

St. Rose of Lima's College

Name of Awarded Teacher : Lin Mau Tong, Kitty

School-based Curriculum, Self-Access Learning, and Mentoring as Learning and Teaching

Introduction

An English Classroom

It is always fun and rewarding to be a teacher, especially an English and English Literature teacher. English and English Literature teachers always enjoy great freedom in their classrooms. Unlike the teachers of other subjects, we can design our syllabus and learning activities since we are not held back by the fixed number of passages we have to cover. This freedom allows me to exercise my imagination and creativity with my students in language learning. We explore the language and culture everywhere, making our classroom beyond our classroom.

When students realise English is a language but not a subject, they will find learning English interesting and fruitful. When students realise that their English classroom is no longer restricted to a classroom physically, they will find more opportunities to learn and use the language. Thus, giving students more learning experiences certainly enables them to grow with the language.



School-based Curriculum

To boost students' confidence and enhance their creativity in learning English, a module-based literary arts curriculum was introduced since 2001. Our Reading lessons were restructured as Literature lessons. Besides teaching students' reading skills, we put our emphasis on reading and appreciating the world and different cultures. To align with the course in English Literature in senior forms, we start to teach different genres to students and motivate their interest in reading literary texts. The following is the syllabus:

Form One : Comic Strip, Poetry, Drama and Author Appreciation

Form Two : Radio Drama, Essay writing, Female writing and Poetry

Form Three : Greek Mythology, Drama, Novel and Poetry

Take poetry as an example. Besides the different types of poems, students also learn poetic devices which can facilitate their reading and understanding of poems. Form One students learn sound devices whereas Form Two students learn visual devices. Form Three students are required to have a more comprehensive understanding of the various poetic devices. For assessment, Form One and Form Two students write their own poems, using some of the devices they have learnt. Besides writing their own poems, Form Three students also need to answer questions on unseen poems to show their understanding and appreciation of poems.

There are set texts and worksheets for the modules. Form One and Form Two students are required to do individual or group projects as assessment. They do not need to take examination as we believe that continuous assessment is the best way to assess students' learning. Standards-referencing is adopted and students are given clear guidelines for their projects. Both teachers' and peer assessments are adopted. Students are thus trained to read their and others' work and performances. Their products are works of art and very true reflection of their learning, originality and creativity.

Our curriculum can be considered as an exemplar of how to integrate language arts in the English curriculum. Language arts provide fertile soil and breeding ground. Poems, songs, films, comic strips, short stories, etc. are very meaningful, interesting and useful tools. Students will certainly find them more interesting comprehension passages and like reading more.

Self-Access Learning

Besides "what to learn", we hope our students can also learn "how to learn". Training on skills is particularly important. When students are willing and able to learn independently, they will learn more and in a better way. Our two Self-Access Learning Centres can cater for students' needs and interests. One is for viewing films, surfing the internet and playing board games, and the other one is for listening to music and exercises, reading and self-study. Besides books and resources, we have also tailor-made some worksheets for students. Based on their interests and abilities, students can choose the worksheets and do the exercises in their Self-Access Logs. They can check the answers by themselves. The worksheets are of three levels of difficulties. Level One comprises comprehension questions; Level Two is a combination of comprehension questions and questions requiring higher order thinking skills. Level Three requires students to have reflections and relate the texts to their daily lives or current issues.

Students can design their own learning programmes at their own pace. When they finish the tasks, they are encouraged to have self-evaluation by filling in a table in their Self-Access Logs. By doing so, students learn to be responsible for their own learning and widen their learning experiences. They will realise the importance of lifelong learning.

Mentoring as Learning and Teaching

A collaborative culture is definitely the key to effective learning and teaching. Sharing among teachers, especially language teachers, is a path to professionalism. We share, reflect and evaluate our school-based curriculum and teaching methodology. The platform for professional dialogue is set up.

My belief

When we enjoy our teaching, our students will enjoy their learning.

Way of Access to Further Information of the above Teaching Practice

E-mail: kittylin@eservices.hkedcity.net

Preferred Way of dissemination / collaboration

Public dissemination and discussion

Contact

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Remarks of the Assessment Panel

Ms Lin is a very experienced English and English Literature teacher who has initiated significant curricular and assessment changes in the school, such as the introduction of the module-based literary arts curriculum and the implementation of project work as an assessment tool.

Being an experienced English and English literature teacher, she has provided valuable guidance and support to new teachers and encouraged panel members to engage in teamwork. She has also co-taught with colleagues to show them how to teach poetry effectively. She is a role model to both her students and fellow teachers.

