

Research Shanghai
ShiXi High School

First Research Day 19 May 2010

The first research day was split between discussion and learning to build a robot with Graham.

The students broke into four teams to discuss some of the concerns of urban life, including:

- + Influence of modern technology on architecture and urban planning
- + Responsive / adaptive architecture
- + Demographic change / urban integration or hybrid identity
- + Climate change / sustainability / green architecture
- + Organic development / mobile density

Many key words and phrases flowed out of the discussion: transportation, choices, noise, electric, money, resources, pollution, migration, network, wifi, recycle, systems, creativity, new uses, power, new materials, life-changing.

The students also brainstormed some clever ideas to enhance the quality of life for those living in urban environments. One such idea focused on creating new ways for a city to psychologically interact with its residents. They suggested that the exterior of the buildings change color depending on the season... so that in the winter the buildings would display warm colors (red, orange, yellow) and in the summer cool colors (blue, purple, green) to help alleviate some of the psychological stress that extreme temperatures can have on the body.

Others suggested ways to give certain objects a new life or a recycled purpose within the urban environment, including using old blue jeans and other clothing items to create insulation materials.

Graham interacted with the students, giving them a hands-on demonstration on how to create a working robot. He explained how to create the power supply, directional controls, video input/output, and the final assembled robot. The kids were so stoked to have a chance to create it, and when it was all hooked up, everybody squealed with excitement as it snaked its way across the floor.

The kids gave the robot the name MIC, which is short for "Made in China." They are incredibly sharp and have great senses of humor, and make the project lively and supremely entertaining.