

The covid-19 outbreak: a Chinese school student's life in isolation for 73 days

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I am Surong Duan, a 16-year-old girl studying in grade 11 of the Chengdu Seventh Middle School, Sichuan, China. I have been at home for nearly 70 days because of the winter vacation and the covid-19 outbreak preventive isolation. This article will tell you about the changes in my life and study during this period. I am an only child and live with my parents in a flat on the fourteenth floor.

During the Spring festival (24 January) I heard from the media about many new cases that were increasing every day. I was very afraid I would get sick if I went out. Except for visiting my grandma to have a family reunion dinner, I did not go anywhere. Had I known I would be staying at home for such a long time, I would have been walking around earlier. What a paradox!

As planned originally, my mother had enrolled me to the cram school programme, because the winter vacation is a valuable time for remedial classes before the important college entrance examination. The plan fell through because of the isolation policy. I was not as happy as I had expected to be, because I couldn't go anywhere.

My suggestions

- ▶ You'd better not to gather during the outbreak, there's a lot you can do at home.
- ▶ It's better to do more exercise at home.
- ▶ Being quiet and doing something you can is more important and useful than being anxious.

The isolation policy has also delayed the second semester. Originally, the second semester for grade 11 would have begun on 17 February. However, due to the virus outbreak, the reopening of the school has again been delayed. Finally, online classes were conducted after a long wait. The online classes start at 7:55 and end at 14:45; these consist of five classes in the morning and one class or exam in the afternoon. Furthermore, there is self-study after 15:00, followed by evening self-study at 18:30. The teacher answers questions during the evening study.

Online study has significantly changed my life and style of studying. Because of the reduction in time spent on the road, I can wake up a little later compared with having to get up at 18:30 to go to school. Having classes at home gives me more freedom. After getting up every day, I turn on my computer, punch on the school website (see [figure 1](#), which lets the school know we don't have any pneumonia symptoms and stay in Chengdu), then have breakfast and wait for the classes.

For the first few days, I was so excited about the new teaching style, because it was unprecedented to have classes online at home with classmates in the same grade. My phone and computer, which had been very strictly controlled by my mother, were all returned to me and upgraded. I could freely chat with my classmates on QQ software. I felt very relaxed at the beginning, because we only have six main subjects including Chinese, math, English, physics, chemistry and biology. The duration of the 40 min class in school was decreased to 35 min, and the break time

您已打卡 **56** 天

查看打卡记录

今日11:36已完成打卡

学生今日所在城市:

1. 有无冠状病毒肺炎症状?

无

有发热; 咳嗽;

Figure 1 Health punch including the time of punch, location and whether the student has symptoms of covid-19 infection.



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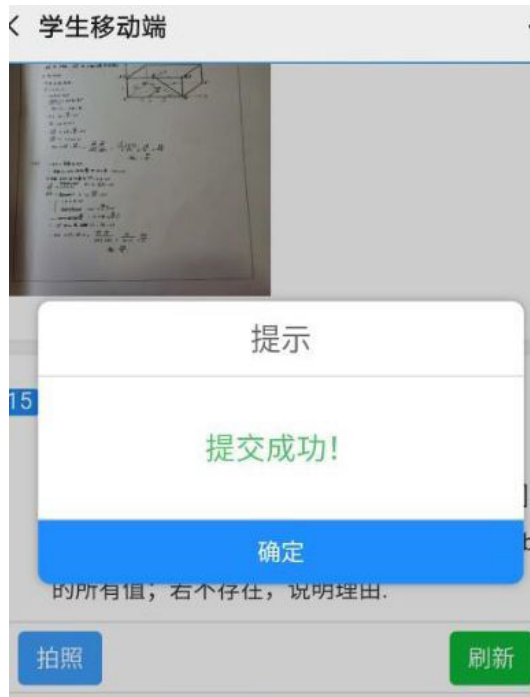


Figure 2 Test answer uploaded into online software.

between classes was increased, including extra eye and recess exercises. Because each subject was relatively easy at the beginning, I could finish my homework quickly and rest. We even had time to play the piano and guitar, and made a video to pay tribute to the medical staff in the front lines of the outbreak. All this made me feel relieved rather than frustrated due to the isolation.

However, the second week onwards, things began to change. My school started helping other schools, letting their students join our online courses; this led to a rapidly increased number of students and resulted in problems with the internet equipment. In addition, each subject has been getting more and more difficult. The teachers felt that the duration of the class was not sufficient, so they started lengthening the class. I had to finish one subject after another the whole afternoon, and the schedule was getting fuller. What's worse, with the end of my parents' holiday, I had to cook dumplings or noodles for lunch by myself. In addition to getting the test paper from my

parents, I had to finish and upload the answer pictures to my teacher once a week (see [figure 2](#), the math test answers were uploaded). Being supervised at home was worse than being at school, I had to finish my homework before the deadline, take pictures to teachers, and even had been randomly checked by teachers on the phone. My eyes would get tired from looking at the screen for long, and my plan of taking rest was ruined. Now my favourite break is listening to music on the balcony and thinking about when to go out. One is allowed to leave one's apartment once a day for essential travel only, but only if one does not have fever. I even feel like a caged animal. Moreover I am struggling to maintain self-discipline, because I don't want to be lagging behind my classmates after returning to school. But by now, I am happy to keep up with the schedule of my teachers.

Fortunately, the covid-19 outbreak has recently been controlled in China. Last weekend (4-5 April), my parents took me out to see the peach blossom. I stepped on the ground outside—so exciting. Even more exciting, today I have received an official notice that the school is opening on 13 April. Unfortunately, the number of infected cases is increasing in other countries. The virus seems to have been a pandemic in the world. I really hope the outbreak in the world ends soon so we can all return to a normal life.

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