



A one-day Storytelling Club in Thailand: "The Day I Became Strong in the Pandemic"

The Thai Storytelling Club was conducted by Miracle Mushroom Company, a kids' media production house in Bangkok. We decided to do a one day workshop due to the busy month of December with several long holidays and most of the kids travelling with their parents.

The workshop took place in our company. We didn't do a virtual Storytelling Club because the Corona situation at that time was almost normal and we believed that face to face works better for Thai children. So, as soon as we studied the project and knew that one of the stories will be filmed, we started to look for families that we know. Some children used to participate in our TV show, and some had earlier joined us for a workshop with Thai PBS.

There were eight kids aged 9 - 12 in our Storytelling Club. We tried to choose the kids with different backgrounds and activities. Some love sports and games, some love art and cooking, so we could guess what they would do to kill the boredom during the pandemic.

Thankfully, Dr. Maya Götz had sent us the handout for a one-day workshop with every tiny detail we need to communicate with the kids. We did use it and followed the steps. Since the pandemic didn't affect the families financially, what the kids were facing is only super long holidays and online education. The answers we got from them in the beginning were quite similar: Playing computer games and cooking. But the handout step by step helped the kids to think more and think for others, and by that way the stories became more varied and we got to know the children more deeply.

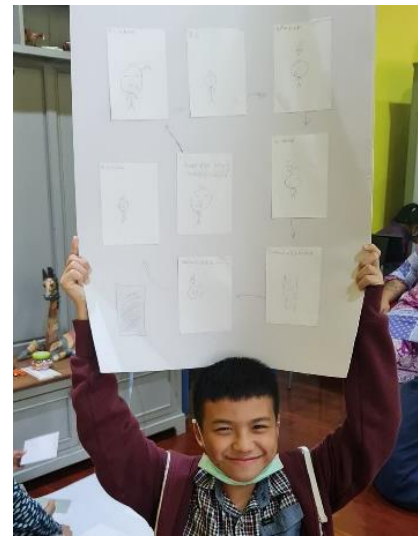
Since the children were familiar with us, the atmosphere was like chitchatting. They were shy at first but warmed up after the second round of telling their story. They even fought to be the first to share their story. The problem in regard to producing stories about the Covid-19 time was that most of them didn't think that the pandemic was the problem. They didn't struggle at all. We had one girl that lost her grandma at that time but it wasn't from Covid-19. And with the help of technologies, boredom isn't the problem, they can talk with friends anytime they want. Speaking of problems, they all thought of big problems like starving and dying. So, we had to guide them to find a problem that doesn't have to be big. We gave them time to think in order to find those stories.

After conducting the STC and observing the development of the kids, we all agree that the handout is the key. Each question step by step helps the kids to think and rethink. Just answer the questions, the answers will be a story. It is an easy way to write a story. Not a simple story but a story that has an introduction, facing a problem, solving a problem, a conclusion and also tips for listeners or readers. The kids are getting very practical tips to write their next story.

By Issada Aisiri, Managing Director, Miracle Mushroom Co.,ltd., Thailand

A story by Tle, 12 years old:

I am in the house of 4 siblings and I am the youngest. During the pandemic, it was so bored. Even though we can play together, but there is no school. I felt like my life was missing something. There's too much free time with so few that I can do. So, I thought of what I love doing and the answer was basketball. My big brother is in the school team. This was a great time to train and he can be my trainer. I played basketball every day. I think I become a better player. I practiced to improve my skills and get stronger. Watch me next year, I will get in the team for sure.



A story by Kaning, 11 years old:

Unfortunately, my grandma was sick and have to admit in the hospital during the pandemic. The hospital rule during that time was not allow any visitors. Hospitals were considered red zone. Many were infected in the hospitals. I felt so sad that my grandma had to be alone. Normally, we always stuck together, the oldest and the youngest of the house. Now we had to separate. I felt so worried. What I could do was to pass messages telling grandma to keep on fighting to the doctor.

But grandma was very sick and she couldn't make it. I didn't have a chance to say goodbye to her. I tried to be strong, that what grandma want me to be. When I missed her so much and I cried, I hold our dog (one of our gang :oldest, youngest and cutest) I felt more calm, her warmth let me know that she's with me and I am not alone.

Be strong, you can get through it. Trust me.

