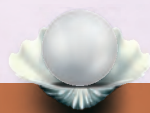




Nurturing pupils to learn English on their own initiative

▲ Back row left to right: Ms LAM Kar-ye, Alice, Ms IP Tak-wai, Mary and Ms YIU Kwun-sze, Cecilia.
Front row left to right: Mr HUSTWIT Richard James and Ms PRADHAN Ashwini Winnie.



Teaching Philosophy

"The teachers view their mission of teaching English as their collaborated effort in fostering an attractive learning environment at school. They believe that it is most important to nurture confidence and interest of learning English in pupils, as these capabilities can promote their self-access and independent learning skills. These skills can enable pupils to learn better as they take up more responsibility in monitoring their own learning progress."



Teachers presented with the Certificate of Merit

Ms PRADHAN, Ashwini Sachin, Winnie
(Years of teaching: 16)

Mr HUSTWIT, Richard James
(Years of teaching: 14)

Ms LAM Kar-ye, Alice
(Years of teaching: 7)

Ms YIU Kwun-sze, Cecilia
(Years of teaching: 7)

Ms IP Tak-wai, Mary
(Years of teaching: 5)

School

Hong Kong Baptist University Affiliated School
Wong Kam Fai Secondary and Primary School

Subjects taught

English Language (P1-6)

Interview with the Teachers

A self-motivated learner can go to great lengths to make improvement. The key to good teaching is to create opportunities to facilitate that.



▲ Novel Study Activities - Making Juicy-O in class

Self-motivation and passion as the key to success

To inspire pupils with a love to learn English, the team of five teachers in the school has designed a curriculum comprising speaking, reading and writing activities according to different levels of difficulty. The objectives of these integrated activities are to cultivate a learning environment in which pupils would propel themselves to master English on their own accord.

Confidence is the cornerstone of English fluency

The teachers believe that junior primary years are critical learning time for pupils to build up confidence in using English. Therefore, they create a classroom in which the young learners do most of the talking. "If teachers talk less in class, the children will have more opportunities to speak," said Ms Pradhan.

"It's important to start the training at P1. When the children reach P4, they would be well versed in English presentation," added the team teacher.

To instill a friendly atmosphere in the classroom is another crucial task that the team of English teachers at the school is focusing on. In a relaxed learning environment filled with positive energy, pupils would

► Nate the Great - Book Character Dress-up Day

▼ Phonics Mat Activities



speak up freely without feeling intimidated.

"Dare to make mistakes is the first step of learning. We keep telling pupils that there is no harm to make mistakes. The friendly learning environment encourages pupils to make a bold step to explore and adapt into the English speaking environment," the teacher explained with a sense of satisfaction.

Promoting enthusiasm for novel reading

Reading novels plays an important role at the upper grade curriculum to equip pupils with more enriched vocabulary, better accuracy in spelling and in grammar usage. Pupils are asked to read two novels a year. Besides reading, students have to study the characters inside the story in depth, learn more about the authors, and take part in various activities to share their insight gained from the book. After that, they will complete a tailor-made novel reading pack, which contains grammar, vocabulary and comprehension exercises.

Home-school collaboration

The teachers fully understand the importance of parental support in students' learning process. Advice is offered to parents on how to kindle interest in English learning.

To enhance further collaboration, the teachers stay connected with the parents via an online platform to check on pupils' learning progress. Seminars are organised for parents to boost up their knowledge on how to build up a nourishing learning environment at home to support learning. "The seminar has been well received by the parents. They found it practical and useful," the teachers said. They feel privileged to be able to work with parents in nurturing a supportive learning environment for pupils.



Teachers' Sharing

Developing positive attitudes towards learning English

The English Language curriculum at our school aims to encourage pupils to develop positive attitudes towards learning English, to develop pupils' ability in using language effectively and to enable critical reflection on how language works.

Our curriculum is based on a balanced literacy model, wherein reading, writing, and oral communication are integrated into every single lesson. The school-based curriculum has a well-planned scope and sequence for all three strands, as well as grammar. We believe the teaching of skills in context is of utmost importance if we are to engage pupils in learning English.



▲ Pupils sharing their book experience through the Socratic Circles

Reading - the backbone of our literacy programme

Reading has been the backbone of our English programme. Motivating children to read English books with enthusiasm is the focus of our lower primary language lessons. We believe that once you instill the love for reading in a child, you've given them a friend for life. Through guided reading, literature circles and novel studies, we aim to encourage them to become reader with critical thinking skills. Activities such as Battle of the Books, Book Quote T-shirt design competition and Book Speed Dating help in developing pupils' good reading habits and keeping their efforts on track.

Developing oral communication skills

In order to develop strong oral communication skills, our pupils are provided with ample opportunities to



◀ Question time after "Show and tell"

speak in the classrooms. Using English to complete tasks in a group helps them develop collaborative working skills as well as increase their oral fluency. Reading and oral communication skills are combined during activities such as Literature Circles, process drama and Socratic Circles wherein pupils are engaged in critical discussion of the novel being studied. Show and Tell, debates and Discovery Quests are oral communication activities enjoyed by pupils on a regular basis and they look forward to their presentations.

Fostering independent learners

We believe that as teachers our role is to facilitate and guide our pupils to be independent learners. To that effect, attention is paid towards providing quality feedback for pupils' writing. A process writing approach is combined with effective marking strategies such as the use of stickers with targets and praise based on learning objectives. We believe children's writing should not be limited by their spelling capabilities and hence in the early primary years, phonetic spelling is accepted in writing. The children are exposed to a variety of text types such as procedures, opinion writing, tall tales, and letters amongst others. Poetry reading and writing is an integral part of the English curriculum. Pupils from P1 to P6 read, present and write their own poems. They particularly enjoy reading poetry by poets such as Michael Rosen and Shel Silverstein. Often, the poems from the Hong Kong Schools Speech Festival are integrated into the curriculum.



We consider ourselves very lucky to be in this profession and feel it is an honour to be able to teach such motivated and talented pupils and witness their development in English Language skills and other life skills through our curriculum.



Assessment Summary

Promoting learner independence through a literacy programme that encourages a love for reading

The awarded teachers develop and implement an English Language curriculum based on a literacy programme which encourages the development of pupils' integrated language skills through well-designed reading and writing activities. They take on different roles in various curriculum initiatives, and facilitate the development of the following: (a) formative instructional practices (b) the Socratic circles (c) process writing; and (d) expertise in providing feedback to learners. The literacy programme emphasises the use of authentic literary materials in maximising learners' exposure to language use in daily life. A "reading to learn" culture is cultivated at school where lower primary pupils learn through levelled and guided reading activities while the upper primary pupils are engaged in Literature Circles and Discovery Quest, where novel study packs, language arts materials and a wide variety of novels and text types are used to develop effective reading skills and good reading habits in learners. The ultimate aim is to empower pupils to learn on their own so they can make progress according to their abilities and pace. A language across the curriculum policy is also put in place in the school to support the initiatives.

Learners develop confidence in using English and a love for reading through the language-rich environment. In the classroom, different work stations are set up to promote integrative use of language and independent learning. A wide range of learning experiences is provided for learners to develop their language competencies at their own pace, master basic skills of independent learning and reflect on their own learning experience. Pupils are given learning options and encouraged to take risk, participate without fear and develop positive attitudes towards English learning.

The teachers promote assessment for learning

through appropriate use of both formative and summative assessments to gain insights into learners' strengths and weaknesses during the independent learning process. Formative assessments like "Exit Slips", "Peer Checklists" and "Literature Circles Rubrics" are used to obtain information about learners' progress, diagnose their learning problems and adjust teaching methods accordingly. Also, the successful implementation of co-operative learning has enhanced learners' communication skills and critical thinking; infuse in learners a sensitivity towards language use in the process of communication, and an awareness of the value and power of language.

The teachers have succeeded in creating a language-rich environment for learners at school through effective implementation of their initiatives. Innovative teaching ideas used could promote integrative language skills and independent learning in pupils. They are clearly dedicated to their work and have demonstrated close collaboration in building up a motivating learning environment that empowers pupils' with self-regulated learning skills. They have also worked very hard to promote a positive and collaborative sharing culture in their

school by holding regular curriculum planning meetings and acting as role models for novice teachers in their school. They also participate regularly and actively in the local community to support the profession by sharing their experiences in workshops and giving lesson demonstrations both inside and outside their school.



◀ One of the workstations in the classroom, where the teacher guides some pupils through a book.



Ways to Obtain Information on the Teaching Practice



Website:

<http://www.hkbuas.edu.hk/www/p/eng/index.htm>

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