



SRI KDU
International
School
SUBANG JAYA

FOBISIA

SHORT STORY

COMPETITION ENTRIES

**A COLLECTION OF SHORT STORIES BY OUR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS,
REPRESENTING SRI KDU SUBANG JAYA IN THE FOBISIA SHORT STORY COMPETITION.**

FOBISIA SHORT STORY COMPETITION

OUR COLOURFUL CELEBRATIONS

Cassandra Wong Zi En (Year 6)

It's that time of February. It's finally the Chinese new year. I'm sure you have seen those movies and cartoons that tell you how we celebrate the festival. Glorious dresses, illuminating lanterns, and bright invasive decorations.

I guess, part of which my family does do it like that, though we celebrate it in a little more simple way. In which we don't wear incredibly uncomfortable and itchy traditional clothing that is guaranteed to become something you look forward to taking off, nor do we cover our house in red pieces of paper.

We hang up lanterns in our driveway, we play Chinese songs, my long distance cousins come to visit, we play fireworks, and my favourite part... getting red envelopes! We usually wear matching new year themed shirts, nothing too fancy or exquisite. But there is something else I totally look forward to, the food!

It's the one time everyone comes together to cook and make a culinary feast! It would be an understatement if I say the food is amazing! From delicious dumplings to savoury seafood, and the peak of the dining experience is everyone holding chopsticks and tossing rainbow coloured Yee Sang into the air! Yippee! All the Yee Sang safely lands on everything but the plate!

And I almost forgot to tell you about our beliefs too. We don't sweep the house on the first day of Chinese new year to prevent sweeping good luck away, don't worry - We clean our house prior to the celebration! There is a reason why we put up red decorations and play loud fireworks, it's to scare away a monster named the 'Nian'!

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A few months pass, and it's now April. Muslim friends are preparing to celebrate Hari Raya!

My friend invites me to her house to celebrate the joyful occasion! As I enter, I'm flooded with warm greetings, at every handshake or Salam, we seek blessing and forgiveness. Everyone is full of joy as this day marks the end of the fasting season, attendees are wearing beautiful traditional clothes, ketupat ribbons are hung up, and traditional music is played throughout the house! But the most noticeable thing would definitely be the aroma of delicious homemade food!

We gather at the dining table for lunch, and are served with courses of enticing traditional Malay cuisine, such as Ketupat, Satay, Rendang, Lontong, Sayur lodeh, and a lot more!

At nighttime everyone goes out to play fireworks and bond with each other there. I was having a lot of fun but it was time to bid goodbye as my dad arrives to pick me up. In the car I thought to myself 'together we can build a colourful and peaceful world where all cultures live and celebrate together in peace and harmony'.

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FROM KIMCHI TO DURIAN: GROWING UP IN KOREA AND MALAYSIA

Chan Heo (Year 5)

I was born in Korea and spent most of my life there. However, a few months ago, my family moved to Malaysia. At first, living in a new country was both exciting and a bit scary. The weather was really hot, the food was different, and I couldn't understand the language people were speaking. But as time passed, I started getting used to life here and enjoying the new culture.

In Korea, spending time with family was always special. I remember the holidays like Chuseok and Seollal, where we wore hanbok, made songpyeon, and paid respects to our ancestors. We followed traditions, like using respectful language with elders, greeting them politely, and not eating until they picked up their chopsticks. At school, I always had a lot of homework, so my days were busy with studying.

Since coming to Malaysia, my life has changed a lot. I am growing up in a unique environment where different races and religions coexist. In Korea, there are holidays like Chuseok and Seollal, but in Malaysia, there are holidays from many countries, such as Malaysia Day, the Indian Deepavali, and the Islamic Ramadan. The sound of prayers from the mosque, heard several times a day, is very impressive.

I've had the chance to experience some of these colorful and joyful celebrations in Malaysia. For Malaysia Day, there was an event at school where everyone wore traditional outfits. I tried on a traditional Malay costume with my friends, and the bright colors and unique design were really fun. It was exciting to see everyone sharing their cultures and celebrating together.

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I also experienced Deepavali recently. An Indian friend invited me to their home, and I wore traditional Indian clothes. The house was lit up with beautiful lamps, and we ate delicious Indian food together while celebrating. One special memory was when my friend painted henna designs on my hand. Through these experiences, I've learned how precious the different cultures here are in Malaysia.

Although I haven't experienced Ramadan yet, I've heard a lot about it from my Muslim friends. During this time, they fast and spend time with their families, sharing gratitude. I'm excited to experience Ramadan next year.

When I first came to Malaysia, the exotic food smells were strange to me, and one of the most surprising things was durian. At first, the smell was so strong that I thought, "How could anyone eat this?" But my parents encouraged me to try it, saying that to understand a culture, I need to challenge myself. Just like kimchi might smell strange to people from other countries, durian is something special here in Malaysia. Now, I've tried durian ice cream and like it!

Living in Malaysia has given me a new perspective. In Korea, I learned the importance of family and tradition, while in Malaysia, I'm learning to respect diversity and try new things. The experiences I've had in both countries feel like great gifts, and I hope to continue learning and connecting the cultures of both places.

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INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS

Asha Luna Madhusudhan (Year 2)

I am going to tell you my story of my intercultural awareness. It all started when my Appuppa and Ammumma were married, and when my popo and grandpa also married. They both had children, and they are both my parents, Mama and Papa. When my mama and papa got married, they had two children: me, Asha Luna, and my little brother, Ari Solis.

Both my parents and my grandparents were all from different cultures from different parts of the world. My Appuppa came from a region in India called Kerala. He knows how to speak Malayalam, and he can also make thosai from scratch. Thosai is an Indian rice crepe made of fermented rice and lentils. My Ammumma came from a small, new village in Karak, Malaysia. She used to help her family make traditional Chinese cakes and sell them down the street while riding her bicycle. She made a lot of different cakes, and she was very good at selling them.

My great-popo came from a small province in China, she speaks Hakka and Hokkien, and she made really delicious Lei Cha according to my Mama. The custom of Lei Cha began during the Three Kingdoms period or in the Han dynasty. It was brought by the Hakka people to Taiwan, Indonesia, and Malaysia. It is made of tea leaves, but more commonly from green tea or oolong, nuts, legumes, and seeds. The most common seeds used are peanuts, mung beans, and sesame seeds. It is a vegetarian dish.

My great-popo came to Malaysia without knowing how to speak any English or Bahasa Melayu, but she managed to live here, learn the local language, and worked hard to support and care for her ten children. My grandma is her daughter number five!

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My heritage is a mix of Chinese, Indian, and Malaysian, and I feel so lucky to be part of such a diverse family. I really enjoy learning about all our customs and traditions, from cooking special meals to celebrating unique festivals. My family has shown me that being different is not only okay but something to love and cherish.

So, I am intercultural. This is my story. I learned from my family how other cultures have different ways to celebrate, cook, eat, and speak. Every culture is unique and special in its own way.

Always remember that being different is amazing.

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INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS

Krithika Shyam Iyer (Year 4)

I was born in Pune, India, a city full of colours, festivals, and fun traditions. When I was 18 months old, my family moved to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. I have been living here ever since. Growing up in Malaysia while staying connected to my Indian roots has been amazing. I've learned how beautiful different cultures are and how they bring people together.

Some of my happiest memories are from celebrating Indian festivals like Diwali, Ganpati, and Holi. These festivals are very special to me.

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is my favourite! In India, people decorate their homes with lamps called diyas and make colourful rangolis on the floor. The night sky lights up with fireworks, and everyone shares sweets with family and friends we also play games.

Even here in Kuala Lumpur, we celebrate Diwali every year. We light diyas around the house, make yummy sweets, and invite friends to join us. It feels like a little piece of India is right here in Malaysia.

Another festival I love is Ganpati, which celebrates the birth of Lord Ganesha. He is known to bring wisdom and remove obstacles. In Pune, people make big statues of Ganesha, sing songs, and pray every day for 10 days. At the end of the festival, the statues are taken to the river for a grand goodbye.

In Malaysia, we celebrate Ganpati in a smaller way. We keep a small Ganesha idol at home for one and a half days. We sing songs, offer prayers, and invite friends to join us. I enjoy explaining this festival to my friends, they love hearing about Ganesha's stories!

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Holi, the Festival of Colours, is so much fun! In Pune, we celebrate Holi by throwing colourful powders on each other, dancing, and eating sweets. Here in Malaysia, it's not as big, but my family still celebrates at home. I invite my friends, and we play with colours in our Cond. It's so much fun, and everyone ends up covered in bright colours. Holi always reminds me how important it is to have fun with friends and family.

Living in Malaysia has also introduced me to new festivals like Hari Raya, Chinese New Year, and Thaipusam. During Hari Raya, our Malay friends invite us to their homes. I love eating traditional foods like satay and Nasi Lemak.

During Chinese New Year, the city is filled with red lanterns and exciting dragon dances. My favourite part is receiving ang pao—red envelopes with money that bring good luck.

At school, we celebrate many festivals together. Our teachers encourage us to share about our cultures. I love talking about Diwali, Ganpati, and Holi, and I also learn about my friends' festivals. It's amazing to see how all festivals are about love, kindness, and happiness.

Living in Malaysia has taught me to respect and enjoy different cultures. I feel lucky to celebrate my Indian traditions while also learning new ones. It makes me feel like we're all part of one big, beautiful world.

Thank you!

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INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS

Heulwen Alua Thomas (Year 5)

When I was three, I thought I was Kazakh. Whenever anyone asked me “Where are you from?” I would always say “Kazakhstan.” This was because, at that point, I’d only lived in Kazakhstan. When I was two, I would waddle into the deep December snow, quite a challenge as it was up to my waist!

Despite what I thought, I was born in England, and I am also half Welsh. When my brother was born, my mother, father, brother and I moved to Malaysia, where we lived in Penang for six years. By that point, we also had a home in Spain, to which we would go most summers.

In my school in Penang, many of my friends were Malaysian- Indian. Because of this, I learned a little bit about Indian culture, like why people celebrate Diwali. I could also recognise how cultures that I knew had similarities, like how in the Spanish and Indian cultures it is normal for children to have ears pierced very young.

Even though I grew up in cultures far away from the UK, I still celebrate some holidays from there, like St. David’s Day and Christmas, of course. However, in school we celebrate Christmas, Chinese New Year, Diwali, Hari Raya, and Merdeka Day (Malaysian Independence Day).

Growing up in so many cultures, I appreciate the many, many foods that are traditional for these different cultures. Through going to international schools, I have learned to enjoy curry, which I would not even touch when I was younger. My favourite foods from the cultures I grew up in include Cawl, a Welsh dish, Fish and Chips from England, and Roti Canai from Malaysia.

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Another thing that I find very interesting is climates in different places. For example, I've grown up in snowy Almaty (in Kazakhstan), humid Malaysia, and dry Spain. This has been interesting mostly because of the different clothing. In the winters in Almaty, people wear fur coats and a fur hat called a 'Borik'. Multiple times, it got so cold in the Almaty winters that the locks on my parents house gate froze, trapping them outside until the landlord got my parents into the house! Moving on to Spanish fashion, in the summer, they usually wear very light clothing.

The languages and religions have also influenced me greatly as I am fluent in English, but am learning Spanish, Mandarin, Welsh, French and in my previous school I learned Malay. Many of my friends also speak Tamil. Religion wise, many of my Indian friends are Hindu, my mother is Christian, and my neighbours are Chinese Christian. I also have Malay friends, who are Muslim.

Being able to live in different cultures has been wonderful for me because of how many memories I have made. There are things that I find quite difficult, like living in the heat of Malaysia and constantly sweating, but overall it has been amazing to be able to have the awareness that I do about different cultures and to experience the world in a unique way.



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