

CREATIVE WRITING

How do you develop a character in your own short story? Make the most of this opportunity to make your creative writing extra special. *See pages 4 & 5*



SOCIAL ISSUES

Teenage pregnancy is a problem the world over. A recent story in the British press really highlighted this. Tell us your views and opinions about teenage pregnancy by answering our questionnaire. *See pages 12 and 13*

DRAMA

Is talking to yourself on stage a good thing to do? What will the audience think? There are special writing techniques to make a drama far more interesting and entertaining. Learn about the soliloquy on *pages 14 & 15*

POEMS & SONGS

It's official, poems can sometimes be difficult. What's worse, they can be boring too. But not in the poems that we introduce to you. Discover poems come to life with animated poetry on *pages 16 & 17*

POPULAR CULTURE

So what is your favourite kind of food? There is a high chance that it is sushi and sashimi, as they're among the most popular foods in the world. But should they be so popular? Find out why on *pages 18 & 19*

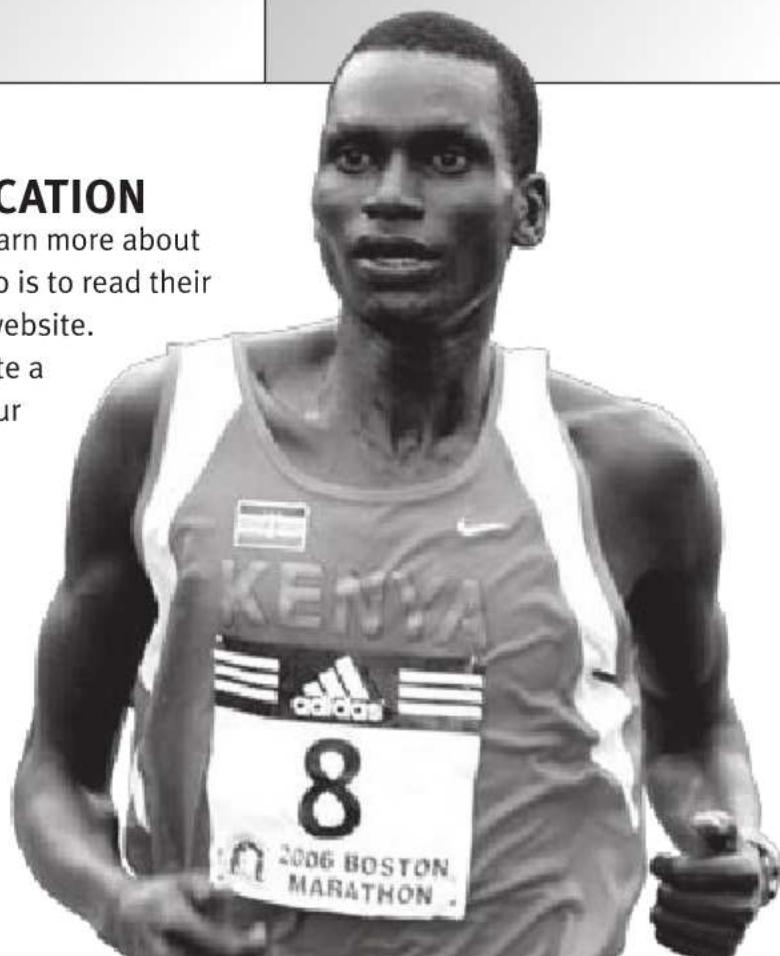
WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION

Everyone enjoys a good holiday in a hotel, but what happens when everything goes wrong? Writing a letter of complaint is a real life skill and you can learn how on *pages 8 & 9*



SPORTS COMMUNICATION

A good way to learn more about any sporting hero is to read their biography on a website. Learn how to write a biography for your own favourite sporting hero on *pages 6 & 7*



DEBATING

How do you prepare a persuasive speech for your next debate? It's all about choosing the right arguments. Find out how on *pages 10 & 11*



Welcome to this introductory issue of **NSS – Now So Simple**. We aim to make your NSS lessons more easy to plan by providing you with new ideas and dedicated features in the next 16 pages and also provide lots of support on the NSS section of the Typhoon Club website, www.typhoonclub.com

Join us from September 2009 and make the NSS learning experience enjoyable for everyone.

Welcome to NSS!

Over the past few months, our office has been receiving an increased number of enquiries relating to the New Secondary School (NSS) academic structure. We have already made a number of changes to our monthly magazine, *Typhoon Club*, in order to incorporate the NSS curriculum. We have also been implementing a variety of teacher seminars that we hope will assist English teachers to prepare for the 2009 / 2010 academic year.

However, we are still of the opinion that teachers and F4 – F6 students would find it especially useful to receive a regular magazine that includes NSS dedicated features, worksheets and supporting materials.

From September 2009, we will begin publishing such a magazine, and will produce eight issues over the next academic year. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to this sample issue, and for avoidance of

any doubt, we have called it *NSS – Now So Simple*.

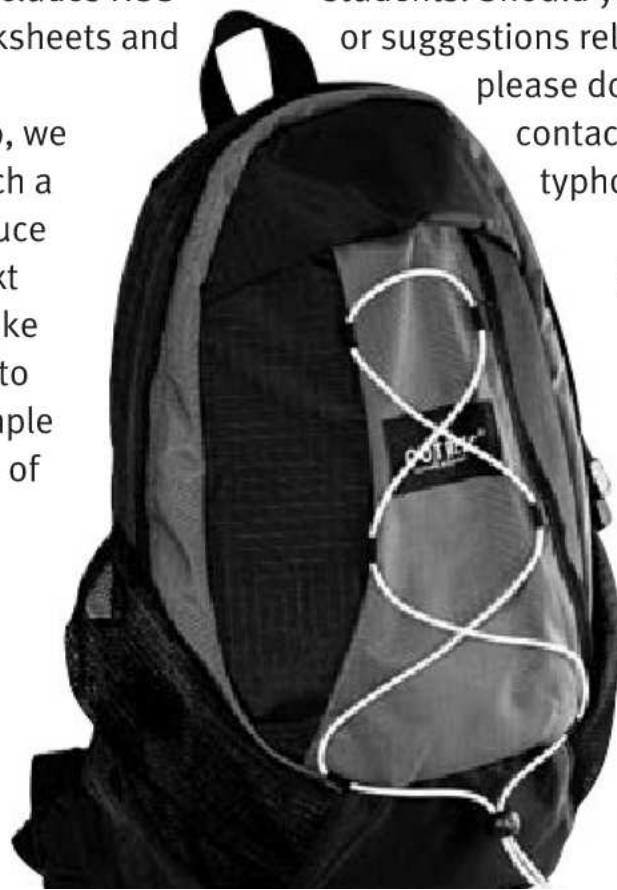
There will be eight features in every magazine covering all eight elective modules within the NSS curriculum. Features will also be supported with worksheets, videos and additional materials that can be found on our website, www.typhoonclub.com/NSS.php.

The first issue of *NSS* will be available from September 2009, and details of subscription rates can be found on the opposite page.

I do hope that you will consider subscribing to *NSS* on behalf of your students. Should you have any questions or suggestions relating to the magazine, please do not hesitate to contact me directly on typhoonclub@gmail.com.

Best wishes,

Mark Cowley
Cyclone Publishing Ltd.





NOW SO SIMPLE!

Available from September 2009
through bulk subscription

8 ISSUES – 2009 / 2010

SEPTEMBER OCTOBER
NOVEMBER DECEMBER
JANUARY MARCH
APRIL MAY

Subscription: \$96 per student

Minimum order: 200 students

Delivery: To school

Please complete the subscription
form on the back page

Enquiries

Tel: 2806 1030

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NSS – Now So Simple will be supported with a wide variety of different exercises on the website, www.typhoonclub.com. Short explanations of each exercise will be included at the end of each feature in the WEB CONNECTION box. Four different symbols will be used in this box to indicate what kind of exercise is available on the website. The symbols are as follows:



Video



Audio



Writing Exercise



Questionnaire



Establishing a Character



Characters appear in all shapes and sizes in any story book that you read. They usually come in the form of humans, but as we all know, animals, robots and even buildings have been known to appear as

characters in books.

When you are writing your own story, creating the different characters can be one of the most enjoyable parts of the creative writing experience. After all, it's your made-up character

in your made-up story, so you can create any kind of character you want.

Characters in your story can be there for all kinds of reasons. They may be the main character in a story, like with Hogwarts's wizard, Harry Potter. But

characters can also be created to help move a story along or to place the main character into a certain position. For example, the character Uncle Vernon Dursley who appears in the Harry Potter series probably does very little for the overall storyline. However, by the way this character acts to both Harry Potter and to his own son, Vernon, J.K. Rowling allows the reader to see what conditions Harry was living in – and would still be living in – in the event that he had never discovered that he was a wizard.

So how do you create characters? The real answer is that there are hundreds of different ways for you to create and develop a character. You may want to base a character on someone you already know. This will help you a little bit because you can imagine how this person would react in certain situations. You also know how this character may dress and what they look like.

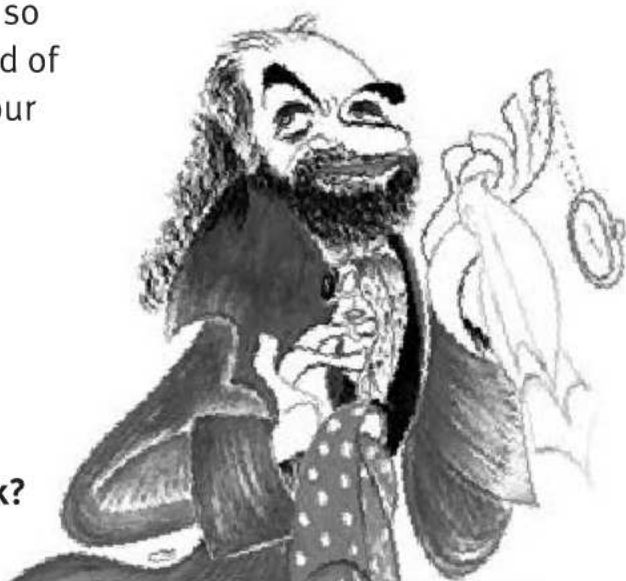
On the other hand, you may want to create a

character from your own imagination. You may have to work a little harder to do this, because to begin with you have nothing to base your character on.

Before you start creating your own character, you may want to ask yourself the following questions. The answers may help you define your character, so you can create the kind of character that suits your story the best.

1. **How tall are your characters?**
2. **Do they have any unusual facial features?**
3. **How do they speak?**

4. **What kind of clothes do they wear? Old or new?**
5. **Do they have any body odour?**
6. **How do they walk?**
7. **Do they appear nervous or confident?**
8. **Where do they live?**
9. **Who do they live with?**
10. **How do they fit into your story? ***



WEB CONNECTION

Listen to the way that Charles Dickens introduces one of his more evil characters in his book, *Oliver Twist*. Fagin is described as ‘disgusting’ to look at and is the leader of a group of young pickpockets, including the Artful Dodger. They all live in the East End of London where they are surrounded by criminals. Fagin turns young children into young criminals. He’s not the kind of person you would like to meet – even today.



Audio



Writing Exercise



Everyone needs a hero! Whether you swim competitively, play basketball, tennis or football, you will probably have a hero. And if you are a superstar yourself, you will be a hero to thousands

of girls and boys, men and women.

While some superstar athletes also achieve incredible wealth as well as fame from their great sporting achievements, many of them began their

life living in, or close to poverty. It was only their drive and determination that enabled them to reach the level of professionalism that we so much admire today.

Every sportsperson will have a story to tell, and their story is often compiled into a short biography that can be reproduced on websites, magazine features and souvenir programmes from the events in which they appear. Here are some examples of biographies of famous sporting heroes.

JAMES J. BRADDOCK was a popular boxer in America at the beginning of the 20th century. His boxing career was going well until he fractured his hand in several places in a championship match in 1928. He had to give up boxing and then lost his money during the Great Depression. He was forced to work in the docks unloading ships, and his family lived in poverty, but the work on the ships eventually made his left hand much stronger. In 1935, he fought the World Heavyweight Champion, Max Baer, and won despite all the odds.

Writing a **Sports Biography**



JAMES J. BRADDOCK

ROBERT CHERUIYOT



PARK JI SUNG



ROBERT CHERUIYOT is from Kenya in Africa. He has won the Boston Marathon three times and can be considered to be one of the most successful marathon runners of the decade. However, life has not always been so good for Robert. When he was growing up in Africa, he had nowhere to live and worked in a friend's barber shop. He used to beg for cigarettes in the streets. By sweeping up other people's hair in the barber shop, he was able to make just enough money to buy his first running shoes.

PARK JI SUNG was born in an industrial city just south of South Korea's capital city, Seoul. He was very skinny and small. His

school team-mates teased him and he often practised passing the ball on his own while the other boys practised their dribbling. Park's father wanted to support his son as much as he could, and fed him special foods to build up his physique. The young boy dutifully swallowed boiled frog extract when

his father told him it would make him grow. His hard work paid off, and in 2002 he was chosen to play in the national side in the World Cup. Shortly after, he was signed to play for the world-famous club, Manchester United, and was the first Asian player to wear the red shirt at Old Trafford. *

WEB CONNECTION



Take a look at the Typhoon Club NSS website and view the short video. It features a TV commercial for a furniture company. During the video, you will see some information about one of the dancers. Collect the information and when the video has finished, write a short biography about the dancer.



Video



Writing Exercise



Writing a Letter of Complaint

This is a short story about a young lady called Doris who booked a hotel room on the internet. She was expecting a night of luxury, but it did not work out quite as she had expected.





WEB CONNECTION

Oh dear! It was not a great time for Doris, was it? What should Doris do? Maybe she should write a letter to the hotel and complain. Could you use the information in this feature and write the letter for her?



Writing Exercise



What's the Strength of Your Argument?

When you are presenting your case during a debate, it's important that you choose your arguments carefully. When you are studying the materials relating to your debate topic, you will find that some arguments are much stronger than others.

There is probably no better way to emphasise your point than by quoting facts and figures from a recognised authority. You can also back up your points by using the words of famous people who have said something that supports your argument.

Take a look at the student's essay below about why Hong Kong should stop reclaiming land from Victoria Harbour. When you have read the essay, you can download the form from the Typhoon Club website (details below) and make a list of the arguments made. You should categorise them from the strongest argument through to the weakest argument. Once you have completed this task, you can decide how you would present your own case in a debate about why Hong Kong should stop reclaiming land from Victoria Harbour.

Stop Taking Our Harbour!

Have you noticed that Victoria Harbour is getting smaller and smaller? Land reclamation has been going on for years. In fact, even before 1997, around 3,200 hectares of land had already been reclaimed from the harbour. Did you know that's the same size as 3,900 football pitches? The harbour is being reclaimed to make more room for roads because the traffic jams are really bad these days.

I love taking a boat out towards Lantau. If you are lucky you will be able to

see some pink dolphins. I really mean 'lucky' because the pollution and land reclamation has nearly killed all the pink dolphins. My dad says there are only about 150 left and they could become extinct.


A recent university report said that there were 375,000 cubic metres of highly toxic sludge lying at the bottom of the harbour. If there was any more land reclamation, this sludge would have to be removed and dumped into deeper water west of Hong Kong. That sounds pretty horrible to me and could

cause even more pollution.

Most importantly for me, if all of Victoria Harbour were reclaimed, it would mean that we could no longer enjoy the fireworks during Chinese New Year.

Thousands of tourists come to Hong Kong from all over the world to watch. I guess they would not come if there were no more beautiful fireworks dancing above Victoria Harbour. *

WEB CONNECTION



Visit the Typhoon Club NSS website and download the form where you can list all the arguments contained in this student's essay. You can then decide what are the strongest and weakest arguments to use in your debate about the land reclamation from Victoria Harbour.



Writing Exercise



A black silhouette of a pregnant woman, shown from the side, with her hands resting on her belly. The image is used as a background for the title.

Teenage Pregnancy

In February, newspapers all over the world reported on a story from southern England about a baby being born. Usually, you would expect people to celebrate the arrival of a new child, but this time it was different. Chantalle, the mother of the baby girl, was just 15 years old when she gave birth. The father of the child, Alfie, was just 13.

Alfie is only 1.2 metres tall and when he was interviewed on national television, viewers could not help noticing that he still had the high voice of a primary school boy. Alfie believes that he is the father of the baby but since newspapers around the world began reporting on the story, six other boys have stepped forward and said that they may be the father.

It's hard to imagine that two young children could look after a newborn child. Chantalle was reported as saying in one newspaper, "We didn't think we would need help from our parents. You don't really think about that when you find out you are pregnant."



advertising campaign about preventing teen pregnancy.

Teenage pregnancy is not, of course, just Britain's problem. It happens in Hong Kong too. A survey carried out by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups in 2006 of 105 people aged between the ages of 13 and 20 found that half of them had had sex before the age of 16.

So how do we prevent teenage pregnancies? The British government's HK\$3.2 billion advertising campaign still leaves Britain as the Teenage Pregnancy Capital of Europe and it did not help Alfie and Chantalle. Should there be more sex education in our schools, and what responsibilities do parents have in this area? Or should teenagers simply know better? *

You just think that your parents will kill you."

When asked about how they thought they would pay for the baby, Alfie said, "I thought it would be a good idea to have a baby. I didn't think about how we could afford it. I don't really get pocket money but my dad sometimes gives me £10 [HK\$115.00]

Teenage pregnancy has become a major problem in Britain recently and the country is now known as

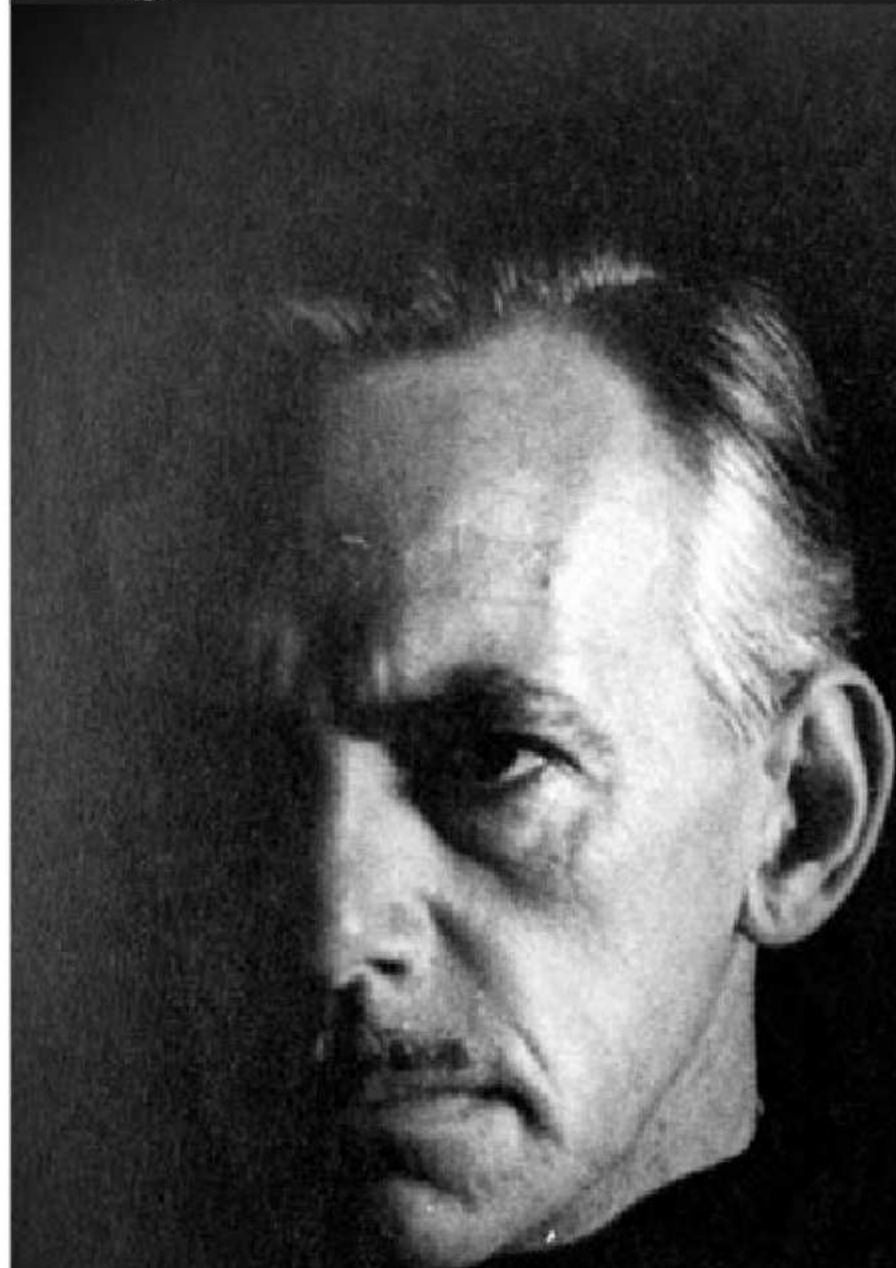
the 'Teenage Pregnancy Capital of Europe' – even though the British government has recently spent HK\$3.2 billion on an

WEB CONNECTION

What are your views about Alfie? What are your views about teenage pregnancy? Complete the questionnaire on the NSS website and compare your answers with your class.



Questionnaire



Before we go any further with this unusual word, you should first know what it actually means. A soliloquy (pronounced so-lil-o-ky) is where a character stands alone on the stage and expresses to himself (and the audience who are listening in, of course) his thoughts, emotions or ideas. It's the writer's device for providing additional information to the audience and helps move the play along. Probably one of the most famous soliloquies can be found in Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*, in act three, scene one, which begins, 'To be, or not to be: that is the question...'

This is an edited extract from a soliloquy written by the American playwright, Eugene O'Neill in his play called *Thirst*. Read through it carefully and then follow the instructions at the bottom of the page.

Am I Speaking
to Myself?

Expressing a Soli

'Then came the crash – that horrible dull crash. We were all thrown forward on the floor of the salon; then screams, oaths, fainting women. Then I was on deck fighting in the midst of the crowd. Somehow I got into a boat – but it was overloaded and was swamped immediately. I swam to another boat. They beat me with oars. Something huge rushed by me in the water, leaving a gleaming trail. A woman near me with a lifebelt around her gave a cry of agony and disappeared. I became frenzied with terror. I swam. I beat the water with my hands. The ship had gone down. I swam and swam with but one idea – to put all that horror behind me.' *

loquy



WEB CONNECTION

Visit the Typhoon Club website where you will be able to hear this soliloquy being read. Then download the list of questions and answer them as best you can.



Audio



Writing Exercise



Poetry in Pictures



Billy Collins reading his poetry

of these reasons that we would like to introduce you to something called Animated Poetry. If you ever find yourself in one of those situations where you think you cannot stand another line of poetry, it may be a good idea to go to the internet and take a look at some examples of animated poetry.

Animated poetry is where someone – or the poet themselves – has created some animation to complement the words of the poem. As the animated poems are designed to be viewed on the internet, you are able to listen to someone reading the poem while enjoying the animation which, all being well, provides interesting images of what the poem is all about.

Read the following poem by American poet Billy Collins called 'Forgetfulness'. When you have done that, take some instructions from our Web Connection.

We are not afraid to admit it: poetry can sometimes be very difficult; poetry can sometimes be very boring. We may even go as

far to say that poetry can drive you crazy as you try to work out what the poet is saying and what some of those extremely difficult words mean. It's because

Forgetfulness

*The name of the author is the first to go
followed obediently by the title, the plot,
the heartbreaking conclusion, the entire novel
which suddenly becomes one you have never read,
never even heard of,*

*as if, one by one, the memories you used to harbour
decided to retire to the southern hemisphere of the brain,
to a little fishing village where there are no phones.*

*Long ago you kissed the names of the nine muses goodbye
and watched the quadratic equation pack its bag,
and even now as you memorise the order of the planets,
something else is slipping away, a state flower perhaps,
the address of an uncle, the capital of Paraguay.*

*Whatever it is you are struggling to remember
it is not poised on the tip of your tongue,
not even lurking in some obscure corner of your spleen.
It has floated away down a dark mythological river
whose name begins with an 'L' as far as you can recall,
well on your way to oblivion where you will join those
who have even forgotten how to swim and how to ride a bicycle.*

*No wonder you rise in the middle of the night
to look up the date of a famous battle in a book on war.
No wonder the moon in the window seems to have drifted
out of a love poem that you used to know by heart. **

WEB CONNECTION

Visit the Typhoon Club website. Listen and watch Billy Collins animated poem, Forgetfulness. When you have finished, download the question sheet and answer the questions.



Video



Writing Exercise



Crazy About Sushi

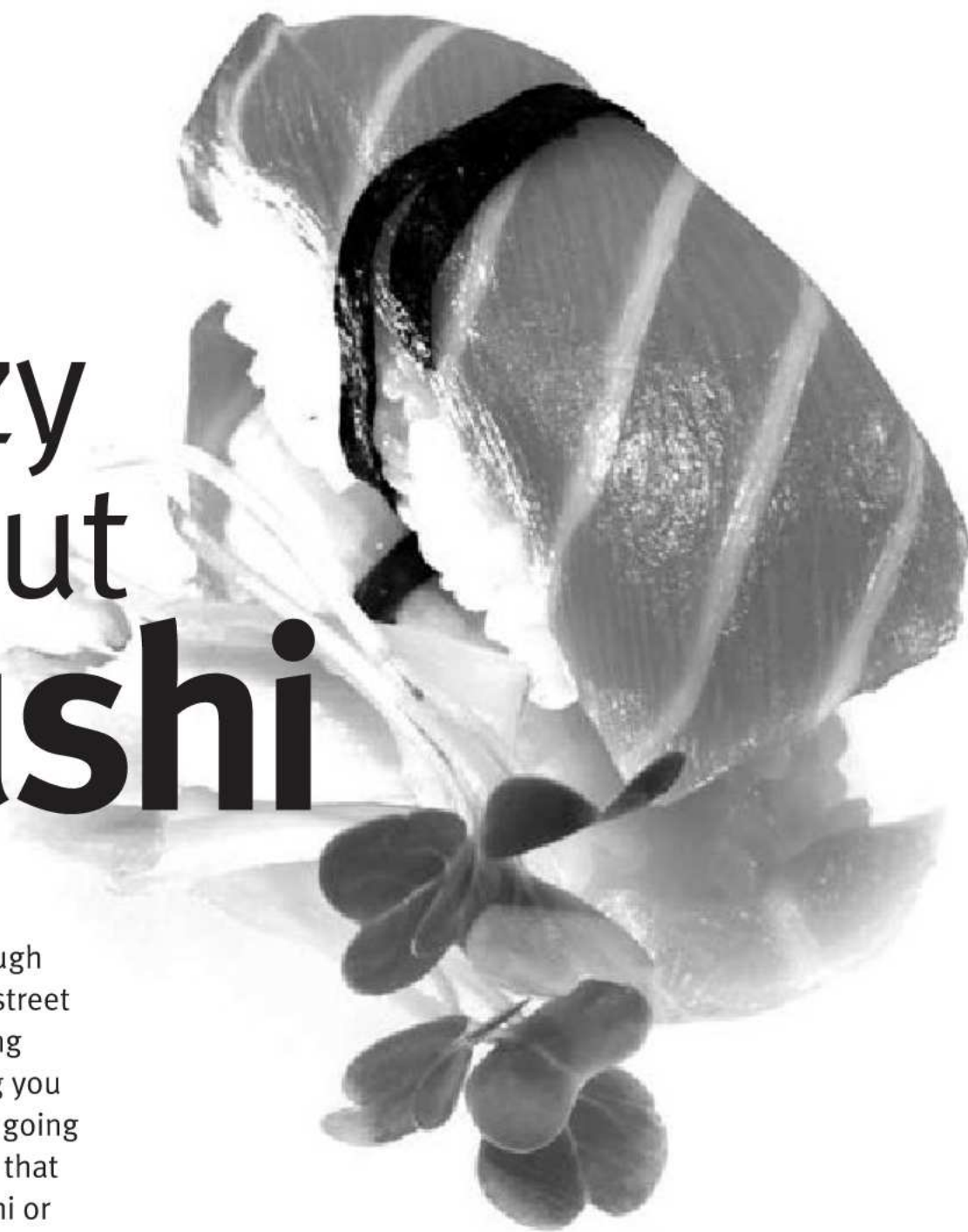
If you walk through just about any street in busy shopping areas in Hong Kong you are most definitely going to see a restaurant that sells Japanese sushi or sashimi. Many of them will be traditional Japanese restaurants, but it is not unusual to see sushi and sashimi sitting side by side and being served in Chinese and Western restaurants.

And it's not just restaurants. Many

supermarkets also sell pre-packaged sushi and sashimi so you can pick it up on your way home and enjoy it while you surf the net, text your friends or watch a video. There can be no doubt that there has been a sushi and sashimi

revolution in Hong Kong, and the rest of the world has been following. Sushi and sashimi have to be among the most popular dishes around.

If we were to ask you to sit down and think about eating sushi and sashimi





for a moment, would you begin to question why they are such popular food items? No? Well, just consider the following information taken from a report compiled by Hong Kong's Food and Environmental Hygiene Department a few years ago.

- In recent years, 3 per cent of reported food-poisoning outbreaks have been associated with sushi and sashimi, with 142 people affected.
- 13.8 per cent of sushi and 11.1 per cent of sashimi samples taken by the Department for assessment were found to be unsatisfactory in terms of their hygienic quality.

From this information, it certainly looks as if you really have to consider eating sushi and sashimi when there is a chance that you may get food poisoning. Do you really also think that eating uncooked fish is that great? Is the flavour, texture and flavour so fantastic it's worth taking the risk? What about that green ingredient often added to sushi? It

can be so hot, it can make you cry! And then there is the cost. If you go to some places, you can leave \$1,000 poorer than when you arrived – and still feel hungry.

Do sushi and sashimi deserve their place among the most popular foods for us to eat? Or are we seriously risking our health just to fit in with the crowd? *



WEB CONNECTION

After you have read this feature, visit the Typhoon Club website and see if you can design the next most popular food in Hong Kong.



Writing Exercise

ISS

PREVIEW ISSUE | FROM SEPTEMBER 2009

NOW SO SIMPLE!

CREATIVE WRITING

How do you describe an idea that is in your mind but not yet fully formed? Make the most of it in our special issue. See page 4 & 2



SOCIAL ISSUES

The world is a complex place. In this issue, we explore the world's most pressing social issues. See page 12 and 13

DRAMA

Is there a story in your life? Or is it just a series of events? In this issue, we explore the art of drama. See page 14 & 15

POEMS & SONGS

Words are powerful. In this issue, we explore the art of poetry and song. See page 16 & 17

POPULAR CULTURE

What is it that makes a piece of pop culture so popular? In this issue, we explore the art of pop culture. See page 18 & 19

WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION

How do you communicate in the workplace? In this issue, we explore the art of workplace communication. See page 20 & 21



SPORTS COMMUNICATION

How do you communicate in the world of sports? In this issue, we explore the art of sports communication. See page 22 & 23



DEBATING

How do you debate a topic? In this issue, we explore the art of debating. See page 24 & 25



Subscribe to this interesting magazine today! Visit www.issmagazine.com for more information. See page 26

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