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Gearing Up For SPM 2016

By [Zulita Mustafa](#) - October 24, 2016 @ 1:05pm



Siti Noor Akasaf Madzlin

D-DAY: As the examination draws near, schools and students reveal their preparations

WITH about a fortnight to go, Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) candidates Muhammad Ariff Md Suhaimi, Edry Rusyaidi Edmy and Mirza Syazan Mohd Fizar are all geared up to sit the examination.

Muhammad Ariff agrees with his two friends that study groups are one of the most effective ways to learn. "Of course, we hope to score straight As but I don't want to disappoint myself by setting the bar too high. I'll just work as hard as I can and give my best," he said, adding that he is 80 per cent prepared.

Aspiring to major in finance and marketing to achieve his dreams of being a businessman, he said he did a lot of group revision in class.

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"There are three to four students in a group and each has a subject which he excels at. This way, we are able to share and teach each group member.

"The advantage of a boarding school such as Sekolah Sultan Alam Shah (SAS) in Putrajaya is the ease in attending extra classes."

For Edy Rusyaidi, preparations have gone well but he still feels nervous and has to tell himself to keep his focus.

"In school, I follow the daily routine and timetable. I do mind-mapping because I'm a visual learner," said Edy Rusyaidi who plans to study medicine.

As the pressure builds, Mirza Syazan keeps himself on his toes by teaching his peers. "For example, I'm good in chemistry so I teach those who are weak in the subject. One has to master a subject before imparting knowledge," he said.

SMK Aminuddin Baki, Kuala Lumpur (SABKL) fifth former Siti Noor Akasaf Madzlin is focusing on state trial exam questions as part of her preparation for the examination.

f Trending **It** tells ev * e not to go overboard in 'Allah' socks issue **BADMINTON** Super start for Zii Jia at Swiss Open as he eyes early birthday Akasaf, the youngest of seven siblings, who is confident in excelling in Bahasa Malaysia, English and Mathematics.

IMPORTANCE OF SPM

Taking place from Nov 7 until Dec 6 this year, all fifth-year secondary school students in the country sit the SPM set and examined by the Malaysian Examinations Syndicate.

SPM is equivalent to O levels and is the second last public examination at secondary school before entry into tertiary education.

Due to the importance of the SPM certification, SAS assistant principal (academic) Mohd Noor Hakim Ismail said the school starts preparing its students from Form One.

"We monitor students' progress as soon as they enter secondary school. This is how we mould them.

"The SPM results are crucial for High Performance School status such as SAS," said Mohd Noor Hakim.

SAS Form Five coordinator Azie Nurul Akhtar Nabir added that the school puts in extra effort to ensure that students reach their potential throughout the five years of their studies at the school.

SABKL principal Siti Sarimah Shaik Abdul Rahman said SPM is a globally recognised qualification.

"It offers many options for students to pursue their tertiary education. It's a ticket to realise their dreams," said Siti Sarimah.

PREPPING CANDIDATES

SAS principal Datuk Haidzir Husin said that while the residential school has prepped students throughout the secondary school years, the momentum is building up with SPM two weeks away.

"With teachers' guidance in the techniques of answering exam questions in mind, time management before and during the exam is vital at this juncture," said Haidzir.

Earlier in the year, students were grouped into three zones – green, yellow and red. "Students in the green zone are envisioned to score A+ while those in the yellow zone are groomed to get As.

"Those in red zone get special treatment – we focus on their weak subjects," he added.

As a motivation to excel further, the school recently held an appreciation day for students who have shown an improvement in their results. They received a token sum of money as an appreciation to boost their confidence.

At SABKL, Siti Sarimah said: "After the trial exam in August, the school reviewed the results and grouped students according to their level of knowledge – excellent, medium and average.

"For the first two groups, we do accelerated exercises. For average students, we not only give them the same tasks but also focus on their weaknesses and adopt different methods of teaching as well.

"In one of our programmes called Pecutan, teachers with the experience of marking SPM papers conduct a session on the techniques of answering exam questions.

"We also engage speakers from outside the school and parents conduct programmes. "This year's fifth formers were the first batch who sat Pentaksiran Tingkatan 3 so I'm quite excited to see their SPM results."

At SAS, Mohd Noor Hakim said: "We hold midnight classes from 11.30pm to 12.30am and dawn classes from 6.30am to 7.30am."

Schools such as SABKL implemented the Juara programme mooted by the Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory Education Department under the directive of its director Fuziah Buang.

SABKL assistant principal (co-curriculum) Kamisah Abu Bakar said: "Under this programme, students form groups of five. Each group appoints a leader to coordinate the group learning schedule.

"We conduct intensive study group and constantly motivate the students.

"We also have a mentor-mentee programme of one teacher to three students."

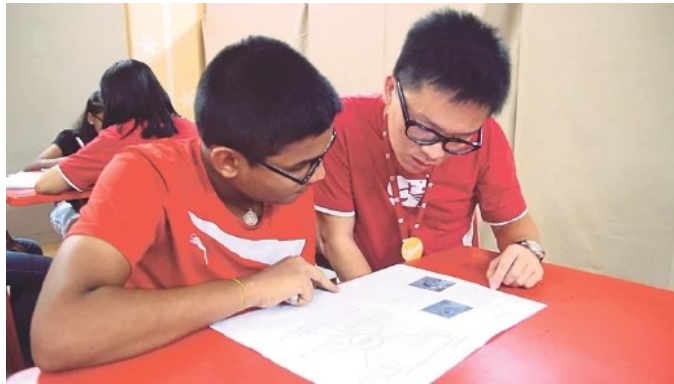
With 44 SPM students getting straight As last year, SABKL has set a target of 50 this year.

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Mohd Noor Hakim advised SPM examination candidates to take care of their health, relax and de-stress. "Don't get so stressed and suffer a nervous breakdown," he said.

And Kamisah added: "Students have acquired the knowledge. It's a matter of using it to answer the questions."

THE MAKING OF A TRANSFORMATION



Anthony Raja (left) and his mentor Simpson Khoo.

ANTHONY Raja (not his real name) has been coached by Yayasan Generasi Gemilang since Form One.

With poor grades in school and unable to speak English five years ago, he then joined Yayasan Generasi Gemilang's programme.

A mentor was assigned to him for three years and with his coaching and encouragement, Anthony's grades improved and his confidence grew.

Yayasan Generasi Gemilang head of education Simpson Khoo said: "Anthony's breakthrough came during one of our camps where we enforced an English-Only rule. He was challenged to step out of his comfort zone and speak only English.

"By giving him room to make mistakes without being teased, Anthony got over his fear of speaking English."

When he was in Form Three, he became a junior mentor to primary school pupils.

"He is from the local community, speaks his mother tongue Tamil and is perfect to mentor the younger ones. He relates to them well."

Today, Anthony speaks confidently in English and his grades have improved tremendously. From failing in English and Mathematics, he achieved six As out of nine subjects in the Penilaian Menengah Rendah examination. (He earned As for the two subjects).

Recently, he scored all As in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) trial examinations.

"Anthony's dream is to be a headmaster because he realises how education has helped him and he wants to help others," said Khoo, who is Anthony's mentor.

Yayasan Generasi Gemilang has three academic mentorship programmes – Pusat Bimbingan Pelajar in Taman Prima Selayang; Community Reading Programme in People's Housing Project Taman Putra Damai, Lembah Subang; and LINUS in a children's institution in Cheras, under the Social Welfare Department of Malaysia.

Pusat Bimbingan Pelajar is a bi-weekly academic guidance and mentorship programme for under-served primary and secondary students from low-income families. They are coached in core subjects such as English and Mathematics.

The Community Reading Programme is a bi-monthly one-to-one reading and mentorship programme for children aged 7 to 18 to improve their English literacy and ability to converse in English.

LINUS is a thrice-monthly academic-based Bahasa Malaysia literacy programme for children aged 7 to 12 in a children's home.

These programmes are run throughout the school year by Yayasan Generasi Gemilang staff and supported by volunteers or mentors who coach students in English, Bahasa Malaysia and Mathematics.

"The Pusat Bimbingan Pelajar programme follows the National Education Syllabus because all our students are in the public school system.

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"We maintain a mentor-student ratio of 1:2. This allows an individual paced education plan so the child will not feel pressured to perform according to the standards of others.

"It also offers easy access to mentors, and mentees are less reserved in asking questions.

"We expose SPM students to model exam papers and guide them to perform better."

Anthony's story essentially illustrates students being empowered to make an impact in the community.

Khoo added: "This transformation is due to the programme and mentorship."

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