



Stimulate Students to have expectation on themselves

Recipient of the Certificate of Merit

Mrs. HO LEE Doen-yee
(Years of Teaching: 28 years)

School

United Christian College
(Kowloon East)

Teaching Targets

Secondary 1 to Secondary 3
(Moral and Civic Education,
Life and Study Skills Education)

Beliefs of Teaching

"Our vision is to provide quality whole-person education to every student and to develop their ability to think with forethought. I believe that the vision of our school can be achieved through keeping a clear focus, persistence and acts of love and care."



Interview^{with the Teacher}

'To provide our students with sound moral and civic education and to develop their ability to think require much forethought.' Mrs. HO LEE Doen-yee of United Christian College (Kowloon East), with 28 years teaching experience and the co-operation of other teachers, designed the programs for Moral and Civic Education, and Life and Study Skills, which actualized her belief to cultivate students' ability to think.

When designing the course content, Mrs. HO would first learn about the backgrounds and characteristics of the students. "Since most of our students come from middle class families, they are quite self-centred. They do not know how to care about others' feelings; nor take care of themselves because they are usually the ones being protected and taken care of. Also, their knowledge of China is weak." A thorough understanding of the students facilitated Mrs. HO's course planning. Her courses are designed

to train students' critical thinking skills, and to become more cooperative with others through project learning. As a Christian teacher in a Christian School, her goal, as well as the school's vision, is to teach students to incorporate their religious belief into daily life matters, and to think critically what quality a Christian should possess.

Mrs. HO would involve three elements in the course content, the first step is to arouse students' learning interests in the subject, second is the content message, and last of all is to let students know what they have learnt. Mrs. HO believes training students to think critically is crucial. Students seldom initiate thinking as they tend to be instructed instead of taking the initiative to think. Mrs. HO referred to the lesson, "As you may see during the lesson, they might be able to answer some of my questions; but the answer would be quite peripheral. Critical thinking helps them to dwell deeper for discovering a question."

Sources of Energy

Apart from learning to think critically, Mrs. HO would stimulate students' drive to achieve the best result they can. Once there was a project learning task in which she led two groups of students. It involved lots of discussion and lasted for several months: setting up a topic, doing research, building questionnaires, organising different facts, preparing presentations, etc. Students faced many difficulties and frustrations, and wondered why their

teacher would have such high expectations on them. However, Mrs. HO persisted her demands on the students. Finally, their project achieved the best result for its content, structure and presentation. When sharing their experience after this project, they all thought that they have gained a lot. They did not take things easily and were serious in their project because Mrs. HO had a clear and solid expectation on them. Every minute was not wasted because knowledge and experience were gained. "Students' own expectations on themselves are essential drives for their learning." Mrs. HO emphasised, "Teachers should also have the persistence to have expectation on their students to stimulate their own expectations. The time may be a little bit hard, but the teacher's encouragement would definitely be a source of energy."

Course design and management are not easy tasks. Mrs. HO's persistence is driven by her religious belief. She sees her education career as a call from God, through which God provides her with abundant power to continue. Also, students' improvement is a vital source of energy for her work. She also takes time to communicate with parents through Parents Day, different functions and home visits. The encouragement and feedback from parents also drive her to move forward. Apart from all these, the trust and respect from the school and colleagues also support her a lot, giving her the force to design and prepare different teaching materials.



Mrs. HO giving lesson to the whole class.



Teacher's Sharing

Vision

I fully embrace the vision of my school that man and woman are created in the image of God. We hold to the belief that there is something intrinsically good in every student. Our vision is to provide quality whole-person education to every student based on biblical principles. This vision shapes the design of the teaching curricular and learning materials that I prepare for my students.

To me, effective teaching extends beyond preparing good learning materials or delivering lively lessons. To provide our students with sound moral and civic education and to develop their ability to think require much forethought. However, I believe that the vision of our school can be achieved through keeping a clear focus, persistence and acts of love and care.

Curriculum design catering for the learners' needs

In planning the curricular and learning materials, I take a close look on our students. They are mostly from middle class families. They have good language abilities, yet, they tend to think in a rather superficial manner. Some of their parents may be over protective of them and some tend to be self-centred and inconsiderate of others' feelings. Quite a number of them lack a sense of responsibility. Their identification with the motherland appears to be rather weak.

In consideration of the above, I have introduced the first three levels of CoRT thinking skills which are promoted by Edward de Bono into

our Life and Study Skills curriculum. The worksheets for the students are usually designed with a warm-up activity that would stimulate their thinking. This is followed by imparting the knowledge required. Then I would include a piece of news or a factual situation for discussion. Towards the end, the worksheets would usually require students to make a summary of the lesson or to write down their self-reflection on what they have learnt. As application is crucial, students are provided with the opportunity to apply the thinking skills that they have learnt in class.

To foster the students' interpersonal skills, as well as to cultivate their sense of responsibility and improve their learning skills, I have added a project learning element to our L&S curriculum. I have planned a 3-year programme to help students develop the project learning skills. From my experience, we have found out that the most difficult aspect is to set research questions for each project. Thus, I have introduced the problem-based scheme of learning to help our students this year. I have also added a housework training program to the Life and Study Skills curriculum to equip the students with some basic life skills towards developing their independence.

In addition to working together with the Department of Health to run the Adolescent Health Program for our students, I have also worked with the 'HKU Suicide Research and Prevention Centre' and 'The Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups' to run courses that are aimed at strengthening the students' resilience in the face of adversity,

and through participation in volunteer work so as to increase their empathy for the needy.

The teaching materials and worksheets that I have designed are mainly geared to small group discussions and emphasis is placed on the inquiry approach. The materials are mainly taken from the mass media. The questions are usually open-ended and aim at encouraging the students to think more and to express their opinions. Through class discussion, the students will develop their critical thinking skills and learn to judge for themselves between what is right or wrong.

Coordination of the two subjects

We have been working with an outside organisation in our Moral and Civic Education programmes. I coordinate these programmes and design the worksheets. I also head up the organisation of our school's activities that are related to the students' moral and civic education.

Our colleagues have worked as a collaborative team with high spirits. I have arranged a weekly preparation session for my colleagues to share with them the objectives of the lessons that I have planned as well as the skills to conduct the lessons. Since CoRT thinking skills and project learning skills are quite new to many of my colleagues, I have also conducted various workshops for my colleagues to share with them my knowledge and experience. I have also openly invited colleagues to observe my class lessons so that we may exchange our ideas about teaching.



Summary of Assessment

An experienced and enthusiastic teacher who makes much contribution to the curriculum development of her school.



Project learning arouses students' study interest.

Way of Access to Information of the above Teaching Practice

Please contact Mrs. HO LEE Doen-yee for further information

Preferred Way of Dissemination

Seminar or school visit

Contact

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Sometimes, project learning takes several months that teachers have to devote the time to discuss with students and give them guidance.