

# Essay topics require examinees to introduce China to foreign youth

By Liu Jia

Essay topics for *gaokao*'s Chinese exam sparked discussion and debate on social media in recent days. The topic for Hubei examinees is "Introducing China to Foreign Youth," which requires the examinees to write an essay of about 800 Chinese characters to introduce foreign youth to unique things in China by choosing two or three key phrases from among a provided group, including: shared bike, the Great Wall, Peking Opera, Chinese food, mobile payments, food security, giant panda, and high-speed train. Our reporter interviewed two foreign friends living in Wuhan, in an attempt to learn what they had to say about this topic.



Jason Stockard is an American teaching English in China. He has lived in different places in China during the past five years. Jason said he would choose the word "consistent" to describe China, as it achieved an annual rate of GDP growth of more than 6% for years.

China's commitment to infrastructure has left a very positive impression on the teacher, and he's very impressed with the rate of construction. Having lived in Wuhan for about a year, he has witnessed new high-rise buildings and the continually expanding roads and metros. "I hope one day there are metro lines everywhere in Wuhan," he said.

By Helen Pan



Luc Pauwels is a Belgian who has lived in Wuhan for 11 years and is the School Principal of the International Department at Yu Cai No. 2 Primary Boarding School.

Pauwels chose "innovative" and "multicultural" to describe China. He shared an article published on the CNBC website. A report there stated that, "A newly released survey from the EU Chamber of Commerce in China found that 60 percent of European firms in China expect domestic firms to close the innovation gap by 2020."

"On the topic of multiculturalism, I see a large and competitive market in China, and I see and hear a large section of the foreign student population wanting to stay and therefore already starting up a small business during their studies. These people will slowly grow and develop within the Wuhan market."

By Jessie Fan

## Gaokao for last group of 1990s-born students

By Liu Jia



Examinees

June 7 marked the first day of this year's national college entrance examination, or *gaokao*, which is regarded as an opportunity that can change destinies. Most of the 52,200 students in Wuhan taking the exams were born in 1999, with a few born in

2000. That means China's *gaokao* is now sending off the last group of students born in the 1990s and welcoming the first group of 2000s-born examinees.

A few days before the students' departure for the examination venue, many high

schools held various unique parties to boost their students' morale and wish them good luck. The students wrote down their wishes on sheets of paper, sang their school songs together, or shouted their school oaths, cheering for themselves and each other.

## College students "grow vegetables" on Shahu Lake

By Wang Zhen



Potted plants in Shahu Lake

Recently, some potted plants floating on Wuchang's Shahu Lake have drawn the attention of neighboring residents. These plants are part of a research project conducted by the Shahu Lake Environmental Protection Student Volunteer Association at the Faculty of Resources and Environmental Science of Hubei University with the intention of improving the lake's water quality.

Since October of last year, students have created seven "floating islands" on Shahu Lake by linking together a number of basin-sized floating pots of aquatic plants, such as cannas, water spinach, and water cress. Every month they come to maintain these islands.

Artificial floating islands (AFI) are a technology used to cultivate hygrophilous plants on floating platforms. The plant roots help cut down substances such as nitrogen and phosphorus in water by means of entrapment, absorption, and adsorption, so as to purify the water.

## Turning trash into wealth

The College of Mechanical Engineering at Wuchang Institute of Technology students, majoring in Industrial Design recently made unique furniture out of waste. Materials included old tires and light tubes.

Our reporter visited the classroom of Industrial Design students on June 12 and saw innovative furniture designs of sofas made from tires and lights made of car frames. All 63 students in the class designed their own practical and unusual furniture. The teacher advised that he will base his grades on how serviceable the works are.