

# Science YouTuber makes learning fun and quirky

Popular social media personality Biogirl MJ has published a comic book to make the subject entertaining

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If your kids comment that science and nature videos are boring, they probably have not watched those helmed by Biogirl MJ.

Known for her quirky and candid presentation style, the 28-year-old YouTuber hams it up for the camera as she covers subjects such as the climate and wildlife from a Singaporean perspective.

Think topics like why the west side of Singapore is wetter and the animals you can find at Bishan-Ang Mo Kio Park.

These one- to 10-minute videos can be found on Just Keep Thinking, a channel that enjoys strong presence across multiple social media platforms.

Biogirl MJ, whose real name is Kong Man Jing, co-founded it with her fiancé Raye Ng, 33, in late 2019. One video in which she investigates if there are too many otters in Singapore has garnered 55,000 views on YouTube.

Meanwhile, the best performing video, which has close to two million views on Facebook, explains food science using the famous dalgona candy game from Netflix drama *Squid Game* (2021).

Both videos were uploaded in 2021. "They went viral because they are topics people care about, but we covered them in a different way," says Ng, who shoots, edits and produces the videos.

A former content strategist on humour site SGAG, Ng recalls going on a snorkelling trip with Kong, who used to be a teaching and curriculum specialist at The Learning Lab tuition and enrichment centre, in early 2019.

"While filming MJ with a GoPro (camera), she started babbling about a washed-up coral skeleton. It was a eureka moment for us and it sparked a cascade of ideas."

Kong, a life sciences graduate from the National University of Singapore, has always been interested in nature and wildlife.

After six months of planning, the couple started the channel as a Facebook page and the rest is history. She left her teaching job of three years to run Just Keep Thinking full-time with Ng last year.

On top of hosting, Kong also gathers the information and scientific research required for each piece of content. She is a regular on science-related discussion panels hosted by various industries.

On encouraging kids to develop a love of science, she says: "Many parents think that they could get their kids interested just by sending them to a programme, taking them to an exhibition or visiting nature areas."

"While that may kick-start their interest, it is important to provide context to what is in front of them."

"For example, if I explore a beach and I spot all these animals, but no one tells me what they are, how they live, what threats they face, then I don't really gain anything out of this trip."

"There's no meaning to it."

Kids and adults have been joining Kong on paid nature tours and intertidal walks.

She adds that children have short attention spans and do not have the tendency nor the capability to think as deeply as adults do.

"To make their learning more effective and ensure sustained interest in the long run, we have to put in effort to make it entertaining from their perspective."

"We also have to tell stories which can evoke emotions that could potentially motivate them to do good as they mature and grow."

This is also why the couple collaborated with World Scientific Education to launch a comic book,



The Intertidal Adventures Of Biogirl MJ, the comic book put out by Kong Man Jing, explores marine life in a fun way to keep young readers interested. PHOTOS: JUST KEEP THINKING

The Intertidal Adventures Of Biogirl MJ. The publisher approached them last year. "We both have the same goal of making learning a fun process," says Ng.

Kong agrees. "Just like every piece of content that we create on our channel, we put in a lot of effort and time to ensure that the comic book, albeit an educational one, has a storyline that entertains the reader."

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\* The Intertidal Adventures Of Biogirl MJ retails for \$14.90 at bit.ly/biogirlpreorder. Get it by Nov 15 to receive a mystery gift. The first 100 buyers will also receive an autographed copy. Authors Kong Man Jing and Raye Ng will be at storytelling events, including one at Times Waterway Point in Punggol on Dec 3, 3.30pm.



Kong (left) has been leading intertidal walks for kids and adults.