

St. Stephen's Girls' College

Name of Awarded Teachers : Au Sin Wan, Anita, Terri Donlon, Cheung Hiu Tung, Becky, Lau Man Chu, Man Chan Rebecca Eva

Task-based Learning, Teaching and Assessment in English

Introduction

Our group of Form One English teachers started the task based approach in September, 2001 with a strong belief that teaching should be student-focused, interactive and task-based.

We carefully chose the teaching modules in the best of interest of our students and designed activities which could be shortened or extended to suit the various needs and abilities of them. In order to make learning and teaching more effective, we use IT in preparing our lessons and provide students with a lot of chances of using computer courseware in their learning.

From time to time, formative assessment, peer assessment and evaluation are implemented to check the effectiveness of learning and teaching. Our group is also willing to reflect and share our teaching ideas with other teachers.

Innovative ideas from the task based curriculum

We have exercised much flexibility when tailoring the syllabus to suit the situation of the school and the different needs and interest of students.

The modules selected and activities designed are revised from time to time. The unit of SARS was introduced when classes were resumed after the suspension of school in 2003.

Computer Courseware that enhance teaching and learning

Two teaching packages were developed to make English learning and teaching more effective. They are a 'Bridging Programme for Form One' funded by the Quality Education Fund and a collaboration project on 'Shopping' with the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB).

The 'Bridging Programme for Form One' is an orientation programme designed to help first formers get comfortable using English every day, with teachers and classmates. There are five parts in the courseware through which students can practise their listening, reading and writing skills. There are also language exercises for students to revise basic tenses. This courseware is not only used as a 'Bridging programme' but also in the unit of 'School Life' at the beginning of the term.

The courseware on 'Shopping' was developed in coordination with EMB. The first section consists of different kinds of games. Students get more familiar with the vocabulary items of the products sold in different shops.

In the second section, students can browse the websites of four selected shopping malls and make comparisons of the features found in each of them. They can vote for their favourite shopping centre before and/ or after discussing the facilities available and plan a shopping trip in their favourite shopping centre.

The third section includes several writing tasks. After the shopping trip, students need to send an e-mail message to their friend reporting their shopping trip, describing to him/her what happened.

These programmes can be accessed in classrooms, libraries or at home at any time convenient to students, therefore students are given certain degree of autonomy to work on their own at their own pace. Students from the remedial classes would definitely benefit more and feel more comfortable using English.

Poetry writing and appreciation

Our team of teachers believes that there are important values introducing students to different forms of language arts. Poetry, to these teachers, is a medium of expression. It can take many forms and is not always



bound by rules. That is why we have chosen poetry for Form one students and have developed a poetry teaching package. In this unit, several different forms of poems are introduced through a series of PowerPoint presentation. Students learn the sound pattern and rhythms of spoken English through reading poems. They even learn some simple poetic devices and are encouraged to write their own poems.

Learning English outside Classroom

We also believe that learning can take place beyond the classroom.

Students are encouraged to surf on the web for interesting information in the unit of 'World records' and present their views on the constraints and benefits that the record holder may encounter in his/ her daily life. This helps to nurture not only their analytical and thinking abilities but also their creativity for they have to come up with an idea to set a class record at a later stage. This helps to build up their confidence in using English particularly for the group of students who have limited exposure to the language environment. The teachers also tried to arrange outings for remedial students so that they could learn English in authentic situations in the units of 'Shopping' and 'Eating out'.

Way of Access to Further Information of the above Teaching Practice

E-mail: rechan@ssgc.edu.hk

Preferred Way of dissemination / collaboration

Meeting and seminar

Contact

rechan@ssgc.edu.hk

Remarks of the Assessment Panel

This team has worked very collaboratively for three years on task-based student-focused modules since 2001. They have tailored the syllabus to suit their school context as well as different needs and interest of students, with the three dimensions of learning, i.e. knowledge, experience and interpersonal skills, addressed.

The team is composed of experienced, dedicated teachers with diversified talents of literature, computer knowledge, problem-solving and co-ordination who have been working together teaching English to F.1 for several years. Team members enjoy high team spirit and self-initiation for effective learning and teaching.

