

Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum's new exhibition reviews development of textbooks, toys and games in 20th century (with photos)

The Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum will launch a new special exhibition, namely "Learning through play: Old textbooks, toys and games", tomorrow (December 22). The exhibition makes use of multimedia with interactive elements and an immersive area to introduce the development of textbooks on the Mainland and in Hong Kong from the early to mid-20th century and explore the importance of children's play in teaching.

Before the middle of the 19th century, textbooks intended to provide enlightenment and books used to prepare for imperial examinations are two main types of teaching materials on the Mainland. Other common reading materials included biographies; poetry compilations; texts on the rhyme, rhythm and form of classical Chinese poetry; and books written specifically for the education of girls. The publication of new textbooks in modern China developed rapidly in the early 20th century. These textbooks were not only used in local primary and secondary schools, but also in overseas Chinese communities, especially in Southeast Asia. Games and toys are a perfect complement to textbooks, as they help inspire creativity and promote physical and mental development of children.

This exhibition showcases more than 60 sets of Chinese textbooks, games and toys that were produced on the Mainland and in Hong Kong from the early to mid-20th century. Highlight exhibits include a Xunmeng Sanzijing ("Three character classic for early learners") printed by Pak Lei Bookstore of Hong Kong in the 1930s, a Xin Tongzi Chidu ("New letter writing for children") printed by Shanghai Guangyi Bookstore in 1932, a Shu-style Chinese typewriter from the early 20th century and shuttlecocks which were popular in the past.

In addition to the precious exhibits, visitors can obtain more information about the games and toys in the early 20th century by scanning the QR codes in the gallery. They can also experience the environment of a rooftop primary school in the 1950s at the immersive area of the gallery.

The exhibition will run from tomorrow (December 22) until March 31, 2024, at the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum (7 Castle Road, Mid-Levels, Central, Hong Kong). For details of the exhibition, please visit hk.dr.sunyatsen.museum/en/web/sysm/exhibitions.html, or call 2367 6373 for enquiries.



