

獲嘉許狀的教學實踐

Teaching practices presented with the Certificate of Merit



英國語文教育學習領域
English Language Education
Key Learning Area



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▲Left to right: Ms YEUNG Chui-shan, Ms TSE Pik-wan, Grace, Mr WONG Wah-chun, Ms LAI Wai-ming

Unlocking ENGLISH = ENGage + EstabLISH

Teaching Philosophy

We believe that "Every child has dignity; Every child is able to learn; Every child is able to succeed". This is infused into our teaching approach which pledges to engage every student in learning and establish a platform for every student to succeed.

Teachers presented with the Certificate of Merit

Ms TSE Pik-wan, Grace Ms LAI Wai-ming
Ms YEUNG Chui-shan Mr WONG Wah-chun

School

Fanling Kau Yan College

Subjects taught

English Language (S1-6)



Interview with the Teachers

English teachers from Fanling Kau Yan College follow their teaching philosophy not merely as a school motto, but they embrace it as their true belief and incorporate it into their daily teaching.

Mr Wong Wah-chun, the professional development officer in the panel, recalled the school visit to Shangdong Province in China some years ago. "We were overwhelmingly impressed by the self-motivated students who showed strong independent learning attitude." Mr Wong was wondering if his students in Hong Kong had the same momentum in self-regulated learning. "If we believe every child is able to succeed, why can't our students be successful in learning English?"

Returning to Hong Kong, Mr Wong and the English teachers reviewed the innovative pedagogies from a global perspective, making reference to research literature from the US and Europe. Step by step, they developed their own framework of self-regulated learning.

This is not magic

"We did fail sometimes, but we never give up. We tried a wide range of learning methods until we came up with something suitable," said Ms Tse Pik-wan, Grace, the English Panel of the school. She explained that English proficiency of S1 students enrolled into the College was low. "Some students had very low motivation and some had difficulty understanding English," said Ms Tse. Another English teacher, Ms Lai Wai-ming, pointed out that the first obstacle of less-able students was their reluctance to communicate in English. Having a strong belief that every student can be a successful learner of English, the teachers jointly design learning guides, explore innovative ways of teaching and organise interesting activities to make the process of learning more enjoyable. Students are supported to boost their confidence by developing good learning habits with the "UNLOCKING ENGLISH" strategy.



▲ Building learning communities - Sharing with local and overseas educators

"Students felt more comfortable to communicate in English with improved confidence. They even challenged me by asking more questions. I believe this is not magic, this is a process," said Ms Tse, feeling proud of the students' accomplishments.

Your improvement, my fulfilment

Mr Wong, who has been teaching for 13 years, experienced the most touching moment when he saw a student transforming himself from an indifferent to a passionate learner of English.

"One of my students whom I taught from S1 to S6 failed most English exams in early years. But the student made a breakthrough in S4 and started raising questions from newspapers and magazines he read. I was delighted to know that he practised using the materials I specially designed for the class and see his improvement in English. Witnessing his improvement is my fulfilment," said Mr Wong. "We are not just English teachers. We have a mission to ignite students' passion for English," said Ms Yeung Chui-shan, another English Panel in the team.

Students' success is the best reward for teachers. By upholding "Every child is able to succeed", every English teacher in the College is learning and growing with the students confidently.



▲ Let me try! Students' confidence is built with this magical spell

◀ Reading is a gateway to success - Students enjoying reading during POWER time



Teachers' Sharing

Establishing the LRC Curriculum to engage everyone

There are three major underlying principles in our LRC curriculum planning: **L**earner-centred curriculum, **R**eadng as the cornerstone of language development and **C**onfidence building.

Our "Learner-centred curriculum" aims to foster holistic language development of our students. Language skills and purposeful tasks are integrated with the infusion of positive values and attitudes in the curriculum. We meticulously design learning guides that require students to do preparations for every lesson, promote their autonomy in learning and encourage them to undertake critical self-reflections.

We consider "Reading as the cornerstone of language development" and place a strong emphasis on reading in our curriculum. Each school day starts with "POWER TIME" - **P**ositive **O**utcomes **W**hile **E**njoying **R**eadng. Students are engaged in sustained silent reading sessions with books of various disciplines. They are also strategically exposed to a wide variety of multi-modal texts in English lessons. To foster students' greater interest in reading, their ability of integrating the knowledge, skills and learning experiences is further enhanced through activities held in the theme-based learning weeks, reading carnivals and cross-curricular project learning.

"Confidence building" is crucial to language learning. We build our students' confidence to use English by constantly engaging them in communicative speaking activities inside classroom, and in diversified life-wide learning activities outside classroom. Students are able to master communication and social skills, develop a healthy and positive learning attitude, strive for greater academic achievements and improve their command of the English language for future endeavours. All these valuable learning experiences support students' growth for whole-person development and life-long learning.

Realising the LRC curriculum in a five-stage learning & teaching framework

A five-stage framework has been designed to engage every student in the learner-centred lesson to establish good learning habits and enhance his



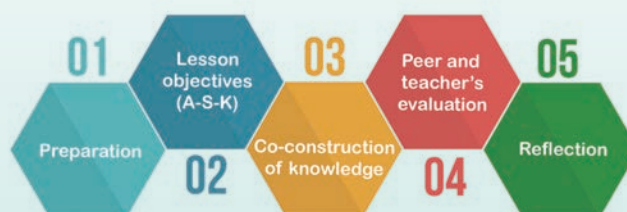
▲ Team work makes the dream work - Students are actively engaged in shared learning

confidence and motivation in learning English.

Having developed a good habit of doing preparations using the learning guide before every single English lesson, students clearly know about the attitude, skills and knowledge objectives of each lesson. They engage themselves with their peers in learning activities and evaluation. Their active participation and interaction with others in a progressive and safe learning environment helps build up their confidence and increase their enjoyment of learning English.

Advancing learning and teaching through collaborative professionalism

For professional development, we have established a culture of collaboration through lesson study. The English Department organises "Open Class" for education practitioners at least twice a year. Engaging English teachers in the "Open Class" boosts their confidence and professionalism through a series of trial lessons. With students' learning effectiveness in mind, all English teachers are involved in observing and reviewing the trial lessons. Adjustments are made afterwards accordingly to further refine the lesson design for the "Open Class". Feedback and insights are collected from other education practitioners during the post-lesson conference. To conclude the lesson study, all English teachers write reflections on what they have learnt. We are proud to see that teachers' confidence in adopting teaching pedagogies and their collaborative professionalism are enhanced in the learning journey.





Assessment Summary

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Promoting students' confidence and their motivation to learn English through the learner-centred curriculum that facilitates self-regulated learning

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▲Engaging students in presentations and peer interaction

Based on the belief "Unlocking English = **ENG**age + **estab**LISH" as the key to effective learning and teaching of English, the group of passionate and highly proficient teachers empower students to establish themselves as the owner of their learning. They adopt "Learner-centred, Reading as the cornerstone, and Confidence building" (**LRC**) as the conceptual framework for a coherent English language curriculum integrating language skills, purposeful tasks and positive values and attitudes. They make the best use of what the school has done in self-regulated learning and put a great emphasis on cultivating students' good learning habits in preparation, sharing, reflecting and presenting, and building students' confidence in learning and using English. In the classroom, students are engaged in self-learning, peer learning and self-reflection to co-construct knowledge with teachers and peers and regulate their learning behaviour. Role taking by each member of the group of four guarantees nobody is left behind in the learning process. Collaborating with colleagues from other Key Learning Areas, the teachers help students establish links between concepts and learning experiences acquired in different subjects.

The teachers have worked collaboratively with the whole English panel in developing different sets of learning guides comprising preparation tasks, lesson activities, reflection tasks and online resources as the basis of each lesson. They put strong emphasis on developing students' reading skills through organising "POWER TIME", "Strategic Reading Scheme", theme-based learning week, and reading carnival, etc. to enrich students' reading experiences and their content knowledge in different themes. To build up students' confidence in using the language in real contexts, the teachers engage students in diversified life-wide learning activities to enhance their language learning experiences. For example, students are encouraged to participate in speech festivals, English writing and speaking competitions, study tours and experiential learning activities. Students' confidence in using English is established while their

awareness of English as an international language for communication is enhanced.

The teachers are reflective practitioners serving as role models in collaborative professionalism. They impact positively on the effective pedagogical practice within the English Panel and beyond. Through their collaborative efforts, they have succeeded in boosting students' confidence in using English, promoting active student engagement in learning English and enhancing students' language proficiency.

The teachers display very strong commitment to collaborative professional development and contribute to the professional development of the English Panel members. They also put due emphasis on their own professional growth through participating in local professional seminars and attending or doing presentations in international conferences. They are active in establishing professional networks with other schools, sharing good practices through the "Open Class" platform and engaging local and overseas experts and practising teachers from other schools in professional dialogues after class observation.

Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice

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▲Left to right: Ms MAN Siu-mei, Ms TSANG Wing-shan

English as an eye opener to the world of learning

Teaching Philosophy

Our education goal is to encourage our students to get out of their comfort zone in learning the language. English is not only a subject; students are expected to immerse themselves in authentic English environment where they can use and practise their English.

Teachers presented with the Certificate of Merit

Ms TSANG Wing-shan
Ms MAN Siu-mei

School

TWGHs Sun Hoi Directors' College

Subjects taught

English Language (S1-6)



Interview with the Teachers

Ms Tsang Wing-shan and Ms Man Siu-mei discovered their love for English in different scenarios. "At an early age, I was crazily in love with music bands from England. I always lingered in the music store and did extensive reading on stories about them. I gradually realised English was not only a subject, but a means to see the world," said Ms Man. From that moment, she decided to become an English teacher helping young people to become good at English so that they can make a difference in studies and life. "I also love mingling with young people as they make me feel young and energetic," she admitted with a smile.

For Ms Tsang, she had an inspiring mentor who triggered her love in English. "My History teacher was excellent in describing historical events in fluent English. I was so mesmerised in these stories that I tried learning more about the great people in History from extensive reading, mainly in English."

Both stories share one thing in common: you need an incentive to spark off your love for the language.

English is not just a subject

Both Ms Tsang and Ms Man agree that students cannot be forced into learning English. Instead, they need to be immersed in a supportive environment in using and practising English in their daily life. Through promoting learning English in non-language subjects, students are encouraged to use English beyond language classes, and in activities like English morning assemblies, competitions, and life-wide learning activities.

Students in their class are given ample opportunities to speak English. Ms Tsang and Ms Man will try to give tutorials for students in need of support after school and during school holidays, coaching them



▲Students building up confidence in a supportive learning environment



▲Developing proficiency in oral presentation

individually until they gain confidence in using English. Once ready, they will encourage them to join different activities and prove themselves capable of doing well.

A student has particularly moved and impressed both teachers. Ms Man recalled, "There was a student who required special care because of his physical weakness. Being very shy and quiet, he had a tough time making friends. Understanding his plight, we encouraged him to join the English Club. Through coaching him the skills of speech writing, interpersonal communication skills and encouraging him to join different kinds of extracurricular activities, he felt less lonely and isolated. Eventually, he has transformed himself into a self-assured student."

We are all blessed!

"The student's mother always thanks us and the school for supporting his son who has made such remarkable improvements," recalled Ms Tsang. The mother expressed gratefully, "This is a blessing." However, Ms Tsang said, "We are blessed too! When we see students willing to jump out of their comfort zone and become ready to try new things, this gives us the energy to keep going."

"I believe every child is unique and he could excel in what he is interested in when given the opportunities," Ms Tsang added.



▲Learning from professional actors on stage



Teachers' Sharing

For Sun Hoi students, English is not just a language but an eye opener. In pursuit of the goal, we draw upon concerted efforts from other subject teachers and extend teaching English beyond the language classroom. This belief has inspired us to make positive changes in the English learning environment for students when we promote the Language across the Curriculum (LaC) initiative in our English Language Education programmes.

Creating an English-rich learning environment

To maximise students' opportunities in learning and using English in authentic contexts, we have created an open and accommodating language rich environment in the classroom, self-directed learning centre and the school campus. We also provide students with ample opportunities to engage themselves in a multitude of intra-school and inter-school learning activities as well as overseas learning programmes in the extended learning environment. Students make good use of these platforms in organising the Language across the Curriculum Fun Day, STEM Fun Day, Sun Hoi Maze Survivors, etc., taking language learning beyond English classrooms. They enjoy learning English in real-life contexts and develop an awareness of learning English anywhere and anytime in daily life situations. We see students' improvements in language proficiency, and more importantly, positive changes in their attitude towards learning English.



▲ Students simulating selling their inventions to the elderly

Learning and using English in authentic contexts

Apart from learning English in language lessons and in non-language subjects taught in English, students are exposed to learning opportunities offered in the



▲ Incorporating e-learning on the LaC Fun Day

community. For example, they made the RTHK3 "Teen Time" recording, participated in simulated English interview workshops and joined the Joint Secondary Schools English Camp. Through these activities, they learn to use English in realistic settings. To give students a stage to shine, we offer the Inter-house English Drama Competitions. Students take up different roles in script writing, acting, props production and backstage support work. With the teachers as facilitators, language learning happens more naturally. To our delight, our drama team won prizes in the Hong Kong School Drama Festival. Throughout the year, students host English assemblies, seasons celebrations and Reading Buddy Programme, serve as English Ambassadors and contribute to our English webpage "SHDC English World" and the school English magazine "MagaSun". They join overseas immersion or cultural exchange programmes for authentic language experiences. All these learning opportunities contribute to boosting students' confidence in learning and enhancing their English proficiency.

Impacts of LaC on student learning

With a highly supportive and stimulating learning atmosphere in language learning at Sun Hoi, students always demonstrate a positive attitude towards English. All the planned learning activities, events, fun activities and other language-related activities have indeed greatly inspired students of different backgrounds and abilities to learn the language with confidence and determination. We are so pleased to witness that students are willing and ready to challenge themselves in different English contexts.

It is our pledge to sustain, enrich and promote good LaC practices at Sun Hoi for our students.



Assessment Summary

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Promoting students' incentives and authentic use of English through providing a language-rich and cross-curricular learning environment

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The awarded teachers demonstrate professional competence in curriculum planning and curriculum leadership. They serve as the catalysts of change at the school, share a common vision and establish common practices for the panel of English teachers. Working in line with the school's language policy in promoting Language across the Curriculum (LaC), Reading across the Curriculum and STEM/STREAM education on a whole-school approach, the teachers work closely with non-language teachers to generate learning materials for subjects taught in English. They have developed a school-based LaC Guidebook and organised a series of LaC training workshops for non-language teachers in the school. To address learner diversity, they use internal and external assessment data as well as qualitative data from various sources to identify students' learning needs and learning styles for directions and adjustments when developing the theme-based booklets such as Social Issues Booklets, Speaking Handbooks, Extensive Reading Scheme Report Booklets, Reading and Viewing Journals, and Self-directed Learning Handbooks. The teachers also implement the Self-directed Reading Programmes for S1 to S3 students with graded reading cards on different New Senior Secondary elective modules. The self-learning centre also provides students with an easy access to ample reading resources to facilitate the development of their self-study learning skills.

The teachers succeed in creating a motivating and attractive language-rich environment for students to immerse in language learning. They expose their students to a wide range of activities, internal and external competitions and assessment modes through a three-tier learning mode comprising classroom, intra-school and inter-school learning activities. To inspire students of different backgrounds to learn English outside class time, they have proposed and organised activities such as English Interview Workshops, LaC Cultural Exchange Tours, English drama and English Immersion Programmes, and offered training to the students



▲ Students engaged in communicative tasks and quality interaction

who participated in various drama and speech competitions.

Through professional sharing and dialogues, the teachers have strategically engaged all English teachers in playing the role of resource persons to the EMI subjects teachers in the development of LaC related learning materials. They have assisted the school in fostering a culture of experience sharing and a professional learning community through developing the 3-tier peer observation practice, the structured school-based mentorship programme and the "Teachers' Professional Development Unit" for monitoring and overseeing the continuous professional development of the teaching staff. They take the lead to work with tertiary institutions and share their good practices in learning and teaching with the English panel and with other schools.

The teachers' continuous effort has laid down a firm foundation for the advancement of English Language education and LaC development at their school. They have succeeded in boosting students' confidence in learning and using English, and enhancing students' language proficiency.

Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice

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▲Left to right: Ms ROSS, Hester Hayin, Ms TSANG Siu-sing, Ms IP Lai-fan, Fanny

Developing good habits of learning and self-learning skills

Teaching Philosophy

We believe it is essential for students to acquire the "Reading to Learn and Learning to Read" skills. We aim to turn them into independent learners who are able to develop good habits of learning and self-learning skills. Catering for students' diverse learning needs is an important part of our teaching because we want to nurture students' interest and confidence in learning English.

Teachers presented with the Certificate of Merit

Ms TSANG Siu-sing Ms IP Lai-fan, Fanny
Ms ROSS, Hester Hayin

School

Shak Chung Shan Memorial
Catholic Primary School

Subjects taught

English Language (P1-6)



Interview with the Teachers

I am a teacher and also a learner

"Being an English teacher has been my dream from a young age because I can always learn on the job," said Ms Ip Lai-fan, Fanny. She has been teaching for over 30 years, and is now the English Panel of the School. "While I am teaching, I am learning how to teach well. It is my biggest satisfaction to know that my methods are effective in enhancing students' English proficiency," said Ms Ip humbly and sincerely. She believes that academic results cannot reflect students' ability in full. She does not judge a student's potential merely from their academic results.



▲ Students actively practise reading skills



◀ Students playing fun games on "World Reading Day"

Reading to learn, learning to read

To help the school promote a rich reading culture in English, Ms Ip visited some New Zealand schools a few years ago. Students there read books freely and joyfully. Ms Ip also realised that they focused more on speaking and had strong phonic skills. She believes that her students in Hong Kong can be trained to do the same.

After returning from New Zealand, she worked with Ms Ross, Hester Hayin and Ms Tsang Siu-sing to develop the Library Curriculum, the Phonics Curriculum as well as the innovative phonics teaching method, "Chunk, Check, Cheer", which trains students to try to pronounce words confidently and independently. They revamped the library lessons and put a strong emphasis on teaching levelled reading in ability groups.



▲ Students doing reciprocal teaching in a library lesson

Ms Ross, teaching more able students in the Library Reading Class, was delighted to see that her students enjoyed phonics and the challenging reciprocal teaching. Motivating students to make deeper meaning from reading and developing high order thinking skills is her goal to boost students' independent reading ability.

Sushi with love

Primary students are adorable and dynamic learners. Ms Ip taught her students a sushi recipe and asked them to try and make sushi with their parents during the weekend. She told them that sushi was her favourite food. "As I walked into the classroom the following Monday, I found that students had placed their sushi delicacies all over their desks with labels like 'Jelly Sushi' and 'Candy Sushi'! These little angels are so sweet and heartwarming. They are the drive to keep me going."

Fuelling passion in the teaching mission

Others might wonder whether these new teaching methods succeed all the time? "To us, failure is only a process of achieving success," said Ms. Tsang, who embraces "being persistent" and "never giving up" as her mottos. Given a free and supportive school environment, the teachers can give full play to their passion, strength, creativity and wisdom and become high flyers in their teaching.



Teachers' Sharing

Promoting self-learning in the Blended Learning e-Curriculum

The school-based "Better English Curriculum" at our school aims to nurture independent learners who can develop good habits of learning and self-learning skills. A blended teaching and learning approach is adopted in our e-Curriculum which is closely linked with the Phonics Curriculum and Library Reading Curriculum. We facilitate students' self-learning with our Better English Textbooks and e-textbooks, which include differentiated learning materials to cater for learner diversity. In our English e-learning classroom, students enjoy face-to-face learning with the support of the teacher, while taking advantage of the flexibility and rich resources that the e-learning platform provides. We provide students with ample opportunities to work in groups to help them develop collaborative learning skills and enhance their oral fluency. There are many possibilities for extended and independent learning as students can access the e-learning resources at their own pace. Students enjoy reading e-readers, learning with peers on the e-learning platform, while tracking their own progress on the e-smart online assessment platform. Students also look forward to joining campus or outdoor activities like QR Code Treasure Hunt, English Day, Science Fair, Super Detectives Science outing and RTHK sharing. Taking an active role in their learning, students' motivation is increased and their self-learning skills enhanced.

Developing phonics skills to support reading

We believe that a contextualised systematic phonics curriculum contributes hugely to students' vocabulary, oral fluency and success in reading. With this in mind, we provide our students with the building blocks and foundation skills to help them learn to read and speak English through our Phonics Curriculum that progresses from P1 to P6. We use the "Chunk, Check, Cheer" strategy to teach students skills in phonemic awareness, letter-sound recognition and decoding, high frequency word recognition and, in particular, fluency building. This strategy becomes a habit of learning for our students in phonics and in the library



▲ Students presenting their group writing on the e-learning platform lessons. Our self-developed Phonics Apps, Magic Chunking Bee, supports students' phonics learning in school and at home. Students build up their phonics skills and the confidence they gain has a profound impact on developing themselves as independent readers.

Fostering independent reading

We strongly believe that reading opens the door to knowledge and learning. We develop theme-based reading materials and provide students with a large collection of levelled e-books on our learning platform. In our library lessons, we teach the reading skills corresponding to students' reading levels and instill the love for reading. Students are exposed to levelled fiction and non-fiction texts that match their reading abilities. Their reading and oral communications skills are fostered in activities such as World Reading Day, Spellathon and Auntie and Uncle English activities. It is evident that they have developed good reading skills and a passion for reading.

We believe that developing students the good habits of learning and self-learning skills helps them overcome challenges and difficulties in learning English. This ability and attitude can go beyond classroom into their daily life.

◀ Let's chunk, check, cheer together!

▼ Open the "four-door leaflet" to develop students' thinking power in reading





Assessment Summary

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Nurturing independent learners in the English language classrooms

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▲ Ability grouping in a library reading lesson

The awarded teachers are committed English language teachers well versed in e-learning, gifted education and learning pedagogies. They have developed a school-based "Better English Curriculum" incorporating the Blended Learning e-Curriculum, Phonics Curriculum and Library Reading Curriculum. Pedagogies such as blended learning, reciprocal teaching and self-learning are incorporated into their daily teaching. They provide e-learning opportunities for students to widen their exposure to authentic learning materials and multimodal media. They succeed in catering for learner diversity, enhancing students' English proficiency, and nurturing them into independent learners.

The blended teaching and learning approach allows students to take an active role in their learning through using self-learning skills or tools such as mind-mapping, phonics chunking, note-taking and self-assessments. The teachers engage students in the integrative use of language skills to develop proficiency and encourage self-expression. Extended and independent learning opportunities are provided to students who could access the materials outside the classroom and use the e-resources at their own pace. Such practices help cater for individual differences and encourage students to work collaboratively in the e-learning activities. Students are taught the phonics skills which facilitate them to read independently. An innovative learning tool "Chunk, Check, Cheer" helps students identify meaningful phonics chunks in unfamiliar words. They learn to self-check and are motivated to celebrate their success. The teachers also develop an interactive Phonics Apps, "Magic Chunking Bee", to support, complement and consolidate the teaching and learning of phonics.

In promoting reading development, the teachers put students into three different ability groups according to their results in regular pre- and post- reading tests. Students' progress is tracked in the formative assessments throughout KS1 to allow for the reshuffling of

the ability groups. The teachers identify less able students for early intervention or more able students for further enrichment. They teach reading skills explicitly in stages, progressing from guided reading to buddy reading, then moving on to independent reading using levelled texts corresponding to students' ability. Emergent readers are taught phonological awareness; early fluent readers are supported to become independent in comprehending the text and in self-learning with levelled tasks; fluent readers are challenged to use higher-order thinking skills in the "four-door leaflet", which promotes predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising skills. A reading to learn culture is cultivated at the school.

Serving as role models in curriculum development, e-learning and subject pedagogies, the teachers successfully enhance a culture of professional sharing and provide support to colleagues to meet the development needs in English Language education of the school. They are passionate and enthusiastic learners playing leaders' roles in supporting a number of primary schools as a Professional Development School in their school-based e-learning English curriculum development.

Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice

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▲Left to right: Ms LAW Hoi-ye, Ms LI Wai-man, Ms LUI Man-chi, Ms NG Pui-ye

Making a difference with the reader-based English curriculum

Teaching Philosophy

Being huge lovers of reading, the teachers strongly believe that all students can learn and acquire English successfully in an authentic language-rich environment filled with theme-based readers, interesting classroom activities and effective learning approaches that enhance students' competence in using English naturally.

Teachers presented with the Certificate of Merit

Ms LUI Man-chi Ms NG Pui-ye
Ms LAW Hoi-ye Ms LI Wai-man

School

HKFYG Lee Shau Kee Primary School

Subjects taught

English Language (P1-6)



Interview with the Teachers

Reading is the cornerstone of the English curriculum

"We have a strong belief that reading can make a huge difference," said Ms Ng Pui-yee, the Vice Principal, and Ms Lui Man-chi, the English Panel of the school. Being parents to young children themselves, they witness the power of reading in motivating their children to learn English joyfully and efficiently. They began to give priority to teaching reading in their curriculum in the best possible way.

Seeing the limitations in the textbooks, they made a painstaking decision to replace textbooks with theme-based readers three years ago. "In the past, we taught six units in a term and there was only one piece of reading material in each unit. The scope and exposure to authentic and interesting reading for students was very limited. Sometimes, the publishers just made up the reading text in order to introduce the language patterns or structures," said Ms Lui. "Only by exposing students to a wide range of authentic readers geared to their reading levels will they be able to cultivate a good reading habit. Once they start enjoying the pleasure of reading, they may acquire knowledge of the language naturally," she continued.

Hunting for treasure

Getting the right books for the curriculum is easier said than done. The team of four had to select their readers from the ocean of books. They started from scratches, first identifying books relevant to the themes of study, then



▲ It's a snail! Learning English in the garden is fun

digging for necessary elements like phonics, vocabularies, and language structures and patterns, etc. in these books. "Interesting and amusing books and children literature related to their daily life are what we are after because interesting books motivate them to read," said Ms Ng. Hunting for the right readers is only the beginning. The team needs to write up the learning units encompassing a balanced coverage of all four skills, language structures, task-based learning activities and the final writing task. In their words, "It is pretty exhausting. But it is absolutely necessary if we want to give them a holistic language learning experience."

Impact on students

Developing the reader-based curriculum might be tedious, but the hard work of the teachers pays off as they gradually see students showing immense interest and ability in reading books at school and on the e-reading platform. It is amazing to learn that students read a hundred books a year. "When the books fit children's reading levels and interest, they learn fast. There are quite a number of dinosaur experts in the school. We teach them how to read and they start reading to learn," said Ms Law Hoi-yee. Once the foundation in reading has gained ground, learning accelerates in other areas such as oral fluency, vocabulary building, e-learning and writing. "We

adopt the 'From Speaking to Writing' approach. Students are both confident readers and competent writers," said Ms Li Wai-man.

The team firmly believes that the reader-based curriculum helps students acquire English in the language-rich environment naturally. They will keep refining the curriculum and help students climb up the learning ladder.



▲ Students are immersed in reading interesting books

► Brainstorming ideas in pre-writing activities





Teachers' Sharing

Creating a favourable English-learning environment for language learning

Our school-based English curriculum aims at helping students to lay a strong foundation for English proficiency through ample reading, paving the way for independent and lifelong learning. With this goal in mind, we put a very strong emphasis on cultivating students' reading habit. We want to create a favourable English learning environment filled with a variety of fun activities to motivate and sustain students' interest and develop their positive attitudes towards learning English. Inspired by Krashen's Acquisition-Learning hypothesis, we believe that it is necessary to create platforms and conditions for both acquisition and learning to take place in real-life contexts. We decided to replace textbooks with theme-based readers because readers could provide students with pleasurable and attractive content, which facilitates students' acquisition of language knowledge and skills in natural settings.

From Textbook-based to Reader-based Curriculum

"Reader-based" is the main characteristic of our school-based curriculum. All the units are organised in themes as suggested in the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide. We immerse students in a print-rich English language environment filled with a wide range of authentic readers, including narrative, informative and multimodal texts, which are closely related to their daily life. The appealing and familiar contexts successfully engage our students in a more pleasurable and conducive learning environment where they learn English enthusiastically.

Using the reader-based curriculum, we motivate students to read English books with enthusiasm through providing comprehensible input in guided reading, engaging them in communicative activities and while reading and post reading tasks. We encourage them to do home reading, revisions and self-assessments



▲ Timely and constructive feedback is the key to successful writing



▲ Students enjoy reading with the teacher in a language rich environment

on the self-directed e-learning platform. Students' speaking skills are developed in reading workshops, children's literature circle, reading aloud practices, story-telling, sing-along, language games and training in presentations offered by native speakers from voluntary organisations. They are confident of interacting with people in English inside and outside classroom.

We expect students to read widely. To facilitate home reading, we arrange students to finish their homework at school in order to spare more time for them to do daily home reading. Since there are no formal tests and examinations for P1 and P2 students, they have more time for reading. All KS1 students are able to read more than 100 readers every year.

Fostering independent readers and writers

Reading is at the core of our balanced literacy programme. Students are provided with plenty of opportunities to use their target language orally. Pre-writing speaking tasks are strategically integrated in the learning process to help students scaffold their writing task for each unit. Peer questioning, information gap activities and presentations are common speaking activities. We believe that students are much more ready for writing if they are able to use the language orally. With

comprehensive reading and oral input, purposeful recycling of prior learning and split group teaching support, students not only become confident readers but also competent writers. Our reader-based curriculum has brought tremendous progress in students' performance and confidence in learning and using English.



Assessment Summary

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Engaging students in guided and extensive reading, interactive theme-based learning tasks to promote self-directed learning

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The awarded teachers are experienced and dedicated teachers with expertise in reader-based curriculum, gifted education, and innovative teaching pedagogies and learning approaches. They draw on Krashen's Acquisition-Learning hypothesis, innovative practices in gifted education and library science to develop the school-based "Reformed English Curriculum" for KS1, using levelled theme-based readers as the curriculum organisers. The curriculum emphasises the use of authentic literary materials to maximise learners' language use through a range of guided and extensive reading, interactive theme-based activities and tasks, and self-directed learning activities. Explicit teaching of shared reading skills for P1 and P2 students and guided reading skills for P3 students help students develop reading proficiency and good reading habit. A "Reading to Learn" culture has been emphasised at school where students learn to read through guided reading activities associated with levelled readers and online reading materials. A language-rich environment conducive to arousing learners' interest in learning and using English has been created at the school. It is supplemented with an online learning platform named "Self-directed Learning Platform" to provide students with pre-lesson preparation work and post-lesson extended learning activities.

The teachers develop authentic learning materials commensurate with students' interest and ability for each of the learning units. They adopt the "From Speaking to Writing" approach and students are provided with plenty of speaking practices and engaged in meaningful language practice before completing the final writing task at the end of each unit. Thoughtful scaffolding of reading skills, phonics skills, songs, conversation, vocabulary, grammar and writing skills equip students with ideas and appropriate language knowledge and skills for the writing tasks. As there are no formal tests and examinations for P1 and P2 students, the teachers devise online formative assessment tasks for students to monitor their own



▲Two heads are better than one! Peer learning is common in English lessons

progress and promote self-directed learning. Data obtained from all formative assessments are analysed to enable teachers to make informed decisions on refining the curriculum, reviewing their pedagogies, learning materials and assessments.

The teachers are conscientious learners who are keen on enhancing their own professional competence. To equip the whole panel of English teachers with the expertise and skills in developing the "Reformed English Curriculum" in stages, the teachers provide guidance and support to their colleagues through coaching, sharing and in-house training workshops. The teachers strategically open their classrooms for peer observation and develop a culture of programme evaluation and self-reflections. They promote home-school collaboration through organising parents' workshops to help parents master the skills in supporting their children's extensive reading at home. They also arrange school Open Days for parents, as well as for teachers and parents from kindergartens, to let them have a better understanding of their school-based curriculum.

Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice

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