

Catering for Various Reading Styles (Primary 3)

Introduction:

Studies show that different students have different reading styles:

Visual style readers learn from what they read.
 Auditory style readers learn from what they hear.
 Kinesthetic style readers learn by engaging in physical activity.
 Tactile style readers learn by touching or manipulating objects.
 Analytic style readers learn by problem-solving.
 Global style readers learn by using all the senses.

Background:

In SKH Kei Sum Primary School, the teachers have identified the students with the following reading styles and have come up with related reading activities:

Reading Styles	Reading Activities
Visual style readers	Silent reading, reading stories on a screen
Auditory style readers	Listening to stories on tapes, doing choral reading, talking about stories they have read
Visual + auditory style readers	Silent reading, reading stories on a screen, listening to stories on tapes, doing choral reading, talking about stories they have read

One reading lesson per week has been introduced into the formal timetable. The introduction of such reading lessons (literacy hours) into the current P.3 curriculum has been made possible through the support of all P.3 teachers and the principal. With a view to developing a school-based curriculum, the teachers have meetings every 2 weeks to discuss the students' work, their progress and means to improve learning and teaching. One common point agreed by all P.3 teachers is that, instead of covering all the units in the textbook, they will only focus on some. The Syllabus for Primary Schools English Language is constantly referred to as a source of guidelines when developing the school-based curriculum.

Level: Primary 3

Learning Objectives:

By NOT adopting the strategy of add-on changes to the current curriculum, P.3 teachers were able to spare time for the reading lessons. The short-term and long-term aims are as follows:

- ☑ to cater for students' various reading styles;
- ☑ to develop students' reading skills, as stated in Key Stage 1;
- ☑ to arouse students' interest in reading;
- ☑ to help students develop into independent readers.

The teachers knew very well that it was impossible to achieve all of the aims they set in a short period of time. But they still wanted to lay them down as goals envisaged by all the teachers in the future.

Learning/teaching processes

The students were divided into 3 groups.



The first group was assigned to do silent reading. After reading the stories, they were asked to respond by either drawing or talking about the story with the teacher.



The second group read the stories on CD-ROMs. Students then drew the characters or scenes they liked on the worksheets.



The third group listened to the stories on tapes. After listening to the stories 2-3 times and having the confidence to read the stories aloud, students read the stories together. They were encouraged to write down words that they did not know how to read.

Impact on learning:

Teacher's reflection:

"At this early stage, the students will not be identified with a particular reading style. They will swap around and try various reading styles. It will only be when they are quite familiar with different styles, and can identify themselves with a particular style, that I will allow them to settle down. After all, our aim is to cater for various reading styles.

It is difficult to measure how much learning has taken place. But if you have students who, after the reading lessons, keep on asking you when they will have reading lessons again, it is already a sign of success. Students have already started to enjoy reading. My next step is to sustain their interest in reading.

In these two lessons, although there wasn't any teacher-centered teaching, it didn't mean that learning did not happen. The reading lessons are indeed a time when I can give attention to individual students, when I can assist my students in their reading and when I can tell them how much I value reading. I remember when I did a book talk with my student, I was amazed by her powers of comprehension. Now that I know her standard, I am going to stretch her more.

I know it is impossible for me to handle 35 students all by myself. I plan to assign some students to be the group leaders to help me. I have already targeted one student who is very good with computers to help other students. I have also spotted a good reader who can help the classmates with their pronunciation. I may even consider inviting the teacher assistant to come and help.

Space is always a problem. The classroom is too small. Having three groups running simultaneously and in different modes needs a lot of planning. I had the technician come to do the computer setup before the lessons. And I arranged to have a double lesson instead of a single period every 2 weeks.

I wouldn't dare to say that the current practice is the best. There are many problems I have to face and I guess more will come up as time goes by. At this moment, the novelty of using computers helps to capture the attention of my students. But that will die down quite soon. More problems may come up in the future."

(Reflection given by Stephanie Hui Sau Fun, a P.3 teacher at SKH Kei Sum Primary School)

Barber, L., Carbo, M. and Thomasson, R. (1995). *A Comparative Study of the Reading Styles Program to Extant Programs of Teaching Reading*. Syosset, N.Y.: National Reading Styles Institute.

Source of information: SKH Kei Sum Primary School