



# BEHIND THE SCENES

## **Group #5-10**

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## Objective

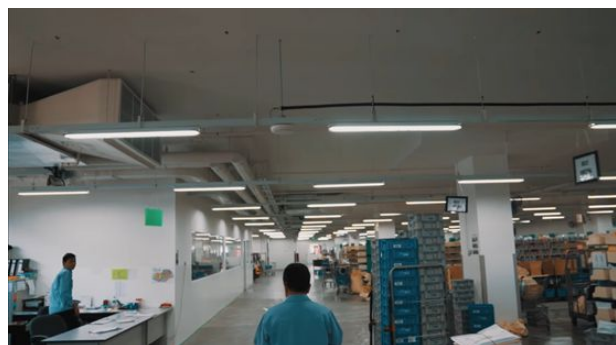
**We hope to achieve raise the awareness on the importance of the non-teaching staff in our school and to educate students to appreciate what the non-teaching staff do for our school on a day-to-day basis.**

We noticed that students usually disregard the non-teaching staff and that very few students show their appreciation to the non-teaching staff during Non-Teaching Staff Day. We also felt that many students were unaware of their daily struggles, thus wanting to give a glimpse into the lives of these non-teaching staff and hopefully increase the students' gratitude towards these non-teaching staff.

## Artist Inspirations

### The Smart Local

The Smart Local produces videos (occasionally short films) for Singaporeans to enjoy. We gained inspiration from how they colour grade one of their films titled “The Last Postman of Pulau Ubin”, with slightly muted and low-contrast colour grading.



## 2.07 Megapixels

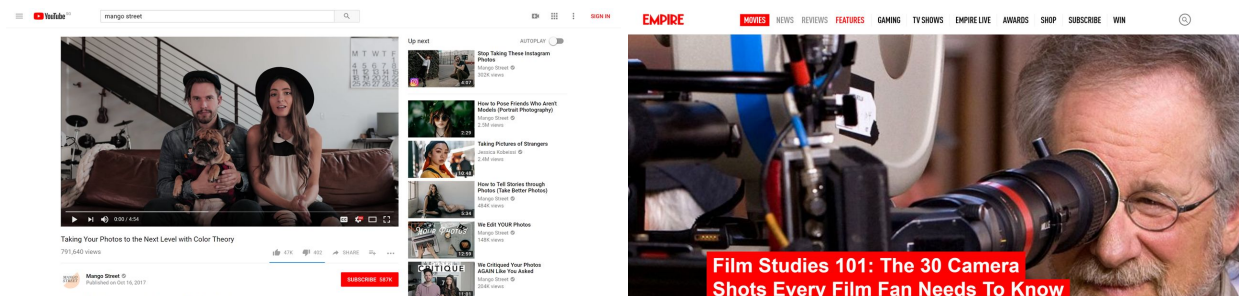
2.07 Megapixels is a group of Hwa Chong students who in 2016, embarked on a film project. We gained inspiration from how their short film titled “Hup Lee” was colour graded more moodily. We also learnt how they used cutscenes to set the location.



## Research

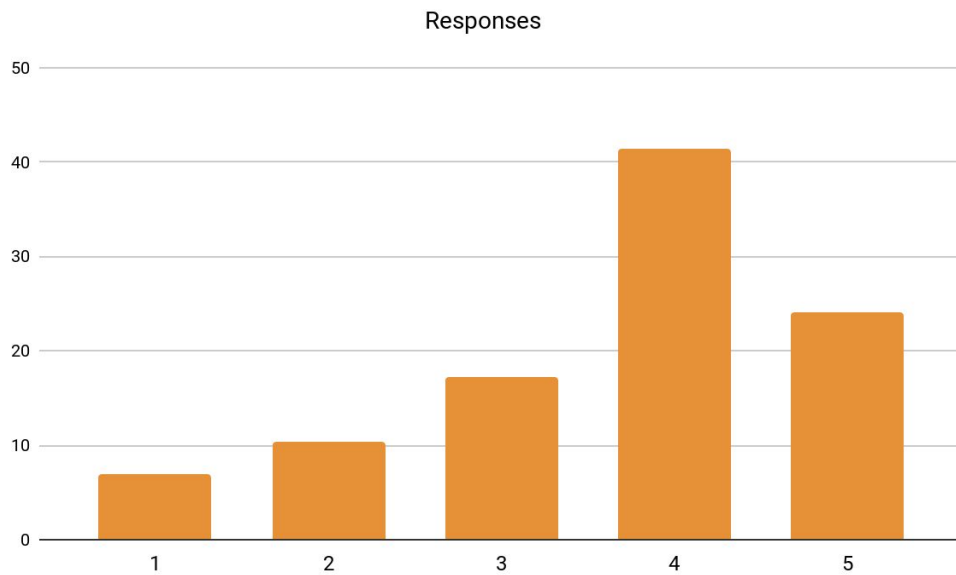
### Learning Filming Techniques

We did some research on the different camera angles and how colours can help portray a certain mood. We found a video on YouTube from Mango Street, a channel made up of 2 professional photographers, about colour theory. We also found out about the different movie colour palettes from an article on studiobinder.com and different camera angles from empireonline.com.

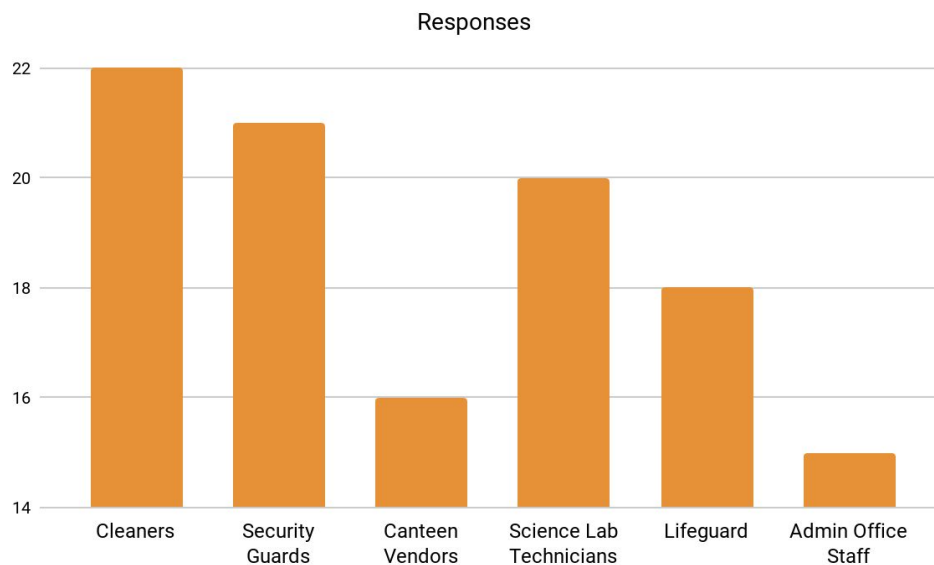


### Survey to Find Out Students' Opinions Towards the Non-Teaching Staff

To find out more about how students felt towards the topic of the negligence of the non-teaching staff, we conducted a survey on Hwa Chong students. When asked on how neglected the non-teaching staff were, on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not neglected and 5 being very neglected), most students replied with a 4 (neglected but not very much) while 24.1% of the respondents replied with a 5 (very neglected).



When the respondents were asked whether they were interested in watching a short film on the non-teaching staff of the school, 82.8% of them replied with a 'Yes' while 17.2% replied with a 'No'. Most of the respondents (21 respondents) indicated that they would be interested in seeing cleaners be featured in our short film, among other options including the science laboratory technicians and canteen vendors.



As such, we decided to feature the cleaners in our short film.

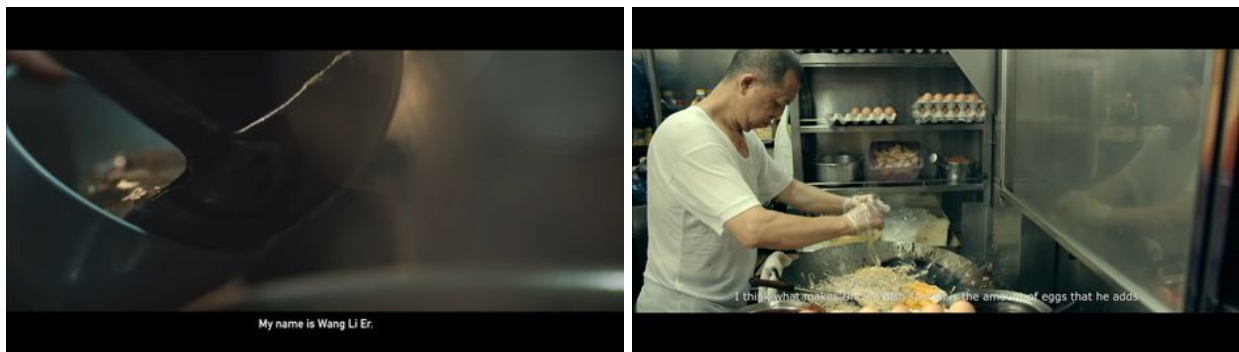
## Process Documentation

### Ideation and Brainstorming

We initially started out with 4 different ideas:

1. Suicide prevention (Scrapped)
  - Too sensitive for us
  - Felt that we were not experienced enough in cinematography to capture the essence of this topic
2. 100th anniversary of Hwa Chong (Scrapped)
  - Did not know how to start on this project
  - Unsure of how to portray this theme
3. Young generation of hawkers (Scrapped)
  - Did a lot of planning but eventually scrapped
  - Felt that it was difficult to find a hawker willing to help us with our project without us needing to pay a fee or interrupting their business
4. Raising awareness for the non-teaching staff in Hwa Chong

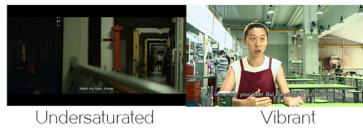
While brainstorming for the 3rd idea, we created a mood board and made references to a series of Tiger Street Food advertisements and even thought of possible hawkers to interview like Tasty Street from Pasir Ris Hawker Centre.



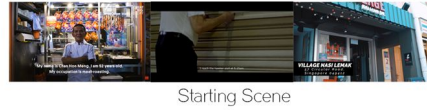
Tiger Street Food Advertisements ('Tiger Street Food - Cambridge Rd. Hong Kong Roast Pork' and 'Tiger Street Food - Char Kway Teow')



## COLOUR GRADING



## SCENES



## LOCATION

Modern vs. Olden



Food Scenes

## Mood Board (References and Inspiration from Other Short Films)

Eventually, we decided on the idea of raising awareness of the non-teaching staff in Hwa Chong due to the difficulties faced with the other ideas.

### Location Scouting

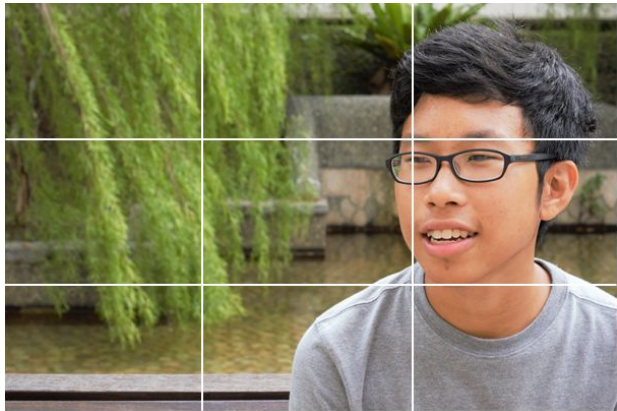
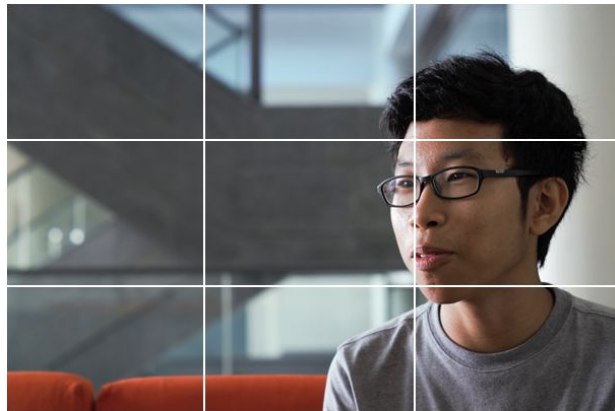
We explored the school for different possible locations to conduct the interview. Some places we considered were the 2nd floor of the International School, the benches beside the Oei Tiong Ham Memorial Hall and the study area below the lecture theatres at the college section. We also explored some locations to film the different scenes like the area in front of the Secondary 1 block for a scene of the cleaner sweeping up dead leaves.





### Experimentation of Different Shots

Based on what we learnt from research we did, we tried out the different shots and find out the different effects each shot produces.



Rule of Thirds for the Interview Shots (Viewer's eyes are drawn to the intersections of any 2 lines)



Long Shot (Showcases environment around subject)





Bird's Eye Shot (Establish the surroundings in relation to the subject)



Close-up Shot (Showcases emotion or give significance to a certain object)

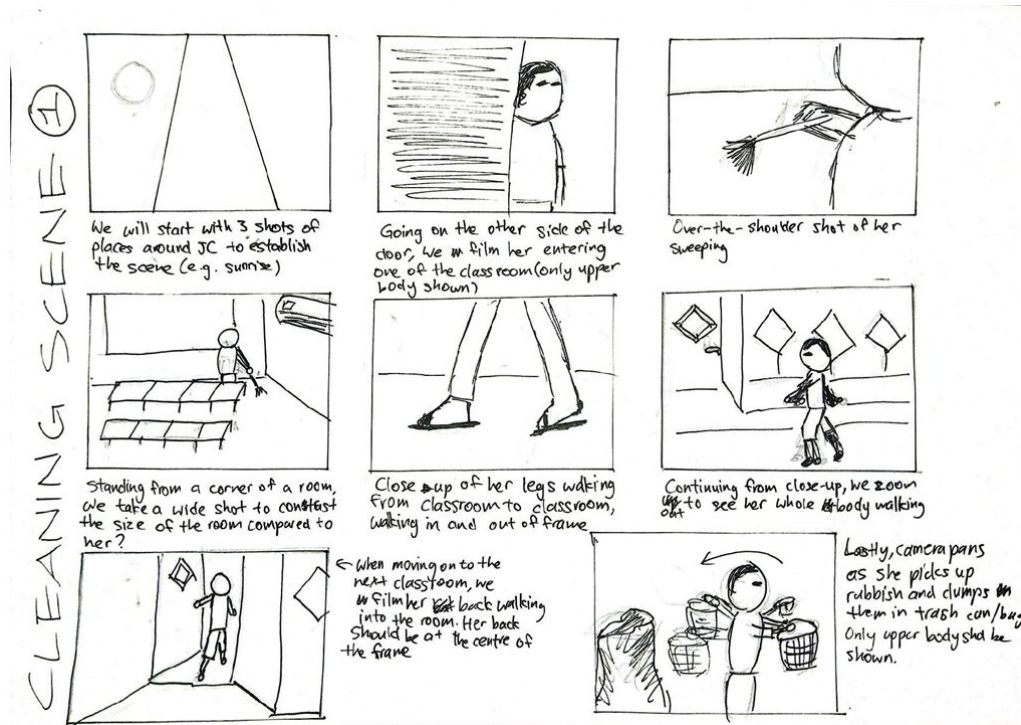


Over the Shoulder (Showcases something from the perspective of the subject)



## Storyboarding

Based on different camera angles we learnt about, we created a storyboard for us to better visualise the different scenes we need to shoot.



Storyboard for Our Final Short Film

## Post Production

We tried experimenting with the Premiere Pro software. For example, we experimented with different looks for the subtitles like the placement, size and the general look of the subtitles.



Subtitles Placed in Letterbox



Subtitles Placed Above Letterbox



Subtitles Placed Above Letterbox with Grey Border

We eventually went for the one where the subtitles were placed above the letterbox, on a grey border.

The first song, titled ‘Morning Walk’, gave the film a sentimental and serene feel. We did not want the film to seem too moody thus the song had an upbeat tempo to it.

The second song, titled ‘Old Soul’, was also a calming piece. Despite the slower paced piano, the violin accompaniment made the song not sound too moody or depressing. Although people might think the lives of the non-teaching staff are mundane, the lives of the staff can still be valued.

## Reflections

### Challenges

Initially, we tried to interview a cleaner named Shanti and the canteen vendors from the Muslim food stall in the high school canteen. We contacted Shanti and worked with her to understand her job scope and conceptualise our film. However, on the day before we wanted to shoot the scenes of her doing her job, she told us that she would be transferred to the High School Admin Office from the next day onwards. It was not possible to film in the Admin Office as the teachers were working and our filming might cause too much of a disturbance. In the end, our efforts were futile and we had to look for another non-teaching staff.



We managed to persuade the canteen vendors from the Muslim food stall in the high school canteen to help us with our project and had shot some scenes of them preparing the food thereafter. However, during the interview, they told us that they were camera-shy, meaning that we would only have audio but no video footage to work with. After reviewing the footage, we found that the footage was also not up to standards as most of the footage was full of noise and shaky. Hence, we searched for other non-teaching staff.

We eventually managed to get one of the Science lab technicians and a cleaner from the college side to help us with our project. However, the science lab technician told us that he would be setting papers for examination hence it would not be suitable to film him do his job. In the end, we were left with the cleaner from the college side.



Interview Shot of Shanti



Shot from Canteen Vendor

### Strengths and Areas for Improvement

We feel that one of our strengths is our quick-thinking. Despite the failures of the past 3 attempts finding a subject for our film, we managed to quickly think of a solution and find other non-teaching staff.

However, one area for improvement is our time management. As a group, we would not effectively plan and manage our time, resulting in a lot of things having to be rushed through. As a result of this poor time management, we lacked a lot of planning before actually shooting the different scenes, resulting in problems like the lack of usable footage.

### What We Learnt from This Project

Through this project, we learnt the importance of teamwork. There were many times where we fell out with each other due to disagreements on certain things. However, in the end, we still came back together to come up with a solution to the problem. Without teamwork, the work would not be done well or in time.

We felt that through this project, we managed to grow in our creative minds. Filmmaking requires a lot of patience, creativity and ideas and it was demoralising when we experienced repeated failures especially when the shots did not work out as expected. We learnt that failures are part-and-parcel in our art journey. In fact, these failures helped us to grow and we ended up thinking of better ideas than before. After this project, we have learnt to enjoy art on a deeper level, making this experience definitely worthwhile!

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