

Teacher Idols

"Being a Toastmasters did help me win the Teacher Idol title because communication skills are important for me to impress my students who then nominated me. Then I have also to impress the Selection board of editors / journalists in The Star. (Please click on the STAR TV in YouTube to hear my comments and responses to the questions posed to me). I did share Toastmasters with some of the Star people - and hopefully they will join TM in their respective districts too!"

By Toastmaster Lawren Yong Hon Chong

From conservative to glamorous, four Teacher Idols find themselves transformed after a makeover session organised by *StarEducation*.

As a teacher, Yong Hon Chong, is used to being the focus of attention in class. However, he attracted a different sort of attention last Saturday as the sole male Teacher Idol selected this year by *StarEducation*.



And Yong revelled in it, never losing an opportunity to whip out his trusty camera to record the day's experience. "Well, this (occasion) is something very unique in my life. I'm very glad you all have taken me on a journey through fashion," said the SMK Darul Ridwan, Taiping, English teacher. And a journey it certainly was!

From morning till night, this year's four Teacher Idols were given VIP treatment all the way, in the quest to turn them into glamorous versions of their usual selves. Chosen from nearly 100 nominations by students around the country, these dedicated teachers gathered bright and early at the Pavilion Kuala Lumpur shopping mall to begin their day of pampering, courtesy of the three generous sponsors.

Wardrobe revamp

The first item on the treat list was clothes.

Yong, who was game for anything, tried on over 10 outfits at the philosophy-Men boutique. With advice from Chia, he picked styles ranging from urban hip to cutting-edge casual, and even a look straight out of Mao Zedong's communist China.

"It was great going through so many styles and outfits. I believe what *The Star* has done has changed our mindset about fashion; we won't just stick to the same colours and conservative outfits anymore."

Yong added that he was amazed at the creativity and innovation of the new ideas reflected in the brand's new China Champs collection.

Short, simple and stylish.

After choosing their final outfits for the photo shoot later, it was just a short hop across the corridor to A Cut Above's flagship salon in Parkson Pavilion. With all four teachers having short hair, it was the finer details that made the crucial difference to their appearance. Said Yong: "For the first time, I see how meticulous a hairstylist can be. He really paid attention to every inch of hair!" Senior stylist Jep Soo gave him a layered trim at the back to add volume to his hair, as well as tips on how to style it with mousse.

A touch of colour

From the city centre, it was back to the photo studio at Menara Star in Petaling Jaya. With their clothes and hair done, the final touch to complete their transformation was provided by L'Oreal Paris.



Goh putting touches of make-up on Yong before his photo shoot.

Strutting their stuff

The grand finale of the day was the opportunity to show off their brand new looks in a photo shoot by *The Star* photographers Azlina Abdullah and Darran Tan.

At the end of the day, *The Star* treated the Teacher Idols to a buffet dinner, where they took the chance to relax and exchange their teaching experiences.



Yong Hon Chong was every inch the typical teacher until he swapped his regular gear for those from philosophy-Men. His comments:

"No more conservative styles for me!"



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<http://thestar.com.my/education/story.asp?file=/2008/5/18/education/21279117&sec=education>

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