

A Digital Take on Total Defence Day 2021 Celebrations @ OLQP

The school buzzed with activity during the two months leading up to Total Defence Day 2021. Despite the restrictions placed upon us by the COVID-19 pandemic as the day grew closer, we were determined to make it a memorable celebration for the staff and students of OLQP alike. What was first planned as an in-school fully live event went somewhat digital as circuit-breaker rules set in. But in true spirit of Total Defence, we found ways around each challenge and soldiered on!

It's all in the preparation

This year's theme, inspired by how the nation came together during the pandemic, was "Together we keep Singapore strong". Unity and teamwork were very much part of the preparations gearing up to the day itself.



Our Student Emcess for The Programme Via Zoom

All our students were in good voice in the week leading up to the big day as they practised the Total Defence Song: "There's a Part for Everyone". By 19 February 2021, Total Defence Day, everyone knew the lyrics, and our talented young actors in the Drama Club had committed their chosen skit to video format. Always looking for silver linings when dark clouds form, we can say that our Drama Club actors can now add movie maker and director to their growing list of talents!

Through the week, the students also had CCE lessons that taught them about the 6 pillars of Total Defence.

Kicking off the big day

Our Principal's address took place via Zoom as the school day began and as the celebrations kicked off at 11.30 am, the students watched the video address by our Minister of Defence, Dr Ng Eng Hen.



Everyone sat enthralled by the Drama Club's video skit, which told the story of a family affected by the circuit breaker and how they followed the six different pillars of defence amid the crisis. It included a warning on fake news and how fellow students could stay safe in the digital space, particularly relevant in these Covid times.

Time for play

Keeping with the digital theme, students were then brought through a video board game laid on by Singapore Discovery Centre. Each class was divided into four teams and each team had a video board to play on. They were tasked to take on the character of a food delivery rider and, through the game, got to understand how the pandemic was affecting different lives through the stories of five characters they met with each roll of the digital dice. These stories tested the players' understanding of economic and psychological resilience and the importance of staying optimistic during trying times.

Sharing by our very own naval submarine officer

The importance of Total Defence was brought closer to home for our students as they tuned in to hear from the father of one of our own students. Elizabeth Fong's father, a Naval Officer in a submarine no less, was kind enough to share with us, via video link from his home, his role in the Navy and how he contributes to the Total Defence of the nation.



A colourful close

The celebrations finished off with all of our students taking part in two colouring activities. First came the Digital Defence exercise, where they tore out bookmarks from their booklets and coloured them in. They then went on to design their own Total Defence Shield, which they could take home at the end of the day. These activities were age appropriate with P1-P4 students working from their Kindsville Times booklets and P5-P6 students working from their A-Ok booklets.



Our Students' Impressive Designs

Co-ordination of the event this year was an unusual challenge for staff as it involved lining up several digital segments – a total departure from past Total Defence days. But even this demonstrated what can be done when we are determined to work together to keep the school and Singapore strong amid any crisis.

Congratulations to all involved for making this a successful Total Defence Day!