

# 臺北市松山區三民國小 114 學年度校內語文競賽

## 英語朗讀篇章

### 01. A Small Seed, A Big Change

Every morning, a small school garden sits quietly behind the classroom building. At first, it looks simple: a few garden beds, a narrow path, and a bucket of water near the fence. However, to many students, this garden is a special place. It is where they learn to care, to notice small details, and to be patient.

One spring day, a class decides to grow vegetables. They choose seeds that are easy to plant and fun to watch, such as cherry tomatoes and green beans. The seeds are tiny, dry, and light. It is hard to believe that something so small can become something so tall. Each student places one seed into the soil, covers it gently, and labels the spot with a small card.

During the first week, nothing seems to happen. The soil looks the same, and the garden beds feel quiet. Some students begin to worry. They wonder if the seeds are too old or if they made a mistake. Still, the class keeps the same routine. They water carefully, pull weeds, and check the soil with their fingers. They learn that growth is often invisible at the beginning.

In the second week, a change appears. A thin green shoot pushes up through the soil. It is so small that it can be missed in one quick look. The students bend down and watch closely. They see how the new plant turns toward the sun. They notice that the leaves are soft and bright, and they realize that the seed has been working the whole time, even when no one could see it.

As the days pass, the garden becomes a living calendar. The plants grow taller, the stems become stronger, and the leaves spread wider. The students begin to understand that time is not only shown on a clock. Time is also shown in slow progress, in daily care, and in small changes that add up. They learn that water matters, sunlight matters, and gentle hands matter. They also learn that plants do not grow faster just because people feel impatient.

By early summer, small flowers appear. After the flowers, tiny green tomatoes begin to form. The class continues to watch and wait. They protect the plants from strong wind and heavy rain, and they support weak stems with sticks. They keep their routine, even on days when they feel tired.

When the tomatoes finally turn red, the students harvest them with careful fingers. The first bite tastes sweet and fresh. The garden has not only grown vegetables. It has grown attention, responsibility, and hope. A small seed has become a big change, not only in the garden, but also in the students' hearts.

## 02. The Empty Chair

At the back of the classroom, there is an empty chair. It is clean, it is quiet, and it does not move. Most days, no one looks at it for more than a second. Students walk past it, backpacks bumping softly, shoes tapping the floor. The chair stays in the same place, as if it is part of the wall.

At first, the empty chair seems unimportant. It does not answer questions. It does not hold a book. It does not laugh or raise a hand. It is only a chair, waiting for someone to sit down.

One day, the teacher asks the class to do a simple task. Each student must write one kind sentence about someone in the room. The sentence must be true, and it must be specific. The students begin to write. Some write about a friend who shares an eraser. Some write about a classmate who runs fast or draws well. Some write about a student who always says “good morning.”

When the teacher collects the papers, the teacher reads them quietly after class. Many sentences are warm and bright, like small lights. But the teacher notices something strange. One student’s name appears only once. Not because the student is unkind, and not because the student is unfriendly. The student simply disappears in people’s minds, like a shadow in the corner.

The next day, the teacher changes one small thing. The teacher moves the empty chair to the center of the room. It is still empty, but now it is impossible to ignore. The teacher does not explain. The teacher simply begins the lesson.

At first, the students feel uncomfortable. They keep looking at the chair. It feels like a question without an answer. During group work, students try to face away from it. During quiet reading, students glance at it again and again. The empty chair seems to take up more space than it should.

After school, the teacher asks the class to think about the chair. The teacher does not say that the chair is good or bad. The teacher only asks one question: What do you notice when something is missing?

Some students say they notice silence. Some say they notice space. One student says the chair feels lonely.

Then another student raises a hand and speaks carefully. The student says that sometimes a person can be in the room but still feel like the empty chair. The student says it can happen when no one calls your name, when no one asks you to join, and when you begin to believe you do not matter.

The classroom becomes very quiet.

The next morning, the empty chair is moved back. It becomes “invisible” again. But something has changed. Students begin to notice each other more. They call names more often. They make room at the table. They invite someone to join a game. They learn that kindness is not only doing big, loud things. Sometimes kindness is simply seeing someone who is usually unseen.

And that is why an empty chair can teach a full lesson.

### 03. The Great Sock Mystery

Every Monday morning, Room 503 has the same problem. Someone loses a sock. Not a pair—just one sock. It is always a different sock: a striped sock, a star sock, a panda sock, even a bright orange sock that looks like a carrot. The class has started calling it “The Great Sock Mystery.”

At first, the students think it is an accident. Socks are small, and backpacks are messy. A sock can fall out when someone pulls out a notebook or a lunchbox. But after four Mondays in a row, the class begins to wonder. How can one sock disappear every single week?

So the students make a plan. They create a “Sock Report” on the classroom wall. It has three columns: **\*\*Date\*\***, **\*\*Sock Color\*\***, and **\*\*Last Seen Place\*\***. When a sock goes missing, they write down the information like detectives.

On the fifth Monday, the missing sock is blue with little white clouds. The last place it is seen is near the reading corner. The class writes it on the Sock Report. Then they search carefully. They look under chairs, inside backpacks, and behind the bookshelf. Nothing.

During lunch, the mystery gets bigger. A student finds a sock under the piano in the music room. It is the bright orange carrot sock from last week. How did it get there? No one plays piano with socks.

After lunch, the class decides to do a “Sock Watch.” Two students take turns watching the reading corner. They pretend to read, but their eyes keep scanning the floor.

Ten minutes later, something surprising happens. A small shape moves near the bookshelf. It is not a student. It is not a teacher. It is a tiny robot, about the size of a lunchbox, rolling quietly on little wheels. It has a piece of paper taped to its back that says: **\*\*HELPER BOT 3\*\***.

The robot stops beside a loose sock on the floor. A small arm reaches out. It grabs the sock and pulls it into a hidden pocket. Then the robot rolls away, straight toward the door.

The watchers jump up. The whole class follows, trying not to make too much noise. The robot rolls down the hallway, turns left, and stops near the lost-and-found box. Then it opens its pocket and drops the sock inside, like it is putting treasure in a safe place.

The teacher arrives and looks surprised. The students point at the robot. The teacher checks the label and laughs softly. The robot is part of a school project. It is designed to clean up small items on the floor. It cannot tell the difference between trash and a lonely sock.

The class bursts into laughter. The mystery is solved.

From that day on, the Sock Report stays on the wall, but it has a new title: **\*\*The Great Sock Mystery: Case Closed.\*\*** And every Monday, students check their socks twice—because Helper Bot 3 is always ready to “help.”