



## Bangkok Post Learning: *Test Yourself*

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# Here to stay

by Gary Boyle.



Photo by Chanut Katanyu

Read the following story by Suwittha Chaiyong from the *Bangkok Post*. Then, answer the questions that follow.

When one of the most popular singers in the idol group BNK48 makes her acting debut in the fantasy thriller *Homestay*, it's easy to assume she got the role because of her fame. But director Parkpoom Wongpoom chose Cherprang Areekul for *Homestay* in July of last year, long before BNK48 had its megahit single *Koi Suru Fortune Cookie*.

UNDER PRESSURE

With zero acting experience, the BNK48 captain beat other candidates because Parkpoom thought her looks matched the charming character, called Pie, who is the object of **affection** of a wandering spirit trapped in the body of Min (Teeradon “James” Supapunpinyo).

“It is an honour to have the opportunity [to be in this big film], but it is also **frustrating**,” Cherprang said. “I wasn’t selected for my acting skill because I didn’t have any. I was under pressure to see how well I could do.”

No young woman has had a more exciting year. Cherprang is the “captain” of BNK48, a Japan-style idol group in frilly costumes that commands the phenomenal devotion of fans. Cherprang, overseeing more than 20 younger girls, led her group to shake hands with Prime Minister Gen Prayut Chan-o-cha, and was later the subject of a mild scandal when she agreed to host an episode of the military government’s 6pm news show. She’s also busy as an outstanding chemistry student at Mahidol International College.

## EMOTIONAL CONTROL

Cherprang met us and confessed she had slept only five hours last night. And yet the 22-year-old looked fresh, with sparkling eyes and a pretty smile. Her most attractive qualities are her sincerity and amiability.

To develop her acting skills, she was sent to several workshops. Cherprang admitted that she had a hard time expressing her emotions.

“My parents taught me to be reasonable. I also study science, which values logical thinking,” she said. “I thought crying didn’t help with anything, so I always controlled my emotions. I tell myself everything will be OK and hide my feelings inside.”

## ROLE MODEL

When Cherprang was young, she had an interest in Japanese animation that led her to finding the anime series AKB0048, inspired by the girl group AKB48, which is the model for idol groups like BNK48 and other international “sister bands”. As a fan of the group, Cherprang auditioned for BNK48 because she was curious to know what her idols had been through. Now, she has become a role model for many fans who look up to her and many girls who want to be like her. But in an honest answer, Cherprang stated that the group is a business, and that she is a product.

“In many cases, I can’t make my own decisions. I want to take photos with other people, but I work with the label and I can only take photos at designated events which allow us to meet our fans who support us,” Cherprang explained.

Being a captain of the group seems like the coolest job out there. It looks like she is respected and adored by her bandmates. But when we asked what was her most memorable moment as captain, the idol found it difficult to answer.

“To be honest, there were more unimpressive moments. I didn’t want to be the captain, but they made me. I had been class president in schools and university and I know it isn’t that difficult, but here I have to be the one who sets the boundaries. And most people don’t want to be controlled or have any boundaries,” Cherprang said.

“It is tiring to keep telling people to follow the rules and what to do. I know how it feels to be disliked by some people. As a captain, all eyes are on me. I have to follow the rules more strictly than others.”

It’s such a **burden** on her slim shoulders that the captain even considered leaving the group — or “graduating” from BNK48.

“I thought about graduation a lot when I was struggling, but I would ask myself if I still want to be here. BNK48 doesn’t need me for it to go on. Yet I still want to be a member. I want to meet my fans and I want to perform. I’m happy here,” the captain said.

## Vocabulary

affection (n): the feeling of liking or loving somebody very much

frustrating (adj): causing you to feel annoyed and impatient because you cannot do or achieve what you want

burden (n): a duty, responsibility, etc. that causes worry, difficulty or hard work

## Section 1

Read through the story and answer the following questions.

1. How old is Cherprang? .....
2. What subject is she studying? .....
3. What's the name of her character in *Homestay*? .....
4. What does she describe BNK48 as? .....
5. She got the role in *Homestay* because she was famous. True or false? .....
6. Which of the following is a TV series?
  - a. BNK48.                      b. AKB0048.      c. AKB48.
7. How many hours sleep does she normally get?
  - a. Five hours.                      b. Seven hours.                      c. The story doesn't say.
8. Does she think that BNK48 needs her?
  - a. Yes.                      b. No.                      c. She doesn't say.

## Section 2

Underline one grammatically incorrect word in each of the following sentences. Then, write down the grammatically correct word in the space given.

9. Cherprang didn't feel nerves on the movie set. ....
10. "I didn't want to be captain but they make me." ....
11. I want to meet my fans and performing. ....
12. I am interesting in lots of things. ....
13. I want to study something that take me to space. ....

### Section 3

Read the following passage. Then, fill in the blanks with the correct words from the choices given.

*Homestay* is Cherprang's first acting job, but two months ago she ....14.... appeared in *BNK48:*

*Girls Don't Cry*, a behind-the-scenes ....15.... that looks at the joy and pain of these young idols as

they struggle in a system that relies ....16.... on social media popularity. In that documentary,

Cherprang, who's ....17.... than most of the band members, comes across as a ....18....,

sometimes tough-minded woman who knows the rules of the game and is willing to play them to her

....19.... ability.

- |                    |           |             |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| 14. a. was         | b. also   | c. had      |
| 15. a. documentary | b. comedy | c. tragedy  |
| 16. a. heavier     | b. heavy  | c. heavily  |
| 17. a. old         | b. older  | c. oldest   |
| 18. a. old         | b. mature | c. maturity |
| 19. a. good        | b. worst  | c. best     |

### Section 4

Write down the noun forms of the following words used in the story in the space given.

- |                 |       |
|-----------------|-------|
| 20. thriller    | ..... |
| 21. frustrating | ..... |
| 22. exciting    | ..... |
| 23. develop     | ..... |
| 24. inspired    | ..... |

For the answers, find the story online at [www.bangkokpost.com/learning](http://www.bangkokpost.com/learning)

If you have any questions or feedback, please contact the Editor at [garyb@bangkokpost.co.th](mailto:garyb@bangkokpost.co.th)