

Jade Liang's experience with Dr. Chu's team as a volunteer student research assistant

I began volunteering with Dr. Chu's team in high school, as a student research assistant. During the six months I had spent working with Dr. Chu and his team, I assisted in the creation of reading comprehensive questions we used on five books for primary school students. These questions were designed to test a student's ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate the book content. In order to come up with the most fitting questions, I learned it was a rather ineffective way to simply rework parts of the story into questions. Instead, there were many strategies and considerations. For example, I needed to consider the target audience, the level of difficulty, and the types of reading skills I would like the students to develop.

As a student myself, I used to do whatever questions my teachers assigned without giving a thought to why those questions were assigned in the first place. After working with Dr. Chu, I came to realize that designing a specific set of questions is similar to designing an education plan. Education is a long-term investment. At school, there are many areas of knowledge and skills students are required to master. To facilitate students' learning process, we need to consider, inter alia, the expected learning outcomes, students' learning styles, and the cognitive levels of different age groups. As I say, designing the best questions was a challenging process, as it required me to come up with the most effective strategies while adhering to a long-term education plan. At the same time, this experience proved to be deeply rewarding because it helped me to gain an in-depth understanding of the role of a teacher, furthering my own aspiration to become a public educator in the future. This aspiration has paved the path towards my university career at Cornell, where I will begin to study at this September. I intend to major in Sociology and Education, a next firm step towards my dreams.

Best,

Jade Liang
Prospective Freshmen,
Cornell University (from Sept. 2020)