



# PARENT

February 2023

# PERSPECTIVES

This edition of our FPSP parent newsletter comes to us from SeYoung Jung of our South Korean Affiliate. SeYoung is not a native English speaker, so we appreciate her submission and allowing us to minimally edit her ideas. Let's learn about the South Korean affiliate program!

## *The Way We Go - Korean FPSP*

The Korean FPSP was started in 2001 and, over the years, it has encouraged creativity education for the young FPSers. Following are some personal experiences I, SeYoung JUNG, encountered as a Coach and also, as Co-director of the Korean Affiliate.



Pictured is Dr. Yung Che Kim, our first Affiliate Director, with Dr. E.P. Torrance, creator of the Future Problem Solving Program

(1) Let's begin with an introduction of 'Korea'. Korea, officially the Republic of Korea, commonly called South Korea, is a country in East Asia. It is the southern part of the Korean peninsula. Unfortunately, it is the only country divided into South and North in the world. It has a population of about 52 million, of which roughly half live in the Seoul Capital area. Korea is a regional power and industrially highly developed country, with its economy being ranked as the world's 13<sup>th</sup> largest by nominal GDP. Its citizens enjoy one of the world's fastest Internet connection speeds and the densest high-speed railway network. Religions are diverse in our country and include Buddhism, Protestant, and Catholic, which is the most influential among them. Since the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Korea has been renowned for its globally influential pop culture, particularly in music (K-pop), TV dramas (K-dramas) and cinema. BTS, a Pop group, is the globally influential exemplary case. KIMCHI has become listed as a global food menu.

Korea uses the proper Korean alphabet (Hangol) and speaks their own Korean language. As the mother tongue is not English, extra energies are required and some disadvantages occur in IC proceedings. The Future Scene in English for the GIPS competition must be translated into Korean and the Booklets answered by the team(s) must be translated into English to be evaluated by the English-speaking evaluators. Furthermore, the Presentation of Action Plan becomes a Pantomime consequently with few words spoken.



Carrying the Korean flag at IC Opening Ceremonies

(2) The educational aspirations/passions are very high and most parents are very dedicated to their children's education. College entrance examinations, particularly for prestigious universities, are very competitive. This certainly influences secondary school education, even flows to primary school education, The educational emphasis has traditionally been on preparing for examinations. Certainly this has negative implications on creativity education. Fortunately, strong voices and requests for creativity and creative problem solving education have been consistently evolving from many of the social sectors including the school, business, politic, social and academic sectors. Hot discussions for educational reforms and for developing the younger students' skills for creativity and creative problem solving are currently progressing and we do hope to be able to find promising futuristic solutions in the near future. We also hope FPSP skills can be of help in this area.

(3) The Korean Affiliate has close connections with academic associations such as the Korean Association for Thinking Development and holds many conferences as needed. It also holds Summer and Winter workshops regularly for educating Coaches, Evaluators, and test specialists of Torrance's TTCT. We do approach schools to help principals and teachers who are particularly interested in creative education so that the students may have extra-curricular classes and special activities. We mostly build teams which are usually cross-schools with cooperation with parent networks. They are generally very open and globally minded. Students participating to the Program classes are very engaged and enjoy working out of the traditional school "box."

(4) In teaching and managing FPSP programs, we emphasize three basic guidelines/principles such as Futuristic thinking, a balanced use of the creative and critical thinking skills, and a deep understanding of the texts. For the first guideline, words such as futuristic thinking, future imagination, future image, future global and changes have been intentionally used in order to remind and connect the students to words and concepts. Further systematic thinking over the six-steps of the creative problem solving is stressed explicitly. For the second guideline, though we do emphasize the importance of the divergent thinking to generate ideas, we also stress that critical thinking, which follows after the generative phase, also be used with emphasis to select the best alternative. We stress that these alternatives should be used in balance. We noted that students in classes were often arguing with each other insisting his/her own idea to be selected without very good reasons to persuade their colleagues. We realized that it is very important to build habits of presenting relevant reasons/evidences to persuade others or to use the proper convergent thinking tools. Through these opportunities for practice, we expect their ability to think creatively as well as critically to improve. Furthermore, we hope they develop more collaborative work habits. The ability to think critically and logically is as important as the ability to generate new and relevant ideas. For the last guideline, we teach the reading skills of deep understanding of the text and encourage the participants to use them in the researching and data gathering phase. Researching with superficial reading



Fun at the Memento Exchange

does not help acquiring the knowledge which is the basis of the creative thinking. Included here are such as the skills of abstracting the main ideas and drawing them graphically using tools such as a Mind-map. It assists with practices with texts such as the future scene.

(5) Regarding the IC experience, we have seen immense joy and positive impact on the faces of the participating students as they go through the IC week. They could be divided into three categories such as IC events, new insights, and parents' feedback. The first, IC events, refers to the activities and events students experience and their response to them. During the two hours of GIPS competition, our students encountered many teams from around the globe being in the same classroom. They felt the room atmosphere which was sincere, serious, genuine, hard-working, collaboratively and teams seemed very eager to win. We assume they might mumble that studying could be very enjoyable, and, also at the same time, it could be very rewarding. It seemed more than enough to motivate them to be better self-motivated learners. In the Opening and Awards Ceremonies, when the flags of the national and affiliates were brought in and when the national anthem played, I was sure they paid solemn respect to them and have had kind of chills coming from the heart. The CmPS showcase was also impressive and we were shocked to feel how far the young students could imaginatively create a creative new world using FPS skills. Also, the Zippy Mart was a fun place to chat with others and to shop for souvenirs for their friends and family members.

Further, program events such as the Variety Show, Memento Exchange, Buddy-up and Social were fun, interesting, engaging and memorable. The students have prepared about 100 items of Korean mementos before their departure to the IC. It was a great fun and a completely new experience of



Korean FAN Dance at Variety Show

giving and receiving mementos, negotiating exchange, sharing conversations freely, breaking ice and communicating with new persons from around the world. The collection of souvenirs were diverse and unexpected to be sure as well as the long-lasting memories they shared. The Variety Show was a great platform to showcase the diverse talents and different cultures. Among them are Psy's GANGNAM STYLE and the Korean FAN Dance. Inviting other fellows from the other affiliates to join the performance was a good idea. The Buddy-up event and Social were also invaluable and fun as they provided the opportunities to become friends. It was a good friendship-building opportunity with others from around the globe. It was very impressive to find some of them were keeping their friendships long after the event.

Another new insight evolved which was their general responses and the attitudinal change following the IC event. Actually, the IC participation resulted in many parts such as preparation for the competition, flying to and from the destination, the overall experiences at the IC, and the sight-seeing tours for about a week after IC. Generally speaking, the students enjoyed so much and were very satisfied. Furthermore, they have become very active, self-motivated, and optimistic about their study and forthcoming careers. Many say "The world is wide and many things are there to be accomplished." Many of the students continued the FPS program two or three years more and returned to IC. It is most rewarding to hear that they have been using their creativity skills even at the university classes and workplaces. Another result is parents' responses from those who attended to IC with the students. They were joyful and reported that they got the feeling that the students became new people and they have more actively pursued their school studies. Besides the expenses and missing of school classes for the period, none expressed any negative responses.



Though the Affiliate has been very active and relatively successful through the years, it has been very unfortunate to have about three years of COVID pandemic. It was almost enough to dissolve the human networks we developed thus far and some coaches and evaluators who worked with us are no longer participating. Now, we must start almost anew. We are confronting places where old and comfortable ideas no longer apply. Currently, AI and Coding education are getting a great deal of attention from teachers and parents. This can be either a positive stimulant or a challenge in other ways depending upon our efforts. We must continue to be very creative to find ways to continue to provide our young students the opportunities and experiences to improve their ability to think creatively, critically, and futuristically. Again, we ponder over the way we should go. We believe it should be through Future Problem Solving International. Thank you.



Korean students at the International Conference



## Cultural Corner

It is the mission of the Future Problem Solving Program International to be as inclusive of all cultures, customs, and beliefs as possible. In fact, we celebrate our diversity across the globe and look forward to sharing and learning with one another through the wide variety of traditions and practices in every walk of life. Already in 2023, several special cultural days have occurred or will be occurring in the coming weeks.

Below is a list of *some* important holidays and cultural celebrations occurring in our Affiliate programs during the first few months of 2023:

- Malaysia and Singapore, have recently finished celebrating the 15th day of Chinese New Year (January 22 to May 2) which also coincided with Thaipusam, an auspicious day for Hindus (a holiday in Malaysia).
- Korea celebrated Lunar New Year, or Seollal on January 22, 2023.

- February 6, 2023 New Zealand celebrated Waitangi Day, the national day of New Zealand, marks the anniversary of the initial signing of their founding document in 1840.
- Black History Month is an annual observance originating in the United States, where it is also known as African-American History Month. It has received official recognition from governments in the United States and Canada, and more recently has been observed in Ireland and the United Kingdom.
- Harmony week is celebrated annually between 15th – 21st March to acknowledge the contributions of multicultural communities in Australian society.
- March 8, 2023 is International Women’s Day. This global holiday is celebrated annually on March 8 as a focal point in the women's rights movement, bringing attention to issues such as gender equality, reproductive rights, and violence and abuse against women.
- March will be an important month for those of the Muslim faith. During Ramadan, Muslims fast during daylight hours (no food or drink—even water—permitted from dawn to sunset) and strive to avoid any impure thoughts or immoral behavior. Ramadan ends with Eid al-Fitr, the “festival of breaking the fast.” which will be celebrated in April.
- Christians around the world will celebrate the 40 days of Lent beginning on February 22 and culminate on Easter Sunday, April 9, 2023.

## Celebrate Culture and

