calm, and many sea birds flew in the sky. Everyone was busy doing their own things, some people were watching the weather, some were studying the route, and some were writing their diaries. Staying on the sea for days and nights, the sea changed drastically in an instant, at times it was calm and at times it was suddenly stormy. Once the terrible weather struck, Zheng He and his crew weren't afraid. All of the ships kept in touch during their voyages. The sea howled like a wild horse, and the waves rushed madly at the fleet, as if to tear it apart. Faced with such a dangerous situation, Zheng He remained calm and commanded the fleet to sail forward bravely in the billow.

The fleet passed through many islands and Zhang presented the gifts to the local kings for every visit as well as told stories about the Chinese culture. They also exchanged goods with the local residents, from whom they bought many special local products. When the people heard of his dream, they all helped Zheng He by bringing him many types of materials from their hometowns.

The fleet returned to China. Zheng He gave different types of materials that he collected from his trip to the porcelain artists to try, but none of them could make the special blue colour. Later, Zheng He and his fleet made several other voyages. Zheng He never forgot about his dream. Many new samples of materials were brought back to China for testing.

Finally, Zheng He heard the good news. The materials he brought back from Persia were what he had been looking for years. Since then, lots of materials were shipped back to China. They were used to manufacture the famous blue and white porcelain of the Ming Dynasty. Zheng's dream became true.

After all, Zheng He's voyages have been circulating all over the world.

The Great Voyages of Zheng He

Shanghai United International School Wanyuan Campus, Cao, Zachary – 8

This afternoon, I walked to my garden as usual. Suddenly, I noticed a small house on top of a tree. I was curious, so I climbed inside it. I saw a note on the floor. It said, “I can send you anywhere.” These days I was learning about Zheng He, so I told the note, “I wish I could go to Ming Dynasty.” The tree house started to shake and then everything was still. Absolutely still.

You would never guess where I was now. I found myself standing on a boat. No, it wasn't a boat, but rather an enormous ship. The Captain of the ship, you guessed it, was the famous Zheng He. While on this ship, I found myself just as a Chef. I cooked a famous traditional Yunnan dish, steam pot chicken. I remembered that he came from Yunnan Province. Very quickly, I was summoned to see the great Zheng He.

He smiled at me and said, “You did a good job. You cooked well and made me think of my hometown.”

I felt happy.

“For this reason, I can answer you two questions,” he added.

I felt honored. My heart danced with delight.

I asked Zheng He the first question excitedly, “My master, you've been to many foreign countries, which is your favorite country? Can you share with me?”

He looked at me for a while and said, “This is a good question. I like Africa most because I brought back a giraffe. I was born in Yunnan in 1371. There are many rare animals there but I have never seen such an animal. It looks elegant because it is very quiet. It not only has a long neck but also beautiful large eyes and long lovely eyelashes. It's amazing. You know, in 1405, I set off from China for the first voyage. We visited South-East Asia, the Middle East, and even the east coast of Africa. But I've never seen giraffe before. I like giraffe very much.”

I was shocked, but I managed not to show it. In fact, I didn't think he liked giraffes so much because he didn't look after them every day.

Then I asked Zheng He the second question anxiously, “My master, this is the seventh voyage. What do you think of your voyages?”

He laughed and replied proudly, “My voyage developed trade between China and foreign countries and also encouraged the exchange of cultures and technologies. China is now very well-known from my voyages.”

“Always be brave, and follow your dream.” Zheng He looked at me firmly and spoke.

I looked at him and nodded, too excited to say a word. I couldn't agree with him more.

Ring, ring, ring!

“Zach, it's time to get up.” A voice said loudly. It's mum.

I suddenly woke up, looked around, and saw an open book called *The Great Voyages of Zheng He* lying on the desk. I smiled and said, “Wow, I dreamed a wonderful dream.”

The Great Voyages of Zheng He

Shanghai United International School Wanyuan Campus, Li, Cindy – 8

It was Saturday morning. I was doing puzzles. It was very hard so I didn't do any pieces. I was so tired that I went to sleep.

When I woke up, I realized I wasn't in my bed. I was on a ship!

Whose ship is that? I thought. I climbed the ladder. I saw a tall and strong person so I asked him, "Whose ship is it?"

"It's my ship. My name is Zheng He. Are you new here?"

"Yes," I fibbed. Just then, I heard a loud sound which sounded like something broke.

"Oh! My china!" shouted Zheng He. He started to cry.

"Don't worry. I know what to do."

First, I put some beans between the china. Then, I watered them. "Wait and see!"

The first day, the beans grew bigger. The second day, the beans grew so big that the skin split. The third day, I saw some yellow buds appeared. A week later, bean sprouts were fully grown. "Wow! The bean sprouts are soft so that they can protect our china. It's awesome." cried Zheng He.

Suddenly a sailor ran to Zheng He, "Captain! Someone has a serious illness!"

"Let me see," replied Zheng He. We went to the room where the sick person stayed. I saw a man who looked very tired and his nose and mouth were bleeding. I didn't say anything about it. I quickly went to the room where the china put in. I picked some bean sprouts and cooked them. I ran back to the room and told the sick person. "Eat it!" The next day the sick person recovered!

"Amazing!" cried Zheng He! "Why are the bean sprouts so helpful?"

"Bean sprouts are rich in vitamins and minerals. These nutrients are essential to human health." I replied.

"Pardon?"

"In short, the sick person couldn't eat any vegetables or fruits on the ship, so he was ill. The bean sprouts cured him of the disease!"

"FANTASTIC!" shouted Zheng He. "The bean sprouts cannot only protect the china but also cure disease! I sincerely appreciate your help. These are the diamonds from Turkey! Here you are."

"Thank you very much!"

I woke up. This time was real. The sun was shining in the sky and my puzzles were mysteriously finished. I saw something shiny. They were the diamonds that Zheng He gave to me! I looked inside. Some diamonds were still diamonds but some diamonds turned into gummy candies! I picked out the gummy candies and shared them with my friends. After we ate the candies, I told them my dream and asked, "What do you think about my dream?"

My friend Lisa stood up, "I think this dream is trying to tell you the real Silk Road stopped but the Silk Road in our heart continues!"

I agreed with Lisa, "It is a road of wisdom. It is the best of times."

The Golden Ship

Shanghai United International School WanYuan Campus, Liu, Emily – 8

It was a stormy day, Zheng He and his crew were lost in the middle of a big typhoon during the voyage with their vessel. After the storm, they unfortunately met a pirate ship. There was a strange captain on the pirate ship. He had a hook in place of his hand and a patch over one eye. He was taller and stronger than Zheng He and seemed very scary. Zheng He was afraid of the captain, but he was smart enough to deal with him.

After a while, an idea came across Zheng He's mind! The pirates love gold. He can decorate his vessel in gold. When the pirates go to the vessel, they will hide for a while and fight with them until the pirates get tired of finding gold. So they did. Zheng and his crew decorated their vessel in gold.

Just like Zheng expected, the pirates were crazy about the gold and paid no attention to Zheng He's crew. Suddenly Zheng and his crew jumped out and attacked the captain and other pirates by surprise. His crew fought bravely with the pirates. Because the pirates didn't prepare, Zheng He won before long.

In the end, the pirates drove their ship and ran away. Zheng He protected their goods safely. His crew cheered and jumped for joy! After that night, his crew respected Zheng He even more than ever for his wisdom and bravery.

Zheng He Goes To Indian Ocean

Shanghai United International School WanYuan Campus, Wang, Amber – 9

Zheng He was a navigator who lived during the Ming Dynasty .He was open-minded, determined and trusted. Zheng He had 62 vessels .His vessels were the biggest ships in the world at that time .He had 26,000 crew members.

In 1405, Zheng He started his first voyage. That day was a windy day .The wind was howling, the sky turned dark and the waves in the sea were like towers. "Oh My! The hurricane is coming!" Zheng He said shocked. The crew ran here and there, but Zheng He didn't run. He knew he was the captain and he will protect his crew.

He pulled the rope against the strong wind by himself .The crew saw Zheng He pull the rope so they helped Zheng He to fight against the hurricane. Tower walls of water were driven down slamming against the vessels. At the same time, he was trying to find a way out. He observed the hurricane carefully and suddenly, he saw the eastern side direction of an island had a very high cliff that could be a safe shelter for them. He ordered his crew to drive the vessels there at full speed, as fast as they could. They stayed there until the hurricane went away. The rain stopped. The wind stopped howling and the sky turned blue again.

They survived, with their courage and wisdom, and went on their voyage.

The Great Voyages or Zheng He

Shanghai United International School Wanyuan Campus, Wang, Matt – 9

Chapter 1

Once upon a time, there was a person named Zheng He. He was a famous navigator. He was a determined, open minded, smart because he had a lot of knowledge about the sea and everyone trusted him. Yong Le was the emperor of Ming dynasty and who made maritime silk road. Yong Le let him to explore the sea. First, Zheng He was afraid. With people's encouragement, he wanted to explore the sea.

Chapter 2

At that day, Zheng He shouted "Bye-bye!" to his country. He went into his boat with his mighty, domineering fleet. His fleet has 240 boats. Soldiers, oil supplier, food supplier and sailors included in the fleet. Zheng He was on the middle boat in the fleet. Half month pasted, suddenly, an arrow shot on a soldier's boat.

"My boat got a shot!" Pay attention to the pirates!" the soldier shouted. Just then, Zheng He saw the pirates are attacking his fleet.

"Fire the pirates!" Zheng He commanded. Then, many arrows shot out, all the pirates got a shoot and they died. Zheng He's fleet was safe again.

Chapter 3

They came to a mysterious country. It was eleven o'clock at night, so everyone was sleeping. They didn't tell anyone they came here. They slept on the grass near the boat. Next morning, some noise woke them up. Zheng He opened his eyes and he saw a crowd around them. "What's going on?"

"Stand straight!"

"Pay attention!" Then, Zheng He saw the king.

"Where are you from?"

"We are from China. We are the merchants."

"Go away! You silly merchants, we don't welcome you." The soldiers from China got really annoyed, they began to kill people!

"No!" said Zheng He, "If we have a war, we will have no food or boat, maybe no life! So, don't get into trouble." Then, they run away fast and got into the boat. They drove the boat quickly. They escaped from the country.

Chapter 4

Soon, they came to a country, Tai Wan. Really loved goods from China, silk, porcelain, bronze and some sculpture. They used jewelry to trade. Day by day, Zheng He and his fleet lived hard and happily after. Bad things happened and good things happened. He and his tremendous, durable and firm fleet sailed on the maritime silk road. They went through the important trading posts. Muzina, Mombasa, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome. They had been across the Indian Ocean, Arabian sea, Red sea and he Mediterranean Ocean. And they arrived at the terminal –Rome.

"Hooray" They shouted, "We have arrived the terminal! Let's go trade for five days."

After five days, they need to go back to home. So they got on the ship and back to China. They reported the great adventure to Yong Le.

The Tempest: Zheng He's Trip to Turkey

Shanghai United International School Wanyuan Campus, Wang, Steve – 9

In 1381, my grandpa's grandpa's grandpa was born. My favorite time in children hood was listening to the story of him. His name is Link. Here is the story, give me some water please.

It's 1400, Link was the guard of Zheng He. One day, they were in Emperor Yongle's gigantic Palace, Emperor Yongle sent them for a great journey.

Yongle said, "It's a great opportunity for you guys, with such an honor to explore the whole world using these ships. To do or not to do, you choose!" I was shocked, Emperor Yongle said the same sentences 100 years before William Shakespeare. "Yes, my majesty." Zheng He prepared for several years and Link was on the same ship with him.

One sunny morning on the sea, the sunshine was on Link's shoulder. Their next destination was Turkey. He was worrying that none of them can speak Turkish.

Suddenly, a soldier reported, "We just saved a people from the sea, he wants to see the General Zheng for something very important."

"Send him in.", said General Zheng He. The man come in, he kneeled and said, "Please save my lord, our ship encounters a tempest and many of our people dead, my lord may still alive."

"Let me think about it!" Zheng He said.

One of the commanders said, "We cannot go, we need to arrive Turkey on time, and we are not sure if his lord is still alive. If we go for them, we may also encounter the tempest. We are on emperor's mission and cannot spent time to save people we don't know."

"On the sea, every life is important. If we encounter tempest, I do hope someone will save us. Let's go for them now." Zheng He said.

They spent one week, finally they found the survived people on a small island. This saving task delayed our whole plan to Turkey.

"Bang.... Bang.... Bang...." The bell of arrival rings.

Before landing, Zheng He called a meeting, "We need to be careful as we are delayed, and we still not yet have a good translator."

After Zheng He said this, the lord we said raised his hand, "My father can help!"

Zheng He's team followed him, but they finally arrived the King's castle. "Why are we here?" Link asked. The lord smiled, "Thank you, I am the prince of Turkey."

Many years later, when Zheng He's fleet come back to China. They brought back lots of treasures. But most important, team of fellowship from different countries. They have deep appreciation and they brought different cultures and technologies to China.

That's one of my favorite parts for the story. Give me some beer, I will continue.

<Zheng He will come back next season>

The First Giraffe in China

Shanghai United International School WanYuan Campus, Xu, James – 9

My grandfather told me the story about Zheng He and how the first giraffe came to China, which happened more than six hundred years ago.

It was the fourth time Zheng He came back from the Ming Treasure Voyage. He was the commander, with a total of 27670 people on the ships. This time the giant fleets visited Java, Sumatra, Maldives, India and the Persian Gulf. Zheng He presented gifts of gold, silver, porcelain and silk on the way, and received a lot of novelties in return.

There was one gift which gave him a really deep impression. It was a giraffe! He never saw such a strange animal and thought it was the tallest animal in the world. At first, there were two giraffes on the boat. The giraffes were leashed to the keepers and were arranged in the cages. They were fed with leaves. The ship was as big as a football field, and there was enough space for the distinguished guests. It was the first time for the giraffes to travel on the sea.

Unfortunately, one giraffe died because of the scare, but the other one survived. After landing, Zheng He led the giraffe to the imperial place. On the street people looked at the monster in a strange way. Yong Le emperor looked the monster up and down carefully. Zheng He was nervous and worried about if the emperor would like it or not. The animal had the head of a dragon, the antlers of a deer, the skin and scale of a fish, the hooves of an ox and tail of a lion, and obviously a long, long neck. After a few minutes, Yong Le emperor smiled and considered it to be a qilin (a kind of animal) which would bring good luck to the country and people. Of course, the emperor gave him a big reward. After that, the first imported giraffe lived in the imperial zoo in Nanjing.

Last Sunday, I went to Shanghai Zoo. I went to the giraffe area and I wondered to myself: are there any later generations of the first imported giraffes from the Treasure Voyage in Ming Dynasty?

In the Book with Zheng He

Shanghai United International School Wanyuan Campus, Xu, Jessica – 8

Slurp! I was reading a book about Zheng He while doing a reading reflection. I wrote that I learned he was a great navigator who had gone on 7 expeditions. He was great at trading, how generous. Whoop! I was so bored doing these things on Sunday! So I fell asleep fast.

Soon, I opened my eyes. I saw that my home had become a huge, azure sea, and my desk had become a coarse plank! I was terrible because my dress was a mess, and my hair was almost like a “crazy hedgehog’s thorn”. The water was ice-cold, so I couldn’t stay still. I wanted to swim, but my legs were sore, what could I do? I could yell for help, I thought. I climbed up to the floating plank and exhausted all my strength to yell, “Help!!!!”

I thought I was going to die! No one replied me at all! How sad I was...Oh...

Suddenly, I saw a huge fleet. It was exactly the same as the one in the book! Was it Zheng He? They saw me! Hooray!

One man carried me to the ship and he exclaimed, “It’s a girl! It’s a girl!”

“Don’t be noisy, Kwack.” said another handsome man in a long scarlet cloak. “You’re a young girl. Do you want to help?”

“Yes, I can do whatever you want, if I can”

“Can you eat, drink and sleep?” said Kwack.

I glanced at him, he was very fat and annoying. I don’t like him.

“Be quiet, Kwack!” said the man, “Hello, I’m Zheng He, Nice to meet you!”

“Hello, I’m Jessica...You said you’re Zheng He, right?”

“Yep. What’s wrong?”

“Holy moly!” I gasped, “I’m your biggest fan.”

“Sorry! I don’t understand what you’re saying, but you like me, right?”

“Uhhhh...Mmm... Like that, maybe...” I shuttered.

After I had been working with Zheng He and Kwack for ten years, Zheng He told me that it was time for me to go home. I had stayed so long! I was depressed but I knew I had to go, so I hugged him tightly and left. I was crying on the way home because I wanted to see him. He was brave, generous and very nice to me. I liked him but not Kwack.

I sat down in my bedroom and suddenly, I heard a loud “unnice” sound, “Ding!Ding!Ding!Ding!Ding!” I woke up. I cannot believe it’s just a dream!

The next day, on the way to school I saw a man smiling at me. He looked like Zheng He and told me he was my uncle! Suddenly I recognized that he was my uncle lost for 10 years! I hugged him. “I know! You’re my uncle! Can I call you ZhengHe?”

“Why?” he asked.

“Because you look like Zheng He from my dream last night” I said.

“That’s Okay,” he said, “You can call me whatever you want”.

“That’s great” I exclaimed.

Do you think Zheng He is my uncle?

The Expedition to India

Shanghai United International School Wanyuan Campus, Yu, Ruby – 8

“BANG!!!” The drum was banging. Zheng He found a new island because he heard some unfamiliar powerful music was louder and louder. It was India!

They got off the fleet and exclaimed “WOW!” They saw a beautiful view. Everyone had dark skin. The women had big eyes, long hair, beautiful clothes and shiny jewelry.

At the very beginning, the Indians thought the visitors were an army because there were some knights. Just then, Zheng He heard someone whispering Emperor Yongle’s favorite song. He thought, “we can sing songs, so that these local people can know we won’t attack them.”

It worked! The Indians knew Zheng He and his fleet wouldn’t attack them. They chose a person to lead the way for Zheng He because they needed to talk with Bahobali and Tiposhina (the King and the Queen of India). Bahobali and Tiposhina met them formally in the palace, and talked about trading goods between India and China.

When the meeting was finished, Zheng He ordered some people to carry out the goods. When they were preparing, Zheng He explored India. He used body language to ask and the Indians used body language to answer. He learned that men wear dhoti, and women wear sari. Their transportation was oxcart.

When Zheng He finished his exploration, everyone was ready to trade. There were jade, silk, bronze and china. One man liked jade, so he traded for it with some tea. Someone else liked jade too, so they asked, “where did you get it?” The man pointed at the shop. More and more Indians came to buy the jade, silk, bronze and china. They used tea, spices and curry powder to trade.

A week later, it was time to leave for the next stop. Zheng He met Bahobali and Tiposhina again to say goodbye. Tiposhina was very curious about China, so she sent her most trusted envoy called Gary to stay with Zheng He and his fleet. “My envoy will send my best wishes to your country and your emperor,” said Tiposhina.

In the whole life, Zheng He made 7 expeditions across the Atlantic Ocean. He explored lots of countries. When Zheng He thought of this trip, he was so proud of discovering this fantastic country and meeting the kind and polite Indians. “I am so happy that we do not only trade, but also learn! We learn songs, new ways of crafting beautiful things and cooking yummy food!” he said with a big smile on his face.

The Strangest Person in the World

Shrewsbury International School, Sham, Pius – 8

'Mission impossible!' Admiral Zheng sighed, showing me the parchment with the royal seal.

'Bring me the strangest person in the world,' I recited, 'or your head. OOPS!'

'Alright, squire,' Admiral Zheng gazed at me, 'This will be our eighth voyage and I swear there won't be a ninth. But where shall we go?'

'Wait, I've heard of the yeti when we travelled to Calicut. He has long wool and big feet. Go ask the sultan!' I suggested.

And there we sailed...

'I am so sorry!' the sultan said, 'The yeti is so elusive that all we have got is his wool!'

'Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full!' his minister joined in.

'Wait, I've heard of the zombie when I travelled to Africa. He will do whatever you tell him to after you cast a spell. Go ask the wizard!' the sultan quipped.

And there we sailed...

'I'm so sorry!' the wizard said, 'The zombie lives in Africa West but here is Africa East!'

'Yes sir, yes sir, why don't you buy some of these spotted camels or striped horses instead? They'll make excellent souvenirs!' his wife joined in. Honestly, we thought they painted the brown spots and black stripes to try to make a fortune.

'Wait, I've heard of the hole-in-chest guy when I travelled to Champa. He puts poles in the hole in his chest when he travels. Go ask the guy!' the wizard remarked.

And there we sailed...

'I'm so sorry!' the guy said, 'I travel in a sedan chair that makes it look like I've poles in my chest, but I've no holes in my chest!'

'Yes sir, yes sir, the writer of the Curious Journal who interviewed him twisted his words to boost sales!' his friend joined in.

'Wait, I've heard of the short people when I travelled to Palembang. They hunt giant rats and dwarf elephants in a nearby island. Go ask the hunter!' the guy pleaded.

And there we sailed...

'I'm so sorry!' the hunter said, 'We haven't traded ivory with them since my great-great-great-grandfather! Maybe they moved away.'

'Yes sir, yes sir, we call them Orang Pendek!' his companion joined in.

'Wait, I've heard of the forest people when I travelled to Borneo. They have arms much longer than yours but legs much shorter than yours. They have hairy skin but bald head. They make funny face and noisy speech. Go ask the locals!' the hunter recounted.

And there we sailed...

'I'm so sorry I missed that scene!' Admiral Zheng exclaimed. 'The Emperor must be fond of them!'

'Yes sir, yes sir, they followed us on board just for a bunch of bananas!' I joined in.

Months later in Beijing...

'The Emperor is fond of them! He spends hours babbling with them! We made a fortune!' Admiral Zheng told me. 'Wait. What did the locals call them, squire?'

'Orang utan, sir!' I answered.

(The End)

Attack of the Reptile Pirates

Shrewsbury International School, Zarin, James – 7

CLANG! The sounds of swords clattering together was deafening. SHING! BANG! Gee and his friends were delivering food to South Africa when a bunch of muscular pirates named after reptiles attacked them. BOOM! Gee and his brother, Yee, who had a robotic hand, were accompanied by their two best friends, Yang and Woo, who quickly jumped out of the battle to sharpen their weapons. Suddenly the reptile pirates set their ship, the Zhang, on fire. When they walked out of the Armory, all of sailors they travelled with were dead except Captain Ming. He was injured and dying. When Captain Ming saw Gee, Yee, Yang and Woo, he whispered urgently. “Can you get the mission done? It would be very kind of you – Farewell, my friends!” Before he fell noisily to the floor.

Yee, Gee, Yang and Woo were all squeezed together in a filthy canon. The reptile pirates got them! Cobra, one of the reptile pirates, marched up to them. He lit the cannon and then Captain Komodo, the leader of the reptile pirates yelled to them, “We’re going to blast you far away!” The next thing they knew, they were blasted off high into the sky.

Gee opened his eyes slowly. When he woke up, he saw that he had landed in a bush! He could see Yee was unconscious to his right and Woo buried in sand to his left, but where was Yang? Unexpectedly, there was a loud crash which woke everyone up. Yang had fallen from a tree! They quickly made a raft big and strong enough to hold them all. It was on this raft that they managed to get all the way to China!

It was a rough and hard journey. When they reached China, they told the Government about their adventure. A funeral was arranged for Captain Ming. Some sailors continued the mission of bringing food to South Africa while others went to deal with the reptile pirates. Thankfully, the evil pirates ended up jumping into the sea because they were so scared!

Later that week, Captain Ming’s burial procession arrived at the cemetery. As everyone gathered around they heard a familiar voice behind them. “Hey! What are you guys doing giving me a funeral? I’m not even dead. This is one of the reptile pirates that tried to kill you guys,” he said, pointing to a pirate on the floor. “You’d better lock him up. I also learned how to swing from tree to tree. Monkeys nursed me back to life. They are unique, clever and have a secret language. You should get to know them. Now, I’m going to have a short nap if you don’t mind.”

Captain Ming fell to the floor and started sleeping. Everyone thought his speech was hilarious and started laughing hard. The villagers went back to their homes and went on with their lives. They never heard of the reptile pirates again.

The Missing Treasure

St Margarets Co-Educational English Secondary and Primary School, Chan, Casey – 8

A long time ago, there was a courageous merchant who sailed from China to exotic countries. One silent and dark night, Captain Shi Hong was sailing on the glittering deep blue water beneath the illumination moon. After sailing for days, he found an exotic island with soft sand which glowed like jewels underneath the bright sun. There were juicy fruits with a very powerful taste and pine needles with an emerald colour. When Captain Shi Hong explored the land, he found precious metallic gold. As he was collecting the gold, he spotted some fearsome looking pirates sailing a worn out and rusty ship with a Jolly Rodger on top. The pirates were holding pointy daggers. When they got closer, Captain Shi Hong got his razor-sharp sword out ready to fight the bloodthirsty pirates. The pirates were there to steal tons of gold, emeralds and jewels. At that time, the captain thought of an idea... "If I could distract the pirates and tell them to go somewhere with more gold, I could escape!"

So Captain Shi Hong shouted, "Hey pirates! I know a place with tons and tons of gold and riches!" The surprised pirates replied "tons of booty?" Captain Shi Hong nodded. The pirates quickly sailed away, meanwhile the captain hurried to his boat to escape the island. He set off to explore a new land. One foggy night, Captain Shi Hong was on his ship searching a map for new exotic places. Suddenly, he saw an enormous sea monster. The monster was behind his ship! It was so close he decided to swing his anchor at the sea monster. When the sea monster was gone, the captain sailed for land as fast as he could. When he arrived, he noticed six long ships on the beach. Vikings! Captain Shi Hong courageously fought against the growling Vikings. He remembered he had a wondrous and magical rock. He threw the precious rock into the water and the Vikings followed it deep to the bottom of the sea. Captain Shi Hong decided to sail back to China. He planned on building a village for homeless people, but he was also planning where he could search for more gold!

The Voyagers of the Sea

St Margarets Co—Educational English Secondary and Primary School, Johal, Jasman – 8

700 years ago, there was a group of good voyagers from China who would travel around the seas and discover new places in the world. One day, the voyagers were called in to the palace by the Emperor of China for an important and special task. When they arrived, the Emperor welcomed them and asked, “Dear noble Voyagers, I would like you to travel around and donate containers of gold and silk to the people of India, Africa and Arabia. We want to make good relationships with them, and also learn different cultures from them. Would you all be kind to do that for me?” without thinking for a second, the voyagers started their journey across the seven seas to donate gold and silk to the countries.

The voyagers first travelled to India, but on their way, there was a group of greedy pirates that went on their ship and tried to steal their gold. They fought the pirates courageously, and luckily the voyagers won the fight and continued their journey. When they all arrived in India, the captain, named Zu, gave 3 big containers of gold and silk to India. The Indians felt very grateful for what they did and as a token of thanks, the Indians taught the voyagers how to make traditional curry. The voyagers also took some curry and traditional spices so that they could share them with the emperor.

After that, the sailors continued their voyage to donate the valuables to Africa. When they arrived, they were shocked and surprised to see that Africa was full of trees and greenery. They had to fight their way through a jungle to get to a village. Fortunately, there was a kind villager that led the voyagers to their home. Whilst they were walking they saw many beautiful plants, gigantic canopies and many exotic animals too!

Finally they had arrived. However, captain Zu fainted! The other voyagers started to panic and shouted for help. Luckily the kind villager knew how to heal people with herbal medicine. So he rushed to the forest, grabbed some leaves and mashed them up into a drink for captain Zu. Zu drank it and woke up! The others were amazed and cheerful for what happened. They also thanked the villager for his help. They gave 7 large containers of shining gold and smooth silk to the village chief. Before they all left, the villager taught the voyagers how to make medicine so they could use it back in China.

At last, they travelled to Arabia. The voyagers donated their last few containers of riches to the Arabians, and in exchange, the Arabians gave them fresh delicious coffee beans! The voyagers set sail to return home and present their exotic gifts to the emperor.

A Pirate Tale

St Margarets Co-Educational English Secondary and Primary School, Lee, Jayda – 8

The sound of the ship creaking through the large waves made the sailors sleep soundly. The sun was rising and the crew were waking up. Morning came. “Arr!” said a loud shipmate. “Captain me matey! We encountered an island!”

“Then we shall make sail for it and find rest!” said the captain. But little did they know that the mysterious and exotic island was actually a resting sea monster!

The captain was first to step off the ship. When they set foot on the land, the island started to move from beneath them. Their ship was drifting farther and farther from the island. Too far for them to reach. They had nothing but each other. They were lost in the deep dark seas. When they had nearly lost hope, some bloodthirsty pirates were encountering the island too. The sailors silently sneaked onto their ship. Night time came, survival mode was on. It was a dark and stormy night. The thunder roared loudly as the sailors and pirates were snoring as the ship rocked them back and forth in the roaring waters. There was something huge, something dangerous coming from the deep depths of the ocean. When it rose up it shook the ship violently. The pirates woke up and took their mighty weapons to fight the monster. “Crew, we must fight harder, said the captain.

“Aye aye” replied the crew. Using their strongest weapons, the creature sank back into the darkness of the ocean. The captain asked his crew to find materials to cover leaks in the ship to stop it sinking. They saw an island emerge with a town on it. “My crew, we must take our treasure and bring it to the island or our boat will sink!” they took off in a raft and set sail for the town. A man came and greeted them kindly. “Bonjour! How may I help you” he asked. “We want to stay for a few days and buy a new ship” replied the captain. The kind man led them to his house.

“Where are we? What is this island” the captain asked curiously. “My dear friend, you are in La île tropicale!” he said gleefully, the days passed slowly until it was time for them to leave the island and say their last goodbye. As they set sail they wondered about their future adventures and who they would encounter next.

Treasure Voyage

St Margarets Co-Educational English Secondary and Primary School, Wong, Kaitlyn – 8

A long time ago, courageous voyagers sailed across the deep, dark sea. They were on a hunt for treasure. Unluckily they had already been sailing for days and days without reaching land. One day, big waves made the ship rock furiously. A sailor on deck called George saw an island! He felt ecstatic, and screamed excitedly “there’s an island!”

Everybody woke up and rushed out so fast and crowded on the deck. Everyone was thrilled. The captain immediately steered the boat to their island. When they got closer they saw that the island was gorgeous! It had a forest full of tall pine trees with bristly pine needles, and the sand was sweet and glided beneath their feet. The captain set the anchor, then one by one the voyagers jumped off. George was over the moon that they had found an island, but they didn’t know if this land had treasure. Suddenly he heard a joyous cry “I found it!” George turned around to see a young sailor raising up a map and waving it rapidly. “It’s a...treasure...map!

George saw that they had to go through a tropical forest, arrive at the dark and gloomy cave and find a tree marked with an X. He gathered everyone and they set off between the trees. Suddenly they heard some scary and mean voices coming from the beach. They heard “hmm, it seems like someone is here already!” another gruff voice said “then we will be faster than them”.

The captain whispered frantically “oh no! I think it’s the Vikings!” They decided to go and find the treasure, whilst some of the crew fought the Vikings. George reminded them “we have each other, so we don’t have to be afraid”. They kept on going and not long after they arrived at the cave. Inside the dark cave, the light was getting dimmer and dimmer. A few minutes later no one could see anything. The voyagers didn’t know what to do, so they huddled together for warmth. They thought the crew was caught by the terrible Vikings! Not long after, the crew got to the cave! They all screamed with excitement and joy. Together they found the exit, and they saw a quicksand road. One by one they stepped on rocks to cross the quicksand. Suddenly, a sailor called Samuel slipped and fell into the quicksand! George told everyone to stay calm. A sailor took a vine from a tree, they swung it to Samuel. Luckily he caught the vine! The voyagers pulled and Samuel flew into the air, right into a tree marked with an X. Samuel had landed on the treasure! They all began to dig and dig and dig. At last they felt something hard, so they carefully pulled out a chest. They opened the chest and saw tons of sparkling gold! There were crowns and coins, diamonds and rubies! Everyone felt ecstatic. The voyagers brought the jewels back to their ship, and happily they sailed for home.

The Stolen Treasure of Doom

St Margarets Co-Educational English Secondary and Primary School, Wong, Starrie – 8

Once upon a time there were three sailors called Sun, Moon and Day. They liked to use their collected treasures to help poor people all over the world. One day, they fought their enemy Captain Richard. They won and not only took over his empire but also all the valuable including gold and silver coins.

This time they decided to bring them on their voyage to help the poor people. They sailed for almost a month without spotting land. Suddenly they saw a mysterious land with bright green palm trees, shiny sand and also brown coconut trees. They slowly sailed to the mysterious land and prepared to take rest.

After a long day, Sun got on the sail boat and decided to use a telescope to see the beautiful scenery. Moon wanted to see and checked their valuable treasures. When she opened the treasure box she found it had all disappeared! They all felt terrified. They went to the boat cockpit and continued to sail and look for their missing treasure. Sun, Moon and Day passed a lot of countries on their journey like China, Russia, Britain and Japan. They asked different people where the treasure may be. In Japan, a man called Jun who was also a sailor and lived in a dense forest for over a hundred years said “Maybe the treasure is in a cave, but there is a horrible sea dragon inside”. Sun asked, “Where is the cave?” Jun said, “The cave is inside a village, there is smoke and a haunting sound coming out! Be careful, the sea dragon is very powerful and no one can defeat it.” Moon thanked him, and they continued their journey to find the treasure.

They walked across the land, climbed over mountains and after a few days they spotted a dark and gloomy cave. Moon and Day decided to courageously go into the cave and search for the treasure. After a while, they heard a strange and horrible ROAR! They followed the sound to see if the treasure was there.

Suddenly the sea dragon came out. It was humungous with long, pointy and sharp tail. It was dark black and its eyes were dark green. Moon whispered, “Hey, the treasure is behind the sea dragon!” Day jumped on its sail and Moon jumped on its neck. They cooperated together and hit the sea dragon as hard as they could.

The sea dragon used its big mouth to breathe lightening fire. Moon was hurt, but Day stabbed his sword into the sea dragons’ skull. They quickly grabbed the treasure and rushed back to their ship.

They were so happy that they were bursting with joy. Later, they shared their treasure with poor people across the world. Together they continued their adventurous journey.

The Amazing Adventure with Zheng He

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School, Leung, Suet Ching – 8

I will never forget that day.....

I got lost with my family when I was exploring in a dark cave. I saw a stone glimmering in the dark. I reached out to touch it. Suddenly, there was a flash of strong light. **VOOM!**

When I woke up, I saw people with odd clothes and I had changed my clothes too! “Oops! Luckily my backpack is still here!” I thought to myself. I saw a man nearby. I ran to ask him where I was and who he was. He said, ‘My name is Zheng He. You are on one of my decks.’ I was surprised! I bowed my head quickly. “Nice to meet you, Zheng He. I am Jasmine and I am from the future.....”

Zheng He brought me to Yongle the Emperor. We went into a huge pier. There sat many big boats! Yongle the Emperor said, “Zheng He, these boats belong to you now! Explore the world and trade precious presents with people you meet.” “**WOW!** Such **SPLENDID** ships!” I whispered. Zheng smiled and proudly presented, “Yes, kid! We have ships to carry treasures, horses and even troops!” For the following months, Zheng and I travelled around the world on our ship!

One day, we saw a big black ship sailing in front of ours. “**HOLD BACK! PIRATES!** Chen Zuyi and his devil crew!” Zheng was stunned and shouted loudly.

“Long time no see, mate!” Chen laughed cunningly! The two armies stood on their own ships facing each other. Zheng’s troops were prepared to fight.

“**BOOM! BOOM!**” The wicked pirates beat the drums fiercely. I saw Chen murmur something like spells. A giant monster suddenly popped up from the sea! “Watch out! What is this octopus-like monster?” I screamed with a trembling voice.

Zheng’s troops tried to hold a long rope to trap the Sea Monster. “Try our best to fight, mates!” shouted Zheng. They used all the arrows and cannonballs they had to fight with the furious Monster.

I took out my chocolate bars from my backpack. “Hey, look here!” I shouted at the Sea Monster and threw the chocolate bars into its big mouth. The Sea Monster opened its mouth wide! “**IT** got my **CHOCOLATE BARS** and dived back into the ocean!”

“Hurray! Hurray!” Zheng’s troops captured Chen and his team finally. They took the wicked pirates back to Yongle the Emperor and put them in the dungeon.

Yongle the Emperor was very pleased with what we had done. He wanted to give me some precious gifts as rewards but I refused. “Please donate these precious gifts to the poor, my Majesty.” I bowed. “I do miss my family and friends so much! I have to say goodbye and go back to my time.” I blinked at Zheng.

“Goodbye, my little hero!” Zheng smiled, and I saw his tears rolling down his cheek.

In a flash, I was back to the dark cave. I would never forget this amazing adventure with Zheng He in Ming Dynasty

The Untold Eighth Treasure Voyage— in memory of my beloved Godfather, Zheng He

St. Paul's Co-educational College Primary School, Yuen, Fe – 8

Dear Godfather,

I did it! I have just realised your lifelong dream of circumnavigation, to prove that Earth is round! Hope I have made you proud. I missed you dearly and regretted incredibly for my absence at your funeral, as I learnt about the tragic news¹ only recently when my fleet reached *Quanzhou*.

Ten months after you embarked on your seventh treasure voyage, *Xuande* Emperor ordered me to lead an expedition of circumnavigation. The emperor thought previous voyages focused too much on the display of wealth. He believed a global circumnavigation could demonstrate the superiority of China in scientific exploration in the region. The emperor ordered us to keep the plan a secret, and understandably so.

As it was the first time I led an expedition of this scale, I wanted to stay modest. Instead of a more ambitious plan of a complete east–west circumnavigation, I planned to circumnavigate north–south, just around the ocean² outside the East China Sea.

It was May 1431. My fleet left the port of *Liujiagang*, travelled northeast, and passed through the strait between *Jin* and *Wo*. Based on the methods described in *Zhoubi Suanjing*, my crew and I duly observed the midday sun to track our latitudes. The fleet reached the farthest north as it navigated past the Kamchatka Peninsula. Since we had been travelling in a reasonably straight line, the changes in latitude made us believe that we had been moving on a curved surface instead of a flat one. The evidence for a spherical Earth was emerging.

In November of the same year, we discovered a new world. It was vast, occupied by very friendly *Ohlone* natives. They were delighted to receive treasures from us, and in return, asked us to give their place a toponym. We took the opportunity and named it “*Xuande*”, after our emperor.

After leaving *Xuande*, we kept navigating south. We reached the farthest south on our journey in September 1432, encountered a continent, covered entirely in ice and occupied by exotic animals — bird-like animals that waddle and live in colonies. They were very agile swimmers, in contrast to some lazy, gigantic species which laid still sunbathing near the shore.

Everything sailed smoothly until a thunderstorm hit us in April 1433 and wrecked one of our ships. Luckily, we found a nearby island where we took the time to reorganise. Finally, the critical moment came on 18 June 1433 when our fleet approached *Liujiagang* northbound, the opposite of how we departed. I murmured to myself in disbelief, “Earth is indeed spherical!!!” Everyone on board burst into tears of joy.

It has been a long two years, and I am glad to be home. Last night, I dreamt of us to be the very first global circumnavigators. After waking up, I keep wondering if the eighth treasure voyage were the world–first... Anyhow, I shall bring the good news to the emperor tomorrow. Wish me luck!

Sincerely and respectfully yours,

En-Lai

¹ I role-played *Zheng En-Lai* (鄭恩來), *Zheng He*'s godson, when writing *The Untold Eighth Treasure Voyage*.

² Some believed *Zheng He* died in Calicut, India during his seventh voyage in the spring of 1433.

³ Today's Pacific Ocean.

⁴ *Jin* (辰): Today's South Korea.

Wo (倭): Today's Japan.

⁵ *Zhoubi Suanjing* (周髀算經): the earliest books on astronomy in Chinese history.

⁶ *Xuande* city was renamed to “San Francisco” by Spanish colonists in 1776.

⁷ The Magellan–Elcano circumnavigation completed in 1522, 89 years after *Zheng En-Lai*.

Ming Treasure Adventures

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Cheung, Elana – 6

Xiu Ting was only six years old when her older twin brothers, Li Ming and Li Hang, left their small village to become pirates in the imperial Ming Treasure Fleet. Her brothers had always dreamed of seeing the foreign world, so when they heard that the Emperor was looking for a crew of young men and women to sail the seas, they immediately sent a letter to the imperial capital of Nanjing declaring their interest. Within weeks, they had packed their bags and were ready for their journey.

However, both brothers did not have any sailing experience. Therefore, they were assigned roles onboard the ship. Li Ming wanted to know how to make the cuisine of the world, so he joined the cooks. As they travelled around the world, he learned about the different spices and dishes from the local people. Li Hang, on the other hand, wanted to learn how to fight to protect the ship from dangerous pirates. So, he trained until he was ready for battle.

During their voyages, Li Ming and Li Hang explored many new places in the world. They visited Java, a beautiful tropical island, and saw lots of interesting wildlife and beautiful scenery. The people there were friendly, and had a colourful culture full of traditional music and dances. Li Ming and Li Hang danced and sang with the local people for many days until it was time to leave. To thank the people, they gave them gold, silk, wine and precious jewellery. The local people were very touched and thankful.

However, not all the people they met were friendly. On the way to Ceylon, pirates who wanted to steal their treasure attacked the Ming Treasure fleet. But, Li Hang fought bravely with the other soldiers and defeated the pirates. Luckily, when they reached Ceylon, the nice local people gave them delicious curries and thanked them for defeating the evil pirates. Li Ming learned a lot about cooking spicy food from the local people, and when they left the island, the people of Ceylon gave them different spices to take back to China. Using these spices, Li Ming was able to cook a lot of delicious curries for the people on the ship.

Li Ming and Li Hang sailed the seas for seven years with the Ming Treasure Fleet, and visited as far as Africa. When they came back home, Xiu Ting was thirteen years old. They told her of their many adventures, and of everything they learned from the people of the world. “You can learn a lot of fascinating people by travelling the world,” said Li Ming. “I also saw the most breathtaking natural scenery and manmade architecture. I’ll remember it forever.”

From then on, Xiu Ting also decided that she wanted to become a pirate on the Ming Treasure Fleet like her brothers. She studied hard at school, and when she was finally eighteen, she had her very own adventure.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

St Stephens College Preparatory School, Cheung, Michelle – 7

In the 1400s, a fleet of ships set sail from China to their neighbouring countries. They brought lots of gold and silk in the ships as gifts in order to build up friendship with the people of the countries they visited. There were altogether seven voyages.

For the first two voyages, the ships from China brought gold, silk, tea and also fruits and gave them to people of the nearby countries. People there were happy because they were poor and they did not have all these precious items. They asked the Chinese ships to come back and bring more things for them.

The third time they went, there was a big storm at sea. The ship was too fragile and not strong enough. Sea water kept getting into the ship and the ship almost sank. Some sailors fell into the sea but luckily they were saved by a mermaid called Amira and her sisters. Amira was the eldest mermaid princess lived in the castle under the sea. She had six younger sisters. All of them had magic powers. Amira's mother was called Queen Abreyshia and she had the strongest magic power. Amira and her sisters saved all those sailors who sailed into the sea. The sailors felt very happy to have pretty girls helping them. They did not know they were mermaids, but they wanted to see them again.

The ship went many times to these countries but they did not see the mermaid again until the seventh voyage. This time the storm in the sea was very huge and the ship was tossed around in the sea. The captain also lost control of the ship and the sailors felt very dizzy. This time the ship sank into the sea. Amira found the ship sinking, but this storm was too big, even Amira and her sisters couldn't help. Amira and her sisters were very kind, they asked Queen Abreyshia to help them to raise the ship out of the water. Queen Abreyshia agreed to help, she used all her strength to lift up the ship, Amira and the other mermaids drained the water from the ship. The sailors saw the mermaids through the portholes of the ship, they were very surprised because they thought they were human beings but they were not, they were "Mermaids!"

The sailors went back to see the emperor, they told him about the things that had happened in their voyages. The emperor asked the sailors to bring the mermaids back, so he sent the sailors to find the mermaids. The sailors kept looking for the mermaids and they did see them swimming in the water. The sailors shouted "Thank you!" to the mermaids from the ship. The sailors did not catch the mermaids because they liked them. When the sailors saw the emperor, they told him mermaids couldn't live on land and so they did not bring them back.

Since then, no one ever saw the mermaids again.

A Lucky Fall

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Chu, Charlotte Tsz Ying – 8

The mighty China Ming treasure fleet sails in the South China sea and beyond, and is led by the most famous admiral Zheng He of China. I am a young sailor in the China Ming treasure fleet. I was born in a little village next to the ocean. It was my childhood dream to sail to different parts of the world. I am honoured to be a member of the China Ming treasure fleet. Our mission is to meet with different people around the world and exchange goods. The fleet is famous for its size and the treasures it carries such as gold bars, Chinese silks, jewellery, jade sculptures and much more. However, the voyages can sometimes be dangerous because there are pirates everywhere!

We had been at sea for weeks, and one hot summer's day, I was helping mop the floor and clean the deck when suddenly, I heard screaming from other sailors. They were yelling "PIRATES ARE COMING!! RUN!!" Instead of running away, I ran to the back of the ship wanting to see the pirates with my own eyes. I saw five pirate ships sailing towards us. The huge pirate ships had cannons, and I heard loud noises like claps of thunder and saw smoke coming out of the pirate ships as cannon balls flew towards us! Luckily, the cannon balls narrowly missed us. Frightened the pirates would sink our ships, I was about to run and hide, when I heard a strong voice saying "Stay calm!!" "Every sailor on deck gather your weapons. The pirates are here for our treasures and we must protect them!" It was Admiral Zheng He and he ordered his men to arm themselves and prepare to fight the pirates. The Ming treasure fleet began to turn around and head towards the pirates. As we got closer to the pirate ships, we fired back with our cannons. Our cannon balls hit some of the pirate ships and badly damaged them. Our fleet ran straight into the pirate ships and our armed men jumped onto the pirate ships then attacked them. Admiral Zheng He shouted "Attack and destroy their ships". I followed the Admiral as we boarded the pirate ship. I swung my sword wildly with my eyes closed because I was so scared. The next thing I knew, I had tripped and fallen into my Admiral! I heard the sounds of the fighting continuing. Many pirates were injured in the battle and some fell overboard. At the end, the pirates were outnumbered and retreated. Some pirates abandoned their ships and some were captured by us. Zheng He claimed victory and everyone cheered.

That night, we had a big feast to celebrate our victory and the Admiral told me that I had saved his life by falling into him and knocking him out of the path of a bullet! The next morning, we repaired our ships and we set sail for more adventure on the mighty China Ming treasure fleet!

Voyage to Africa

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Chu, Yan Kiu Carina – 6

Yesterday, my Daddy told me a story about Zheng He, our China's great admiral about five hundred years ago and his adventures in seven voyages to India, Arabia and Africa.

At night, I had a dream about Admiral Zheng. He was as tall as a door. He was strong, muscular and can carry very heavy things. Admiral Zheng led a large fleet of ships. The main ship was enormous. The shape of the ship resembled a dragon. It was ten floors high ten basketball courts long. It had more than hundred rooms and could accommodate about 1,000 people.

I was a Chinese doctor working on Admiral Zheng's ship during the voyage to Africa. My job was to do acupuncture and herbal therapy for the crews. I made herbal medicine to treat diseases like diarrhea, sore throat and even measles. One day during the journey to Africa, Admiral Zheng asked, "Doctor Carina, do you have any idea of what we could help other countries?" Then I replied, "hmm, maybe I could try working on developing a new Chinese medicine to cure Malaria as Malaria was a serious illness in Africa." Admiral Zheng nodded his head and looked at me with a smile.

Admiral Zheng was a nice and knowledgeable man. Sometimes, he talked to me about interesting stories of navigation at night.

After three months of travel, we finally arrived a town along the East coast of Africa. I was very excited. The weather was hot and dry. I saw many stone houses. People wore clothes made of cotton and some wore goatskins. We have visited a number of coastal towns in Africa. We gave porcelain, silk, in exchange for tortoiseshell, leopard skins, ivory, giraffes and elephants. I shared my Chinese medicine formula to heal Malaria to people there. I tried to collect indigenous plants in Africa to make new herbal medicine.

On our return trip back to China, near Somalia, we noticed pirates approaching us in a small boat and tried to get onboard of our ship by ladders. They are armed with handmade weapons and swords. The pirates wanted to take away our gold, silver, silk and food from us. Admiral Zheng and his soldiers fought fiercely with the pirates. I was scared and attempted to hide up. Suddenly, I saw an arrow shooting towards me. I yelled "Help! Help!" I woke up and realized it is only a dream.

The Ming Pirates

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Ho, Sophia – 6

Once upon a time in a dangerous place called China there were three pirates. There was Pirate Ho, Pirate Chang and Pirate Pan. They were kind pirates. One time they went to the treasure cave on their ship and they went to the magic cave. They used their hands to open it but the magic door was locked! Pirate Chang had a key so she looked to see if it was the right size. The door said, "You must use a password."

Pirate Pan had come here before, so maybe he knew the password. He said, "Mappy mop, mopyy map, help me find my gold!" The door suddenly opened and they went inside and saq a treasure box. Pirate Chang had another key so she used the key to open the box. It had a lot of beautiful gold that that shared together! They were rich!

The Ming Pirates

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Hsu, Caitlyn – 6

Once upon a time there were two pirates called Pirate Zheng and Madam Ching and they had a big ship. They were very kind pirates. They went to a different country to visit the king and exchange treasure and silks. When they went to India they went to a palace and exchanged gold. India was beautiful. They ate some naan bread.

After, went to a cave to look for treasure. They dug and dug and dug. Finally, they found the treasure that they wanted. They opened a big treasure chest and found silver and gold coins inside. They also found a lot of jewels inside too.

They sailed back to their homes in China. They were tired but they also wanted another adventure!

Molly and Zheng

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Lai, Hailey – 6

Once upon a time, a mermaid named Molly was living on the coastline near Thailand. She was only 16 years old. One day, Molly looks out of the window of her dolphin house when she hears a huge sound, 'BANG!' After a while, a sailor looking man sailing on a small boat containing many shimmering jewels and gems approaches. Molly is afraid this man is a pirate who wants to take away her treasures, so she swims quickly to find her best friend, the little penguin, Snowflake.

Snowflake is a very clever boy who loves to help other to solve problems. He is very familiar with all the dangers that appear in the sea, he is a good helper to all the sailing ships, that is why he is so well known to all the sailors when their ships are having trouble.

When Snowflake gets to Molly's dolphin house, he was so amazed. "Admiral Zheng! Is that you? Am I dreaming?" said Snowflake.

"Hello Snowflake! It is nice to see you again. I am coming to say thank you for helping my sailing team many years ago. Remember, you helped us escape from the gigantic tsunami? You helped us survive!" said Zheng.

Snowflake felt astounded that he could see Admiral Zheng again. When Molly and Snowflake looked out from the coastline, Zheng was leading his tremendous sailing fleet to bring food, valuables and most of all, love to them. Zheng's biggest dream is to make friends with everyone in the world.

Molly and Snowflake invited Admiral Zheng and his fleet, Land of Paradise to have a party before they set sail to other places. At the party, Molly's best friends, the three monkeys – Do, Re and Me, did their favourite tricks for the sailors. All the sailors enjoyed the tricks and were very willing to give the moneys bananas as rewards. After the monkeys show, Admiral Zheng showed them all how to design their ships in a clever way to avoid sinking. He told tales of of all the funny things that happened in their sailing adventures. All people on the Land of Paradise were having a great time, telling to stories, watching tricks and listening to the seagulls sing.

When the sun rose the next day, Molly was the first one up. She felt a little bit different and felt her tail that was heavier than usual. She heard a voice telling her to get up and walk. She looked down and her tail had disappeared. With her two new gifts, she was able to marry Zheng He and sail around the world with him, bringing love and hope to the world.

The Ming Sea Voyages

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Lam, Edwin – 8

A long time ago during the Ming Dynasty, China was very powerful and wealthy. The emperor appointed Admiral Zheng to build friendships with other countries. The emperor gave him a fleet of five boats and some of his men to start off the expedition: chefs, sailors, herbalists, mechanics, merchants, soldiers and officials. They planned to sail through the South China Sea, Indian Ocean, and Persian Gulf to East Africa, giving out gifts like silk and porcelain to foreign countries.

In 1405, the first expedition began. Among the many people was a little boy called Abo. He was 11 years old. He was short and thin, with long black hair and big round eyes. He was a housekeeper of the ship. He had a lot of crazy ideas and possessed secret super power. He kept a pet monkey with him called Mink. It had golden brown fur and was very clever. He always helped Abo in the adventures.

After several months of sailing in the South China Sea, they eventually arrived at Sumatra. Sumatra was always attacked by pirates. Prince Sam of Sumatra requested help from the Chinese troops. Admiral Zheng agreed and launched a battle against the pirates. But the pirates were too powerful and mischievous, and the soldiers were too tired to fight after the sailing. They were losing at the beginning. Abo decided to show his superpower. He created a tornado wind and it hit the wooden deck of the enemy's ship. It crashed. Then, he launched his secret weapons, banana bombs and a fire launcher. Mink used his banana lightsaber and threw banana bombs and BOOM! Another ship exploded with bananas flowing into the sea.

The soldiers shot fire arrows and cannon balls towards the pirate's ship to set them on fire. They threw dusty bricks at the pirate ships to sink them. They defeated the pirates. Prince Sam was very happy.

Then they set sail to India and the days were back to normal, The soldiers continued their battle training, and the officials took notes of the journey, and Abo and Mink had fun on the ship.

Finally, the fleet reached Ceylon. However, the fleet was not welcomed by the people there. The King of Ceylon was rude and hostile. He was known as the Snake King because he wore snake skin with a snake crown. He kept a lot of poisonous snakes in his palace as weapons. He was the worst villain yet.

Admiral Zheng was invited to the Snake Palace. The Chinese fleet was suddenly attacked by the snake troops. Abo shot the lasers at Snake King but he threw Abo into the swamp full of poisonous snakes. Admiral Zheng saw it and he threw the grapple hook towards the Snake King and BOOM! The Snake King fainted.

They cheered and celebrated the victory. They returned back to China and the emperor rewarded them with gold.

Ming Treasure Voyages

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Lam, Natasha – 9

Hi, I am Li Ming, a slave from the Ming Treasure Fleet. Here is my story about my journey.

The first thing I did was I carried gold, silk and other precious items to the boat. After we finished loading it with the precious items, we sailed off into the sea.

The first country we went to was Korea. We came at the perfect time because we saw the beautiful yellow, orange and red autumn leaves slowly fall from the trees. It was the most extraordinary thing I have ever seen! But after a few hours we had to leave.

This time the waves were furious. We could not even steer the boat properly because of the waves. Finally we reached Malaysia. At first we thought no one was there but then a person popped out behind a rock with a bow and arrow. Then we knew we had to have a war. We took our weapons and started to fight. After a few hours all of us got so tired and we ran back to our boat.

Finally, we reached India. Indians were so joyful and caring. They helped us heal the wounds from the war. When we were in India, we also learned their unique culture.

Once again we had to leave. This time the sea was calm and peaceful on the way to Africa. We also met so many sailors on the way.

Later that day we did not know where to go. Then I saw land as I was looking out of the boat! Suddenly before I could say anything, I heard a shout and the shout was from the island I just saw. I did not hear what they shouted but I thought it was a bad sign. When we got to the island we were welcomed very nicely with some flowers and their handmade chocolates. They let us stay for a night. Then we said our one goodbyes and thank you to them and we sailed off into the sea.

Later we hit something and the next thing I knew was the boat was sinking! Everyone started to panic because we did not have those mini boats for an emergency. Our captain said we have to swim to shore and walk back to china.

Later that day it was beginning to get dark and after all that swimming everyone got so hungry. We were in the forest and all we could find were some fruit we had to eat fruit for dinner. After a few days we got tired of eating fruit but I had to eat it to survive. We had been traveling by foot for weeks but we still had not arrived at china.

2 months later we finally arrived! Everyone was so happy we made it back to china. I told everyone the great journey I had. I know I did not go to the end of the world but it still was an exciting journey.

The Big Voyage

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Ling, Alicia – 6

Once in a faraway magical land named Crystalcross, lived a girl named Emily. She was eight years old. She loved sailing and it was her favourite hobby. The magic school she went to was the best magic school ever! She learned lots of magic spells and she also learned sailing from Professor Zhenghe.

During the school summer holiday, Emily and her two classmates, Lia and Sophie, decided to go sailing and explore beyond Crystalcross Coast and make new friends. They conjured up a ship that was rainbow-coloured and covered with glitter, brought with them a treasure chest full of precious stones and departed from the port. Crystalcross Bay shimmered beautifully in the afternoon sunlight. It was a happy and peaceful journey. The girls threw a tea party and watched TV.

Shortly after, their ship approached an island, and the kids could not believe their eyes! In front of them was a magnificent, huge golden palace with fairies fluttering around it. A fairy fluttered towards them.

“Hi!” she said, “I’m Kylie the Ice Fairy. Who are you?”

The girls introduced themselves and made friends with Kylie. Kylie invited them to the palace for tea and showed them around. Before Emily and her friends left, they gave Kylie some of the precious stones as a token of their friendship and asked Kylie if she would like to visit Crystalcross. Kylie joined the girls and headed toward Crystalcross.

The journey continued happily until a fleet of nasty pirates came by. The pirates had weapons, the girls did not, but they had magical powers. With the help of Kylie and the magic spell she cast that froze the pirates, the girls were safe again.

“Hurray!” the girls shouted. “We won the battle!” they cried.

They returned to Crystalcross safely with Kylie their new fairy friend. What a wonderful journey!

Dear Diary

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Luk, Kacelyn – 6

I'm Kacelyn, the little cleaner. I would like to share two very exciting days of my voyage!

February 11th, 1410

We had a big party on Captain Zheng's ship. This ship is the biggest in the fleet. That means a lot of work for me, the little cleaner! I am sad because every giant sailor was drunk! They ate lots of food and drank lots of rum. That means lots of cleaning work for me!

When I was busy cleaning, I heard something rumbling – I ran to the deck, I saw a thunderstorm and big waves coming. "Wake up! Wake up!" I shouted loudly. All the sailors woke up. Captain Zheng ordered every sailor to prepare for the big waves and rain. The ship started to rock up and down on the waves. Now, I was very dizzy but I still needed to do work, so I told myself to stay strong and be brave.

The rain and sea water started to spill into the ship. I was very busy clearing all the water with a mop. Finally, the ship and the fleet passed through the storm. Everyone was safe. I pretended to play the guitar with the mop and I sang, "we are safe! Let's celebrate!" Everyone laughed and went back to bed after such a crazy day.

February 12th, 1410

I woke up early in the morning after the big storm. "Hurrah!" I said, "It is a beautiful sunny day!" I took out the map to the deck and looked at it. Looks like we are heading to Africa!

Captain Zheng walked by and said, "Good morning little cleaner, we are almost at Africa! Are you excited?"

"Yes! I am very excited!" I yelled as I jumped up and down.

When I was relaxing and resting on the deck, enjoying the sunshine, I saw a very big ship with a tall black flag with a skeleton on it... "PIRATES!" I screamed, "Pirates are coming!" Sailors, get your weapons and get ready to fight!" The pirate ship came closer and saw that we have many ships in our fleet, a huge army and many sailors with weapons. The pirates looked us and became very scared. They returned back to their base. Everyone was so happy because the pirates were gone.

I took out my telescope to check if we were near Africa. I couldn't believe my eyes. I saw people with dark skin waving at us on an island. I was so surprised to see people with a different skin colour. Captain Zheng shouted to all the sailors that we had arrived at Africa.

We brought gold, jewels and silk to make friends with the African people. We didn't understand them, but they were happy and smiling. They invited all of us to a party. We ate, drank and danced together. We had a great time. This is how Captain Zheng makes new friends around the world.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Ma, Nathan – 9

This story is dedicated to my ancestor who worked on one of the Ming Treasure fleets in the early 1400s. At that time, the Yongle Emperor was trying to make friends with neighbouring countries such as India, Siam Africa and Arabia. The fleet carried a lot of precious treasures such as gold, silver, silk and gemstones. Together they made seven voyages across the Indian and Pacific Ocean They had to fight against local pirates and foreign enemies. Even though they fought many battles, they won most of the time and returned safely from their journey to China. The Chinese admiral who guided them was called, 'Zheng He' and he had won many awards from the emperor and the respect from the Chinese People.

The first three expeditions were so amazing because they carried the most military weapons, thousands of sailors and passengers. As the ships arrived at the port in Champa, the king greeted the crew members with local treasures and gifts in exchange for Chinese silk and gold. Sailing to the island Java, the fleet faced many dangers and threats by pirates. However, the mighty power of the fleet led them to victory. They even sent the pirate chief back to Nanjing for punishment. They met the King of Calicut and received a stately welcome at his inauguration. They had a long feast and food to take along for their journey.

During the last four expeditions, they saw many types of western ships. They traded crewman with each other to learn foreign languages, New battle ships were made and constructed, the Chinese Emperor became more powerful and rich. The officials from Ceylon, Cochin, Hormuz, Sumatra, and Mogadishu sent their ambassadors to the capital city, Beijing for commerce and more language training.

At that time, many young people followed alongside Zheng He on a maritime adventure to become a sailor. When they first got on, they often had motion sickness. They were given Chinese medicine to settle their stomach. After that, they were given a variety of jobs on the boat such as cleaning the decks, halls, toilets and kitchen. Besides that, they had to build stalls and coops to hold the pigs, chicken and sheep for the crew to eat. The young men were extremely welcomed by the crew and they listened and obeyed every order. They helped loading cannons and preparing weapons during battles. They learnt how to fight alongside admiral Zheng He. When they travelled to the next port, they picked up other supplies for the fleet. The young men were extremely grateful that they could travel the Indian and Pacific Ocean for free and received free meals and drinks.

There were dangers at sea especially traveling to Calicut. A few men got lost at sea without notice when they lost balance climbing on the rope. If they fell into the sea, they usually drowned before the ship could rescue them. However, the long journey was worth making because they were recorded in the history books.

New Tales of the Ming Treasure Voyages

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Mui, Megan – 6

Chapter One: The First Voyage: 1405 – 1407

In a thunderous night I was summoned to come to the royal palace. His Highness Yongle Emperor could not sleep. His eyes were swollen as he yelled in pain saying, “I could not sleep and I am having these nightmares that my nephew will be coming back seeking his revenge. Our spies reported that he disguised as a monk and left the country on a large fishing boat a few months earlier. We thought that he hid somewhere in the South Sea. Gather a fleet and hunt him down.”

In early spring 1405, we set sailed with twenty ships and two thousand sailors. It was like a picture painted in blue with our treasure boats scattered like little dots in the sea. Our fleet sailed straight through the Indian Ocean following rumours on the whereabouts of Jianwen Emperor.

We were not able to locate Jianwen Emperor but we ran into a local pirate named Chen Zuyi at Palembang on our return trip. He was a pirate who dominated the Malaccan Strait. He sent his pirate ships to attack our ships with arrows and fire bombs in the middle of the night. We returned fire and destroyed ten of his boats and captured another seven. Chen fled quickly knowing that he is no match to our fleet. Chen and his lieutenants were captured and publicly executed on 2nd October 1407.

News spread quickly and our victory was widely publicized. We returned to Nanjing at the end of October; two and a half years after we left. Members of our fleet, the local officials and the people in the vicinities staged an extravagant welcome for our return. The city put up dazzling fireworks during the night to celebrate our return. That night gitters lit up Nanjing while we enjoy our feast. Dancers performed in front of major municipal officials and local mandarins from the vicinity. Scores of people came out to congratulate us on our victory as the local establishments gave the sailors free food and drinks.

We brought foreign envoys from Calicut, Quilon, Semudera, Aru, Malacca, and other smaller nations along the sea routes that we visited. We went back to Beijing with the envoys two days later. We were invited to visit the Ming court to pay homage and present tribute to the great Yongle Emperor. His Highness ordered the Ministry of Rites to prepare generous gifts for the foreign envoys to show his appreciation.

Everyone in the court was amazed by exotic animals such as monkeys from Malaysia; Tapir and Orangutan from Indonesia. We asked the natives to teach the cooks in the royal courts how to prepare food with the spices we brought back. Everyone but the Emperor seems to have forgotten what the underlying objective of our trip – to hunt for the fugitive Jianwen Emperor, who is still at large. But before we were able to indulge on our success, His Excellence asked us to plan our next trip and set sail as soon as we can.

The Treasures of the Sea

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Ng, Isis – 8

The Ming Dynasty navy looked for a group of pirates who were led by a very cunning and nasty pirate named Captain Shark because they stole the gold from the government, which was used as the grant to the refugees after a super storm. However, Captain Shark's fleet was too sneaky and the national navy could not catch them at all.

"Captain, our fleet has searched for pirates for almost a month but we still cannot find them, all the sailors are tired and how about we go back to our navy base to take some rest?" said a sailor.

"Never give up! If we cannot get back the gold from the pirates, all the starving people in the fishing village will die, you don't want see that happen, do you?" said Captain Ming with lots of worry on his face. "Oh...I almost forgot my best ocean friend; he must help me!"

Captain Ming played wonderful music on his magic flute, and the sailors saw some flying creatures flying toward their ship. "Flying dolphins!" said all the sailors.

"My friend, are you looking for me?" said the biggest flying dolphin.

"Indeed, I need your helping hand, John." said Captain Ming and he let John know his problem. "Um...many of my ocean neighbors got tummy-ache because a fleet of ships threw lots of trash in the ocean and the ocean was got polluted, do you think they are the people that you are looking for?" said John.

"Oh, yes, only Shark's fleet will do this nasty thing, thank you John." said Captain Ming.

"Sailors, let us follow the trash and start our journey!"

After Captain Ming's crew set off for a few days, they met five sharks which were swimming upside down. He knew Captain Shark's fleet must be nearby.

After Captain Ming's clever thinking, the national navy finally found the pirates fleet. "Shark, surrender or die!" said Captain Ming.

"We hid so well, but how could Captain Ming find us?" said Captain Shark to his pirates. "Let's escape immediately!" said Captain Shark in a quiet voice. The pirates would like to escape but their fleet was somehow stuck by the trash they threw and therefore captured by Captain Ming. All the pirates were put in jail, the gold was taken back and exchanged for food to the refugees. The national navy also helped the refugees to build a new village.

"Captain, the Emperor must be very pleased that we have captured the most cunning and nasty pirates." said a sailor.

"Please accept our sincere thanks, my friend, the ocean is clean again after you punished the pirates to clean up all their trash." said John. "All the flying dolphins and ocean animals thank you and your sailors."

"Not at all, John, we not only saved the refugees by retrieving the treasure from the pirates, but also protected the greatest treasure, a clean ocean which can be passed to many generations after!" said Captain Ming happily.

A Sticky Situation

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Ng, Kaylen – 6

“Help!!” I yelled loudly until my throat hurt.

“Let go of me! I am not one of the sailors!”

I was trying to explain that they got the wrong person but they just didn't listen. I didn't understand why this was happening to me. I was supposed to be fishing with my mom and dad.

Two hours ago, we were casting our lines. We were on the shore not too far away from Zheng He's fleet. We had been there for a long time but the fish weren't biting so I got bored and I walked away.

When I got onto the ship, I was asked to climb up a long ladder and one of the sailors followed me, making sure I didn't escape. When I had almost reached the basket, the sailor pushed me hard and I fell into the basket! He took out a key and locked me up! I was so scared that I cried all day long.

I looked around and found weapons, such as swords, shields and bombs! Beside me, there was a long tube. I didn't know what it was and I was curious to find out what was inside, so I looked inside. WOW!! I could see a very small stone on a remote island! Now I knew it was a telescope. I was asked to watch the sea to make sure no pirates would come to steal our jewellery and weapons. It was such a boring job to stay in the basket every day.

One hot and boring summer's day, I saw a big dark shadow swimming in the water 20 meters in front of our fleet. It swam closer and closer, I was petrified and started shouting,

“Beware Everyone! Something massive is in the sea!” Everyone rushed out to see what was happening. The shadow was at least five times bigger than our fleet.

The black shadow slowly rose from the sea, everyone started to step back. The object became bigger and bigger. All of the sailors ran away but I was not able to escape as I was high up in the basket.

The object raised one of its ugly black arms! I heard some of the sailors yelling, “It's an octopus!” Everyone was worried that it was going to kill us. Some of the sailors started to cry, some of them started to pray and some of them started to scream. While everyone was trying to escape, I could not move at all as my legs had gone numb. I closed my eyes, and hoped and prayed that I would see my parents one last time before I died.

Suddenly, I felt something wet and slimy run over me from head to toe. I opened my eyes and saw the whole octopus rising from the sea in front of the fleet. It..... actually smiled at me!!! It was his arm running over my body!!! I could not believe what I had just seen. The octopus did not want to hurt us, in fact, it only wanted to say HI!!! Everyone was shocked but glad that we were still alive.

The octopus brightened up my boring hot summer's day and I was already looking forward to the next adventure!

The Inquisitive Tortoise

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Tam, Alma – 8

Strolling leisurely around the deep and mysterious woods, Mr. Tortoise grinned from ear to ear as it was a gorgeous day. “If only I could fly in the sky, it would be fantastic!” He wondered to himself blissfully. Mr. Tortoise had a heavy spiral shell on his back and he was extremely tiny. Mr. Tortoise was overjoyed and wore a cheerful grin on this face.

An instant later, Mr. Tortoise caught a glimpse of a gigantic pheasant soaring in the sapphire blue endless sky. The pheasant spread open its wide wings and glided gracefully with the mighty wind. Mr. Tortoise found it unbelievable because he wanted to fly too! “Woo!” he gasped. “That was absolutely amazing!” He felt extremely shocked, so his mouth hung wide open. Mr. Tortoise wanted to imitate the pheasant badly. All of a sudden, a fabulous idea flashed into his mind.

In no time, Mr. Tortoise attempted to imitate the fierce pheasant because he wanted to fly! He gathered all sorts of twigs and leaves and stuck them on his spiral shell. The huge mollusc used them to make fake wings! He tried with all his might to clamber up the mushroom. Soon afterwards, he crept slowly up the stalk of the spotted mushroom. Mr. Tortoise was thrilled to bits, so his eyes lit up. He imagined that he could soar and glide smoothly just like the graceful pheasant. Mr. Tortoise took off from the mushroom and fluttered his fake wings. He hoped that he could fly.

“THUD!” Unfortunately, Mr. Tortoise stopped in mid-air, tumbled down at lightning speed and smashed into the hard ground. Mr. Tortoise felt sore, and he was slightly bruised. He was disappointed, so he hung his head in shame. In great despair, Mr. Tortoise stared at the clear blue sky. Suddenly, he noticed that a massive hot air balloon was floating in the sky. An idea struck his mind, “A balloon is great for me, I want to have a second try!” He muttered to himself. Mr. Tortoise took a multi-coloured balloon from the pit excitedly and tied the balloon tightly around his hand. Before long, he hastily clambered on the mushroom stalk, took a gigantic deep breath, counting “one, two, three” and took off from the mushroom with full confidence. He believed that he could fly. Regrettably, Mr. Tortoise fell down at breakneck speed and smashed down with a thump. Mr. Tortoise shook in fright, let out a whimper of pain. His heart was breaking and he fainted.

When Mr. Tortoise awoke, he learnt that he was perfect just the way he was! He realized that he had his unique talents to be proud of. He was strong enough to carry his home on his back, and he could hide and protect himself from danger. He never needed to be in a hurry and could enjoy his life. At last, Mr. Tortoise stared at the sky again and murmured, “I’ll never try to fly again!”

The Secret Voyage

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Teoh, Amelia – 9

There was one time the Emperor stopped Zheng He from travelling overseas. But, Zheng He and his loyal shipmates secretly stole a boat from the port, and packed supplies. But, unfortunately one of the men betrayed Zheng He and told the Emperor. Surprisingly, the Emperor didn't care. He didn't care because he was jealous of Zheng He being a hero to the Chinese and planned to kill him. But, he thought the pirates in the sea would kill him.

At last, Zheng He and his crew were ready. At the break of dawn, the crew set off. The sea was unusually calm. This normally meant a gang of pirates were coming to attack them. Nobody was worried because with Zheng He, the fearless captain, everything would be good in their way.

The second day of the trip, the pirates finally came. Either way, it was a bad day. Storm clouds were like a thief, creeping over. The wind was blowing hard like a giant huffing and puffing after running. First, the pirates tried to use cannons to blow a hole on the side of the ship. By fighting back, Zheng He also used cannons, but better ones. The pirates saw things weren't going well for them, and went on Zheng He's ship to fight. A lot of pirates died during this bloody battle. Some of the crew of Zheng He also died.

But it wasn't the pirates that were the worst, it was the storm. Five days after the battle, there was a terrible storm. The storm raged for weeks. One day during the storm, the crew couldn't see the way through the mist. So, they accidentally crashed on a rock. Fortunately, Zheng He managed to climb on a lifeboat and to fish out some of his most important crewmen. Zheng He wanted to save more men, but he knew if he saved more men, his boat would sink. In the boat, there were things like Chinese buns, a few bottles of water, ropes, and approximately 30 axes. The crew and Zheng He rowed for weeks and weeks. Until suddenly somebody shouted "Land ahoy! Land ahoy!" Everyone rowed hard and they finally landed on the island.

Zheng He split the crew into four groups. The first group was for fishing using nails and ropes. The second group was for climbing trees to get coconuts. The third group was for cutting trees down using axes. The fourth and last group was for making a big sturdy boat for going back home to China.

At last, after 2-3 weeks, everything was finished and Zheng He and his crew were ready to go. During this time, it was amazing nobody had died. Luckily, on the way back to China, everything was peaceful. When Zheng He and his crew arrived, all the villagers in China greeted them as heroes. Even the Emperor was proud of Zheng He this time and gave him gold, silk and tea.

Zheng He's Eighth Voyage

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Timmermans, Ariel – 8

In 1432, Zheng He received an order from the Chinese emperor to return to China, but Zheng He was not yet ready to return to China. At that point, the fleet had already reached the East coast of Africa. Perhaps he beautiful sights made him want to stay. Maybe he also wondered if he could befriend some of the animals, such as zebras, giraffes, lions, tigers and elephants. So Zheng He faked his own death and continued on his way. He had a group of trusted sailors with him. They built a new ship and sailed West in hopes of finding new lands.

They sailed South of the African continent and saw many exotic fish. Zheng He was constantly asking the people of Africa what they were, his favourite fish were the Shaggy Anglers, Clown Triggerfish and Ribbon Eels. Eventually, they entered what is now known as the Atlantic Ocean. On their way, they saw a frightful monster! It turned out the monster was actually a Sperm Whale. The whale was friendly and led them to the Amazon River to find the Whale's turtle friend, Turty so that he could lead them to the local's favourite spot. When they arrived, they mingled with the locals and they told Zheng He about a hidden treasure that was said to be found in the deep and dangerous Bermuda Triangle.

Zheng He spoke to Turty about this treasure and Turty warned them but he was adamant about finding this treasure. Turty led the to the Bermuda Triangle. When the neared it, Turty said he was scared and wouldn't go any closer. They parted ways and Zheng He thanked him. As they neared the Bermuda Triangle, the sea became quite rough and stormy. As they moved through the waves, Zheng He spotted some sort of bottle. He leaned over his ship and grabbed it. There was a note attached, it said: Zheng He, I beg of you, drink me. If you have found this note, my greatest wish has come true. Drink this and you will live forever. From, Yong Le, the ghost of the emperor.

Zheng Le took a sip, and woke up on the deck of his ship to his comrades calling his name. It was just a dream he thought to himself until he looked overboard and saw small turtle that looked like Turty smiling at him.

Tasty Tale

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Tong, Kristen – 9

In the early 1400s, Chinese pirates discovered the route from China to India. They decided to gather their belongings, collect food and set sail to India on their ship.

When they arrived to India, the Indians greeted them happily and guided them to the palace. When the king saw Captain Zheng He, he wondered what he and his crew were doing in India. Captain Zheng He said, “How do you do your majesty? I have come here with my crew from China. If you would be so kind, can we become friends? I will give you some gold to sweeten the deal?”

The king looked at Zheng He up and down and replied, “I don’t want gold.”

Captain Zheng had never been spoken to like that before. He stared back at him and asked, “Then what do you want?”

The king shook his head desperately, “My son has lost his appetite. He won’t eat anything we cook for him. If you could bring back his appetite, only then we can become friends.”

Zheng He pondered for a moment as they stared at each other. A girl named Ling who was part of the crew whispered into the captain’s ear, “We still have a few leftover ingredients from last night’s dinner. There is enough to make a few dumplings for the king’s son.”

After listening to the Ling’s idea, the captain thought they could give it a shot. So Ling quickly made the dumplings that her mother had once shown her how to make when she was little, perfecting the folds as she went. When she took the meal pack to the palace she told the king, “Here, let your son try these. See if his appetite will be back.” The king’s son had smelt the dumplings and his eyes grew wide. He had a small bite, and then gobbled it whole. The King was amazed at how his son finished the dumplings in less than a minute.

The king looked back at Zheng He and smiled. He walked over to him and embraced him. He agreed to make friends with the pirates, on one condition. The condition was that Ling had to teach them how to make those decadent dumplings for himself and his crew.

A lifetime experience of the Ming Treasure Voyage

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Wong, Leah – 8

“Leah! Come and see this gorgeous painting of Zheng He!” My mum called out in the China Historical Museum. I quickly darted to her and caught sight of an enormous painting. It showed Zheng He and one of his giant, nine-mastered “treasure ships” on which he made seven voyages around the Indian Ocean.

The painting was so vivid that I couldn't help myself by secretly touching that massive ship when no one was looking. Suddenly, a flash of lightning came out of it! I was so terrified that I shut my eyes. When I opened my eyes, I was on a stupendous ship with a pair of dragon eyes on it. Seconds later, someone shouted at me, “Dr. Wong! Please help! Someone is dying!!”

“Huh? Are you calling me?” I questioned.

“Yes! YOU! Dr. Wong!” he cried as he dragged me into a small room.

I was still confused about everything as my eyes couldn't believe what they were witnessing. I saw a sailor lying on the floor, he was very pale and weak, his teeth were bleeding and his body was shaking. The sick sailor said, “I can't move my arms and legs, my body is in pain. I have tried all kinds of herbs but they didn't work. Unfortunately, most of my sailor friends are suffering from the same disease...” He explained and his eyes started shutting. I felt helpless and I didn't know how to respond. I quickly ran out to seek help.

I was panicking and running around like a headless chicken. Suddenly, the air filled with a familiar smell. The smell led me to a tiny storage room filled with tributes from other countries. There were weird stones, species, furs and some plants. I surprisingly found a box of lemons labelled, “from Vietnam”. All of a sudden, I remembered that my science teacher had mentioned a type of disease called Scurvy. The best remedy to cure this disease were the lemons! I grabbed them and gave them to the sailors, I explained the benefits of eating lemons every day. I also suggested that they grow lemons on the ship. The sailors were so stunned by this discovery, but they decided to try it.

After a few days, all of the sailors recovered completely. They were extremely thankful for me. However, I was in deep thoughts worrying about my return home and started to feel homesick. My sailor friend, Ping, approached me and said, “Dr. Wong! Admiral Zheng He wants to see you now!” I was overjoyed about finally meeting my hero, so I walked to his room immediately. Suddenly, a flash of lightning came out of the wall and I blacked out.

Seconds later, I found myself on the couch of the museum and my mum dashing towards me. “Where have you been?” she exclaimed.

“I guess...I was dreaming?” I replied.

Before we left, I admired the painting once again, I saw Zheng He grinning at me, as if to say thank you Dr. Wong!

The Most Amazing Fruit

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Wong, Vanessa – 8

“Captain Zheng, we’re running out of food. We’ve been sailing for 200 days. Our sailors are starving,” said Xiao Ma, my assistant who had been serving me for more than 10 years.

“We must keep sailing and find a place to refill our supply,” I looked at the sky and commanded.

“There is an island over there!” another sailor shouted.

I took the telescope. “This island looks like a snake.” I thought.

“Set sail!” I commanded.

We stepped onto a dark island and went into a haunted forest.

Hiss...Hiss...Hiss...

“What is that sound?” someone whispered. “Monster!” We were surrounded by thousands of half human, half snake creatures. Suddenly I saw many stars and I felt like I was in outer space. When I woke up I was no longer in the forest. I was in a gigantic cave with Xiao Ma.

“I am the queen of Python Kingdom. Why have you come to our kingdom?” said a beautiful half human, half snake woman.

“My beautiful queen, we bear no malice. We have come seeking food. I am going to present some gifts,” I exclaimed. “Xiao Ma, bring the treasure boxes!” I said.

The queen was amazed by the silk, silver, gold and jewels. “What would you like in return?” she said.

“We will be grateful if you can give us some food,” I replied.

“Food? We only eat the migratory birds that rest on this island,” The Queen laughed. “Aha! There is a kind of thorny fruit on our island. You can take as many as you wish,” she continued.

We found the fruit and loaded thousands of them onto our supply ships. Their odor could be smelled from miles away and no one dared get closer to them. I took one and gazed upon it. “Bring a knife to me!” It smelled like pig dropping and was so rotten that no one on this universe could bear it.

I cut the thorny, ball-shaped monster and found some creamy substance inside. I took a deep breath, bit the golden yellow flesh and then closed my eyes. Surprisingly it was soft and smooth. It was a strange combination of smelly, sweet and creamy.

“This fruit tastes heavenly! This is the most amazing food I have ever had!” I exclaimed.

The sailors, looking incredulous, took their first bite. Their contented face proved that they agreed with me. Our ships sailed off to our home and the fruits saved our lives. After two months, we were finally home.

“My Majesty, may I present to you the most amazing fruit in the world,” I kowtowed to the Ming Emperor. The Emperor took his first bite and was delighted.

“Zheng He, it tastes wonderful! What is the name of this fruit?” the Emperor asked.

“My Majesty, this is Durian,” I answered.

“Very well, I am fond of this fruit and I command you to prepare for your next voyage. This time, bring back more durian!”

Xiao Ma and I looked at each other and smiled.

Wormhole

St. Stephen's College Preparatory School, Yeung, Blevins – 9

It all started one afternoon when our rocket was about to take off. I was super excited because I was in this mission with my two astronaut brothers! Never have I thought it would become an extraordinary adventure...

I was an astronaut and our mission was to explore Saturn for our country. Our rocket blasted off as planned. After we left the atmosphere, something went wrong! A strong, mysterious force pulled our rocket away from the track. When our rocket finally became steady, we found ourselves travelling through a dark tunnel, our compass had lost its function and we were heading to an unknown direction.

“Where are we?” I asked.

“I think we are in a wormhole!” my smart brother replied.

“Wormhole? I can’t see any worms outside,” said my dumb little brother curiously.

“Not the hole with worms, people say wormholes are secret passages that makes you travel through time,” I said.

“What?” my brother was shocked.

“We don’t know yet, but we’ve got to stay calm for now,” I replied.

The rocket began to twist and twirl like we were inside a tornado! In a blink of an eye, we found ourselves in a cabin on a wooden sailing boat crossing the ocean.

We saw ourselves in sailor uniforms and there were hundreds of sailors and other boats around us. We found out from them that we were in the Ming dynasty! There was no way we could escape because we were in the middle of the ocean.

“I see land, is that home?” asked my little brother.

“That’s not home, it’s India. Have you forgotten that the king commanded us to offer gifts to other countries? India is next!” a sailor told us.

We went back to our cabin and started discussing our escape plan. We decided to be disguised as sailors until we found a way to escape. We believed that was the safest option.

We followed the crew as they carried jewelry and goods for the Indian king. There was no way for us to escape from there because we didn’t know their language and neither did they. The fleet then sailed to Africa to continue the journey. However, we weren’t welcomed there. The Africans misunderstood us as enemies and the battle between us was fierce. My brothers and I managed to keep ourselves alive by hiding inside the cabin over the four days of fight.

After we left Africa, we went to Arabia. It was so hot there and crossing the desert was impossible. We carried loads of goods to the Arabian king and it was a long walk. We accidentally walked on quicksand and sank quickly together with some goods and others. We were terrified and thought we would die.

Suddenly we found ourselves in our rocket on the track to Saturn! We did not know how that happened, yet, all we knew was that we were going to have a few sailors joining us and loads of goods to Saturn!

A Lovely Journey

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Yip, Gracelyn – 6

It's a sunny day with mild wind breeze. My very good friend and I, Zhang He, got on our boat, ready for our adventure. It was a very big boat made with wood, ordered by our Emperor Yongle.

We started sailing, we needed a lot of sailors to paddle and it was slow. There was not much to see in the first 20 days. We were just eating, reading and sleeping on the boat all day long. And then we started to see a lot of fish and dolphins. They were very shocked when they saw us at first because I believed they had never seen any Chinese people like Zhang He and myself. After a while, the dolphins flipped their tails waving to us to say hello. As we didn't know exactly where we were going, we asked the dolphins to show us the land. We followed the dolphins for another 20 days, then we saw the land.

We got off our boat, a lot of people were staring at us and pointing their swords to us. They looked very frightened. To show them we were good, we showed them the treasure that we brought from our own home. They looked at the vases, jewels and coins. We tried to make our hand gestures to show them these were the gifts for them. They knew we were friends. They took out their own treasure and we exchanged.

We were very happy making new friends. We ate a dinner with them and then we got on the boat and ready to go home. On the way back home, suddenly the pirate Chen Zuyi and his people were attacking us, trying to take away our treasure. I and He fought with them and caught them finally. We tied them with ropes and took them back to our home country.

We took Chen Zuyi and his people to meet our Emperor, and he sent these bad guys to jail. And then we showed our Emperor the treasure that we exchanged with our new friends. Emperor Yongle was very happy. He said I and He did a very good job. He ordered us to go on a second adventure.

I enjoyed sailing with He very much and I wanted to go again with him next time.

The Friendly Pirates

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Yiu, Marcu – 8

Not all pirates are hostile! This story happened in the 1400's. While most pirates stole treasure for their own benefits, a crew of pirates did the exact opposite! They were called "The Ming Treasure Fleet". Their ship carried cargo of gold and silk from the emperor to give away to the poor people.

The Ming Treasure Fleet was sailing across the sea. One night, the ship accidentally hit a rock. Crash! The captain, Harry, suddenly woke up. 'What happened?' Harry asked. The night crew captain, D.J., replied 'The ship accidentally crashed into a rock and it put a dent on the bottom part of the ship.' Harry commanded 'Repair man come here now, please!' The repair man, Iggy, was a greasy man. Some of his body was covered in grease because all of the repairing he had done. He said 'Repair man at your service. What do you want me to do?'

Harry replied 'See the dent at the bottom of the ship. Tell me how big the dent is. If it's very big we have to stop at that island to fix it. If it is just a little one, then tell me.'

A moment later, Iggy reported how big the dent was. 'Captain, the dent was very big. Looks like we need to stop at the island.' So, Harry commanded the ship to sail to the island.

When they arrived at the island, there were people. Harry said 'Great. There are people that can help us repair this dent.' So, off the crew went giving gold and silk to the helpful people who helped repair the dent in the ship.

After a few hours, they were sailing again. Suddenly, a ship sailed by. Harry recognized the ship. In the past, they had fought this hostile ship. Harry ordered the crew to set fire to the cannons. A moment later, the cannon balls went shooting like a bullet towards the hostile ship. 'Bang!' Went the cannons. 'Crash!' Went the cannon balls. The ship sunk into the bottom of the sea. While on Harry's ship, Harry and his crew were celebrating. They had a party. While they were celebrating, Harry went to his bedroom and slept.

The Ming Treasure Fleet kept sailing towards its destination and the exciting experience continued...

A Tale of the New Ming Treasure Voyages

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Yu, Nicole – 8

After two months of sailing and trading goods, our crew, led by Admiral Zheng He, found ourselves in a ferocious storm. Waves crashed against our fleet of ships and everyone was seasick for weeks. After the storm and rough waters cleared, we didn't know where the storm had blown us to. We completely lost our navigation. We were heading south at first yet ended up going east. We had to use different instruments and stars to guide us back on track.

I was travelling on the main ship, commanded by admiral Zheng He. It was four hundred feet long, and was very large in comparison to the other ships. Sometimes I was terrified, sometimes excited and sometimes even both at the same time when I was on board. As a young sailor, I learnt how to sail when the storms came, and assist as a crew member. When the fleet was sailing on calm waters I would do chores.

There were several different types of jobs such as sweeping the decks and cooking. My job would sometimes be filling gun powder in the cannons and carefully aiming them at our enemies. But the most interesting job would be hoisting the sails, as you needed to control a lot of different ropes and tug on them with all your strength simultaneously at the same time with the rest of the crew. We would hoist and lower the sails a few times a day.

The different sights were incredible to see. Occasionally, I saw a pink dolphin and a massive whale shark. When the fleet sailed to Arabia, the crew were amazed by what they saw. Magnificent towering cliffs and thousands of birds that filled the sky making it dark during the day. Even though the cliffs loomed over the fleet creating spooky shadows, it wasn't half as scary as battling hostile armies and dangerous pirates of the more usual treasure-stealing and ship-attacking sort.

While sailing to Arabia, I discovered that Mongols were following us. So we broke into battle, firing muskets and cannons at each other. Zheng He's fleet usually won and we captured the Mongols who were later executed on return to the Ming Empire. We discovered that the Mongols had been trying to steal the goods and treasures we carried.

When the fleet arrived in Arabia, the peaceful people there greeted us with a welcoming ceremony. This was the only time we traded goods. They agreed to trade some of their jewels in exchange for tin, Indian cotton cloth and corals. Other times, such as in India, we offered our goods for free. These were guns, resins and rhinoceros' horns, which were gratefully appreciated and the Indians gave us curry in exchange.

This was as far as we explored in the seven voyages. I was happy to collect all these goods from different countries and to offer the wonderful goods from our dynasty to the world.

The Last Voyage of Max

St Stephen's College Preparatory School, Yue, Sherlock – 8

Chapter 1 – Max abroad the ship

It was a peaceful morning in Beijing. Max just woke up at six p.m. He knew today would be a special day. Max is a fourteen years old boy. Since he was six, he learned archery. Today the emperor asked Max to go to the ship for training people about archery and prepare to fight with enemies. When Max went up to the ship, Cheng He told the other archers that Max was the instructor of archery. He also told Max that they were going to the Middle East. They prepared the ship with loads of foods, weapons, supplies and armours. The most important thing was to trade precious things that belonged to China. The captain showed Max his room. Max tidied up his supplies and went to the breakfast room and eat with the other sailors.

Chapter 2 – The Pirate Encounter

On the way to the Middle East, we had to pass the Pacific Ocean. There was a storm in the wide path so we had to go to the narrow path to avoid the storm. However, the narrow path is where the pirates hide. “There is the narrow path in front of us! Prepare the powerful weapon and get ready to fight!” shouted the captain. The pirate spotted us and started to launch the fireball to our ship but Cheng He already knew that would happen. So he commanded the soldiers to fire the water cannons. Max and the other sailors defeated the pirates.

Chapter 3 – Trading in the Middle East

They were almost at the Middle East. It was in the afternoon but then someone spotted an island. The people in the island talked a different language called “Arabian”. Cheng He did not understand but he made some actions that people knew what he was talking about. The King invited Cheng He and the sailors to have tea in the palace. Cheng He said that they would like to give some precious items from China to where they travel. The King wanted to trade special items including Camels, gold, silver with the Chinese fleets. They became good friends and the King decided to send some people to visit China.

Chapter 4 – Back to Beijing

After they went to the Middle East, Cheng He decided to return to China. When Max went to his room, he found that something was strange. There was a cloth on the table which wrote, “Pirates ahoy! We stole some of your precious things and throw them in an island. I told my boss to get that treasure in one hour by now. Yeah! The gold is ours. It’s in Korea. Ha Ha Ha.” Max told the other sailors and they all agreed that they need to take back the gold. Max and Cheng He turned the ship to stop at Korea and took back the gold. After many days, they went back to China. They went to the Emperor’s palace with the camel and the Arabian people and the Emperor was pleased to see that Cheng He and Max brought back camel and the Arabian visitors. And then they wanted to take a break because they had travelled for so long and didn’t take a rest. They ate something and all went to bed.

Chapter 5 – The Last Look of Cheng He

The next day, the Emperor brought them to see Cheng He because he had bad news to say. Cheng He said, “Take a last look of me, I’m dying but I’m happy because I went the seven voyages with you guys. I’m really proud of you all.” The sailors all cried and their faces were full of tears. Cheng He said that something very important. He wanted to be buried at sea. When Cheng He was dead, the sailors did what Cheng He told them. Max remembered all the trips and voyages they had spent together. Max lived happily ever after.

I’m an eight year old girl from the Kingdom of Lanka, a beautiful island country in the Indian Ocean.

People call me Blue–Elephant because every day, I help, a “Saint”, elephant to take bath in the River of Orchid, to eat and play. This is near to the Temple of Tooth where I live with monks.

We are safeguarding and serving the most important treasure in Lanka, The Buddha's Tooth.
Every year, hundreds of thousands of people come here to pray.
Where does the Buddha's Tooth come from? It comes from India as a gift from thousands of years ago.

We always wanted to take the Tooth back to the people of India but we didn't have a ship big enough.

One day, Monk Master and I went to a harbour nearby for a visit.
He asked: "Do you want to go on an ocean adventure?"
"Of course, but we need a ship," I answered.
Suddenly, I couldn't believe what I saw!
I saw a giant fleet in the sea, with seven large ships. Each ship carried a flag with golden words "Ming".
A smiling captain was standing on the deck waving to us.

"This must be the famous Ming Treasure Voyage from China to India and Africa!" Master said to me.
"And the captain looks very friendly," I shouted out.
We ran to ask the Captain: "Can you take us on your journey too?"
"Of course," says the Captain.
"Great!" said the Master: "Can you help us to take the Buddha's Tooth back to India for a tour?"
He added: "After that, we can show it to your country too!"
"Good idea!" Captain answered: "but our fleet can only take three more people."

We went back to put the tooth into a small treasure chest, and carried it onto the ship.
We set out for our next adventure!

We sailed many days and nights on the ocean.
We went through a lot of beautiful sunrises and sunsets, but also thunders, storms which were very dangerous!

Finally we arrived at India and we took the tooth to a hotel nearby the sea.
At night, while we were sleeping, some pirates came to try to steal our treasure!

I was woken up by the sound and jumped up to stop them.
"How dare you!" shouted the pirate, captain Goldbeard.
"No, stop!" I shouted.
I battled with him bravely..., before Master and Captain come to rescue me.
At last we won!

I asked Goldbeard to give back the tooth.
"It's a hope for many people in many countries!" I tell him.
"Stop stealing, and we can become friends."
"Yes, Blue-Elephant, thank you for pardoning me and the love! Sorry!"

In the end, Goldbeard and myself joined the Ming voyage after India tour. We became ships captains and sail among China, Lanka and India.

Suddenly, a tropical lizard woke me up and I jumped to my feet. I was actually reading a pirate book on a Maldivian beach! It had been a dream!

The Magic Adventure of Blue–Elephant

St Stephens College Preparatory School, Zhang, Audrey – 8

I'm an eight year old girl from the Kingdom of Lanka, a beautiful island country in the Indian Ocean.

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“This must be the famous Ming Treasure Voyage from China to India and Africa!” Master said to me. “And the captain looks very friendly,” I shouted out. We ran to ask the Captain: “Can you take us on your journey too?” “Of course,” says the Captain. “Great!” said the Master: “Can you help us to take the Buddah’s Tooth back to India for a tour?” He added: “After that, we can show it to your country too!” “Good idea!” Captain answered: “but our fleet can only take three more people.”

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A Captain's Diary

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Chan, Alwyn – 8

Day 1

Today is a special day – We started the Ming treasure voyage. There were big boxes of treasure, food and water everywhere. I've never seen so many boxes of treasure before!

We're about to go on the most famous trip in the world!

Day 15

We've been sailing for 15 days but seen nothing. I felt worried.

Suddenly it got foggy and dark. The crew were scared and didn't want to sail anymore. The General asked me, captain Leung and a few brave sailors to continue on a small boat.

Day 20

The small boat was very shaky. We were tired and sick. Suddenly a storm came and blew us towards an island ... BOOM! We crashed into the island.

We lost our consciousness.

We woke up finding strange people staring at us. They had a yellow face, yellow beard, brown skin, and white spots on their skin. "AHHH! Who are you?" I said, scared. They said something, but we couldn't understand. They weren't speaking Chinese.

These people seemed pretty nice: they helped us fix our boat. Tomorrow we will go back to tell the General what we saw. I am excited.

Day 30

Today I led the fleet and returned to the island. The islanders saw me and welcomed us immediately. "Here is some treasure. Thank you for helping us." I said, handing over the treasure.

They happily took the treasure.

Day 31

Today we introduced our instrument Dizi (Chinese flute) to them. We also taught them how to play it. But they weren't very good; they blew too hard.

Later, they introduced an interesting looking instrument to us: a didgeridoo. It is a big long hollow tube. When they blew it, it sounded like a long and low boat horn. They played some songs with the instrument.

I never heard of such beautiful melodies.

Day 33

Today we introduced our food to them. We prepared some noodles, rice, and turtles. They drew some symbols on a rock. I think it meant they liked our food. But they didn't eat any turtles.

For dinner the islanders prepared kangaroo jerky, crocodile meat, and local plums. The plums were sour. Chinese plums are sweeter.

My favourite was kangaroo jerky. It was chewier and juicier than pork jerky.

Day 35

Today we were preparing to go. I was sad to say goodbye because it was fun learning about their culture.

The general gave them a Dizi as a gesture of friendship.

Day 36

Today the general came and asked me if I would like to stay and be China's ambassador to this island. I said "Yes!" immediately. I was so excited!

The other person selected was captain Leung. "It's going to be a fun three years!" I told captain Leung.

We planned to learn more about their culture and pass this information to people in China so that they know the world is not just China; there are other places just as good as China.

The Stolen Treasure

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Chan, Pearly – 8

Where am I?

“Finally! I get to read my book on ‘Ming Treasure Voyages!’” Mia collapsed on her bed, grabbed her book, and flipped through the pages. Immediately, she was sucked inside the book. “Help!” She yelled. But no one heard her. When the spinning finally stopped, Mia looked around and immediately recognized this place as Malaysia. She looked up and saw herself staring at a scary forest. Mia wanted to explore, so she bravely got on her feet and walked into the forest. Then, suddenly, she heard a rustle and peered through the bushes...but saw nothing.” Ha! It’s just the wind! Nothing can scare me! Said Mia. She kept on walking. BOOM! Mia whirled around. “Nothing but the wind, nothing but the wind,” Mia reassured herself...but then...A metal-looking human was staring at Mia...But was it *really* a human? That was when Mia spotted buttons on the creature... and lights flashing on his head. Then Mia at once knew who that creature was... A robot was in front of Mia.

Trapped!

“HELP!” Mia cried. Too late. The robot swallowed Mia in one gulp. Mia was worried. She was in a cave-like mouth. Mia looked around, hoping to find something, but instead she heard a noise. She walked over to the noise and... “Hello?!” a voice said. “Anyone there?!”

“Oh!” thought Mia. “There’s someone here!” Mia bravely walked to the noise...and found herself facing a warrior!

“What are you doing here?” They both said, confused. They looked at each other...then Mia started to panic. “Oh! Well, I was swallowed by this giant robot!” said Mia.

“Hi! I’m Zheng He!” replied the warrior. “Well, I’m here to look for the legendary gold. My home, China, has sent me to get it. I’m not sure if it’s here, but the map I have in my pocket says so. So I let the robot eat me. Then I can look for the gold! Do you think you can help me?”

“Sure!” said Mia.”

They started looking. But they couldn’t find the gold! At last, Mia gave up. She sat down on what looked like a clean spot, but it was covered in saliva. So she stood up. She looked around, hoping to find a clue or at least a place to sit and.... she found a piece of cloth in the corner. She walked to the piece of cloth and lifted it. She found an open chest covered in jewels. Gold coins were scattered around the chest, there were also necklaces and bracelets inside it.

“The treasure!” Mia yelled.

As Zheng He was running over, she found a gold coin with a skull on top. As she was closing her hands around it, there was a flash of light and Mia was immediately back in her room with the book “The Ming Treasure Voyages” on her lap. “Whoa! What an adventure!” She thought. She put her new book on her bookshelf and smiled a secret smile to herself.

Lost in Space: The untold story of Admiral Zheng He

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Chu, Christina – 8

Once there was a man called Zheng He, he was a famous Admiral in China long long time ago. He was famous for his adventures and brought many beautiful things to China. The history books tell us that he had sailed more than seven times to Africa and the Middle East, but nobody knows that he had a secret journey... until now !

On one sunny day, Admiral Zheng He his friend Zheng She, his god–daughter Zheng Me and his dog Zing Zing, were sailing in the famous treasure ship called the ‘Chicken King’. Suddenly the weather turned bad and the sky turned wild and purple! Strange objects like green peas and Chinese dumplings all crashed into the sea together with lightning and thunderbolt made of toothpicks. While everyone on the ship were panicking, a tornado sucked up the ship ! The tornado was in fact a Black–hole! Everything started to stretch like noodles and spin around like a carousel. They were travelling through the Black–hole at the speed of light, then suddenly everything stopped.

‘Everybody brace yourselves! Let’s get out of the ship and explore!’ said Zheng He.

The Black–hole had taken them to a strange planet called TTA 8813. It looked like a garbage dump full of giant squids which were actually aliens. The aliens were eating disgusting stuff such as slug pies, purple ink and chewing bubble– gum made of horse poop. The aliens called themselves names like ‘Europa’, ‘Galli–storm’, ‘Lo’, ‘Nose–picker’, ‘Chatterbox’ and ‘Poop–eater’ Zheng He thought the aliens might eat them, so they hid behind some slug slime.

Just when Zheng He thought he and his friends could quietly return to their ship, something unexpected happened. Zing Zing barked at Nose–picker because it looked like a sausage! The aliens tied up Zheng He and his friends with pony–tails and forced them to eat their disgusting food. Zheng Me tried to be polite and took a bite of the horse–poop bubble gum. She hand started to shake, her face turned green and she turned into an alien! They called her ‘Greenie–pie’ and wanted to eat her! Just when the aliens turned their backs to get the knife, Zheng He and his friends ran away in time and got back into the ship. Zheng He went to his cabin and took his magic wand that the King of Africa gave him as a birthday present. He waved the wand at Zheng Me and said “hullaballo !”, she turned back into human. Suddenly their ship started to spin and the Black–hole took them back to China. Zheng He said to his friends, ‘this is the worst adventure ever! Let’s not write it down in the history book because people might think we are very crazy!’

Guess where his next adventure will be?

The Magical Violin

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Lee, Erin – 8

Finally back to China! thought Zheng He. As he stepped into the Golden Palace to attend the ceremony arranged by the Ming Emperor to celebrate the triumphant return of the Ming Treasure Fleet, he heard a clang. He knelt down and picked up a miniature model of a violin that made him think back to the moment that made his journey unforgettable...

It was a normal day out at sea. But suddenly, the wave began to roughen. Zheng He closed his eyes as he tried to steady himself. Just as the wave began to calm, a powerful force sucked him into the water...

Zheng held his breath as he tried to swim. Suddenly, he realized he could breathe underwater. He also found that whenever he swam, he would hit his head. At last he knew where he was. He was in an underwater prison. He felt around the room until he bumped into something and he knew it was not a rock. "Who are you?" It said.

"I am Zheng He. Who are you?"

"I'm Violet," whispered the girl. "I was brought here by a big storm. The only thing I have here is my magical violin." Just then, they heard some heavy footsteps approach them. They looked through the tiny window, terrified as the 10-foot shadow went past them.

Violet drew out the violin from her bag and began playing. A sweet melody drifted out of the prison and reached Bubble, the smartest swordfish in the ocean. In a split second, Bubble arrived and tried to use his pointy sword to unlock the prison door. As they were about to celebrate, the giant sea monster appeared! Violet immediately played "The Flight of the Bumblebee" (a fast, rhythmic piece that was her favourite), hoping to attract every single fish in the ocean to rescue them. Without any disappointment, a troop of fish arrived. Zheng He picked up a big seashell and blew into it. As intended, the fish saluted him as their leader! Zheng He commanded the troop to enter the mouth of the sea monster and keep blowing bubbles. The monster expanded and expanded.... Suddenly they heard a POP! The sea monster had burst and shrunk into a giant sea turtle. Everyone was very grateful to them and then decided to make Violet their new ruler. Violet happily accepted and as a token of thanks, she gave a miniature model of a violin to Zheng He. He had then continued on his journey...

Suddenly, a tap on his shoulder interrupted his thoughts. He turned to see an official waiting. "Zheng He, the ceremony is starting. The emperor has invited a famous musician who says she is the ruler of the Aquatic Empire." The music began to play, and the fast, rhythmic piece that had once saved his life echoed through the palace. *That's got to be Violet!* thought Zhen He.

The Ming Treasure Bottle

Victoria Shanghai Academy, Sze, Kristen – 8

“Ugh.” Stephanie was at the beach with her mom cleaning up rubbish from Typhoon Mangkhut. “I hate volunteering! Why don’t we just throw the rubbish back in the water?” Stephanie complained.

Dragging herself along the beach, her foot hit something hard. She picked it up. It was a glass bottle containing a Chinese model ship. She was fascinated, and unknowingly stroked the bottle several times. She felt dizzy, and it seemed as if the world was fading.

Stephanie was woken up by the sounds of fighting and water splashing. The first thing she saw when she opened her eyes was a flag with the word “Ming” printed on it. She got up and looked around. Stephanie was on the deck of a Chinese sailing ship!

“Stop the pirates!” The ship captain shouted while his men scurried around the pirates trying to stop them stealing the gold the ship was carrying.

“Take all the gold! Chuck everything else OFF THE BOAT!” The pirate leader screamed.

Whoa! I have to do something! Stephanie thought.

The pirate leader was standing close to Stephanie, and she found that the pirate was standing on a sheet of silk. Being smart, she grabbed the sheet and pulled with all her might.

The pirate leader stumbled and tripped and he fell overboard.

Realising what happened, one of the pirates made a face and cried “Cap’s down! RETREAT, RETREAT, **RETREAAAAAAT!!!!!!**”. The ship’s captain and his men chased off the remaining pirates until they were all gone.

The ship captain recognized Stephanie’s heroic deed and praised her. “You are a true hero. If the pirates were not stopped, they would have ‘chucked everything OFF THE BOAT!’” The captain chuckled and Stephanie joined in on the laughter. “That would have been quite catastrophic, and would definitely end the beautiful beach and most sea life around here.” Turning towards the horizon, the captain said “We need to respect the sea.”

Stephanie pondered at what the captain said, and suddenly came back to her senses about her own situation.

“Wait... where am I? And who are you?”

“Why, I am Admiral Zheng He and you are onboard my great expedition of course.”

Stephanie was in disbelief and held out the glass bottle. It shone a great blinding light and everyone closed their eyes.

When Zheng He opened his eyes. Stephanie was gone, leaving behind in her place the glass bottle. Shocked, he picked up the bottle wondering if Stephanie was a spirit sent to help him.

“Bury this bottle on the beach.” He ordered his men.

Approximately six hundred years later...

“Stephanie! Stephanie! Are you okay?” Stephanie’s mom yelled as Stephanie sat up, still clinging onto the bottle with the Chinese model ship.

“I’m alright, mom. Let’s continue with the beach clean up!” Stephanie said, blinking but enthusiastic as her mom looked at her puzzled.

Stephanie placed the bottle carefully into her backpack. For a moment, she thought she saw little figures running around on the model ship inside the bottle.

Suspicious Pirates

Yew Chung International School (Primary), Cheung, Latisha – 6

Pirates usually fight travelers and steal their precious gold. But in the early 1400s, a band of pirate ships did the opposite! They traveled to India, Africa and Arabia. When they got there, they received gold and silk and other precious things. Sometimes, they meet kind people and gave away their lovely gold. Other nasty pirates would fight and sink their ship.

Fighting is hard work. Pirates would die from it. The two fleets sank each others' ship. But the soldiers of the pirates are the people who work the hardest. They are the people who get rid of the nasty pirates. They use hooks and swords to fight each other. But the weapons are dangerous too. If they're too heavy, they sink the ship.

Blackbeard was a fierce pirate. He was also handsome. He beat a lot of pirates but one. Mayfield has a lot of pirates. There were so many that Blackbeard couldn't even stand it. He was shot five times before he was killed. But silly Blackbeard was famous for a longer time than he was alive. Today Blackbeard could be in books, in computer books and in legends.

Other nasty pirates use a trick called Tortoise. A tortoise is a trick when you hold up your shields and form a tortoise shell. It would be hard to look and fight though, but they don't even mind. They repeat this several times. The helping pirates practice every day to beat those nasty pirates.

Anxious pirates won't be brave enough to fight those ridiculous pirates. They sleep and stay in sailing ships. Do you know that they eat tree skin and don't die? They have got secret underground hiding places to sleep. They also hide weapons in their hiding place too.

Pirates will be fewer than helping soldiers' pirates as they just have a wooden club and an animal's soft and harmless skin. Others have hard armies and harmful swords when their journey ends. They sail back to Arabia, Africa and India. Sometimes a terrific sunset will fall and the pirates will enjoy! They meet their families and will have a great feast.

The Pirate World

Yew Chung International School (Primary), Wang, Angela – 7

Once upon a time there was me, my brother and my friends and the Ming Treasure Fleet started in Hong Kong. It took the children 3 years to get to America, then they started to fight because they are enemies of the pirates. The pirates said “I’m going to steal your treasure!” The children shouted “No you are not!” They continued to go to America. Everyone was feeling nervous because they knew they were about to fight each other. Their hearts were beating fast.

The pirates made the first move to fight. One pirate came behind me to try to steal my stuff. I quickly turned back and shouted “Hold on! You are not going to steal my treasure. I’m going to push you in the water! “ Ahhhh! SPLASH!

Everyone on the boat heard the very loud surprising splash and the pirates ran to see what had happened. “Oh no! Man down in the water!” shouted a pirate with a rope. They threw the rope to the drowning pirate, but it was too late. He was too tired to pull.

The children said “Hooray! One pirate down!” The children ran to continue the fight with the other pirates. Then another pirate said “I will fight with those little children” and me and my brother said “You can’t do that because you are a nasty pirate. HA HA HA!”

We decided to push him down into the water. My brother was smart and used the sword to cut off the bad pirates head and he was gone. We felt happy and said “Yay! Another pirate is dead!”

We continued to sail to America until we almost got there and then we met another whole ship of pirates. They were much stronger so we had to make a plan. Our plan was that some of us would do gymnastics and some of us would do kung fu. We’d surround the pirates at once. At first we didn’t win but we kept trying and trying and then at the end we did it! We won the battle! We were feeling so happy that we cheered. We kept sailing and made it to America. When we got there, we saw pirates taking other people's stuff. We had to fight with them until all the pirates were in the water. Once they were in the water, we gave all the sparkly gifts to the poor people that didn’t have them. We also gave other people gifts because the nasty, mean pirates had stolen everything from their homes. The people felt happy with the Hong Kong children gave the sparkly gifts to the people in America.