

AMANDA XIANG 4S

PUBLIC SPEAKING SOLO CHAMPION

64TH HONG KONG SCHOOLS SPEECH FESTIVAL (ENGLISH)

For the past 10 years, I have been living in this very fast developing 21st century. I'm a modern global citizen- I wear dresses, leather shoes, blue jeans, just like you all do...but I'm no ordinary girl.

I was born in 1810, (in case you don't know, it was) the year when Napoleon the First got married twice, the year when Columbia and Argentina declared their independence from Spain, the year when composer Chopin was born. I'm lucky to be here in 2012, but somehow, not.

In my early years, I was ambitious. Yes, ambitious, so ambitious that I built a practical time machine. And I actually traveled back to the Elizabethan time from my time.

During the travel, there were flashbacks of memories. Many of those I've forgotten after journeys and journeys, but I remember how Shakespeare was raised to the peak of sophistication and artistry by his fantastic works, I remember how Queen Elizabeth the First created the Gold Age of English history, and I remember how Elizabethans' national pride was inspired through classical ideals, international expansion, and naval triumphs.

I enjoyed the simplicity of the villagers' lives. I watch as they live the same routine every day- wake up, work in the fields, read, eat and sleep.

I wanted to see more, so I went back to the 1900s, and it was the time when I no longer saw a routine or simple world. Economically growing countries were beginning to stumble across energy bonanza in fossil fuels; humans were beginning to link up globally by means of shipping, trains and telegraphs...

And then I came here, to the present and to this room with you. I'm a girl from the past who has been on a journey across hundreds of years. And after experiencing the changes in the world, I have a message for you.

Travelling back in time made me realize the fragility of human nature. We underestimate the importance of our present and our future. I now see how people

around the world, and in Hong Kong, interact, work and use resources without consideration of their future generations.

And It breaks my heart. With its light bulbs, stoves, laptops, the complexity in modern society is endangering everyone.

So this is what I want. I want you, the future generation I see, to understand and know the story of humanity... and to know it so well. So well... that only then will you understand both the challenges and the opportunities that you face TODAY, at this moment on our wonderful planet.