



Using Pragmatic and Inspiring Strategies to broaden students' historical horizon

Teacher
presented with the
Certificate of Merit



Ms HUNG Sau-yu, Dora

(Years of teaching : 17 years)

School

Tak Oi Secondary School

Subject taught

History (S3-6)

Teaching Philosophy

"A History teacher should have a good mastery of the subject knowledge and plan well for the lessons to engage students in learning. The lessons must be delivered in an interactive and inspiring way to develop students' thinking skills as well as their consciousness and empathy for the historical events."



Interview with the Teacher

To make the lessons engaging and practical, Ms HUNG always does her best to prepare learning tasks for every lesson. She does not want to waste even one single minute in any of her lessons.

Ms HUNG not only has high expectations for herself but also for her students. Before each lesson, the students are encouraged to review all materials and gather historical evidence in order to present their views with supportive arguments from different perspectives.

Revitalising history to enhance learning interest

Ms HUNG hopes that her own learning experience and attitude will inspire her students to strive for their best. "Neither had I viewed myself as particularly talented, nor was I born into a wealthy family. However, with a passion for History, I studied very hard to make up for my lack of talent. Likewise, many of my students live in public housing estates and some come from single-parent families. I hope that my own learning pathway can prove that family background or a lack of talent would not prevent us from achieving academic success. If you are committed to studying History well, your persistence and diligence will finally pay off! You can quote my experience on that."

Ms HUNG believes that, in order to motivate students to develop an interest in History, the teacher needs to develop in students a sense of historical understanding. Therefore, Ms HUNG tries to include different teaching strategies in her classes. "For younger students, I would use more maps and cartoons to assist teaching. As for senior students,



▲ Ms HUNG gained students' respect and gratitude.

► Students enjoying every minute of their History lesson



I would arrange group discussions and ask them to analyse historical events from different perspectives. For instance, when it comes to Hitler, I would ask students to look at Hitler from the German's perspective as well as from the British's point of view. By doing so, they could understand each historical figure more objectively."

Apart from lessons, Ms HUNG would also design field trips that allow students to learn History up close. "Hollywood Road linking Sheung Wan to Central is our study route this year. The field trip is designed to enable students to visualise the East—West dichotomy, and may trigger their interest in exploring the social stratification and cultural difference of Hong Kong in the past."

Gaining drive from students' feedback

Years of efforts has produced fruitful rewards. Students' positive feedback has been a major driving force behind Ms HUNG's teaching. "I was glad to learn that past students found the knowledge they gained from my lessons very useful. For example, they realised that the answering techniques I taught them could also be applied to compose better theses in colleges. The solid foundation laid in secondary school helps our graduates pursue History-related studies such as politics and law more successfully in universities. Helping students succeed is my ultimate motivation. I put my heart into my teaching. Over time, students would realise how much I have contributed to their growth." Ms HUNG said with passion and delight.

Teacher's Sharing

"Excellence is the gradual result of always striving to do better." This encourages me to make improvement and make constant reflection. This motto also makes me believe that all students can learn and achieve excellence if they have the right attitude, the will to excel and the methods to improve.

Having high expectations

I strongly believe that it's important to help students nurture a serious attitude towards study and life. I have high expectations for myself and my students. In my daily teaching, I try to be a role model. I am fully prepared before entering the classroom and I mark each piece of students' work with the greatest effort. At the same time, I require my students to be responsible learners, who need to be prepared before lessons and to produce quality work. With this, I believe students will become responsible persons who can contribute to the society.

Providing sufficient scaffolding

For many students, learning History is tough as it's a very language-loaded subject with lots of facts. "Making it manageable" is the important first step to help students learn more effectively and confidently.

My lesson usually begins with lesson objectives so that students can follow better. Moreover, a difficult task is often broken down into smaller tasks so that students can understand it step-by-step. Various graphic organisers and timeline are used to help students organise the facts and facilitate analysis. Both first-hand and second-hand sources are employed to enhance their ability in understanding History.

► Students collaborating and sharing ideas in class



◀ Preparing well for lessons and engaging students fully in learning

Students are meaningfully engaged to construct their knowledge through activities like "big-poster-writing". In this way, students can learn from their peers, develop collaboration skills and have a stronger sense of ownership in the learning process.

Arousing interest in learning History

Many students find learning History uninteresting as it is a subject with lots of facts which are remote from them. Therefore, arousing interest is consequently vital.

Apart from typical data-based questions and essay writing, other tasks are also designed to nurture students' empathy, creativity and critical understanding of historical events. For instance, students would draw wartime posters to help recruit soldiers during World War One and to write petition letter to the "Big Three" to voice their discontent towards the Paris Peace Conference after the First World War. Learning is not confined to the classroom, thematic talks, museum visits, cultural walks and overseas study tours have been organised to arouse students' interests and curiosity in learning History.

Conclusion

Teaching is getting more challenging nowadays but it is not unmanageable, with support from colleagues. "Unity is strength." In our school, colleagues are like "critical friends" who drive each other to grow. Peer observation and open classrooms are arranged so that we can learn from each others' feedback. My partners in the History Department are responsible and dedicated. Professional dialogues are often conducted so that we can exchange our views and share our teaching strategies. All these help our students learn more effectively and confidently.





Assessment Summary

Revitalising History learning through inspiring and effective teaching strategies.

Ms HUNG is a very dedicated, reflective and charismatic teacher who has a clear view about the value of History education and its contribution to the Personal, Social and Humanities Education. She believes that understanding the past and its patterns enhances one's ability to analyse the present and the future. The study of History helps students develop a global perspective and an enhanced understanding of the processes of interaction, diversification and rapid change in today's world. Ms HUNG shows good mastery of the subject knowledge in History and she does not only equip students with skills for handling the subject matter but can also nurture students to take responsibility for their own lives. Her reflection has articulated a coherent philosophy of teaching based on her passion for teaching, care for her students, her belief in achieving excellence and her endeavour in the profession for more than 15 years.

Ms HUNG is always well prepared for her lessons. She uses a wide range of resources and teaching strategies to motivate students to learn History effectively, e. g. use of time-line and graphic organisers, questioning, group discussion and big poster-writing. Key concepts were systemically unfolded and consolidated. Delivery and pace of teaching are well-managed. Taking into consideration the characteristics of students and their learning diversity, she provides incremental steps or clear guidance as a scaffold for learning and designs tiered assignments and diversified learning tasks to address their learning needs. Students' works are marked carefully with detailed



▲ Well-prepared lesson with clear objectives

and constructive feedback to enhance their learning. Ms HUNG had obviously won students' love and respect as she could make them fully engaged in learning through diversified strategies.

With the aim to "revitalise History" and to make connection between learning and the life of students, "lively" learning materials were used. Current issues were chosen and in some of the topics, elements of the local culture were included as well. She has always made use of the connection of History to students' everyday life to cultivate critical thinking, multiple thinking perspectives, respect of culture, and self-and-social responsibility, which are all good qualities for nurturing the younger generation.

Ms HUNG's professional competence is well recognised in her school and she has been invited occasionally to share her pedagogies and teaching strategies at staff development days. With the aim of developing a learning community in the school, Ms HUNG encourages enthusiastic colleagues to have more professional dialogues through regular lesson observation and reviews. Her conscientious and dedicated attitude to the teaching profession, and persistent strive for improvement have made her a role model in the school.

Ways of Obtaining Information of the Teaching Practice



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C O N T A C T



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