

## A New Force

Learning a new language has been a way for me escape my surroundings and travel to a new world. Much like how someone would get lost in a book, I get lost in a language. I can spend hours at a time studying new words and expressions. Copying characters again and again until my hand cramps up to an extent that I can no longer hold my pen. Studying subjects like English and Biology rarely spark a desire for me to keep studying. But as I take in new information, I can feel myself enjoying the language more and more. With a desire to keep learning. My friends, both at Sen Lin Hu and at school are constantly pushing me to excel. To grow in the language.

All year I have been pressuring myself to become better at Chinese, but to some extent I can't keep learning from a textbook. I need to hear the language. In the past by the end of summer at Sen Lin Hu my speaking and listening skills have improved exponentially, but when I go back to school I struggle with speaking, as our curriculum is based more around reading and writing.

My spark for the language started the year after my first four week session. Before, camp was just a way to retain the information I learned in the school year past. But, in the fall of my freshmen year I returned to school, with a new ambition to learn, to know everything the Chinese language had to offer.

As I study for tests and quizzes, I can't help myself to search for new words and new ways to say sentences. I always have questions, so many that I am no longer allowed to email my teacher. So I go to the Chinese classroom before, during, and after school. In my opinion there is always something new to learn. Something to achieve and strive for. I take this mentality from sports. In running, when there is a new person to beat, I train to beat them. At the end of ski practice, if I am exhausted, then I have given it my all.

I feel that learning a new language is incredibly important, especially for my future. Our world is more connected than ever before, and in the workforce we are constantly communicating with others from around the globe. By knowing a language that is spoken by a majority of the world's population, I feel that it will benefit me in the long run.

I chose to take Chinese starting in 6th grade because my favorite food in the cafeteria were mandarin oranges, but I am so glad I did. The new opportunities it has offered me, such as going to such a wonderful summer camp, or being able to help others who might not be able to read directions in english. The language has shown me how to study effectively. It has show me how to creatively think, and has given me some of the best friends I have ever had.