Shirley Tan (17)

T03

**Part 1**

During the tang dynasty, there is a type of glazed pottery that uses yellow, white and green. This pottery is then called Sancai, the tri-coloured glazed pottery. The pottery glaze is low melting. To achieve different colours, different metal oxides are added to the glaze such as copper oxide for green and iron oxide for amber.

When firing, the chemicals in the glaze change steadily to produce a varicoloured effect with a magnificent and graceful creative attraction. They are jade-like and have a pale greenish grey tint. The pottery was mainly used as burial wares. The base is loose and brittle and the pottery is not very waterproof. Hence, it was not as practical as the blue and white porcelain that already existed during that time. The ceramics are made in a variety of decorative shapes. The human and animal figures have realistic features. The soldier figures have well-built muscles and wield weapons. The female figures have a natural and refined look. The animal figures are usually horses or camels. Animal-shape potteries were cast in moulds and then carved in detail.

(Tang Tri-colored Glazed Pottery)



The ebony black lacquer gave off a delicate yet mysterious luster, preserving the ceramics. The intense red highlights decorations stood out passionately against the black lacquer, as if trying to show their power and strength. From afar, one can see the perfect symmetry of these lacquerwares and that there are many precise details on them.

The first lacquerwareware is built with three parts; the stand, the bowl and the cover. The stand has three levels, with the taller one bigger than each level. The levels have equally rounded edges. These enable light to reflect and vaguely showing the lacquer’s original colour; brown. What’s connecting the stand to the bowl is a short rod with a raised band. The bowl consists of two raised bands at the bottom. The bottom-raised band is larger than the top one and the raised band at the short rod. The top raised band is slightly smaller than the bottom one. The bowl looked like a pot with curved, smoothed side. The lid is the same size as the base of the stand. At the center, there is a spire that has several ribs that are different sizes.

The next lacquerware has the shape of a pumpkin with a half sphere stand and a ball-like spire. It is ribbed like a real pumpkin. Between the ribs, vertical red line is drawn on it. A horizontal red line is also drawn across the center of the pumpkin. Furthermore, vertical lines of gilded diamonds are decorated on the center of each ribs. There is a bright red raised band linking the pumpkin to the spire. This beautifully decorated and unique laquerware will not make anyone disappointed after looking.

At the center of the photo, lies the biggest lacquereware exhibited. It is the most detailed compared to the others. It has three identical leg stands, similar to a tripod. The legs are bend and have an incised part. The parts are coated in ruby red. Between the top of the legs is a pair of wing-like decorations. Each wing has three holes on it. The sides of the wings are highlighted red too. Above those, there is a red raised band and a vertically flat ribbed bowl. The surface of the bowl is very well polished that its sheen is so visible. A plate-like lid with a spire that has similar ribs and various sized raised bands is on top of the bowl. This exclusive lacquerware will give off a holy and magnificent vibe to everyone.

Beside the main attention is a tiny small box. The box is shaped like the Burmese mythological bird duck, Hintha. Do not belittle it, as it is believed to give good luck. At the center of the sides, two red lines are highlighted, which is actually the box’s opening. The box has the prominent features of the bird duck in red, which are the comb, eyebrows, eyes and beak. The eyes are typical white-eye with black pupil. I am sure that this weird yet adorable small box will make anyone go “how cute!”.

Next to the small box is barrel-like lacquerware with a more narrow overturned bowl shape. It gives off an “as strong as a barrel” feel. It also looks as if you can use it as a drum.

The last lacquerware is slightly similar to the first lacquerware. However, it has a small hexagon stand and bowl. The stand also has three levels like the first lacquerware. The bowl has a red line drawn across the middle of the sides. The tip has raised bands at equal gaps in between and a rounded band with a red line drawn across the diameter.

(802 words)

**Part 2**

**Paragraph 1 and 2**

What lessons have you learnt from the novel Single Shard?

I learned that to achieve a goal, one does not need status or a high standing but need determination. Even Tree-ear, despite being an orphan, can become a potter, which is passed down from father to son. He accomplished this through persistence, endurance and patience. When the vases he was transporting were thrown, he decided to look for them in hopes of it not being broken. He then found them broken but then thought of a way to show Min’s skills. He quickly travels to Songdo without eating or resting much. Hence, I can still reach my goals even when it seems impossible.

I also learned that one must not resort to stealing even when you are poor. Tree-ear and Crane-man get by through searching in dumps and scavenging and foraging in the wild. They also waited for people to finish harvesting the crops in the field before taking the leftovers. Therefore, I should never resort to stealing but instead, make full use of the resources available to me. I must also not take advantage others’ kindness. Tree-ear resisted the urge to eat finish his food despite knowing that the bowl will be refilled again when he go to collect it.

**Paragraph 3 to 5**

Has it inspired you to read other Newberry Readers? You can express your views and disagreements about reading and give reasons for them. How can we promote the reading habit in Ngee Ann? The word count for this part is between 750 to 1,000 words.

It inspired me to read other Newberry Readers books, as I believe they can also teaches me lessons. Not only this but I can also expand my vocabulary as Single Shard uses many profound words. To me, I find that having a bigger vocabulary will help me in expressing myself more articulately.

It uses adjectives that enable me to visualise the generation they are in and also the pots. This makes me feel like I am inside the world that they are in. The characters in Single Shard are also quite likable as they are funny and real. I feel attached to the characters and their relations with each other. The events in the story were quite intense and emotional. The robbers throwing the vases were a bit predictable but were still very saddening. Also, Tree-ear’s reaction and thoughts about Crane-man’s death was very heartbreaking and tear jerking. These events stirred up a surge of emotions within me.

To promote the reading habit in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), NP should make use of their media they have. They can allow short essay stories to be submitted and published in the NP library, a webpage in NP website or NP magazines. Additionally, NP can ask students to vote for the best writers and then give awards to the writers. Similarly, the NP radio station can have a new program, which is reading a five to ten minutes short story. Also, NP should subsidy the costs of storybooks costs so that reading something is not that expensive. During lessons, there should be some reading-related activities. The class can have a discussion and talk about one another’s favourite book and the reason why it is their favourite. They can also bring their favourite or recommended books from their house or library to class and exchange it for another for a few days. The class can also have a partner or a group to do a reading aloud session. This will make students feel not nervous or shy, as the group is small. Teachers play a big role in promoting the reading habit. They should participate in the activities too, to show a good role model. Teacher can use a small reward system to reward those who did a certain number of book reviews. This will encourage students to read more. The teacher can also show the class one of the best reviews to the class and urge them to read these books.

Currently, during classes, teachers would pick a few students in the whole class to read and the other students have to grade them. I do not think that this is a good idea as students grading them would not be able to concentrate or follow the pace of the reader. This makes the students unable to follow the story and causing them having to reread the story again. The readers might also be shy and nervous when reading to many people. Thus, did not do a proper reading. Also, when listening to other people reading, the reading can be unclear or soft at times. Although, the teachers did participate in the reading, it is quite hard to follow the story as the teachers start to read at the end of the chapter, where the students are already lost. To ease this problem, students should actually have a silent reading instead and then answer questions given by the teachers.

(768 words)