

HOU KONG MIDDLE & PREMIER SCHOOL, MACAU, CHINA



BRINGING A LOVE OF READING TO STUDENTS IN MACAU, CHINA

When classroom teachers from Macau, China came to the United States to visit elementary school classrooms, they happened upon the ***Read Side by Side Reading Program***, and were impressed to see students reading novels with purpose and engagement. They became inspired to bring the same **love of reading** to their trilingual students who speak Cantonese, Mandarin, and English.

Judy Buckland, professor for the School of Education at Central Washington University, began purchasing curriculum for the schools and bringing books in her suitcase on each visit to Macau.

But the question remained, would this reading program written for American classrooms have the same appeal and impact on Chinese students? Following the use of the program in these schools over the last three years has been exciting. While modifications have been made to the program to adapt it to the unique goals and culture of the buildings, students and teachers continue to see rewards. **Students are enjoying the books, and they are showing growth in comprehension and vocabulary.**

“The students enjoy hearing their teachers read books aloud to them. It is an opportunity for them to hear the English language, and understand what it means to read with fluency and expression.”

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A Special Place

Hou Kong Premier School is affiliated with Hou Kong Middle School. Both campuses are Chinese medium schools where local teachers, teachers from mainland China, and teachers from all over the world help students master and apply Mandarin as well as the English language. **Developing and increasing the English language proficiency of students is one of HKP's core goals.**



Leaders at both schools, Jane and Magnolia, pose with Sarah Collinge and Judy Buckland in 2018.

The English Teachers

Walk into the English teacher's classrooms at Hou Kong Premier School and you will see evidence of the *Read Side by Side Reading Program* everywhere. Student work is displayed on the wall showing students' thinking while reading books like *Marvin Redpost: Why Pick on Me?*, *There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom*, *Among the Hidden*, and *Maniac Magee*. **Books rich in language, humor and craft**—written by some of the most popular American authors—have found their way to Macau, China. The **students are eager to be reading these engaging books.**

The schools partner with Central Washington University and Oregon State University to bring teaching interns to the school to work with Chinese students each term. This infusion of American culture gives students to an opportunity to practice formal and informal English with native speakers.

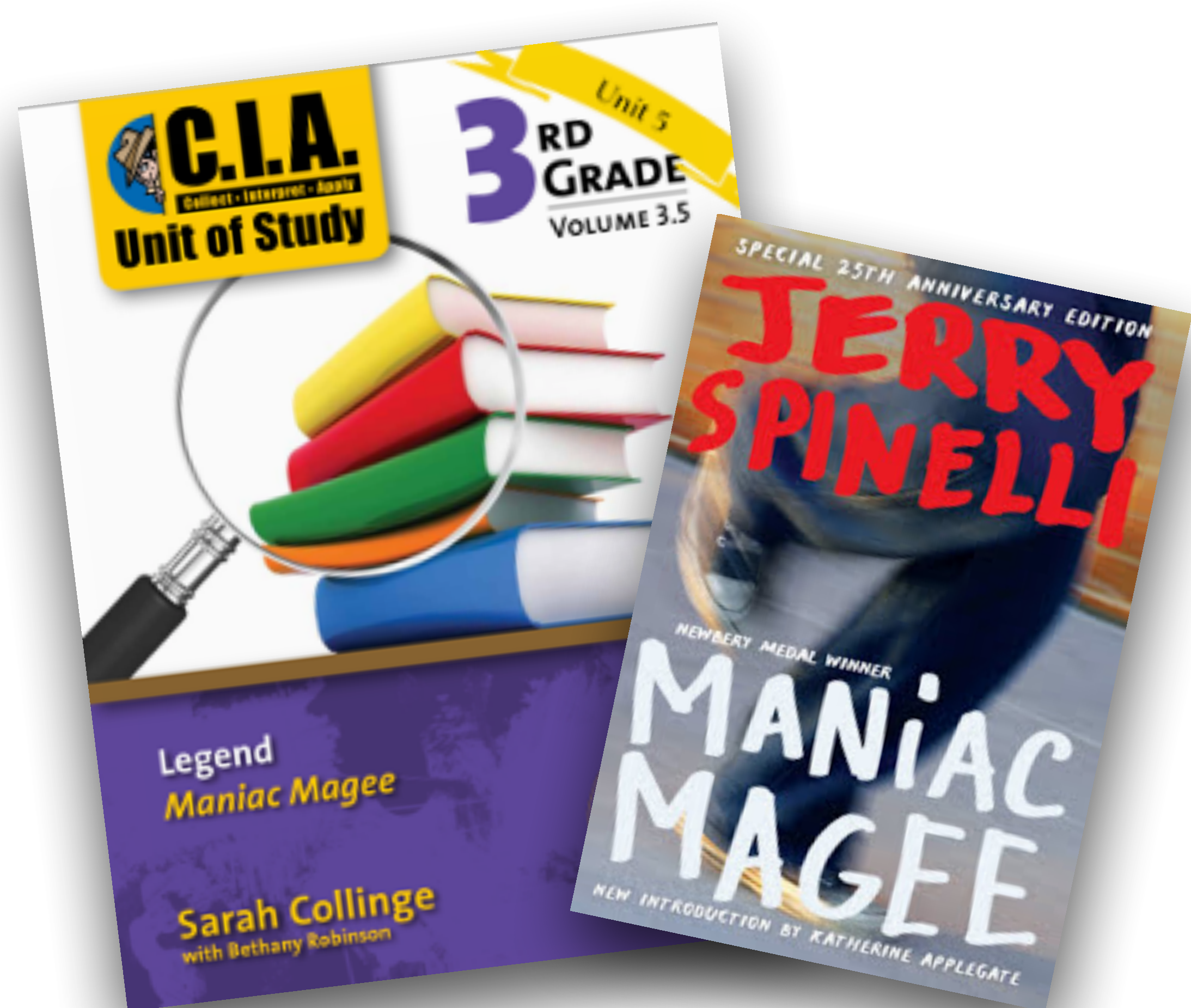
Both schools provide an environment of learning that is special—bringing local Macau students a high quality education that allows them to enter the global world after graduation.



Student work is proudly displayed on the wall in one sixth-grade classroom.

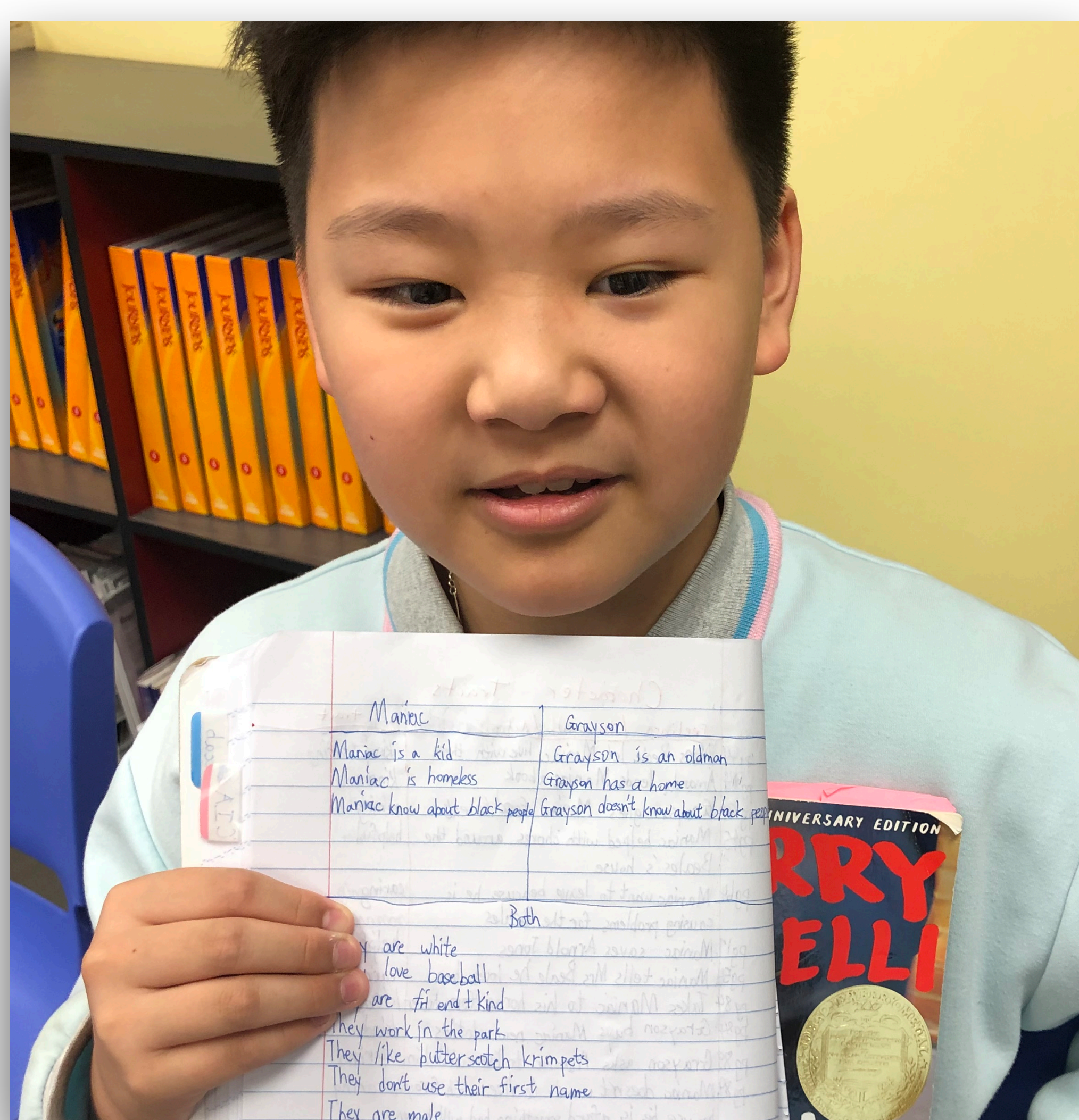
Teacher Testimony

“My students are starting to read other books by these author’s on their own,” says Frank Bradford, one of the teachers who works with students in grade 5. “I have organized a Scholastic Book Fair for the last three years, and **families are buying books for students to read at home.** It’s exciting.”



Modeling in the Program

The lessons in the curriculum are designed to model skills first before students are asked to apply the skills independently. In Frank Bradford’s classroom, students discuss the similarities and differences between two characters in the book *Maniac Magee*. They take notes together, then write a comparison essay. Students copy the comparison essay into their notebooks, adding some of their own details as they write. **This gradual release of responsibility provides just the right level of scaffolding to ensure success.**



Next Steps

Both schools are continuing to analyze how the *Read Side by Side Reading Program* is working to increase reading achievement. While much remains to be answered, **teachers feel confident that the program has increased students love of reading—and that is certainly a win!**

Sarah Collinge