

## My Pets



I have two pretty birds as pets. They are green-and-blue **budgies**. Their home is a shady tree in the garden where they are free to fly from branch to branch. Yet they are safe from the cat as the whole tree is inside a wire enclosure. I have nailed a wooden box on the tree. This is their 'nest' where they sleep at night and where they find shelter whenever it rains.

My pets are called 'Polly' and 'Sally'. They enjoy flying about among the branches and they **chirp** happily all day long. Every morning, I feed them with birdseed and give them a bowl of water to drink. I also clean their 'nest'.

They are pretty birds and I like to watch their movements. I find them **cheery** and lively, so I never feel dull spending my time with them. I love my pets very much.

## Things I Like To Do



I like to play games out in the garden. When it rains, I stay indoors and play card games and scrabble with my family. Alternatively, I **indulge in** doing jigsaw puzzles. I have completed several scenes and pictures.

I also like to play with my puppy. It chases me round the garden and barks at me. It has learnt how to pick up a stick and bring it back to me each time I throw it far off.

Besides this, I like watching my fish and feeding them with worms. They have beautiful colours and I enjoy following their movements in the water.

Drawing pictures and painting them is another activity I enjoy doing. Reading story books is my favourite **pastime** too as there are exciting adventure and mystery stories to keep me **engrossed**.

Lastly, I like watching good television programmes.

## Hari Raya Celebrations



Every year, after one month of **fasting**, Muslims celebrate Hari Raya Puasa which falls in the month of Syawal. All Muslims celebrate the day with great joy. In the morning, they go to the mosque to pray. Then, on returning home, they receive guests and relatives who come to pay them a call.

Days before, the womenfolk make many varieties of cakes, cookies and sweetmeats. They also cook 'rendang' curries and prepare '**satay**' to go with the 'ketupat'. Homes are decorated with many coloured lights all over the garden. Small lamps are lit and placed along the driveway.

On Hari Raya Day, many Malaysians visit their Muslim friends to share their joy. They receive warm hospitality and are entertained to a feast of specially prepared food. Boys and girls wear new clothes and shoes. Girls wear jewellery and boys new 'songkoks'.

The town is usually crowded with Muslims dressed gaily and going about. They visit their friends and relatives while some go to the cinemas or to the Lake Gardens. Many, however, go back to their '**kampungs**' to celebrate the festival with their parents. It is also a time for family reunions. Everyone rejoices during this festive season.

## A Frightful Experience



One day, as I was returning home late from school at about 7.30 p.m., I was **dismayed** to discover a group of rough-looking boys following me.

As I quickened my steps, one of them, apparently the leader, obstructed my path and ordered me to surrender to him my watch and my wallet. At first I resisted, but, when he threatened to cause me harm, I quickly handed over the items. I felt frightened and, at the same time, mad, having to **part with** my possessions as they were of sentimental value to me. Once they had taken possession of my properties, they laughed and made their way to a coffee shop nearby while I was left **fuming** by the road.

At first I wanted to report the incident to the police but, later, I decided against it and went straight home. I told my parents about it and they concluded that it was unsafe for me to walk alone. They then arranged for me to go in my neighbour's car and that solved the problem.

## The Benefits of Television



Television is popular in all Malaysian homes as it is the best form of home entertainment these days.

First of all, television enables people to find entertainment right within their own home without having to **venture** out at all. This saves on transport and time as it is quite difficult to travel to the cinema with traffic jams all over the town. Besides, parking is a problem in the town and so home television is greatly appreciated.

Secondly, television **keeps us in touch** with national as well as world events. Motion pictures help people to follow events better than if they were to read and get the news from the papers and magazines. The news bulletin comes regularly and we are well kept informed of all that is happening around us.

Thirdly, television entertains children with cartoons and other educational programmes. This keeps them happily occupied besides **imparting** knowledge to them in a way beyond the limits of classroom teaching. Adults find watching television shows relaxing after a day's hard work. They can choose their programmes to suit their taste-detective series, thrillers, soap operas, musicals, talks or documentaries which provide general knowledge.

We enjoy the advantage of having three channels to choose from. The national language is heard often and the public can improve their Malay language by listening to features presented on television. Hence, television offers many benefits.

## A Wedding I attended



My cousin sister got married during the December school holidays and my whole family attended the function. Dressed in my best, I went along with my family to the bride's home where the 'Bersanding' ceremony was held. There were beautiful coloured lights and the garden was lit, too. I found flowers everywhere and guests were **milling around**.

On a **dais** in front of the hall were two chairs beautifully adorned in satin and silk, with two velvet cushions for the bridal couple. At about 7.00 p.m., a 'kompany' group started beating their 'kompany' and entered the garden. The bridegroom, dressed in blue 'kain songket' and looking like a Malay prince, arrived next, his **retinue** of young men, and took his place on the dais. Later, the bride, dressed also in blue 'songket kebaya' and 'sarung', arrived looking beautiful. Her jewellery sparkled in the light. In her hair were sweet-scented flowers and 'bunga goyang' which glistened visibly. She looked like a princess and sat next to the bridegroom.

Then the 'kadi' said prayers and everyone was ready for the 'kenduri'. The dinner had all the traditional dishes of 'beriyani', 'kurma', 'dalcha' with salad and 'rendang'. After a sweet dessert, a 'Bunga Telur' was presented to each guest. It consisted of an egg placed in a small, decorated basket with flowers on top. Malay music was played throughout the function and guests were entertained to some cultural shows.

Then it was time to go home. We had enjoyed a hearty meal, blessed the blissful couple and were ready to leave the place.

## A Film I Enjoy Watching



'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs' is my favourite film. I enjoy it very much and have already seen it twice. This Walt Disney film is popular still. Children, as well as adults, find the characters lovable, especially the seven dwarfs and Snow White.

In this film, I enjoy the beautiful woodland scenes, the tiny **cottage** among the trees and the strange, little men -- the dwarfs. The pretty birds, squirrels, deer and other forest creatures are also lovable.

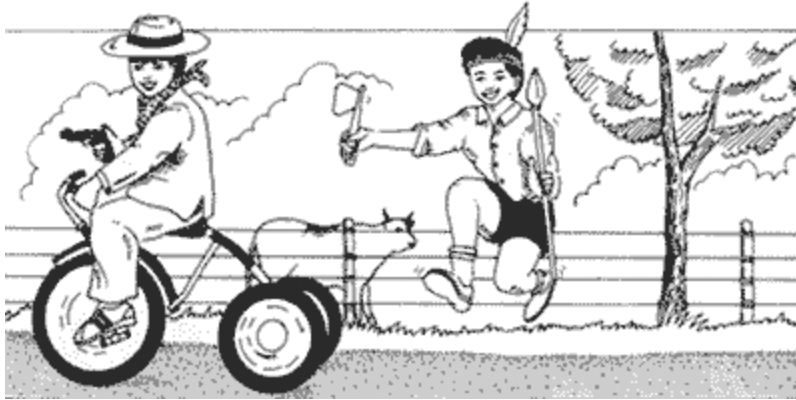
Snow White is charming and dainty, with her sweet voice, round, sparkling eyes and a cute little mouth. She is a pleasure to watch as she sings lovely songs like 'Just Whistle While You Work' and 'Some Day My Prince Will Come' while busy washing, dusting and cooking for the dwarfs. The beautiful scenes are further enhanced by the blue birds who help her along as she works all alone in the house.

The dwarfs are comical with their short, fat bodies and interesting names that suit each of them perfectly -- Doc, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, Sneezy, Bashful and Dopey. I especially like Dopey who is shy and lovable and who always takes up the last position in the queue.

The wicked witch, on the other hand, looks ugly and **repulsive**, especially to children. In contrast, the handsome prince riding on horseback is a welcome character. His waking Snow White up after her long sleep, and riding off with her after saving her life, is a happy scene one will always remember.

I can never get tired of watching 'Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs', one of the best **fairy tales** shown on screen and would dearly love to see it again.

## Memories of my Childhood Days



My first **recollection** of my childhood is the day I **toppled** down the stairs when I was three years old. I was so upset that I cried and cried for nearly an hour in spite of my parents' attempts at comforting me. Finally, I quietened down when I was given ice-cream and chocolates. Luckily, I was not hurt.

My days were happy ones before I started going to school, as I had good neighbours to play with from morning till evening. We played games outdoors, dressed as cowboys and Red Indians and rode about on our tricycles happily. There were also other games to occupy our time.

At the age of five years, I had to attend kindergarten and this turned out to be quite an **ordeal** for me. To begin with, I felt very sad having to leave my mother and go off each morning to be amongst strangers. I cried and wanted my mother around, much to my teacher's displeasure. As the days went by, however, I made friends easily in class and found company. I became happy again and actually looked forward to leaving the house each morning.

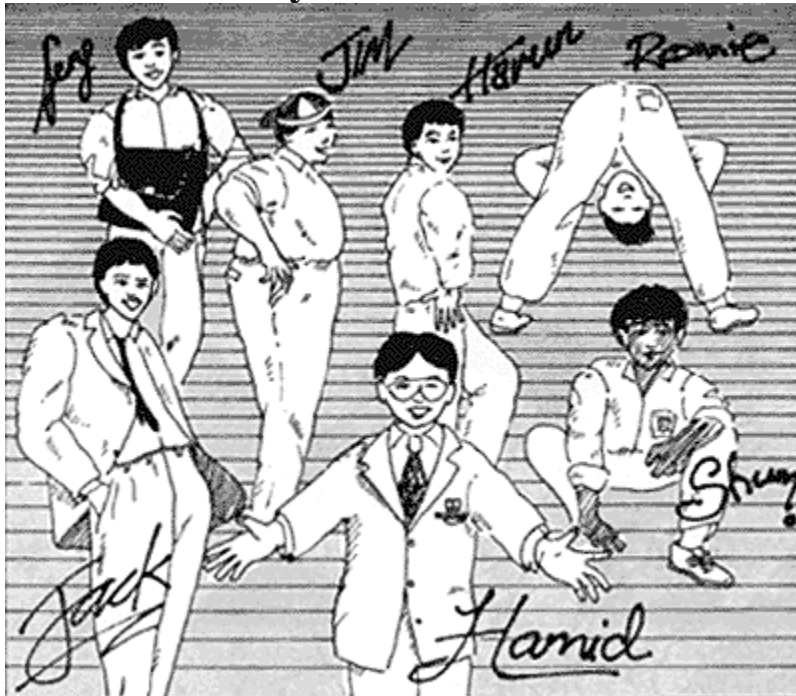
I still remember those days when I was learning to ride a bicycle. I fell and bruised myself several times but I never gave up. Finally, I was able to join my friends going around the neighbourhood on my bike.

Another fond memory is the end-of-year concert held at the kindergarten. I was chosen to play the role of Jack in the play, 'Jack and the Beanstalk', and I became a celebrity overnight receiving lots of compliments for my performance.

I now realise what a wonderful childhood I have had and at times wish I could relive those days.



## My Classmates



There are thirty-five students of all races in my class. They include Chinese, Malays, Indians, a Eurasian, an Arab and a Filipino. We get along well and are a happy lot.

The outstanding ones in my class are Wong, Harun and Segar who **excel in** sports and games. Shum, Ravi, Hamid and Johnny are excellent in studies and we are proud of them.

The funniest characters are Jim, Ronnie and Seng who are always joking and are the source of much laughter in the class. Jim is the fattest of all and we call him the 'Incredible Hulk'. Seng is as thin as a **rake** and we call him 'Grasshopper' or 'Coconut Palm'. Ronnie is always heard quoting wise sayings, so we call him 'Professor'. Then, there is Jack, an excellent dancer who is vain and very proud of his handsome look. We call him 'John Travolta' because he loves to dress after the star and **takes pride in** his appearance. I shall feel sorry when we have to part at the end of the school year.

I shall certainly miss the fun we now share as a mixed bunch of friendly teenagers.

## My Favourite TV Cartoon Programme



Of all the TV cartoon programmes I watch, I enjoy most the one with funny little blue men called, 'The Smurfs'. This is a weekly show with a colourful background of green woods, flowers, butterflies, birds and squirrels.

These small blue creatures, the Smurfs, have, as their leader, Papa Smurf, a good character. They help unfortunate creatures including outsiders in difficult situations. Then, there's Smurfette, a lovely girl Smurf with a delightful voice, helpful and ladylike in all her ways. Next, we have Baby Smurf, a truly lovable character whose language is cute and adorable and it is a pleasure to watch her and listen to her baby language.

The scenes are set mainly outdoors in pretty surroundings in the woods with lots of trees, flowers, ponds, hills, waterfalls and rivers which delight the eye.

Most fairy tales have giants, witches or monsters, and 'The Smurfs' is of no exception. There is Gargamelle, a wicked, ugly wizard, cruel to the Smurfs whom he plans to catch and imprison. Many a time, the Smurfs escape his cruel clutches and are free. His cat, Azriel, is a wild and unpleasant creature making **erie** sounds and mewing. He and Gargamelle are always punished for their **misdeeds** and **wickedness**.

I enjoy this programme as I find it amusing and entertaining especially with its beautiful scenery. Besides, the Smurfs are a lovable lot.

