



## EXOTIC PETS

Have you ever thought of keeping a pet? What should we consider before keeping one? Do you know what the most popular pets are in Hong Kong?



Dogs and cats have been the most popular pets for people in Hong Kong to keep. However, in recent years, more and more people like to keep exotic animals.

### What are exotic pets?

In general, exotic pets refer to animals that are not native to Hong Kong.

### Why do people keep exotic pets?

There are different reasons for why people like to keep exotic pets. Some people want to keep an unusual animal as a pet. Others may think that keeping exotic pets make them different from others. Or they find the animal cute and buy it out of impulse.

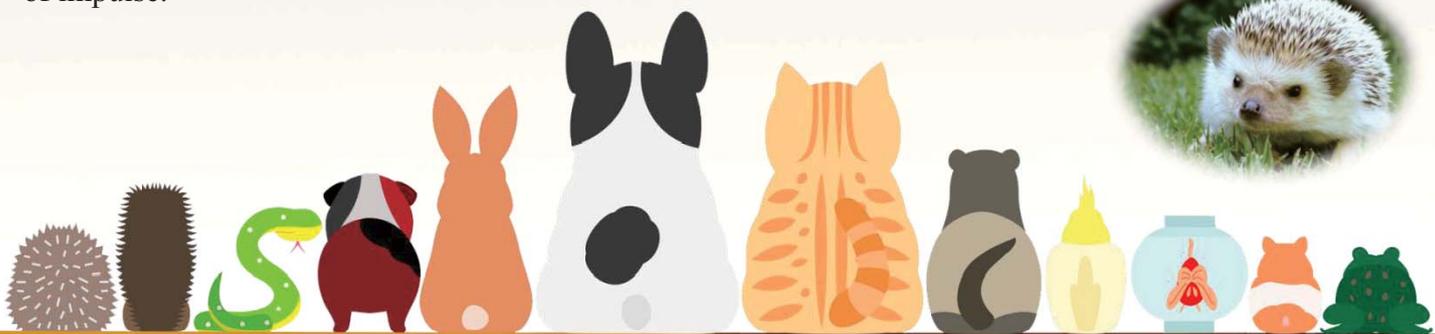
However, exotic pets may need special attention and many are unsuited to the local environment. Some of them may even be endangered species and should not be kept in captivity.

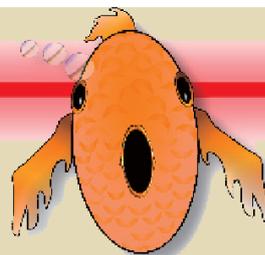
What are some of the common exotic pets found in Hong Kong? Are you familiar with any of the following?



### Hedgehogs

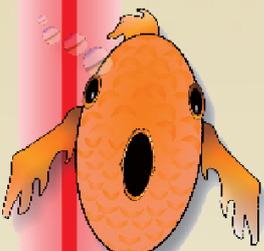
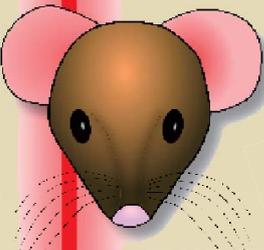
Hedgehogs can be found in Europe, Asia and Africa. They are covered with sharp spines, which is one of their distinct features. The spines are used for defense when they are scared or nervous. They are nocturnal and spend most of the day sleeping. They like to play and run in wheels, so they may make a lot of noise at night. They are not the best choice for people who go to bed early. They are easy to care for and they have very little smell. They are cute, curious and cuddly.





### Snakes

There are different species of snakes. The most popular snake that is kept as a pet is the python. It can be found in Africa, Asia and Australia. There are 31 species of pythons that can be found around the world and some of them are on the verge of extinction. Most snakes tend to live long lives. For example, corn snakes have a lifespan of 5-10 years, ball pythons can live for 20-30 years, and kingsnakes often live for 12-15 years.



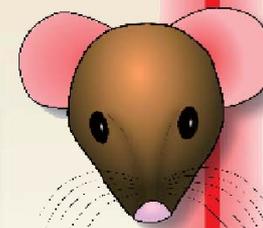
The skin of pythons can be used to make belts, shoes, handbags or even the sound board of some string musical instruments, like the erhu.

People like to keep pythons as pets because they are easy to keep, docile and they have vibrant colours.

### Lizards

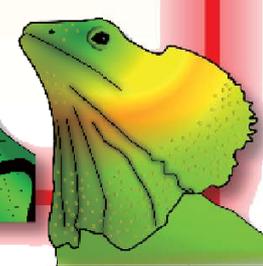
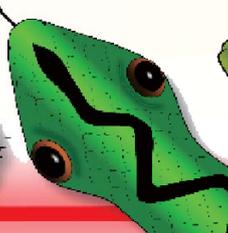
Lizards are small reptiles. They share some similar features with snakes. They are active during the day. Most lizards are harmless to humans. Some people eat lizards as it is believed that lizards can keep them healthy. Besides, some people use lizard skins to make different kinds of products.

In general, lizards require more maintenance than other exotic pets as their faeces are smelly so the cage should be cleaned frequently.



### Dormice

Most dormice are found in Europe and some species can be found in Africa or Asia. They have long periods of hibernation which may last up to six months if the outside temperature remains cold. They are small in general. Their body length is only 3-4 inches. They look like a mouse but with bushy tails. They are nocturnal and quite active at night. They are social animals and can be kept in groups of two or more.



## Chinchillas

A chinchilla is native to South America. It looks like a mouse. It can live for about 15 to 22 years. People use its fur to make clothes. Chinchillas are popular pets but they require much care, especially dental care because their teeth continually grow throughout their lives. Besides, the temperature at home has to be carefully controlled since they do not sweat.



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No matter what kind of pet that you want to keep, you have to be a responsible pet owner. Once you keep a pet, you should be committed to taking good care of it and keeping it for the rest of its life. Don't abandon any pets. Also, you can consider adopting one from the SPCA instead of buying one from a pet shop.



## Mr Li's English Corner

### The Pleasures of Being a Pet Owner!



If you've ever had a pet, you'd know how much pleasure they can bring to your lives. I don't have a pet at the moment as I don't think I could give it all the time and attention it would need.

Owning a pet is a big responsibility, and much thought should be given to whether you should keep one or not.



My first pets were 3 goldfish bought from a high street pet shop. They were tiny little things I took home in a clear plastic bag. I kept them in a fish tank and they lived happily for many years. Watching them swim around was a good way to relax. Sadly, when one of them died, the others followed soon after. I put them in a plastic box and buried them in the garden. It is a sad day when a pet passes away, but they live on in our memories.

I do enjoy listening to people's stories about their pets. It's very interesting to hear what they get up to – the way they behave is often very surprising and amusing. If you have a funny pet story, I'd love to hear it.

I enjoy watching the TV channels *Animal Planet* and *Nat Geo Wild*, especially shows which feature pet owners and the problems they have with their pets. These problems can be very frustrating for both owner and animal, but it's amazing to see pet experts giving advice that can help solve these problems and bring about a happy ending.



According to the SPCA, pets can be found in 12% of all households in Hong Kong, with dogs (37%), cats (18.9%) and turtles and tortoises (18.7%) being the top 3 types of pet. If you have a pet, I hope you have many years of happiness together. If you are thinking of becoming a pet owner, make sure you do some research before you make a commitment. Pets can give us so much pleasure, but we must remember to be a responsible pet owner!

Pet statistics:

<https://www.sPCA.org.hk/en/animal-welfare/what-is-animal-welfare/animal-welfare-in-hong-kong>

# Our New Members



Ms Leung (T) was interviewed by  
Eva Chan (4A) and Francoise Li (4B) (Ss)

Ss: Ms Leung, what is your favourite food?



T: My favourite food is dessert, such as strawberry cheesecake, and ice-cream.

Ss: What leisure activities do you like?

T: I like singing and swimming.

Ss: How would you describe yourself as a student?

T: I always paid attention during lessons. Also, I was nice to teachers and they liked me very much.

Ss: How do you feel at St. Teresa Secondary School?

T: When I first entered this school for an interview, I felt that the school was a nice place.

Ss: What is your impression of our students?

T: Students in St. Teresa are generally good, especially during the lessons. They pay attention and they are eager to ask questions and learn.

Ss: Why did you choose to be a Maths teacher?

T: I was inspired by my father because he is also a Maths teacher.

Ss: Do you enjoy being a teacher?

T: I think being a teacher is an interesting job for me and I made up my mind to become a teacher when I was at university. Being a teacher is a very meaningful job, and I want to teach my students what I have learnt.

Ss: Did you think Maths was easy when you were a student?

T: Not really, especially at university. Maths was quite difficult for me because the questions usually required a lot of proof.

Ss: How did you feel when you started being a teacher?

T: At the very beginning, I felt very nervous, especially in the first year of teaching, because the students in that school were not very nice and they were very naughty sometimes. Every time I entered the classroom, I felt nervous.

Ss: Do you have any unforgettable experiences of teaching?

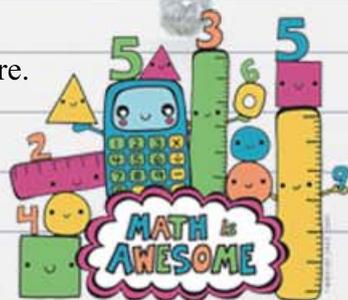
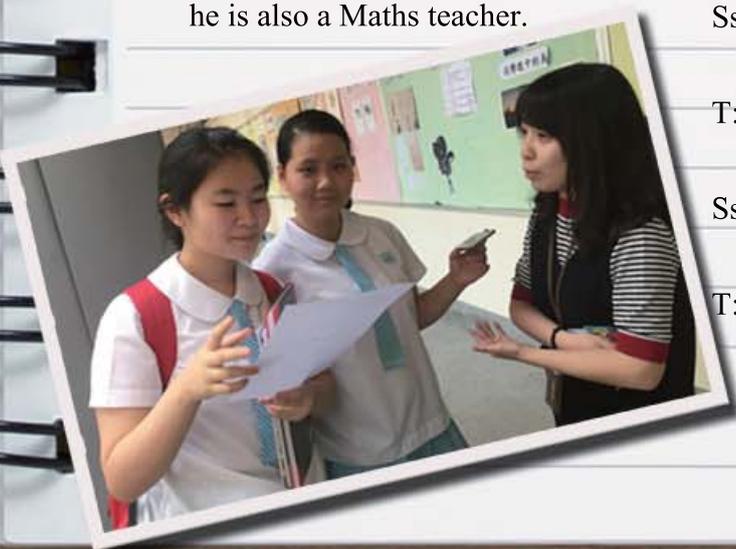
T: One of my students was not good at Maths, and she felt very frustrated about that. After I talked with her and taught her every day, her interest in Mathematics was greatly aroused and finally she got a good grade in her DSE.

Ss: When you are stressed, how do you relieve your pressure?

T: When I feel stressed, I listen to music and talk to my best friend.

Ss: Ms Leung, thanks for letting us interview you.

T: It was my pleasure.



Ms Cheung (T) was interviewed by  
Christine Leung (5A) and Charis Chiu (5B) (Ss)

- Ss: Ms Cheung, what do you usually do when you are free?
- T: I have quite a lot of interests, for example, running, practising yoga, cooking and walking my dogs.
- Ss: Why did you want to be a teacher?
- T: I think being a teacher gives me the most sense of achievement. And I think it is a meaningful job.
- Ss: What is the biggest challenge of being a teacher?
- T: There are two challenges. One is workload. All teachers in Hong Kong have a huge workload. I have to be very self-disciplined and manage my time very well to finish my work. Another challenge is that teachers have to take care of different students. They have different personalities and may have different emotions every day. It is not easy to manage them.
- Ss: Do you have any unforgettable experiences of teaching?
- T: After the first year of teaching, I felt quite stressed by my work and I thought of giving it up. But at that time, my students wrote me messages telling me how they liked my teaching. I was really touched at that time, so I changed my mind in the end and didn't give up my career.
- Ss: What was your first impression of our school?
- T: When I first came to this school, I thought it was very spacious, and it was well-equipped with different facilities.
- Ss: Do you have any expectations of our schoolmates?
- T: I want them to be responsible and proactive in learning. They can always find some opportunities to learn in their daily life. Another one is about learning English. I always want them not to be afraid of making

- Ss: mistakes. I always believe "the more you try, the better you will get at English".
- T: What do you recommend students do if they are under stress from their studies?
- Ss: I will advise them to do more exercise. For me, I didn't use to be a sporty person. But in the past few years, I have started running and practising yoga. I have found that doing sports can always help me relax. Although I may feel a bit tired after exercising I am always mentally full of energy even though I am physically tired.

- Ss: How did you study English when you were young?
- T: When I was in secondary 2, I was very keen on a

- music band from the USA. I always listened to their songs and even read and studied the lyrics as well. I also read a lot of English magazines because of the band. Another thing was that I enjoyed doing grammar exercises.
- Ss: You may think it is strange, but I do like grammar a lot. I spent a lot of time doing grammar exercises when I was a student.

- Ss: Can you give us some suggestions on improving our English?
- T: I think the most important thing is not to be afraid of making mistakes. Students are not confident enough when speaking in English. But if you are not afraid of making mistakes, I think you are already half way to success. Another suggestion is that you should always pay attention to the words around you, no matter if you are on an MTR train or in the street. You can always learn some new and interesting vocabulary in your daily life. Just be curious about the language!

- Ss: Thanks for giving us some useful advice.
- T: You're welcome.





Mr Tong (T) was interviewed by  
Shirley Mak (5A), Rachel Cheung (5B) and  
Doris Lo (5B) (Ss)

Ss: Mr Tong, what do you like to do in your free time?

T: I am quite a boring guy. I don't have many interests. But in my free time, I like doing some exercise, for example, playing ball games and cycling. I also like cooking.

Ss: Why do you like to be a teacher?

T: It is because I love to instill in my students the knowledge I have and I love to play with them. More importantly, I want to share my learning experiences with my students so that they can learn from them.

Ss: If you were not a teacher, what would you like to do?

T: Since I have strong interest in engineering, perhaps I might be an engineer or scientist if I were not a teacher.

Ss: Do you think being a teacher is stressful?

T: Teachers are under great stress nowadays. But every job is stressful in different ways.

Ss: How do you relieve your stress?

T: I do exercise, play sports and watch movies. I can forget about work temporarily and let myself relax.

Ss: What do you think about our schoolmates?

T: They are energetic, charming and diligent. Also, they are willing to learn and serve the school.

Ss: What do you expect our students to achieve?

T: I hope they can achieve more in their academic studies and external competitions.

Ss: Thanks, Mr Tong, for spending time with us.

T: You're welcome.





Ms So (T) was interviewed by BoBo Siu (5B) (S)

S: What do you do in your spare time?

T: I sometimes watch funny variety shows. I also go cycling and swimming in my spare time.

S: Which festival do you like most?

T: I like every festival! I think every festival has its own unique value because they all have their own special characteristics which reflect traditional culture.

S: Why did you want to be a teacher?

T: It became my dream when I was in secondary three because I liked Science very much. Also, I got inspired by and appreciated the idea of "no child left behind" from my secondary teachers because they provided education for all people without discrimination.

S: Apart from being a teacher, did you think of doing any other jobs?

T: In the past, I thought of becoming a flight attendant because that would have allowed me to travel to and explore many places, and broadening my horizons.

S: Do you think teachers nowadays are under great stress? And how do you cope with stress?

T: Yes, they are. For me, I like to eat my favourite food and chat with my friends to reduce my stress. Sometimes, I do some exercise to relax myself and sleep earlier.

S: What is your impression of students at St. Teresa?

T: I think the form two students are quite passive sometimes. However, the form three and form five students are more energetic, and they like to express themselves more, so I can communicate with them more easily.

S: What advice would you give to students to help them get better academic results?

T: If there is something you don't understand, you can first discuss it with your classmates. If you still can't find the answer, you should ask your teachers immediately. Don't wait until the uniform tests and exams.

S: Which Catholic value do you think is the most important?

T: Truth. We should maintain correct beliefs and follow the way of truth. We should also have a deep trust in God because God is the truth in our life and He is always with us.

S: Ms So, thank you for your sharing.

T: You're welcome.



Mr Wong (T) was interviewed by Kaur Manpreet (3C) and Cindy Ngai (3C) (Ss)

Ss: Mr Wong, which university did you graduate from?

T: I graduated from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, with a major in Physics. I love CUHK so much, especially its campus.

Ss: Have you studied abroad before? If yes, where did you study?

T: When I was studying in CUHK, I had the chance to go for a summer research exchange at Caltech (California Institution of Technology) in the USA. I found that my English speaking skills improved a lot when I was living in a foreign environment.

Ss: Which subject do you like most?

T: It is Physics. Even though I am now teaching in a secondary school, I still always study the subject in depth by reading books and websites at weekends and during holidays.

Ss: How long have you been a teacher?

T: I have been teaching in secondary schools for three years.

Ss: Why did you choose to teach in our school?

T: I applied for a teaching position in this school because I have always wanted to make use of my science knowledge in an innovative environment. I noticed that students at St. Teresa had got so many STEM awards. Therefore, I thought it was a suitable school for me.



Ss: Have you taught in a girls' school before?

T: It's my first time to teach in a girls' school. In fact, it is quite similar to teaching in co-educational schools.

Ss: What do you think about our students?

T: I think most students are quiet and polite. Some are active and some are shy. They can always share their happiness with friends and they are studying in a school full of fun.

Ss: Why did you want to be a teacher?

T: When I was working as a tutor in CUHK, I found that I could teach well, my students could learn, and they liked learning from me. Finally, I have gained much happiness from teaching students. Therefore, I enjoy being a teacher. Oh yes, I like to talk to my students.

Ss: What do you expect from our schoolmates?

T: I hope students of St. Teresa can learn something new every day, not only in science or technology, but also communication skills and about having a world-wide perspective. I hope you all can finally understand the meaning of life.

Ss: Mr Wong, thanks for sharing with us.

T: It was my pleasure.

