

Headline **Something for everyone**
Date **02 May 2010**
MediaTitle **Sunday Star**
Section **Star Education**
Journalist **N/A**
Frequency **Weekly**
Circ / Read **320,964 / 1,072,000**

Language **English**
Page No **L-E16**
Article Size **664 cm²**
Color **Full Color**
ADValue **24,848**
PRValue **74,545**



Something for everyone

Students, teachers and even schools stand to win. Prizes galore await participants of the Mag Inc 2010 contest!

IT has begun – the phones are ringing off the hook and the e-mails are streaming in. Students and teachers are in a race against time to complete their three-page mini magazine entries for this year's Star-Pizza Hut NiE (Newspaper-in-Education) Mag Inc 2010 contest.

The contest, themed "A better life", was launched on March 8 at the Pizza Hut Restaurant outlet in Kota Damansara, Petaling Jaya by the Education Ministry's director of sports (arts and co-curriculum), Ee Hong, and will see an array of exciting prizes for the six teams that make it to the finals in September.

The contest templates, available only with the school subscription of Star-NiE, were published on April 7 and 28. Fret not if your school missed the issues, as the teacher coordinator is still able to order backdated copies of the templates from the circulation representative in their respective states (for details, please call Sharon Ovinis at 03 7967 1298 between 8am-4pm, Mon-Fri).

Concept and theme

Students, in teams of four or five create a three-page mini magazine on an original template.

"A better life" challenges students to think about aspects that can improve or have improved their lives significantly.

The 10 topics students can explore are on:
● Health ● Environment ● Social values
● Science and technology ● Safety
● Education ● Community and charity
● Relationships ● ICT ● Social integration

Like most magazines, the content of the students' magazines must have a self-titled masthead, a compulsory feature article and at least three elements found in a magazine (these can range from polls and surveys to jokes and comic strips).

Stay focused

Many teams make the common mistake of

being too general in their research. The trick is to pick one topic (for instance health), and select just one aspect that has helped improve lives (the key word here being *improve*).

For example, we already live in a world where vaccinations have eradicated key diseases like polio, Meningitis C, measles and mumps.

These vaccinations have provided a better quality of life for children all around the world as without such vaccines, these diseases can maim, kill or cause long-term health problems. In many parts of the world, immunisation has already improved the quality of life by preventing outbreaks and epidemics due to infectious diseases.

The list is endless, and the team can explore the many aspects of vaccination and the benefits to mankind.

Let's say, however, you and your team members have a creative streak and want to be more adventurous. Take the next step and tell us what your team sees as mankind's potential for immortality. Could it be a vaccine for breast cancer or AIDS? Or would the the proverbial fountain of youth eventually be discovered in the form of a vaccine or drug?

The key idea is to explore your topic comprehensively, and not veer out of topic. Remember, life is already good, so ask yourself: "Just how do I make it better?"

The categories

Mag Inc 2010 is open to students in Years Four to Six and secondary schools in Malaysia. Participation is through schools only. Online registration is currently open for teacher coordinators who already have their passwords.

If the school is a first-time participant, the teacher coordinator must complete Form A (found on page ST8 of your contest template) and fax the form to the number listed on it.

Star-NiE will create a password for the school. The teacher coordinator will be able to log onto the contest website by the following week.

Online registration will close on May 15 and re-open on June 21 in preparation for the final submission of entries.

All contest entries must reach Menara Star in Petaling Jaya by July 10.

Prizes galore

Every team member will receive a Pizza Hut personal pan pizza voucher if the team submits a complete entry. However, each member will receive an upgrade to a Pizza Hut regular pan pizza voucher if the team submits two mini magazines, or one mini magazine and one video clip entry.

Although each participant can only be a member of one team, each team may send in

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as many entries as they wish.

Teachers who supervise teams too stand a chance at winning Pizza Hut vouchers. Teachers supervising four teams and below will receive one regular voucher while teachers supervising five teams and above will receive three vouchers each.

Teacher contest coordinators, on the other hand, will each earn a Pizza Hut voucher valued at RM50.

There are prizes for schools too! Schools with the highest number of entries in three categories (500 pupils and below, 501 and 1,000 pupils, 1,0001 and more) will win sports equipment vouchers worth RM1,000 courtesy of Pizza Hut.

Creme de la creme

Additionally, 75 merit awards are in store for winning teams from every state. Each team will receive RM200 worth of Pizza Hut vouchers.

The top teams from each category will be eligible to vie for the grand prize. This year, all runners-up in the three categories, primary, lower and upper secondary will spend three days and two nights in Genting Highlands, sponsored by Resorts World Genting.

The grand prize winners in each category will enjoy a four-day, three-night stay in Siem Reap, Cambodia, with flight tickets sponsored by AirAsia.

For the second year in a row, Taylor's University College is offering the upper secondary winners RM100,000 worth of scholarships for any one of their pre-university programmes – South Australian Matriculation (SAM), International Canadian Pre-University (ICPU) or Cambridge A-Levels (CAL).

The contest, jointly sponsored by *The Star* and Pizza Hut, in cooperation with the Education Ministry, will run from March to July this year.




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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Apr 7	Online registration opens (http://contests.thestar.com.my/nie)	July 10	Online registration closes, final date for submission of entries
May 15	Online registration closes	Aug 1	List of schools with entries and voucher tally to be published in StarEducation
June 6	List of registered schools to be published in StarEducation	Aug/Sept	Distribution of Pizza Hut vouchers to schools
June 21	Online registration re-opens for final tabulation of entries submitted		

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Capture that Mag Inc journey on print!

Teachers and students! We want to hear from you.

If you've got insights on what made your Mag Inc magazine or video journey, exciting and memorable, feel free to share them with our readers. Send your story (of not more than 800 words) and exciting photos (jpeg format) to starnie@thestar.com.my and we will send you Pizza Hut vouchers for published stories!

All stories must reach us by June 30. Please include your name, school, mailing address and contact number.