

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_ ( )

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**Canada's bionic violinist, Adrian Anantawan, tells Hong Kong students about overcoming challenges to live your dreams**

Adrian Anantawan has **accomplished** things most able people never even dreamed of. The Canadian performer became an **acclaimed** concert violinist with **degrees** from both Harvard and Yale. He has even performed for Pope John Paul II and the Dalai Lama.

And he's done it all without his right hand.

*Young Post* met the 33-year-old when he came to Hong Kong to visit schools and chat with students. He **crowned** his stay with a concert.

Many parents of children with disabilities are afraid to push their children to success, but Anantawan's mum and dad made sure their son had the same opportunities as any other child. "There are lots of parents in the community who are looking for advice on raising their child to become successful in the face of challenge or **adversity**.

If he had grown up anywhere else, Anantawan might not be where he is today, but thanks to a government-funded programme in Canada, he had a special prosthetic device tailor made to help him hold a bow.

Anantawan's father played violin, and music was important to both of his parents. When he was nine, his class at school was learning the recorder, which he couldn't play as he didn't have enough fingers. Instead, his teacher suggested that he try composing music, or just watch the other children perform. "But it was important for me and my parents that I was performing music, just like everyone else," he says. They chose the violin as they loved how it sounded, and didn't think twice about their son's disability holding him back. Their **philosophy**, he says, was: not to worry about what was practical. It was more important to do what you want first, and then work out the details of how to **adapt** the instrument later.

Music gave Anantawan an environment he truly felt comfortable in. "It is an **avenue** not only to do something fun and learn an instrument, but also to connect with other people and know myself better. Music allows you to see beyond outward appearances."

After gaining several music degrees and building his profile as a performer, Anantawan decided to go back to school and study education. These days, he performs less, and spends more time meeting children, many of whom have a disability. After sharing his story and performing a piece, he leaves lots of room for questions. "I get asked: 'Does it hurt?' 'Were you ever teased?' 'How do you play so fast?' They're very honest questions," he says.

The violinist says he'll always play and keep **polishing** his skills, but he believes that teaching and performing aren't so far apart. "Both require you to create memorable experiences for other people," he says. "It's not about proving yourself, but sharing ideas and reaching out to your **audience** at their level."

## Questions to think about:

- What have you learnt from this article? How can you apply the lessons learnt in your life?
- How do most people treat people with disabilities? What challenges do people with disabilities face in Hong Kong?
- What do you think made a difference for Anantawan? / What do you think the reasons are for him being the young man he is? / Why do you think he has been able to achieve what he has?
- Do you agree with the young man, Anantawan's, views on music and teaching?



**I: Vocabulary and understanding meanin:** Match the meaning and/or synonym (words with a similar or the same meaning) to the words which have been highlighted in bold in the article.

Column A: Word from text	Letter	Column B: Meaning or synonym
1. accomplish(ed) (v)	<b>D</b>	A: a way of dealing or approaching a problem and making progress towards something / a path you choose
2. degree(s) (n)	<b>J</b>	B: a difficult or unpleasant situation
3. acclaimed (adj)	<b>F</b>	C: a way of thinking
4. crown(ed) (v)	<b>H</b>	D: achieve or complete successfully
5. adversity (n)	<b>B</b>	E: way you change or become used to a new situation
6. philosophy (n)	<b>C</b>	F: publicly praised or celebrated
7. adapt (v)	<b>E</b>	G: improve or make something better
8. avenue (n)	<b>A</b>	H: be the final celebrated event of a series of events
9. polish(ing) (v)	<b>G</b>	I: the people who watch a performance or event
10. audience (n)	<b>I</b>	J: an academic certificate or level given to someone who has completed a course at university

**II: Usage of vocabulary:** Choose the most appropriate word from the table above to fill in the missing words of the sentences below making sure your answers are grammatically correct.

- The (a) **acclaimed** musician Yoyo Ma performed to a packed theatre. The (b) **audience**, the people watching, really enjoyed his performance and requested many an encore.
- Completing a medical **degree** takes a lot of hard work, you need to study at university for a minimum of 6 years.
- Moving countries means you have to **adapt** to a new life and culture.
- The more you practice and the more you **polish** your skills, the better you will be at something.
- He survived despite having to face (a) **adversity**, and it was his (b) **philosophy**, his positive approach to the challenges he faced which helped him.
- In order to **accomplish** or achieve a lot, you need to work hard.
- The band **crowned** their world tour with a performance in New York. It was the highlight of their tour.
- The government need new **avenues** to deal with the problem of poverty. The current policies are not working.

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