# Supplement to the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide

## Secondary 1-3

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# Preamble

The *Supplement to the English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Secondary 1 — 3)* (2018) (this Supplement) is prepared by the Curriculum Development Council (CDC) Committee on English Language Education. It is a supplement to the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 — Secondary 6)* (2017) (the ELE KLA Curriculum Guide 2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg) aiming at providing teachers with further suggestions on the implementation of the English Language curriculum at Key Stage 3 (Secondary 1 — 3). When planning the junior secondary English Language curriculum, schools should make reference to the ELE KLA Curriculum Guide 2017 for an overall picture of the curriculum framework and curriculum planning, the guiding principles of and approaches to learning, teaching and assessment practices, and the use and management of learning and teaching resources.

In preparing this Supplement, the CDC Committee on English Language Education has taken into consideration the concerns, needs and suggestions of various key stakeholders including schools, principals and teachers. Views on the major updates gathered from the series of school briefing cum feedback collection sessions, the territory-wide school survey conducted in 2015, school visits and focus group interviews with teachers conducted between 2016 and 2018 are also incorporated.

This Supplement revisits curriculum emphases provided in the *Syllabus for English Language (Secondary 1 — 5)* (1999) for renewal and puts forth new emphases to reflect the changing contexts. It provides details about promoting Language across the Curriculum at the secondary level, the learning and teaching of language arts and the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading and writing in regard to the major updates of the English Language Education curriculum, with particular emphasis placed on the use of e-resources to promote effective learning and teaching. The four language skills are interrelated and interdependent, and real-life communication usually involves the use of more than one language skill. Hence, opportunities should be provided for students to learn and exercise the integrated use of the language skills for authentic and purposeful communication through the use of tasks. However, for the sake of clarity and simplicity, the four language skills are presented separately in this Supplement. Teachers can refer to the Examples (http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleklacgexamples) developed to support the ELE KLA Curriculum Guide 2017 for suggestions on the integrated use of language skills and other areas covered in this Supplement.

Schools are strongly advised to read this Supplement in conjunction with the ELE KLA Curriculum Guide 2017 and encouraged to adopt the recommendations in this Supplement to promote effective learning, teaching and assessment at the junior secondary level taking into account the school contexts, teachers' readiness and learning needs of their students.

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# Contents

# Chapter 1

# The Learning and Teaching
# of Listening

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# Chapter 1   The Learning and Teaching of Listening

## 1.1   Importance of Listening

Effective listening skills are essential for successful interpersonal communication, whether in work or study situations or socialising with English-speaking people. Good listening skills are also required for leisure and entertainment (e.g. listening to radio programmes in English, watching videos, TV and films in English). At the secondary level, students need adequate listening ability for academic and intellectual purposes not only in English lessons, but also in lessons of non-language subjects where English is the medium of instruction.

In the process of listening, one has to activate various types of knowledge, for example, knowledge of a topic or the culture, in order to construct one's own interpretation of what has been said. It also requires the activation of contextual information, which includes the physical setting, the number of listeners/speakers, their roles, and their relationship to each other. In other words, the listener interprets what has been said, constructs meaning, and responds on the basis of that interpretation. Strategic listeners also use metacognitive strategies to identify the listening goals, plan for the listening skills to use, monitor their comprehension and evaluate the effectiveness of the skills used.

## 1.2   Effective Listening Skills

At the primary level, students have developed basic skills for effective listening. For details, please refer to Appendix 5 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg). At the junior secondary level, the listening skills to be developed include skills for listening for intended meanings, feelings and attitudes. In order to do so, students need to learn to:

- identify key ideas in a passage, discussion or conversation;

- extract information and ideas in spoken texts;

- identify the sequence of events, causes and effects;

- understand levels of formality and informality;

- discriminate between different intonation for various feelings and attitudes; and

- make connections between ideas and information with the help of discourse markers.

Teachers can make reference to the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) for English Language (Listening Skills) ([http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_listening](http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_listening)) when planning and developing listening tasks for the learning-teaching-assessment cycle. The LPF serves as a useful tool for providing clear descriptions of students' performance and progress along the developmental continuum of learning English from Primary 1 to Secondary 6, and enables teachers to plan holistically in developing students' listening skills progressively.

## 1.3  Role of the Teacher

To enhance students' listening abilities, teachers need to:

- select a wide range of spoken texts of appropriate lengths and topics which incorporate a variety of language features (e.g. formal or informal, spoken slowly or quickly), integrating multimedia resources where necessary. They can include authentic texts (e.g. radio programmes, audio books, videos), which can be gradually introduced to familiarise students with the characteristics of spoken English (e.g. overlapping turns, hesitations, redundancy);

- build students' confidence by providing learning experiences and activities in which students can gain a sense of achievement;

- encourage students to make use of information technology to gain quick and easy access to a variety of listening materials to maximise their listening input;

- help students develop good listening habits, which include:

  ➢ being attentive;
  ➢ activating prior knowledge of a topic and the culture or the context of the spoken discourse;
  ➢ anticipating the possible development of the spoken discourse;
  ➢ listening to important words instead of every word that is spoken;
  ➢ being selective while listening (e.g. discriminating between relevant information and irrelevant information, between main ideas and supporting ideas, based on the context or task requirements);

> paying attention to the intonation to understand a person's feelings and attitudes; and

> identifying the implied meaning of a message, which is very often the speaker's real intent, instead of interpreting the surface meaning.

- explain to students what listening entails and how they might approach it. Teachers can make listening meaningful for students by providing tasks which are as realistic as possible;

- consider the interplay between tasks and texts when designing tasks for students to demonstrate their understanding of the texts. Task demand increases with text complexity as students progress in listening skills development. To cater for learner diversity, simple tasks can be included for complex texts while more challenging tasks can be designed for simple texts. It is crucial to select or design texts and tasks with care to ensure that they are appropriate to the skills being targeted; and

- support the development of metacognitive strategies to facilitate self-directed learning and promote learner independence. Teachers can help deepen students' understanding of the demands and process of listening by demonstrating the ways they construct their understanding of the listening texts through think-aloud techniques. Teachers can also make it explicit when and how to apply the metacognitive strategies, such as planning for the listening skills to use, verifying guesses, monitoring comprehension and evaluating the effectiveness of the selected skills, to focus students' attention on the listening process and help them integrate them into the listening activities.

## 1.4 Choice of Listening Materials

Students should be exposed to as wide a variety of authentic spoken English as possible if they are to understand spoken English as it occurs in the real world, not just classroom English specially developed for teaching. As such, apart from engaging students in listening activities based on classroom spoken discourse, authentic listening materials should be used as much as possible in order to prepare students for listening in real-life situations and to help them become familiar with the characteristics of natural speech like false starts, hesitations, pauses, variations in pitch, increase or decrease in volume, quickening or slackening in pace, different accents, and so on.

With the rapid development of information technology, a wide array of authentic listening materials readily available online provide useful learning and teaching resources. A variety of text types (e.g. speeches, advertisements, announcements) and listening purposes (e.g. listening for academic development, listening for interactive conversational exchanges, listening for enjoyment) should be introduced to help students prepare for real-life applications. These authentic listening materials should be appropriately adapted and tailored to the level of students while maintaining the real-life settings. Online video clips on cross-curricular themes/topics/issues should also be considered for student viewing to help students establish meaningful links among concepts and ideas acquired in different Key Learning Areas.

Besides resources on the Internet, other e-resources such as e-books and apps can help facilitate the development of listening skills and promote self-directed learning through engaging students in an interactive mode of learning and allowing them to work at their own pace both inside and outside the classroom. The multimodal cues of these resources render useful support to students as they can be cross-referenced to enhance the development of listening skills. For instance, the synchronised display of text along with the listening input can assist students in getting the main ideas by locating the key words. The video presentation can provide a visual context of the listening material. Visual images such as people engaged in interaction and other contextual information provide cues for students to identify various nuances of speech to understand the speakers' intended meanings, feelings and attitudes. Most e-resources allow students to have some control over the number of repeats and the speed of the audio presentations. In other words, students can start, pause and review pieces of information to better understand the aural texts according to their individual needs. In addition to facilitating self-directed learning, the resources with interactive features such as online learning platforms could help foster students' interaction and communication by engaging them in collaborative work.

## 1.5  Activities to Develop Listening Skills

Teachers are encouraged to consider the following activities to help students at the junior secondary level develop effective listening skills:

- *Understanding Instructions and Following Directions*

  ➢ Engage students in task-oriented practice like tracing a route on a map according to the directions they hear.

  ➢ Let half of the class mime according to an instruction orally given and the other half guess what they are doing.

- *Developing the Skill of Sequencing*

  ➢ Ask students to re-sequence a list of sentences or a set of pictures in jumbled order in accordance with the spoken text.

  ➢ Conduct jigsaw listening activities with students. For example, students listen to different parts of a story in groups. After that, students are regrouped to construct the story logically based on what they have heard. Such activities can also promote integrative use of generic skills (e.g. collaborative problem solving skills, holistic thinking skills).

- *Developing the Skill of Anticipation*

  ➢ Ask students to discuss related topics that activate their prior knowledge, which is used as the basis for prediction and comprehension.

  ➢ Provide students with background information regarding the text they are going to listen to and ask them to guess what the speaker is going to say.

  ➢ Give students adequate information about the speaker and the situation and ask them to think about what they might hear.

  ➢ Play a short extract of the text to students and invite them to predict its possible development.

  ➢ Engage students in focused listening in which they are told what to listen for beforehand. This will train them to select and pay attention to the key points while listening.

  ➢ Show a freeze frame of an online video and ask students to predict what the speakers are talking about. Check the predictions by watching the video afterwards.

- *Processing Meaning*

  ➢ Ask students to organise the materials into meaningful sections as they listen, for example, making notes under different headings as they listen, using a graphic organiser to organise information.

  ➢ Use listening texts which include paraphrases and repetitions to provide students with practice in identifying redundant materials.

- *Understanding the Main Idea or Main Theme*

  ➢ Use non-verbal exercises, such as matching the description from a spoken text with a picture from a set.

  ➢ Use a radio, TV or Internet news bulletin which begins and ends with the news headlines. Students can easily follow and identify the main points being summarised in these headlines.

  ➢ Ask students to listen to a spoken text and write down the most important words, and then ask them to write down the key phrases or key sentences of the spoken text.

  ➢ Ask students to view short online video clips and find out the main idea or main theme as an out-of-class activity, and then have a discussion about it in class.

  ➢ For more advanced students, ask them to supply a title to a spoken text or summarise in their own words the main points of the spoken text either orally or in writing. This will make them pay full attention to the overall theme as well as the central ideas.

- *Extracting Information and Ideas*

  ➢ Ask students to listen to the weather forecasts of different cities on the Internet and take notes while listening. Students then do a short oral report by using key words such as "temperature", "humidity" and "outlook" in their presentations.

- *Understanding Levels of Formality and Informality*

  ➢ Expose students to spoken texts of different levels of formality and informality in different settings, for instance, public speaking in a school assembly, a conversation between a student and his/her principal, and a chat between friends. Discuss with students the differences in the levels of formality and informality in terms of language items and structures, the choice of vocabulary and the stylistic features of formal and informal speeches.

- *Understanding the Speaker's Feelings or Attitudes*

  ➢ Help students understand the speaker's feelings or attitudes as well as the underlying meaning of what the speaker says by examining:

    - the language used (e.g. discourse markers, choice of words, stylistic features such as the use of repetition, exaggeration); and

    - the manner of speech (e.g. choice of intonation and stress, the volume, pitch and pace).

  ➢ Start with texts which are straightforward so that students can easily identify the speaker's feelings and attitudes. Later on, texts in which the speaker's feelings and attitudes are less explicit can be used. Discussion provides very good training for students to identify the speaker's feelings and attitudes.

  ➢ Expose students to different features of speech (e.g. different intonation patterns, special stress, pausing, rephrasing, repetitions, hesitations, self-corrections) presented in appropriate contexts to develop their awareness of the nuances of speech.

- *Making Connections between Ideas and Information with the Help of Discourse Markers*

  ➢ Ask students to jot down the key ideas and information as they listen to a spoken text for the first time and then ask them to focus on the discourse markers (e.g. "first", "next", "nevertheless", "in other words", "by the way") when they listen to it again. Students then organise their notes into meaningful sections using a graphic organiser. More advanced students could be asked to write a summary of the text as an extended task.

## 1.6 Task-based Listening Activities

Apart from the activities suggested earlier, task-based listening activities, consisting of purposeful contexts in which students can draw upon their framework of knowledge and skills and develop their generic skills in an integrative manner, should be conducted. There are three stages in conducting a listening task.

Pre-listening Stage

This is the tuning-in stage. The purpose is to establish a framework for listening so as to prepare students for approaching the upcoming listening task with some point of reference.

Pre-listening activities may include:

- soliciting students' knowledge and opinions on the topic;

- predicting content from the title;

- commenting on a picture or photograph relevant to the topic;

- revising learnt structures or vocabulary items;

- introducing the setting of the listening text;

- explaining the type of responses required;

- reading a short text or viewing a short video segment on the Internet on a similar topic;

- reading through comprehension questions in advance; and

- raising students' awareness of the skills involved in the listening process.

<u>While-listening Stage</u>

This is when students are involved in listening, and have to respond as required in the task. Activities may include:

- putting pictures in a correct sequence;

- following directions on a map;

- checking off items in a photograph;

- completing a grid, timetable, or chart of information; and

- jotting down notes.

As students' proficiency develops, tasks will gradually become more demanding, eventually requiring students to construct a framework of meaning for themselves, understand explicitly stated ideas, make connections between ideas and information, interpret feelings and attitudes and understand levels of formality and informality. Examples include:

- filling gaps with missing words;

- picking out particular facts, evidence or cause-and-effect relationships;

- constructing a coherent set of notes;

- checking True/False statements;

- discriminating between different intonation patterns for various feelings and attitudes; and

- understanding levels of formality and informality based on the word choice and stylistic features of the spoken discourse such as the use of contractions.

At this stage, it is vital for teachers to support students in the development of metacognitive strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning progress. Students can be prompted to use different skills, as appropriate, for regulating their comprehension and application (e.g. listening for details, listening for gist, inferring information) followed by actively monitoring and reflecting on their comprehension and the effectiveness of the skills used. Depending on the proficiency of the class, teachers could pause the recording when appropriate to check understanding, explore and demonstrate how the understanding is achieved and assess the effectiveness of the skills employed.

Post-listening Stage

This is an opportunity for many kinds of follow-up work to be done individually or collaboratively – thematic, lexical, grammatical, skills developmental, and so on. Some post-listening activities are suggested as follows:

- giving feedback to students on a class basis or individually as to their mastery of listening skills and setting goals and plans for further development. Reference can be made to the LPF for English Language (Listening Skills) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_listening) for identifying students' strengths and areas for improvement, and understanding what students need to achieve as they progress in listening skills development;

- reviewing the listening materials at a self-regulated pace for a different purpose;

- making use of relevant podcasts and vodcasts available on the Internet for more listening practice;

- writing a group summary for a defined purpose or audience with notes made collaboratively while listening;

- reading/listening to a related text for comparison purposes and engaging in small group discussions;

- exchanging views on the topic or problem identified;

- doing a role play; and

- writing on the same theme from a different point of view.

# Chapter 2

## The Learning and Teaching of Speaking

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# Chapter 2　The Learning and Teaching of Speaking

## 2.1　Importance of Speaking

Speaking plays an important role in everyday life. In real-life communication, the most direct way to communicate is through speech. Oral interactions are often indivisible from the learning and teaching activities of an English task, and as such, speaking activities can be well integrated into any listening, reading or writing tasks to support the development of different language skills. Conducting speaking activities on a regular basis can help students improve their fluency and communication skills and raise their awareness of the particular structural or intonation patterns or lexical items used for different communication purposes.

Speaking activities including presentations and discussions provide relevant contexts for students to develop a range of communication/interaction strategies (e.g. maintaining eye contact, speaking at a volume appropriate to the situation, responding readily to others' questions, opinions or comments) to achieve different communication purposes, as well as for the integrative use of generic skills such as collaborative problem solving skills (i.e. the integration of collaboration skills, communication skills and problem solving skills) and holistic thinking skills (i.e. the integration of critical thinking skills, problem solving skills and creativity) as they work collaboratively to achieve the objectives of the activities concerned.

Speaking tasks also provide good opportunities for promoting self-directed learning. In learning contexts where students are required to speak before an audience (e.g. reporting the outcome of a task to the whole class) or produce recordings (e.g. preparing audio/video clips for a presentation), students can be guided to monitor and evaluate their speaking performance with respect to the learning goals (e.g. articulation, accuracy and fluency in their speech) in the learning process.

## 2.2 Effective Speaking Skills

At the primary level, students have developed basic skills for effective oral communication. For details, please refer to Appendix 5 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg). At the junior secondary level, the speaking skills to be developed include skills for:

- presenting information, ideas, and feelings clearly and coherently; and

- participating effectively in an oral interaction.

In order that students can use the spoken language effectively to present information, ideas and feelings, they need to learn to:

- convey ideas and information in conversations or discussions;

- use words and expressions appropriate to the context;

- use appropriate discourse markers; and

- use correct pronunciation, intonation and register for different purposes.

Effective oral communication entails the following:

- *Accuracy*. This refers to the skill of using pronunciation (which covers speech sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation), grammar and vocabulary correctly to communicate ideas and express feelings.

- *Fluency*. This is the skill of producing speech at normal speed in a natural manner. Fluent speech is relatively free from an abundance of hesitations and false starts which cause difficulties in communication.

- *Appropriateness*. This is the skill of using formal or informal language to suit particular situations. The choice of formal or informal language varies depending on the communication purposes and the contexts (e.g. participants' roles, the setting, the topic).

- *Coherence*. This is the skill of producing spoken utterances which "hang together". Coherent speech makes use of devices such as pronouns, substitution, ellipsis and conjunctions to enable the listener to establish relationships across utterance boundaries.

In addition to these skills, students need to develop communication/interaction strategies so that they can participate in oral discussions effectively. The communication/interaction strategies to be developed at Key Stage 3 include the following:

- seeking and giving clarification, explaining what information one requires and why, rephrasing one's questions when necessary, summing up points made and redirecting the discussion when the need arises;

- making a balanced contribution without either dominating the discussion or being too reticent; and

- expressing, eliciting and responding to ideas, opinions and feelings in a group discussion.

Teachers can make reference to the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) for English Language (Speaking Skills) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_speaking), which describes students' performance and progress along the developmental continuum of learning English from Primary 1 to Secondary 6, for the learning outcomes regarding the following:

- content, organisation and communication strategies;

- language; and

- pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation;

and plan holistically for the school English Language curriculum to meet students' needs.

### 2.3 Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher in planning and conducting speaking activities includes the following:

- *Building Students' Confidence*

  Many students are reluctant to speak up in class because they are afraid of making errors/mistakes and being corrected by the teacher publicly. Teachers therefore need to help students build their confidence as well as trust and mutual support among them. Some suggestions are as follows:

➢ Help students understand that making errors/mistakes is a normal part of the learning process.

➢ Select speaking tasks with no correct answers.

➢ In communicative tasks, focus on what students say (i.e. the message) rather than the language they use.

➢ Before individual presentations, provide opportunities for students to practise with their peers.

➢ Be alert to the emotional and social state of individual students when correcting their errors/mistakes.

➢ Set realistic expectations and acknowledge students' accomplishment to encourage them to improve further.

➢ Provide positive feedback as far as possible and give practical suggestions to address students' areas for improvement.

● *Teaching Enabling Skills*

Teachers need to ensure that students are equipped with the necessary enabling skills to communicate ideas effectively. An important enabling skill to teach is pronunciation, which covers elements such as speech sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation. It will also be useful to revise or teach phonics at the junior secondary level and phonetics at a later stage.

➢ When teaching pronunciation, teachers should aim at intelligibility rather than native English pronunciation.

➢ Teachers need to help students perceive sounds and intonation patterns before they produce them.

➢ Teachers should place equal emphasis on the suprasegmental features of stress, rhythm and intonation and the segmental elements of speech sounds.

● *Using Appropriate Tasks*

Teachers need to select, adapt or design speaking tasks which are interesting, purposeful and relevant to the needs of their students. Teachers should also help students relate their learning to their real life. To connect students' learning experiences in different Key Learning Areas, teachers can adopt cross-curricular themes in the speaking tasks as well as highlight to students the speaking skills and communication/interaction strategies that students can apply in the

preparation of presentations and discussions for non-language subjects. More information about tasks and activities for practising speaking skills is provided in the next section.

- *Monitoring Students' Performance throughout a Speaking Task*

  Teachers should walk around and listen to groups of students engaged in speaking tasks. While guidance and assistance may be necessary, frequent interruptions demotivate students and should be avoided. Common errors/mistakes should be noted down so that remedial work can be done with students after the tasks.

- *Keeping Students Speaking in English*

  Teachers may appoint a group member to remind others in the group to speak in English. Teachers may also incorporate the use of e-learning tools (e.g. e-platforms/apps that support voice/video recording and editing) to record each group's speaking performance for analysis and discussion. These techniques help raise students' awareness of their speaking performance as well as enhance their engagement in the speaking activity.

- *Providing Feedback to Students*

  At the end of a speaking task, teachers should provide feedback to students about their performance and participation. Based on the learning outcomes of students, teachers can make reference to the LPF for English Language (Speaking Skills) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_speaking) to understand students' speaking performance and provide constructive feedback to acknowledge students' accomplishment and to improve their performance. Teachers may begin by offering some encouraging remarks before discussing language items or communication strategies which students still need to work on in order to improve their speaking competence. To engage students in providing peer feedback, teachers can make effective use of e-learning tools (e.g. an interactive whiteboard) to project video clips of students' performance in front of the class and engage students in analysing their performance with reference to the assessment criteria such as content and organisation, language, pronunciation and delivery, and communication/interaction strategies (e.g. eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, turn-taking). e-Platforms or apps that support instant response and messaging can also be used to provide teachers with an overview of students' learning performance and facilitate the provision of feedback among teachers and students.

- *Helping Students Become Self-directed Learners*

  To promote learner independence and develop students' metacognitive strategies, teachers should provide opportunities for students to develop the ability in planning the content and language for the speaking tasks and in monitoring, reviewing and assessing their own speaking performance. Discussions can be held to raise students' awareness of the requirements of the speaking task, the language, vocabulary and communication/interaction strategies to use. Checklists can be distributed beforehand to support students in identifying learning goals and assessment criteria so that students are aware of how various aspects of speaking are assessed and exert efforts to do their best. Models of strong and weak speaking performance can be used to help students understand the assessment criteria. e-Platforms or apps that support voice/video recording and editing allow students to revisit their performance and make improvement as they evaluate their own speaking performance.

## 2.4 Choice of Speaking Activities

A wide range of speaking activities should be conducted to develop students' speaking skills. Some of these activities should focus on the more micro level of speech production or aspects of pronunciation while others should give students the opportunity to develop the skills and strategies needed for effective speech performance.

The following types of activities, while not exhaustive, are effective in helping students enhance their competence in oral communication:

- *Information-gap activities.* These require students to find out information from their classmates in order to solve a problem.

- *Ranking activities.* These require students to reach a consensus in putting a list of factors or attributes (e.g. characteristics of a good teacher) in order.

- *Jigsaw activities.* These require students to put different pieces of information together to form a coherent whole. For example, students are given different sections of a story. They describe their own section in turn orally, and then the whole group determine the sequence of the story.

- *Guessing activities.* These require students to guess the identity of a person, the location of an object and so on.

- *Matching activities*. These require students to match items that go together. An example is the Bingo game.

- *Problem-solving activities*. These require students to find a solution to a problem, for example, deciding what items are essential for survival on a desert island.

- *Role play activities*. These require students to take on the role of someone other than themselves. They may need to imagine themselves in a real world context and have to use appropriate language to suit the context.

- *Discussions and debates*. These require students to collect information about a certain topic/theme and then have a discussion about it or present arguments for or against a particular motion.

- *Public address.* Activities like a speech, a vote of thanks or a presentation give students opportunities to pay attention to delivery techniques (e.g. diction, appropriate use of discourse markers, voice projection, expression and even posture in addition to content and rhetorical conventions).

- *Voice/video recording activities.* These require students to practise speaking by recording their utterances (e.g. using e-platforms/apps that support voice/video recording and editing), which allows them to listen to and assess their speaking performance and make improvement instantly.

- *Multimodal texts production*. This provides opportunities for students to practise their pronunciation, stress, rhythm and intonation and presentation skills for different communication purposes through creating their own audio/video clips to present their work in multimodal contexts (e.g. an e-book) to convey meaning.

In selecting, adapting or designing any speaking activity, teachers need to check whether the activity embodies such characteristics as the following:

- It requires students to speak a lot in English.

- It makes use of students' personal experience.

- It allows students to work collaboratively or creatively with peers.

- It is cognitively suitable for students.

- It is interesting rather than stressful for students.

- It requires students to exchange information or express feelings in order to close an information gap/opinion gap/reasoning gap/imagination gap.

- It is realistic and simulates real-life situations.

## 2.5 Task-based Speaking Activities

Task-based speaking activities are process- as well as goal-oriented. They require students to interact orally and, during this process, students use the spoken language as a means to achieve a definite outcome, such as a drawing, a list of priorities, a solution to a puzzle, an oral report or a written summary of a group consensus.

The following are some examples of speaking activities that can be integrated into a speaking task to help students at the junior secondary level achieve the objectives of (a) presenting information, ideas and feelings clearly and coherently; and (b) participating effectively in an oral interaction.

- Students use the target sounds to produce a group story. For example, they are given a list of words containing the sound /r/ (e.g. "wrong", "road", "rate"). In groups, they use these words to create a story and read it aloud to other groups. When listening to the story, students write down all the words they can hear which contain the sound /r/. They then summarise the story they have listened to by producing a few sentences that make use of the target sound.

- Students write their own tongue-twisters for use in class. They get one point for one sound which is shared by two or more words (e.g. /l/ as in "long" and "lively"). They get two points for two sounds which are shared by two or more words (e.g. /br/ as in "break" and "bring"). Groups of students then take turns to read the tongue-twisters aloud in a competition.

- Students practise shadow reading to improve their mastery of stress, rhythm and intonation. First, they view or listen to a recording of a speech a few times until they are familiar with it. They then play the recording again and read the text of the recording at the same time, trying to imitate the stress, rhythm and intonation used. Lastly, they produce their own recording by applying the framework of the speech in new situations.

- As an awareness-raising activity, students can be given several sentences describing a situation (e.g. "It was Parents' Day. Teachers had meetings with students' parents. A teacher said to a parent, 'How many offspring do you have?'"). Students decide whether the language used is too formal or too informal and rephrase the sentences as appropriate.

- Students view or listen to some recorded materials and decide on aspects such as the degree of formality, relationship between the speakers and setting. Then they improvise for similar situations.

- Students study the transcript of an informal conversation between two close friends about school life. They report the same information in a role play to a student playing the role of a principal, using formal language.

- Students work in pairs to do a "Spot the difference" picture activity. Students A and B are each given a similar picture with several differences. Without showing their picture to each other, they exchange information to determine the differences.

- Students watch a video clip or listen to a song together. Next, in groups of four, they tell each other what the video clip or song makes them think about or feel. Students with special ideas or stories share their information with the rest of the class.

- Students work in groups and imagine themselves as guests in a party. One member of the group takes the role of the host/hostess of the party and introduces the rest of the group to each other. After the introduction, the group carry out a social chat (e.g. asking one another what their hobbies are, telling others how they spend their leisure).

- Groups of students are given a topic for discussion. Students need to give suggestions for organising a school function (e.g. the Open Day). They need to respond to the suggestions proposed by their group members and make decision on the activities to be organised for the school function, paying particular attention to different communication/interaction strategies (e.g. maintaining eye contact, turn-taking, seeking clarification).

- Students perform a role play in which they use discussion skills to gather information and ideas for a project (e.g. a greening school campaign). Their task is to discuss ways to improve the campus environment so as to save energy and be more environment-friendly.

## 2.6  Conducting Speaking Activities

There are four main stages in conducting speaking activities:

- *Awareness raising*. The aim of this stage is to raise students' awareness of what native speakers do in an oral interaction (e.g. using expressions to encourage people to say more). Some examples of awareness-raising activities are:

  ➢ Students tap on desks or clap hands in order to understand how stress works in English.

  ➢ Students view or listen to a recording and identify the use of different intonation patterns to convey meaning.

  ➢ Students view or listen to a recording and identify the use of conversational fillers such as "Really?" and "I see".

  ➢ Students view or listen to a discussion to understand how communication/interaction strategies, such as negotiating meaning and asking for clarification, contribute to effective interaction.

- *Pre-communicative*. This stage gives students controlled practice in speaking. The focus is on a particular skill or language item which is needed for effective speech performance later (e.g. an intonation pattern, a language structure, a list of useful expressions). Pre-communicative activities give students repeated practice in individual items rather than practice in all communication skills together. Students are provided with more guidance on the skills or language needed in these activities.

- *Communicative*. This stage gives students free practice in speaking tasks. Students use language appropriate to the context to convey meaning. Communicative activities aim to develop students' overall competence in speaking. In other words, elements such as fluency, appropriateness and communication/interaction strategies are often practised together.

- *Feedback*. This stage allows students to receive useful feedback from the teacher and/or their peers. In assessing students' oral performance, teachers and students may want to focus on aspects such as the following:

  ➢ Did students use language appropriate to the context (e.g. level of formality, relationship between the speakers)?

  ➢ Did students' grammatical errors/mistakes hinder communication?

  ➢ Did students convey their message fluently without undue hesitations?

  ➢ Was the information conveyed coherently?

  ➢ Were students confident in interacting with others?

  ➢ Did students make use of appropriate communication/interaction strategies in interacting with others?

  In providing feedback, reference can be made to the LPF for English Language (Speaking Skills) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_speaking) for identifying students' strengths and areas for improvement, and understanding what students need to achieve as they progress in speaking skills development.

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# Chapter 3

# The Learning and Teaching

# of Reading

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# Chapter 3    The Learning and Teaching of Reading

## 3.1    Importance of Reading

Reading is an effective means to seek information, develop thinking skills, enrich knowledge, enhance language proficiency and broaden perspectives. In everyday life, students read for different communication purposes (e.g. locating information, understanding instructions to perform certain tasks, keeping in touch with friends through correspondence and the social media, seeking enjoyment). Students need adequate reading skills and ability for academic and intellectual purposes too. Mastery of reading skills is important for the acquisition of new knowledge in both formal education and lifelong learning.

In the setting of a language classroom, reading is one of the major learning activities. Reading helps increase knowledge of the target language through exposure to new vocabulary and language items and structures used in context, and helps consolidate learning. Mastery of this language skill helps students develop competence and fluency in the language which may extend to listening, speaking and writing. Strategic readers also use metacognitive strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning progress. They identify their reading goals, make use of appropriate reading skills, monitor their reading process and evaluate the effectiveness of the skills used.

With the rapid development of information technology and the social media, reading can more efficiently connect the reader to the community. Literacy practices can involve collective intelligence and the use of multimodal texts, in which messages are conveyed through different modes (e.g. linguistic, audio, visual, gestural, spatial). If students can move beyond simple comprehension to analyse, synthesise and evaluate not only printed but also electronic reading materials effectively and efficiently across Key Learning Areas (KLAs), they will be better readers and writers of the electronically connected global society.

## 3.2   Effective Reading Skills

At the primary level, students have developed basic reading skills. For details, please refer to Appendix 5 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg). At the junior secondary level, students have to develop more advanced skills to understand, interpret and analyse different written and multimodal texts. In order to do so, they need to learn to:

- make use of knowledge of the world to make sense of the text;

- acquire, extract and organise information relevant to specific tasks;

- understand how different visual elements create meaning;

- relate facts, opinions and information from a variety of print and non-print sources;

- understand different feelings, views and attitudes;

- differentiate fact from opinion;

- identify implied meanings through making inferences;

- recognise how writing conventions affect meaning and cohesiveness;

- understand how sentences and parts of a sentence relate to each other;

- understand the use of discourse markers; and

- know what a word or phrase refers to in the previous or subsequent context.

Teachers can make reference to the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) for English Language (Reading Skills) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_reading), which describes students' performance and progress along the developmental continuum of learning English from Primary 1 to Secondary 6 and plan holistically for the school English Language curriculum to meet students' needs.

## 3.3 Role of the Teacher

A teacher has a very important role to play in developing students' reading skills. He/she can:

- increase students' interest/motivation in reading so that they have pleasurable reading experiences. Suggestions include:

  ➢ the use of texts that appeal to students. Teachers may select or recommend materials with a variety of content and related to the particular interests of different students;

  ➢ the use of interesting activities and challenging tasks;

  ➢ the use of group work and cooperative learning where students interact and assist one another to make meaning with the help of digital communication technology; and

  ➢ the introduction of a reward system to acknowledge students' efforts in reading extensively.

- create an encouraging, constructive and supportive reading atmosphere both inside and outside the classroom. This will help cultivate in students a positive attitude towards reading so that they become enthusiastic readers. The teacher can:

  ➢ set up a reading area or an English corner in school;

  ➢ have English books and magazines displayed prominently;

  ➢ choose reading materials that suit students' interests and developmental levels;

  ➢ hold book fairs;

  ➢ put up posters about authors and their books; and

  ➢ organise visits to public libraries.

  With the rapid development of information technology, the teacher can promote e-reading through:

  ➢ modelling screen reading to provide students with multiple ways to engage with e-texts;

> collaborating with the teacher-librarian to encourage students to read e-resources available in the school library;

> setting up an e-platform for students to engage in reading outside school hours and to share their reading experiences with peers, teachers and parents; and

> encouraging students to make use of the e-resources in the public libraries.

- guide students to plan, monitor and evaluate their reading at a metacognitive level. As junior secondary students need to deal with texts of increasing text complexity and language demand in English Language as well as in non-language subjects where English is adopted as the medium of instruction, they should learn to set reading goals, monitor their progress, evaluate their performance and plan how to read more efficiently and effectively. The teacher can raise students' metacognitive awareness in regard to improving their reading comprehension with various strategies such as thinking aloud to model his or her own thought processes in deconstructing complex texts.

- facilitate the development of critical literacy skills to enable students not only to understand, appreciate, and evaluate what they read and view at a deeper level, but also to help them become more reflective and independent learners. The teacher can encourage students to look beyond the literal meaning of the texts and critically analyse and evaluate the texts in respect of the implied meaning, the author's intent and stance on various issues as embedded in the underlying message of the texts, which may range from social justice to racial or gender equality.

- guide students to become independent readers by developing their learning to learn capabilities through the use of e-resources such as online dictionaries, and enabling skills such as phonics skills, vocabulary-building skills and reference skills to facilitate self-directed language learning.

- set aside a particular time when students can be read to. Reading to students provides the teacher with an opportunity to demonstrate to students the enjoyment and importance of reading, as well as the behaviour exhibited by a proficient reader. An alternative is for students to listen to audio books or read e-books. Teachers may also set aside time for students to practise reading together or read something they have particularly enjoyed to their classmates.

- serve as a role model. Teachers should enjoy and value reading themselves and cultivate in students a desire to read. They should show students that they are also avid readers and encourage them to follow suit.

- encourage parental involvement in developing lifelong readers. Often parents want to help their children develop good reading habits, but they may not know what they can do. Teachers can encourage parents to provide the basis for a good attitude towards reading. Parents can set good examples by reading themselves and by making appropriate materials available for their children to read. They can encourage their children to discuss what they have read with them.

### 3.4 Choice of Reading Materials

- In developing reading skills, both print-based and multimodal reading materials can be used. Authentic contexts and texts written to inform, to entertain or to convey a message should be used to explore literacy practices. Any printed or electronic materials and resources that make sense to students can be brought into the classroom as frequently as possible for identifying meaning or information conveyed. These include stories, brochures, journals, reports, speeches, letters (formal and informal), debates, editorials, feature articles in newspapers and blogs covering issues in various cross-curricular domains such as values education (e.g. life education, moral education, environmental education). Apart from offering variety to cater for individual needs, interests and abilities, different text types provide meaningful contexts to illustrate the purposeful use of specific language items and vocabulary. The use of multimodal texts provides students with an opportunity to explore how images, graphics, photos and videos with sound are combined to convey a message effectively to the intended audience.

- Language arts materials, such as short stories and poems, can provide students with enjoyable experiences, and enhance their cultural awareness and creativity, while non-fiction materials, such as newspaper/magazine articles and reports, can raise their awareness of different perspectives from which to consider issues and facilitate the promotion of Reading across the Curriculum (RaC). A suggested book list on RaC for Key Stages 1 – 4 is accessible at the following website: http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleresources.

### 3.5  Task-based Reading Activities

Task-based reading activities provide students with a meaningful purpose for reading and an appropriate setting for involvement in the reading process. Taking advantage of digital communication technology such as online diaries and blogging activities, teachers can design tasks to engage students in critical reflection, negotiation of meaning and evaluation of the reading content, and promote a collaborative learning environment. During the reading process, students may acquire and practise particular reading skills as well as the integrative use of generic skills such as collaborative problem solving skills (i.e. the integration of collaboration skills, communication skills and problem solving skills) and holistic thinking skills (i.e. the integration of critical thinking skills, problem solving skills and creativity).

### 3.6  Conducting a Reading Task

A reading task is usually conducted in three stages:

<u>Pre-reading Stage</u>

*Providing a Purpose for Reading*

How and what one reads depends very much on the purpose, whether it is reading for gist, for specific information, for exposition, for deliberation of argument, or just for pleasure. Once the purpose is identified, one can use the appropriate reading skills and vary the speed accordingly.

When assigning a reading task, teachers can help set a clear purpose, for example, by giving students a question, problem or task before they read. Students can then judge which parts of the text to ignore, and decide on what to skim over and what to attend to in detail. At the beginning, teachers may need to make conscious efforts to remind students or to discuss with them what to look for as they read. Through modelling and practice, students can be guided to think about what they know, what connections they can make, what questions they want answered and the way the text is organised. The use of multimodal texts that are electronically linked suggests different pathways for reading and hence allows much reader autonomy. Opportunities should be provided to develop navigational skills and search skills to facilitate the reading process and reading skills development.

*Introducing a Text*

The introduction of a text means giving students some information on what they are going to read and this includes the topic, the setting, the background, the text type, its organisation and the modes of communication, which may include images, animations and sounds. The rationale behind this is to get students into the right mood for reading a particular text and to make them feel interested in reading it. If students get a global impression of the kind of text they are going to read and have a rough idea of the topic, they will be provided with a general framework that facilitates the more detailed work that follows.

The best introductions are the ones that the teacher draws out from students. Students can be invited to share opinions on a topic as often as possible. For example, before students start reading a text about a melancholic billionaire, teachers can ask students to put down on paper or input via an e-platform the pros and cons of being rich or ask them to engage in a debate. Students can then be asked to read the text and compare what they have thought about the topic and what they have read.

*Getting Readers into a Receptive Frame of Mind*

In the process of reading, readers have to interpret the message conveyed in the text in light of their previous knowledge and experience. They use schemas to make sense of a text. Schemas are the reader's concepts, beliefs, expectations – virtually everything from past experiences that is used in making sense of things and actions.

Below are some ideas for teachers to develop and activate students' schemas:

● *Brainstorming*

  Brainstorming is a pre-reading activity that can establish a foundation for approaching new and unfamiliar materials. It also helps students make connections with their own life experiences, thus engaging them and giving them a stronger purpose for reading. Teachers can first show students the cover/blurb/contents page of a book or the title of a text and ask them to brainstorm a list of words and phrases, questions, ideas, and examples related to the topic. Students then have a discussion to create further understanding and clarify anything they may not understand. Teachers can help students further explore the topic by asking questions to guide the discussion.

- *Previewing*

   Previewing means taking the time to look over the materials one plans to read. Previewing of texts by skimming, looking at pictures, examining the title and subheadings, and going through the table of contents, the appendix and the preface helps one's comprehension of explicit and implicit information. To facilitate navigation of e-texts, previewing requires students to recognise conventions such as the specific tabs, icons and tags that indicate hypertexts or a non-linear network of information.

- *Prediction*

   Prediction is an important reading skill, which activates readers' schemas. As students make hypotheses about what the writer intends to say, the experiences and associated knowledge they already have about the topic of the text will be called to mind. Having an idea of what the text is to be about helps a reader make sense of it and sets a purpose for his/her continued reading.

   Teachers can get students to predict the content of books, articles and so on from non-linear information like titles and headings, subheadings, captions, blurbs and illustrations. In an electronic reading context where there is no preset pathway for readers to follow, anticipating the content of the hyperlinks and forming meaningful associations with the titles and subheadings can also get readers into a receptive frame of mind.

   Students can also be asked to read aloud the first paragraph of a text to let other students discuss and predict what is likely to come in the rest of the text.

- *Use of Semantic Maps*

   A semantic map is an arrangement of key words which embody concepts about a topic. It can be developed in the following steps:

   Step 1: Associations
   Begin by asking students to work in pairs/groups and discuss what they think of when they hear the word "money", for instance. List the responses as students offer their associations.

Step 2: Categorisation

Put the associations on a semantic map, probably an electronic one to facilitate discussion and revision, by helping students assign these associations to different categories (e.g. "uses of money", "kinds of money", "ways of earning money", "consequences of having money"). Encourage students to pose their own questions about what they want to learn about the topic from the text using different means (e.g. K-W-L charts) to engage them in an active process of activating prior knowledge, sharing ideas with others and monitoring their own learning.

Step 3: Revision

While going through the set of categories and pre-reading questions related to "money", students add new ideas acquired from their reading and discussions, correcting and augmenting the original semantic map. The revised map is the result of the students' pre-existing schemas, their new learning from the text, and the integration of old and new knowledge. (Step 3 is also activated for use at the while-reading and post-reading stages.)

- *Using Signpost Questions*

  The purpose is to direct readers' attention to the important points in the text or to the things that might otherwise be missed, preventing them from going off the track. The best signpost questions relate either to the whole section or to its final part, so that they cannot be answered until the whole section has been read and understood.

- *Using a Video on the Topic*

  A short educational video with or without subtitles can stimulate students to think and motivate them to read the text. It is authentic and provides useful information that introduces students to important words and concepts in context and builds background knowledge among students. Teachers can stop, start and rewind the video to ensure that students understand the main idea, and then challenge them to predict the ending of the video, or debate an issue.

<u>While-reading Stage</u>

*Breaking up the Text*

A long text is daunting to readers who are not very skilled or speedy. Before engaging students in actual reading, teachers can break up the text into a number of shorter sections. It is easier to go through shorter texts than lengthy ones. In this way, students' interest can be better sustained.

*Tackling Unfamiliar Lexical Items/Structures*

The failure to understand a text often results from an inability to decode the meaning of unfamiliar words and structures. Teachers should refrain from teaching all the new words and structures in the text before reading begins. Not only will this be very boring, students will also get used to being given "pre-processed" texts and consequently they will never make the effort to cope with a difficult passage on their own. Instead, if students are to read texts with understanding, they need to be equipped with word attack skills and knowledge of common language items and structures and usage.

Teachers can introduce three categories of words to students – active vocabulary, receptive vocabulary and throwaway vocabulary. Given frequent exposure in context, students can transform receptive vocabulary into active vocabulary, whereas throwaway vocabulary items can be forgotten once they are taken out of context.

Not every unknown word readers come across can be ignored. With words that stand in the way of comprehension, students have to develop word attack skills to tackle them. These skills include:

● *Use of Structural Information*

➢ By looking at the position of a lexical item in a sentence, students can make a guess at its grammatical category (e.g. whether it is a noun, a verb or an adjective) and deduce its meaning.

> The morphology of a word may offer valuable clues to its meaning. An understanding of affixation, how compound words are built and the way phrasal verbs are put together to form new meanings helps students decode unfamiliar words.

> Students can be guided to recognise the various devices used to create textual cohesion, particularly the use of reference words and signpost words. For example, students can be shown how authors use these devices to set expectations and to either reinforce or overthrow these expectations before presenting their own points of view.

- *Use of Text Grammar*

When reading a text, students may be guided to note how the choice of language items is affected by the context and how it shapes the tone, style and register of a text. For teaching grammar at the text level, texts related to different topics and students' learning experiences in other subjects can be chosen to help students understand the salient features of the texts they may come across in other subjects, and enhance students' understanding of how grammar makes meaning in different texts. For further details of text grammar, please refer to Section 4.2.4 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg).

- *Use of Images*

Teachers may draw students' attention to visual cues (e.g. charts, diagrams, maps, key for a map, photos or other illustrations) while reading. They often provide valuable information about the topic or unfamiliar words and facilitate the effective understanding of a text.

- *Making Inferences from Context*

Students should be encouraged to infer the meaning of unknown words from context. Teachers should remind students that inferences are about probabilities, not certainties. Certainties are developed over time with more frequent exposure to the language in use.

- *Visualising*

  Students should learn to create pictures in their minds while reading a text. These pictures visualised out of reading the text can enhance their reading comprehension and contribute to effective reading. Through visualising, students can turn reading into an active, purposeful and creative process, in which they construct meaning, connect with their previous knowledge and experience and create mental pictures. The teacher should give students explicit examples of the use of visualising in reading, model the thought process involved in visualising and provide students with opportunities to try generating mental pictures while reading. Students can then share what they have visualised with the teacher and their classmates.

- *Use of a Dictionary*

  Students must learn to use a dictionary effectively and with discretion. They have to learn to decide which words to look up and which ones to bypass. Even if they need to consult the dictionary to get a precise meaning, they should only do so after having tried to work out an approximation on their own. The new words and language items can often be more easily and effectively learnt in context during the process of reading. Students may also make use of online dictionaries with useful features (e.g. audio pronunciations, hyperlinks for cross-references) to learn new words.

*Practising Skimming*

Skimming is a reading skill required for a general impression of the content and structure of a text, the general direction of an argument or a narrative, ascertaining chronological sequences, like time shifts in a narrative or when it uses flashbacks, or a sense of the writer's tone and intention. When skimming a text, a student should be encouraged to note headings and subheadings and to locate topic sentences. In skimming texts that involve more than written language, a student should be guided to identify features that enhance readability such as icons, toolbars, images and hyperlinks that help highlight key sections for retrieving information. Skimming to get an initial global view is a valuable way of approaching complex texts too.

Activities to practise skimming may include:

- skimming a text for answers to simple global questions;

- supplying a text with several titles. Students choose which title best fits the text;

- supplying a text with photos or diagrams. Students tell what topics are dealt with in the text;

- supplying some letters for various purposes (e.g. invitation, complaint, request, appreciation). Students match the letters to different categories; and

- supplying copies of news items from different papers or websites about the same incident. Students identify which copy states purely the fact, which one explains the background to the event and which one includes opinion.

The above activities can be conducted as pair or group work to facilitate collaboration and discussion among students.

*Practising Scanning*

Students scan to locate/extract specific information. They glance through a text rapidly to search for specific details (e.g. a name, a date). In a multimodal reading context, students can be alternating among various websites with the help of hyperlinks or toolbars to locate the specific web page for information. Students should be encouraged to look for clue words or phrases that may indicate the location of the answer they are seeking without attempting to deal with the content as a whole.

Practice for scanning can be organised orally to force the pace. It is not scanning unless it is done fast. Some scanning activities are as follows:

- The most common activity is to ask students to locate a word or a fact on a page or a hypertext. For instance:

  ➢ looking up a certain page or a hypertext to find out the year in which a particular event took place;

- counting the number of times a particular word occurs on a single page or web page; and

- finding from the index or the site map of a website where "Topic A" is mentioned.

- More complex activities can be used on a group basis:

  - supplying a copy of a newspaper or suggesting a news website and asking students to:

    - locate the page and column where various headlines and bylines can be found;

    - locate specific data in editorials, letters to the editor; and

    - locate videos and pictures being described or corresponding to captions.

  - supplying a page of advertisements from a newspaper or providing links to several advertisements on the Internet and asking students to answer a series of questions orally (e.g. "Which tour agent offers holidays in Italy?", "Where can you get a holiday for $980?").

*Understanding Main Ideas*

By recognising the essential ideas, students can become more proficient in processing and retaining information about the text they read. Some suggested activities aimed at developing students' ability to understand main ideas include asking students to:

- match headings with newspaper articles;

- identify the key phrases or sentences in a text;

- select from a list the main ideas most relevant to the text they read;

- work in pairs, with each team member reading a different text and explaining to each other its main ideas;

- summarise orally or in writing the main points of a text; and

- deconstruct a text with graphic organisers.

*Questioning*

Questioning, during the pre-reading stage, while-reading stage or post-reading stage, promotes engagement, invites prediction, creates reasons for reading and fosters understanding. Questions that students can ask include those that can be answered or inferred from the text or by means of further discussion or research. Teachers should model how to raise questions in interacting with a text to enhance students' reading comprehension. Ample opportunities should then be provided for students to practise questioning.

*Identifying Supporting Ideas or Details*

Making distinctions between general ideas and supporting details is an important part of reading comprehension. Some suggested activities include asking students to:

- list the supporting details under each main idea in the text;

- find one illustration or example for each main idea provided; and

- read strips of paper containing sentences or a paraphrase from the text they read and put these strips under the categories of "main idea" or "supporting detail".

*Reading Beyond the Surface*

If students are to understand the writer's points of view, intent or attitude towards a specific issue and work out the implications of facts and ideas presented in the text, they have to be trained to read beyond the literal meaning of the text.

Teachers can help develop students' ability to make inferences through:

- encouraging students to anticipate the content of a text from its title and illustrations;

- drawing students' attention to the use of figures of speech, cohesive devices, rhetorical devices and contextual clues, which help bring out the underlying meaning;

- sensitising students to the use of certain typographical features such as italicised words and the use of question marks for statements;

- drawing students' attention to the writer's distinctive style or personal experience and to the social, cultural and political setting of the text;

- holding discussions about the writer's points of view and attitude towards specific events; and

- discussing the way visual and audio elements (e.g. tables, diagrams, graphs, images, close-ups, animation, voiceovers, sound effects) contribute to the meaning of the text.

As students proceed to a more advanced level, they have to be taught to interrogate the text and respond to the writer's ideas in light of their past experiences. To start off, general questions inviting evaluation of the information source can be asked to enable students to assess the reliability of information, recognise the presence of bias and challenge the assumptions made. If students have expressed opinions on a topic or the theme, it is desirable to invite comments from peers. Students can also be encouraged to initiate and formulate questions. Teachers may have to go through some texts with the class, thinking aloud the questions these texts raise. The next step is to let students tackle the questions from their own experience, with the teacher and their classmates giving feedback on attempts made. Students will gradually pick up the skill of reading a text critically.

Post-reading Stage

At the post-reading stage, teachers may make use of tasks that involve:

- eliciting a personal response from readers (e.g. whether they agree or disagree, like or dislike the text);

- determining what the author wants readers to think or believe based on a critical analysis of the text;

- establishing the connection with other works on the same topic/theme and drawing comparisons between them;

- drawing conclusions about the purpose and validity of the ideas and information in the text;

- suggesting practical applications of theories or principles;

- retelling or role-playing the text read;

- debating the points of view or moral values/issues presented in the text;

- choosing or creating a title, which is an excellent way of summing up readers' overall understanding of a text;

- conducting self-evaluation in which students articulate their own progress towards the achievement of their reading goals; and

- writing about their thoughts, feelings and insights acquired from the text and sharing them with their classmates via an e-platform.

## 3.7 Intensive and Extensive Reading

Both intensive and extensive reading are necessary if students are to become proficient readers in the target language. It is best not to think of them as two distinct and separate modes, because the two are complementary and are often intertwined in real life.

The reading skills covered in this chapter are geared at helping students understand what the text means and how the meaning is produced. Such texts are generally shorter in length. However, it is unrealistic to just rely on class time and the limited choice of reading materials that are available to develop fluency and efficiency in students. Teachers have to give thought to the promotion of extensive reading out of class through some kind of reading scheme or programme. The e-learning tools available in the media present interesting opportunities to meet young readers' reading needs. To help students appreciate reading more fully, they should be motivated to take advantage of the additional opportunities provided by different media and technologies to experience content presented in a multisensory context. With a range of digital media that are becoming more embedded in everyday lives, students should be encouraged to embrace reading beyond the confines of the classroom as a habit.

## 3.8   Reading across the Curriculum

Since the curriculum reform launched in 2001, emphasis has been placed on motivating students and enhancing their learning to learn capabilities through reading. Building on their existing strengths and experience in promoting reading, schools should continue to set Reading to Learn as a sustainable task while due emphasis should be placed on Reading across the Curriculum (RaC) to help students establish meaningful links among concepts and ideas acquired in different KLAs. Through RaC, students at all key stages of learning can be provided with meaningful contexts and extended learning experiences to further develop their literacy skills, positive values and attitudes, and world knowledge. It is particularly important for students at Key Stage 3 to meet the demands of other subjects or KLAs where the medium of instruction is English. Schools can devise a holistic plan and integrate RaC into the school curriculum to support the whole-school language policy. Teachers can identify suitable reading resources (e.g. information texts in printed or electronic form) and implement RaC through cross-KLA collaboration. For further details on how to implement RaC, please refer to Chapter 4 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) ([http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg](http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg)) and Booklet 6B *Reading to Learn: Towards Reading across the Curriculum* of the *Secondary Education Curriculum Guide* (2017) ([http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/renewal/guides_SECG.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/renewal/guides_SECG.html)). For illustration of how RaC is promoted in the English classroom, please see Example 11 "Enhancing Students' Literacy Skills Development: Promoting Reading across the Curriculum through e-Learning (Secondary 1 – 3)" ([http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleklacgexamples](http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleklacgexamples)).

# Chapter 4

# The Learning and Teaching of Writing

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# Chapter 4   The Learning and Teaching of Writing

## 4.1   Importance of Writing

Writing is an important skill that students need to develop, because in real life people often have to communicate with each other in writing, whether through pen-and-paper or electronic communication. Writing is also important in that it helps students learn. It reinforces the language items and structures, and vocabulary that students acquire. The written product allows students to see how they are progressing and to get feedback from the teacher and/or their peers. Most significantly, writing engages students in a process which constantly requires them to take in information and generate thoughts, to organise and reorganise ideas, and to discover and recreate meanings. In effect, writing provides students with ample opportunities to demonstrate their creativity, originality and thinking skills. Strategic writers also possess strong metacognitive abilities to monitor their own writing process, i.e. planning, drafting, reflection, revising recursively and editing their writing.

With the rapid development of information technology and the social media, "literacy" has taken on a new meaning as texts are no longer a linear form of presentation limited to words but are composed of various modes of communication (e.g. images, animations, sounds, graphics). Students, therefore, need to be equipped with new literacy skills to process and create multimodal texts in which messages are conveyed in different modes (e.g. linguistic, audio, visual, gestural, spatial) (see Figure 1), and the skills to search for and manage information.

*Figure 1: Different Communication Modes that Convey Meanings in Multimodal Texts*
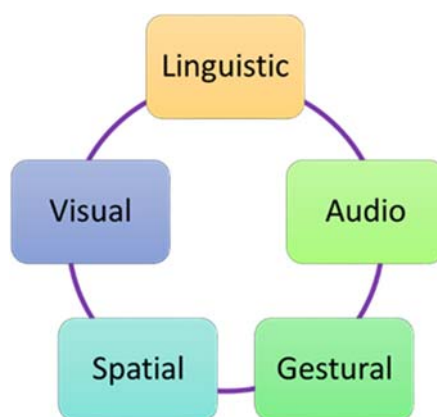


(The New London Group, 1996; Kress, 2000)

## 4.2 Effective Writing Skills

At the primary level, students have developed basic writing skills. For details, please refer to Appendix 5 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg). At the junior secondary level, students have to develop more advanced writing skills to present information, ideas and feelings clearly and coherently. In order to do so, students need to learn to:

● evaluate and make use of given information to complete specific tasks;

● describe, express or explain ideas, feelings and experiences;

● create written and multimodal texts appropriate to the context, purpose and audience;

● use strategies to arouse and sustain readers' interest;

● plan and organise ideas, and use appropriate cohesive devices;

● use a wide range of language patterns and visuals for various purposes; and

● use appropriate tone, style and register for various purposes.

Teachers can make reference to the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) for English Language (Writing Skills) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_writing), which describes students' performance and progress along the developmental continuum of learning English from Primary 1 to Secondary 6, for the learning outcomes regarding the following:

● content

● organisation; and

● language and style;

and plan holistically for the school English Language curriculum to meet students' needs.

**4.3 Role of the Teacher**

To facilitate student learning, teachers need to be clear about the role they should play in the writing classroom.

- In planning, designing and implementing the writing instruction, teachers play different roles at various times: a designer and an interpreter of learning tasks, a motivator, an organiser, a facilitator, a resource person, an evaluator and a reader.

- Teachers need to guide students to set task-specific learning goals for the writing tasks and equip them with the necessary skills to plan, monitor and evaluate their writing performance throughout the learning process.

- Teachers need to show a positive attitude, believing that students are capable of doing the work in the writing curriculum.

- Teachers need to be aware that writing development takes time and therefore instruction should be planned accordingly.

- Teachers need to recognise that extensive practice is required in developing students' writing skills.

- Teachers need to be flexible. As students have different needs, interests and abilities, teachers should use a variety of materials and tasks to cater for student diversity. In general, they need to provide students with tasks or assignments that:

  ➢ represent a broad range of interests, preferably with elements from cross-curricular domains such as values education (e.g. life education, moral education, environmental education);

  ➢ lend themselves to different viewpoints;

  ➢ relate to the students' experience; and

  ➢ vary in their stylistic complexity.

- Teachers need to encourage students to take calculated risks, to innovate and to reflect on their work with respect to their learning goals or assessment criteria.

- Teachers need to develop amongst the students a sense of community and sharing, so that writing can become a collaborative and cooperative effort.

- Teachers need to be sensitive. They need to create a trusting environment in which students feel comfortable talking about their writing with teachers. Teachers should not be viewed by students as ones who criticise them, but ones who will provide encouragement and help them improve their proficiency.

## 4.4 Choice of Instructional Materials

Teachers will find the following types of information and resources useful in facilitating their writing instruction:

- Print-based materials – including language arts texts, anthologies of readings for writing, grammar handbooks, dictionaries, thesauruses, encyclopedias, short novels and stories, articles from magazines and journals, newspapers, non-fiction books, and textbooks from subject-area fields.

- Non-print materials – including films, trailers, and e-resources such as e-books, e-journals, web pages, social media texts and blogs.

- Learner-generated materials – including text-based or non-text-based materials contributed by students, which provide a good avenue for facilitating exploration of personal/study-related issues or topics.

## 4.5 Activities for Developing Students' Writing Skills

The following are some suggested learning activities which teachers can use at the junior secondary level to develop students' skills at various stages of the writing process, i.e. pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing.

Pre-writing Stage

At the pre-writing stage, students are mainly involved in generating and planning ideas.

*Generating Ideas*

Idea generation is a crucial initiating process as it helps students get started, which is one of the most difficult steps in writing. Activities which help promote idea generation include:

- *Brainstorming*

  Students work in small groups to say as much as they can about a topic without worrying about grammar, organisation, mechanics or the quality of ideas. Through quick exchange, students can explore, clarify, and interpret ideas, as well as gain insights into others' points of view. Collaborative thinking tools can be introduced to facilitate the brainstorming process. Students can generate ideas collectively with their peers more conveniently with the aid of e-learning tools. For example, they can exchange, on an online class forum, their views and information about a topic they are going to write about before class.

- *Discussion*

  Students discuss ideas to be included in their writing. Working in pairs/groups facilitates the exchange of ideas and points of view.

- *Freewriting*

  Students generate ideas by writing as quickly as possible without stopping for a certain period of time (e.g. ten minutes), concentrating on content rather than language.

- *Questioning*

  Teachers use questions (who? what? where? when? why? how?) to stimulate thinking and develop ideas. Using questions as part of the writing process can stimulate a lot of valuable discussion and genuine communication in class. Alternatively, students can ask one another questions to generate ideas for the writing topic.

- *Role Play*

  Role play simulates behaviour, language and ideas in a context other than that of the classroom. It also develops perspective and audience awareness, offering students a wealth of different ideas and viewpoints.

- *Interview*

  Students collect information and ideas through questioning others. This can be a class or an out-of-class activity in which they interview their classmates, schoolmates, teachers, family or friends.

- *Reading/Listening*

  This enables students to learn other people's ideas, and stimulates them to think of their own new ideas.

- *Researching*

  Students gather and analyse data, information from different sources (e.g. the Internet, newspapers, books) to increase their understanding of the topic or issue they are going to write about. Students can also search the Internet for appropriate visual input, such as photographs, to be inserted into their multimodal texts.

*Planning Ideas*

Planning involves consideration of the purpose and audience of a piece of writing. Through this, students recognise the writing context, which has a significant bearing on the content and writing outlines. They need to learn how to evaluate and make use of given information to complete a specific task. Strategies for planning a piece of writing include:

- *Identifying Purpose*

  It is necessary to understand the writer's purpose of writing, since the purpose determines the organisation, tone and the choice of language. The following are some suggested activities to help students identify the purpose of writing:

  ➢ examining sample texts (e.g. letters to the editor, itineraries) and identifying their text type features to consider the writers' purpose, and taking into consideration text grammar, work out how the choice of language is affected by the context and how it shapes the tone, style and register of a text (for details of text grammar, please see Section 4.2.4 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg));

  ➢ learning how language items are used to communicate the intended meanings appropriate to the contexts (e.g. using modal verbs in writing instructions);

  ➢ responding to a letter to the editor to understand how personal views and opinions are expressed and presented;

➢ examining how a single event or issue (e.g. a typhoon hitting Hong Kong) has been reported from a variety of angles (e.g. eye-witness accounts, assessments of damage, descriptions of the weather, precautions to be taken); and

➢ considering an event or a situation from the points of view of the various people involved (e.g. writing accounts of a bank robbery in the personae of various characters such as the bank manager, the robber, the police and the customers).

● *Identifying Audience*

Before attempting any piece of writing, it is important to ask the question "Who am I writing for?" Presenting a concept in our culture to someone unfamiliar with it is quite different from presenting it to people from our own culture. A keen sense of the audience can help the writer select appropriate content and express it in an appropriate tone, style and register.

The following are some activities which can be used to develop students' ability in identifying the audience:

➢ examining a text and trying to deduce the audience it was written for;

➢ telling the same story from the perspective of a different character;

➢ rewriting an argumentative text from the perspective of the opposing viewpoint; and

➢ rewriting a letter of complaint to a friend explaining the complaint.

● *Outlines*

A brief and flexible outline making use of a graphic organiser can make students see the basic skeleton or form of what they plan to write, and assess what addition or development of main ideas is needed. It should be stressed that students must not regard outlines as straitjackets, but be ready to reshape their plans as they discover new ideas.

<u>Drafting Stage</u>

When writing the first draft, students should focus on getting the content right and leave matters like grammar, punctuation and spelling until later. Class time should be allowed for students to carry out this process. They should be guided to draft written or multimodal texts appropriate to the context, purpose and audience.

Teachers should prepare students for this particular stage of writing by developing their skills in the following areas:

*Beginnings and Endings*

Teachers can use the following activities to help students develop effective beginnings and endings appropriate for the type of writing they are working on.

- Examining the beginnings and endings of different text types. Students read and discuss the characteristics of the beginnings and endings of sample texts of a particular text type using the following guiding questions:

  ➢ Is the opening interesting? What makes it interesting?

  ➢ What form does the opening take? A general statement, a fact, an opinion, a quotation, an anecdote or others?

  ➢ Does the opening make you want to read on?

  ➢ How is the opening related to the other parts of the text?

  ➢ How is the ending related to the opening?

  ➢ How is the ending related to the other parts of the text?

  Through discussion with peers and the teacher, students recognise the typical characteristics of the beginnings and endings of a particular text type. Should students be working on a draft which comes under the category of this text type, they could apply this knowledge to evaluate the opening and ending of their own drafts.

- Examining examples of effective beginnings of texts and discussing the ploys used to attract the reader's interest (e.g. an assertive statement to challenge the reader, a rhetorical question, a quotation, an event, a description which creates suspense).

- Matching the beginnings and endings of texts to see the ways in which the endings reflect and relate to the openings.

- Writing a beginning and an ending to suit the body of a given text.

*Developing and Structuring Content*

Teachers can use the following activities to help students develop and structure a text.

- Students work through integrated tasks focusing particularly on reading and writing. Reading provides students with relevant input (e.g. ideas, vocabulary) which they can use, thus enriching the content of their writing. Students can also build up mental schemas of the structures of various text types, which help them shape their own writings. They also learn about the relationship between language and context, and develop their awareness of how the use of language items affects the coherence and structure of the text, which they can then transfer to their own writing.

- Teachers should also offer students practice in writing full texts. Writing at the text level provides students with an opportunity to develop ideas through sentences and paragraphs within an overall structure. Various aspects of rhetorical shaping such as cohesive devices (e.g. references, conjunctions, substitutions), paragraphing (developing topic sentences with key supporting details), organisational methods (e.g. deduction, induction), and types of writing (e.g. instructions, summaries, narrative, discussion, comparison, classification) can be practised in a meaningful way. Students can also learn to use language items to communicate the intended meanings and produce texts with the appropriate tone, style and register in respect of the context.

- Students should be encouraged not only to read but also to write a broad range of text types, so as to deepen their understanding and experience of the use of different methods of organisation in different types of discourse. The types of texts to be included in a writing programme vary according to the students' needs, interests and abilities, but teachers should select a range of items from the following areas:

- ➢ personal writing (e.g. diaries, journals, blogs);

- ➢ social writing (e.g. personal letters, emails, invitations, telephone messages);

- ➢ public writing (e.g. form-filling, letters of enquiry, speeches, letters of appreciation, letters of complaint);

- ➢ study writing (e.g. making notes from reading/lectures, summaries);

- ➢ creative writing (e.g. rhymes, advertisements, stories, drama, poems, jokes, e-posters);

- ➢ essay writing (e.g. controversial issues, arguments); and

- ➢ institutional writing (e.g. memoranda, business letters, reports).

- ● Controlled language exercises focusing on one or more aspects of written discourse can be used to enhance students' ability to structure a piece of writing. The more common ones aim at developing the skill of using cohesive devices (e.g. combining sentences, logically sequencing jumbled sentences within a paragraph, rearranging jumbled paragraphs), while others aim at developing understanding of discourse organisation (e.g. transferring information from a text to a tree diagram, reducing a text to an outline). It should, however, be stressed that these exercises must be reinforced by freer writing activities which require students to draw on their language learning experience in order to express themselves creatively and to progress towards learner autonomy.

*Creating Multimodal Texts*

Creating a multimodal text is a complex process. It requires students to make meaning by strategically combining different modes of communication (e.g. linguistic, audio, visual, gestural, spatial). Though multimodal is not synonymous with digital, the development of multimodal literacy is strongly associated with the advances made in information technology. In creating a multimodal text, students learn to use a range of software (e.g. word processing and presentation software) to incorporate visual and audio features to contribute effectively to the meaning of a written text, for example, incorporating pictures of ingredients and a video that demonstrates the cooking steps to accompany a recipe. Access to easy-to-use digital production tools and resources has significant implications for literacy development and practice, and should be exploited to develop students' literacy skills and their abilities to express themselves in diverse modes of communication through the use of information technology.

Teachers can support students in creating multimodal texts through:

- asking students to identify multimodal texts (e.g. TV commercials, posters, promotional videos) for a class discussion on their effectiveness in conveying the intended messages;

- asking students to discuss how visual and audio features can be added to a written text to enhance its effectiveness in achieving different communication purposes; and

- showing students the use of different software to create multimodal texts.

For further illustration of how multimodal texts are promoted in the English classroom, please see Example 20 "Designing Meaningful Homework – Developing Students' Ability to Produce Multimodal Texts (Secondary 1 – 3)" (http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleklacgexamples).

Revising Stage

While drafting is concerned with what the writer wants to say, revision or rewriting concentrates on how to say it effectively. Students should be empowered to reflect on their own work and decide how their writing can be improved. Teachers can model and teach the skills of self-evaluation, and guide students to set their own goals and monitor their progress towards the goals. Another way to facilitate students' self-assessment of their writing is to provide good samples and models of work to help students understand the assessment criteria. Students should be encouraged to evaluate their drafts and make changes at the text level instead of being overly concerned with grammatical and mechanical errors/mistakes. When revising, they should apply the following:

- Am I conveying my ideas clearly to my readers?

- Is my writing appropriate in terms of the context, purpose and audience?

- Are my explanations and examples clear?

- Are my points adequately explained or developed?

- Are my arguments logically and consistently presented?

- Are there any repetitive/irrelevant ideas?

- Are the links between paragraphs clear?

- Have I used a good range of vocabulary appropriately?

- Have I used the appropriate tone, style and register?

- Is the language (e.g. grammar, vocabulary, punctuation) accurate?

- If visual or audio features are used, do they help convey the intended messages more effectively, or are they overused?

In supporting the revising process, teachers should consider applying the following strategies:

*Peer Review*

- Peer review, also known as peer response, peer feedback or peer editing, is often used in the writing classroom to assist revision. Central to this activity is the notion that students work interactively in pairs or small groups to review each other's draft by way of questions, suggestions or comments. One key benefit of peer review is that it enhances audience awareness and promotes habits of revision with readers in mind. The interaction between students and peer readers enables both parties to gain insights into each other's point of view. Further, by responding critically to their peers' writing, students become aware that they need to do the same with their own work to facilitate peer review.

- Students need to be given clear instructions and directions about the roles they will play and the tasks they are expected to accomplish. They also need to be guided to give quality feedback.

- The worksheet below provides some ideas of the kind of feedback students can be asked to give on their peers' writing. The questions can be modified and adapted to better suit each classroom situation.

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PEER REVIEW WORKSHEET

Complete the following statements:
✧ The best part of this piece of writing is …
✧ I agreed with you when you said …
✧ I disagreed with you when you said …
✧ The suggestions I want to make to improve this paper are …

---

- Peer review can also be conducted with the use of information technology. The interactive functions of e-learning tools (e.g. online learning management systems, weblogs, discussion forums) facilitate peer review through providing an e-platform where students can give comments and suggest revisions on their peers' works.

*Teacher-Student Conferencing*

The teacher conducts a discussion with the students on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. It may take place out of class time when a group of students meet with the teacher to discuss the current draft of a piece of writing with reference to their learning goals and writing performance, leading to a revision plan.

- Conferences provide students with an informal atmosphere where students can actively participate, ask questions freely, learn to negotiate meaning and clarify the teacher's responses. Students are able to receive more immediate and elaborate feedback than they would through written comments. Also, students may feel better motivated by the personal attention received.

- The obvious drawback of conferences is that they place a great demand on the teacher's time. One way of addressing this disadvantage is to help students clearly understand the purpose of the conference and have them prepare a list of questions beforehand. This keeps the conference on task and may reduce the time needed for each meeting.

- Mini-conferences can be conducted in class during small group work. The teacher walks around as students work, clarifying queries, asking questions and offering suggestions. Mini-conferencing has several benefits:

  ➢ It becomes part of the regular classroom learning as a focused discussion activity.

  ➢ The immediate intervention is a natural part of the writing process.

  ➢ It addresses students' immediate needs.

*Responding in Writing*

This refers to teachers' comments on the drafts they have collected from students.

● Teachers should offer positive support by praising what is genuinely good in students' drafts. They should raise specific questions which will enable students to carry out revisions, make suggestions for reorganising ideas or developing specific points in the draft, and provide a small set of concrete suggestions for improving the grammatical and mechanical aspects of the text.

● To make written feedback work, teachers must avoid giving vague and confusing comments which provide little direction for students when they attempt revision. They must also avoid providing detailed editing comments on the surface form without paying attention to organisational and content issues.

● To enhance the quality of their feedback, teachers can make reference to the LPF for English Language (Writing Skills) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/lpfel_writing), which is a useful tool for identifying students' strengths and areas for improvement, and understanding what students need to achieve as they progress in the development of writing skills.

Editing Stage

At this stage, students make the final revisions based on feedback from their peers and teacher, and check accuracy to make sure that the text is suitable for presentation to the reader. They also focus on matters such as grammar and mechanics, including spelling, punctuation and handwriting.

**4.6 Evaluating Student Writing**

Evaluation refers to the teacher's response to a student's final draft, based on a set of assessment criteria developed for evaluating student writing. The teacher has the responsibility to inform students about the evaluation policies and criteria for specific writing tasks beforehand. These criteria represent the teacher's objectives and expectations, which serve as a guide for students in writing and revising their work. Most task-specific criteria focus upon the following areas: purpose and audience, content, organisation, grammar and mechanics.

Teachers need not correct all the errors/mistakes in students' work. Total correction is time-consuming for teachers and discouraging for students. Teachers should consider using the following alternative approaches:

- *Correct errors/mistakes selectively*. Instead of correcting all the errors/mistakes in a piece of writing, the teacher should first agree with students what to focus on. For example, the teacher may concentrate on areas where the students particularly need help, such as tenses and articles. Apart from selectively correcting errors/mistakes, teachers write comments in the margin or at the end of a piece of written work. This helps draw attention to recurrent errors/mistakes in a particular area. The teacher then explains these common errors/mistakes and addresses them by engaging the class in appropriate language activities.

- *Indicate errors/mistakes so that students can correct them*. This is done by underlining/highlighting the errors/mistakes and/or using a correction code to alert students to the kinds of errors/mistakes they have made. As a follow-up activity, the teacher can provide students with appropriate activities or exercises addressing their common text-level and/or language errors/mistakes.

## 4.7   Time Constraints

It may appear to some teachers that process writing takes up too much of their class time. However, this does not mean that process-based approaches are therefore irrelevant and have no place in the writing curriculum. Information technology has contributed much to creating an environment conducive to teaching process writing. For example, the work of drafting and revising has been greatly relieved by e-learning tools (e.g. word-processing software, online graphic organisers). In addition, students do not need to go through the entire writing process every time they are given a writing task. What is important is that teachers make use of each writing assignment to draw students' attention to a specific aspect of the writing process, be it idea generation, planning, drafting, revising or editing. Teachers may decide when it is appropriate and which assignment to use to take the students through the entire writing process. Such a practice is essential as it provides students with a comprehensive picture of what the approach entails and how they can apply it to their own writing.

## 4.8 Use of Group Activities

Group and collaborative work in language classrooms contributes to a non-threatening atmosphere under which communicative skills are fostered and the need for interaction is created.

Collaboration and small group work can be employed to help students throughout the writing process. In small groups, students can:

- collaboratively gather information, generate ideas and respond to opinions;

- work together to solve problems, along with evaluating and making decisions;

- role play or participate in simulation activities in the process of discovery; and

- participate in reader response activities: discussing, analysing, and evaluating peers' drafts.

With the rapid development in information technology, teachers may make effective use of e-learning tools (e.g. discussion forums, weblogs, online graphic organisers) to facilitate collaborative writing, so as to enhance students' participation, provide opportunities for peer- and self-assessment and increase the input for the writing task.

Group writing activities also provide relevant contexts for students to develop their generic skills. At the junior secondary level, meaningful writing tasks could be developed to facilitate students' integrative use of generic skills such as collaborative problem solving skills (i.e. the integration of collaboration skills, communication skills and problem solving skills), for example, by guiding students to write a proposal collaboratively to the principal suggesting solutions to the long queuing time at the school canteen; and holistic thinking skills (i.e. the integration of critical thinking skills, problem solving skills and creativity), for example, by engaging them in a group activity to design a gadget that improves one's health and promote it with an advertisement.

## 4.9   Writing across the Curriculum

Writing across the Curriculum (WaC) is a meaningful follow-up on Reading across the Curriculum (RaC) as it offers opportunities for students to apply in their writing the language and content knowledge related to non-language subjects making use of input from their reading. In WaC, students are provided with meaningful contexts and extended learning experiences to develop their literacy skills and world knowledge. It helps students establish meaningful links among concepts and ideas in other Key Learning Areas (KLAs), and develop a better understanding of the language features of texts on cross-curricular subjects. WaC is particularly important to Key Stage 3 students who may need to learn non-language subjects through English. It also supports them in coping with more complex texts that deal with cross-curricular themes in the English Language curriculum as well as prepares them for meeting the growing language demand in terms of formality and text complexity at the senior secondary level.

When designing a WaC task, teachers can identify connections between English Language and non-language subjects in terms of different aspects such as text structure, vocabulary, rhetorical functions and their related language items and structures, and set a clear writing purpose to support the use of English for academic purposes in contexts related to non-language subjects. Writing in one subject differs from writing in another subject. The incorporation of WaC in the school English Language curriculum facilitates students' development of subject-specific language and writing strategies that vary from one subject to another. Implementing WaC does not mean assigning long and complicated academic essays. While such writing has many benefits, they may be too demanding for Key Stage 3 students. More manageable WaC tasks in terms of text length and language demand (e.g. writing explanations for a poster about how to maintain oral health, writing descriptions for a new invention, writing procedures for a recipe) can be introduced to students at the junior secondary level. For further illustration of how students' learning experiences between English Language Education and other KLAs can be connected through promoting Language across the Curriculum, please see Section 3.4.2 of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg), Chapter 6 "Promoting Language across the Curriculum at Secondary Level" of this Supplement and Example 2 "Connecting Students' Learning Experiences between English Language and Non-language Subjects through Promoting Language across the Curriculum at the Junior Secondary Level" (http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleklacgexamples).

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# Chapter 5

# The Learning and Teaching

# of Language Arts

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# Chapter 5   The Learning and Teaching of Language Arts

## 5.1   The Place of Language Arts in the English Language Curriculum

Language arts has much to offer in developing students' capability to use English to respond and give expression to real and imaginative experience. It seeks to develop students' language sensitivity and cultural awareness, as well as creative and critical thinking through the use of imaginative or literary texts[1]. The use of language arts materials and relevant learning activities is an effective means to help students progress towards the learning targets of the Experience Strand in the English Language Education curriculum.

Exposure to a wide range of language arts materials at the junior secondary level enhances students' language skills as well as prepares students for the language arts modules in the Elective Part at the senior secondary level, namely, Learning English through Drama, Learning English through Short Stories, Learning English through Poems and Songs, and Learning English through Popular Culture. The incorporation of language arts into the junior secondary English Language curriculum can also help lay the foundation for the study of Literature in English, an extended and elective subject in the senior secondary curriculum. The use of language arts materials also provides opportunities for the integrated use of language skills, meaningful extension of English language learning and development of generic skills. Hence, teachers are encouraged to use a wide variety of language arts materials and activities in the learning and teaching of English.

"Language arts" is used in this Supplement instead of the term "literature" in order to avoid the confusion which might be caused amongst teachers that it is concerned with the critical study of literary texts such as those prescribed for Literature in English in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination. It should be stressed that language arts is <u>not</u> concerned with:

● the mastery of literary and/or critical terms;

● the learning of the biographical details of poets/novelists/playwrights or the historical background of texts;

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[1]*In the context of language arts in this Supplement, language arts materials/texts may be written, spoken, visual or multimodal, such as poems, novels, short stories, drama, films, radio and television programmes.*

- stylistic analysis;

- literary criticism; or

- the production of literary works.

## 5.2 Reasons for Using Language Arts Materials in the English Language Curriculum

<u>Language Enrichment</u>

- Language arts materials help sharpen students' awareness of how language can be used to achieve different effects. They offer vivid examples of a range of styles, registers and text types at different levels of difficulty. They are enriched with figurative language which often presents familiar experiences in a new light, encouraging students to consider the nature of the experience and the potential of the language itself. Students are encouraged to be creative and adventurous as they appreciate the richness of the language.

- Language arts materials are often open to multiple interpretations. Students' interpretations of and reactions to a given story, poem, play or film are rarely identical. This difference in points of view allows for stimulating interaction among students.

- Language arts materials which deal with issues of universal significance (e.g. human relationships, nature, love, growing up) or issues with cross-curricular themes (e.g. environmental protection, life planning, human rights) can be used as resources for stimulating activities to enable students to develop positive values, think from different perspectives and make thoughtful and reasoned judgements.

- The interest and appeal of language arts materials make them a key resource for thought-provoking language activities. Through engaging interactively with the language arts materials and learning activities with their fellow students and the teacher, students will learn to pay careful attention to the materials and generate language as they complete tasks.

## Cultural Enrichment

Language arts materials provide cultural enrichment as they expose students to culture-specific situations, which heighten their sensitivity of cultural diversity. They offer a rich context in which the characters' actions, thoughts and emotions are displayed, all of which provide insights into the codes and values of the society they represent. Students are likely to gain an increased awareness of both the foreign cultures represented in the materials and their own as a result of a juxtaposition of the two.

## Personal Involvement

Language arts materials allow for personal involvement. More diffuse than informational discourse, they stimulate students to engage in a vigorous process of interactive reading and viewing. The focus of the students' attention is often shifted from the more mechanical aspects of the target language system to the emotional experience represented in the materials.

## 5.3  Choice of Language Arts Materials

The suitability of language arts materials for the English classroom varies from one group of students to another, depending on their age, needs, interests, cultural background, language level, and intellectual and emotional maturity. It is most important to make use of materials which stimulate their personal imagination and involvement. Teachers should consider the following when selecting language arts materials to be used in class:

## Appropriateness of Content

The suitability of language arts materials depends on each particular group of students, their age, background, needs, and previous exposure or experience. Conceptual difficulty is also a factor to be considered. Students will not be able to find pleasure in language arts if the ideas conveyed by the selected materials are beyond their intellectual and emotional maturity.

## Likelihood of Interest to Students

One important factor to consider is whether the materials are able to stimulate personal involvement and provoke strong, positive reactions. Materials which are relevant to students' life experiences, emotions or dreams may be favoured. Besides, surprise, suspense, original thoughts and critical insights are common elements of language arts materials that find popularity with students.

## Amount of Cultural Knowledge Required

Language arts materials which are culturally difficult may pose challenges to both teachers and students. However, this should not deter teachers from exploiting them to foster understanding of another culture and to study the target language in the social settings they represent. After all, learning a foreign language is also getting to know a foreign culture. Teachers are advised to introduce these materials with shrewd guidance to support students in understanding them as well as the culture embedded.

## Possibilities for Multiple Interpretations

The beauty of language arts materials lies in their infinite possibilities for interpretations and each reading or viewing experience is by nature unique. It is desirable to use materials that allow room for multiple interpretations to stimulate thinking. Materials open to interpretations provide opportunities to spark personal responses, and invite analyses and reflections.

## Fostering Positive Values and Attitudes

Language arts materials such as stories, plays and films mirror a wealth of human experiences, emotions and behaviour in circumstances as well as value-laden issues that provide opportunities for critical and imaginative responses. Materials that deal with fundamental questions of humanity have the capacity to shape young minds with intrinsic values, nurture their empathy towards others as well as guide them to reflect on their beliefs and make wise and moral judgements. Teachers are advised to make effective use of language arts materials to promote positive values and attitudes, with a focus on the seven priority values and attitudes (i.e. perseverance, respect for others, responsibility, national identity, commitment, integrity and care for others) so as to facilitate whole-person development and raise a generation of socially responsible youths for a better society.

<u>Density, Pace, Clarity and Language</u>

In choosing written texts, it is important to select texts of the appropriate length. Texts that are too long may pose the problem of maintaining students' interest. On the other hand, texts that are too short may not be desirable because they lack the extended contextual support found in longer texts. Although language difficulty is a factor to be considered, it should never be the most important consideration. In fact, students do not have to understand every word in the texts. Texts with a certain degree of stylistic complexity may be used to improve students' language proficiency and develop their receptive skills.

<u>Subtleties and Richness of Language</u>

Teachers are advised to select language arts materials demonstrating a range of language features to present themes, characters, experiences and feelings. Both visual and written imaginative or literary texts provide opportunities for students to appreciate the subtleties and richness of the English language through learning the use of figurative language such as metaphor, personification, alliteration and onomatopoeia. The use of language arts materials can equip students at the junior secondary level with the language and skills required in studying the language arts modules in the Elective Part and the study of Literature in English at the senior secondary level.

<u>Engagement of Students in the Selection of Learning Materials</u>

It may be a good idea to select different language arts materials and introduce them in the classroom and allow students to select those they prefer to work on. Sometimes two texts on the same theme (e.g. a novel/poem and a film about the First World War) can be selected to provide students with the chance to compare and contrast points of view and features of different genres.

## 5.4 Planning and Designing Activities Using Language Arts Materials

The following are some suggestions for planning and designing activities that may be used with language arts materials in written or non-written forms.

- The reading or viewing of language arts materials is often just one key element in a set of connected activities within a unit. These activities may include a preliminary discussion, interactive work and follow-up activities that integrate the development of different language skills.

- Group and shared activities allow the teacher to tap the knowledge and experience resources within the group. With its variety of life experiences, a group can foster the development of an individual's awareness both of his/her own responses and of the world represented in the materials. Students working in groups are encouraged to explore the materials together, and share their experiences, views and interpretations.

- Activities involving the use of questions need not be teacher-centred. Questions can be designed and organised in such a way that they lead students to work either individually or through group discussion to achieve a better understanding of the materials. Students can benefit from answering both closed questions aimed at eliciting information-based responses and open questions encouraging probing investigation and reasoned interpretation.

- Teachers should employ a broad range of activities to suit students' needs, interests and abilities (e.g. storytelling, role play, solo/choral speaking, drama, improvisation, creative writing, audio/video production, jigsaw reading, parallel reading of a written text and another text in different modes of representation). However, it should be stressed that the variety of activities should aim at increasing students' confidence in developing and expressing their own responses. As their critical faculties are sharpened, students will become keener to articulate their own views and assess other perspectives. Also, they are more likely to engage in creative learning activities and/or extended reading or viewing outside the classroom.

- Flexible use of e-learning resources can effectively help students understand, interpret, analyse, appreciate and respond critically to language arts materials. Students can make use of the e-features (e.g. graphics, sound, animation) available to explore imaginative or literary texts in the e-learning environment, while the use of e-platforms or apps (e.g. discussion forums, online graphic organisers) facilitates the exchange of ideas, helps them better organise their ideas during brainstorming activities, and fosters collaboration among students. The use of information technology to give expression and respond to ideas and experiences in language arts materials can also increase students' learning motivation, develop creativity and enhance their language skills.

## 5.5  Suggested Activities for Using Language Arts Materials

The following is a list of activities which may be used with language arts materials in written or non-written forms. It is meant to be suggestive rather than exhaustive, and teachers should feel free to make changes and/or use their own ideas. (The "texts" referred to below may be written, spoken, visual or multimodal.)

Preliminary Activities

- poster presentations on the theme/subject of the text;

- annotation or discussion of photos/pictures/music related to the text;

- predicting what a text is about by reading its title or a few opening lines, looking at the shape in the case of a shape poem, or watching the trailer of a film;

- personal reactions to the theme(s) of the text;

- discussion of how students would respond if they were in a similar situation to the one in the text;

- discussion of the setting of the text (e.g. costumes of the actors in a play); and

- brainstorming vocabulary conducive to understanding the text.

Activities Focusing on the Language Arts Materials

- jigsaw reading (i.e. reordering a scrambled text);

- choosing a description which best summarises the text;

- completing sentences which show "cause-effect" relationships in the text;

- matching definitions with words in the text;

- organising words according to lexical relationships;

- discussing how dramatic effects are produced in the text through the use of different devices such as music, colour and images;

- gap-filling (i.e. certain words are removed from the text, and students fill in the gaps either by themselves or by choosing from a word list);

- choosing from a list of adjectives the one which best describes a certain character, and supplying reasons;

- reading/viewing an extract, and writing and/or presenting the rest of the dialogue between the characters;

- answering comprehension questions about certain words or phrases, the content of the text and its underlying meaning;

- understanding and appreciating the effect of sound patterns in the text;

- identifying and discussing themes of the text;

- considering the same text presented in another form; and

- reading aloud the story/poem/speech/drama script.

Follow-up Activities

- engaging in a discussion/debate on the theme/subject of the text;

- writing creatively (e.g. poems, lyrics, stories, drama scripts) or critically on the theme/subject of the text;

- comparing characters from various texts;

- doing a role play/simulation and other dramatic presentations such as readers' theatre;

- participating in the presentation of the text through providing oral and written descriptions of feelings and events and expressing one's reactions to issues related to the text;

- rewriting the text in a different text type (e.g. if the text embodies a story, students may be asked to rewrite it as if it were a newspaper article or film script);

- sharing reflections on the text via an e-platform; and

- creating e-posters, animations or video clips of the text and uploading their work to the e-platform for peer viewing and assessment.

For illustration of how a poem and how storytelling are used in the English Language classroom, please refer to Example 7 "Using Imaginative and Literary Texts to Develop Generic Skills and Positive Values and Attitudes: 'Where Go the Boats' (Secondary 1-3)" (http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleklacgexamples) and the resource package "Using Storytelling to Develop Students' Literacy Skills and Positive Values" (http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleresources) respectively.

# Chapter 6

## Promoting
## Language across the Curriculum
## at Secondary Level

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# Chapter 6    Promoting Language across the Curriculum at Secondary Level

## 6.1    Challenges for Secondary School Students in Learning English and Learning through English

At the primary level, Chinese is generally adopted as the medium of instruction (MOI) in the majority of subjects. Through English Language Education as a Key Learning Area (KLA) in the school curriculum, primary school students are provided with a wide range of contexts and learning experiences to develop their English language proficiency, enhance their personal and intellectual development, and extend their understanding of other cultures. At the secondary level, while students continue to develop their English language skills for general purposes, they may also need to acquire language skills for academic purposes to support them in learning non-language subjects through English and in coping with more complex texts that deal with cross-curricular themes in the English Language curriculum.

Language demand grows in terms of formality (e.g. learning topics with contexts ranging from students' everyday life to formal situations), as well as text complexity in reading and writing tasks (e.g. from simple texts to complex texts typically with more embedded/subordinate clauses and prepositional phrases) as students progress from the primary to secondary level. Under the fine-tuned MOI arrangements, schools are given more flexibility in devising their school-based MOI arrangements at the junior secondary level to enrich the English language environment. As stated in the Education Bureau Circular No. 6/2009 "Fine-tuning the Medium of Instruction for Secondary Schools", schools can adopt diversified MOI arrangements including the following:

- allocating no more than 25% of the total lesson time (excluding the lesson time for English Language) to Extended Learning Activities (ELA) in English;
- transforming the ELA time into the adoption of English as the MOI in up to two non-language subjects; and
- adopting English as the MOI in all non-language subjects based on the Secondary 1 intake of the school.

In this connection, junior secondary students are given more opportunities to be exposed to and use English through listening, speaking, reading and writing in non-language subjects, in which the language used is more formal and complex. It may involve the use of more subject-specific vocabulary and more complex sentence structures to perform different rhetorical functions. Students are also required to process and produce a greater variety of text types of increasing complexity.

To support students in coping with the growing language demand across key stages of learning in the English Language Education KLA and learning non-language subjects through English, schools are encouraged to promote Language across the Curriculum (LaC).

## 6.2 Language across the Curriculum

LaC is an approach that integrates language learning and content learning (EDB, 2009). It can be adopted to support students in exploring knowledge of different subjects while improving their language proficiency at the same time. Non-language subjects provide a context for language learning while effective language development facilitates the learning of these subjects.

In implementing LaC, teachers should understand the language needs of the different KLAs and the connection between English for general purposes and English for academic purposes. Focus in LaC should be placed on the learning and teaching of subject-specific language items, text structures and rhetorical functions typical of academic texts (Paltridge, Harbon, Hirsch, Shen, Stevenson, Phakiti & Woodrow, 2009).

To develop students' academic language and content awareness, there must be explicit teaching of reading and enabling skills as well as rhetorical functions, text structures and language items typical of academic texts.

### 6.2.1 Strategies to Promote LaC

Ways in which English teachers can help students tackle the language demand that they may find challenging in non-language subjects include:

Use of Visual Representation to Deconstruct the Structure, Language and Content of Texts

- demonstrating to students learning skills that they can apply in the study of non-language subjects by making use of texts on cross-curricular themes in the everyday English classroom, e.g. teachers can guide students to understand a text about environmental pollution by deconstructing the structure, language and content of the text using visual representation such as the graphic organiser in Figure 1.

***A Sample Text Used in the English Classroom (Topic: Environmental Pollution)***

*…There are a number of factors contributing to environmental pollution…Vehicles that run on diesel should be banned. Exhaust fumes emitted from diesel vehicles are one of the sources of air pollution, **as** they contain toxic chemicals … oil spills as **a result of** equipment fault of oil tankers…**Since** paper products are made from wood, if more paper is used, more trees will be cut down, which will lead to deforestation. Using less paper can definitely help save our environment…the temperature of the Earth continues to rise **because of** the frequent use of air-conditioners…*

***Figure 1: A Fishbone Diagram Illustrating the Cause-and-effect Relationship between Information in the Text***

***Factors Contributing to Environmental Pollution***
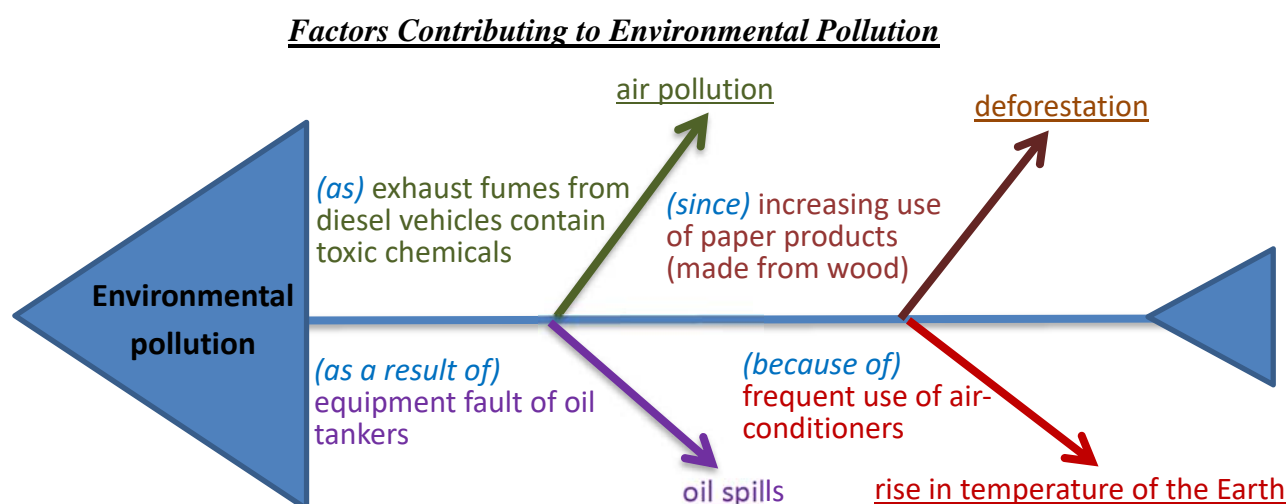


*Note: Other examples of graphic organisers (e.g. flow charts, Venn diagrams, data grids) can also be used to illustrate to students the relationships between different pieces of information/events/ideas (e.g. problem and solution, explanation, comparison and contrast) in a text.*

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<u>Reading and Enabling Skills</u>

- explicitly teaching students reading and enabling skills to support them in comprehending information and ideas in academic texts such as:

  - vocabulary building strategies (Table 1) including knowledge of word formation (e.g. affixation, compounding, blending) to help them work out the meaning of unfamiliar words with examples from other KLAs; and

*Table 1: Examples of Vocabulary Building Strategies*

| Knowledge of Word Formation | Examples |
|---|---|
| Affixation | • <u>ex</u>hale (prefix: "ex-"; meaning: away from)<br>• civilisa<u>tion</u> (suffix: "-tion"; meaning: the process of) |
| Compounding | "test" + "tube" → "test tube" |
| Blending | "smoke" + "fog" → "smog" |

  - phonics knowledge that can enhance students' phonological awareness and support them in reading aloud and spelling.

<u>Communication/Interaction Strategies</u>

- teaching students strategies for effective oral communication including communication/interaction strategies that students can apply in presentation and discussion activities across subjects (e.g. maintaining eye contact, responding readily to others' questions, opinions or comments, speaking at a volume appropriate to the situation); and
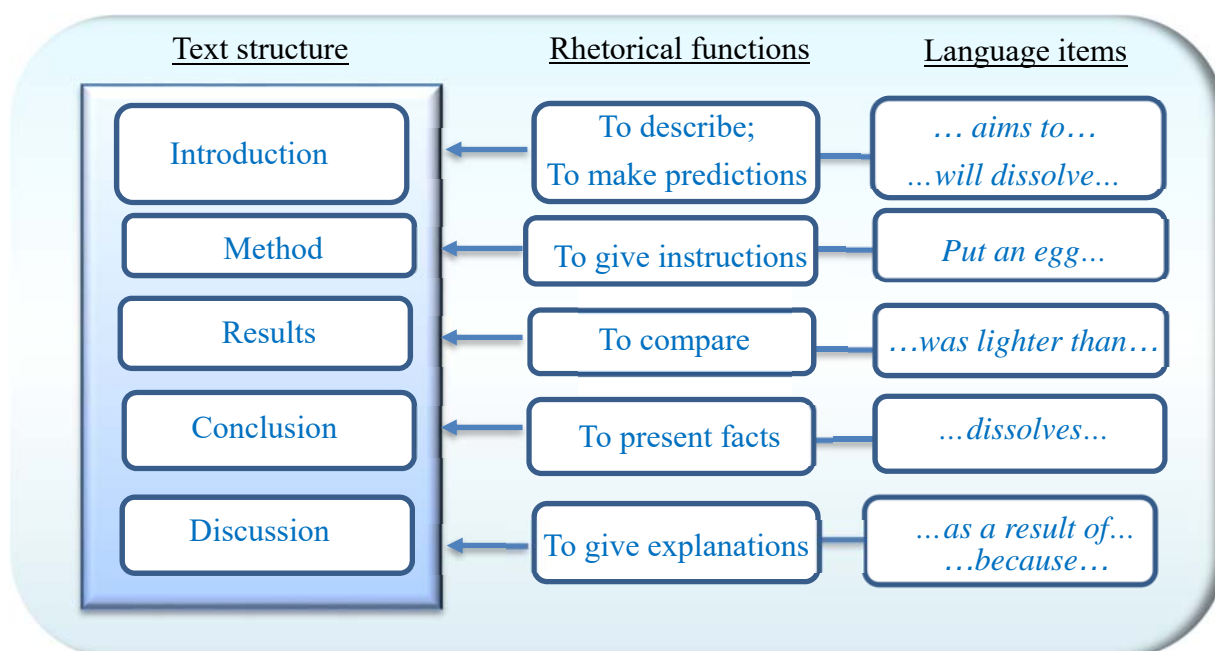
<u>Features of Different Text Types</u>

- raising students' awareness of the features of different text types (e.g. reports, essays), including the rhetorical functions, text structures and language items typical of academic texts by integrating the use of a variety of text types commonly found across KLAs.

### 6.2.2 Rhetorical Functions, Text Structures and Language Items Typical of Academic Texts

The choice of language items ties in closely with the text structures and rhetorical functions in academic texts (Paltridge et al., 2009). The text structure of an academic text (e.g. an exposition) may consist of as simple as one single rhetorical function (e.g. "to compare and contrast"), introduced by particular language items (e.g. the use of the cohesive device *"on the contrary"* to present opposite views). However, the text structure of a more complex academic text, (e.g. a report as in Figure 2), may include multiple rhetorical functions (e.g. "to describe" and "to make predictions" in the introduction, "to give instructions" in the method section, "to compare" in the results section, "to present facts" in the conclusion, "to give explanations" in the discussion). These rhetorical functions are introduced by different language items, for example, the use of

- *"aims to"* to describe the aim;
- the future tense *"will dissolve"* to make predictions about the results;
- imperatives to give instructions;
- the comparative adjective *"was lighter than"* to compare differences in the results observed;
- the present tense *"dissolves"* to present facts; and
- the cohesive devices *"as a result of"* and *"because"* to give explanations.

*Figure 2: An Example of a More Complex Academic Text (e.g. a report)*

English teachers can collaborate with teachers of other KLAs and help students make connection with their learning experiences by drawing their attention to the rhetorical functions, text structures and language items commonly found across KLAs (Table 2) and designing related learning and teaching activities for practice and consolidation.

*Table 2: Examples of Rhetorical Functions and their Related Language Items Commonly Found across KLAs*

| Examples of Rhetorical Functions | Language Items (Examples) | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| Comparing/Contrasting | *"However"*, *"on the contrary"*, *"similarly"* | Some historians think that the paintings had entertainment functions. *However,* these paintings were usually found at...(PSHE) |
| Sequencing | *"After"*, *"before"*, *"then"* | Clean the food thoroughly *before* cooking...(TE) |
| Explaining | *"Since"*, *"because of"*, *"as a result (of)"* | *As a result,* more sulphur dioxide is produced...(SE) |
| Describing | Adjectives, relative clauses | *Larger* current makes the bulb *brighter*... (SE) |
| Defining | *"Refers to"*, *"is known as"* | Osmosis *refers to* the diffusion of fluid...(SE) |
| Making suggestions | *"Can"*, *"may"*, *"suggest"* | The government *can* make better use of the land through...(PSHE) |
| Giving instructions | Imperatives | *List* the characteristics of the four phases in the long jump...(PE) |
| Presenting facts | Present tense | A computer system *consists of*...(TE) |
| Presenting past events | Past tense | The waltz *was* originally a peasant dance in Austria...(AE) |
| Making assumption | Conditional clauses, *"let"*, *"suppose"* | *Suppose* Jane's salary is $10,000 now. What is the percentage of... (ME) |

Note: *Key Learning Areas*

ME: Mathematics Education; PSHE: Personal, Social and Humanities Education;
SE: Science Education; TE: Technology Education; AE: Arts Education;
PE: Physical Education

## 6.3  The Implementation of LaC

To support the implementation of LaC, schools are encouraged to:

- form a committee/team which includes representatives from English Language and non-language subjects involved in the LaC programme to oversee and plan the implementation of LaC as well as strengthen the collaboration between different KLAs. For more details of cross-KLA collaboration, please refer to the next section "Teachers' Role in Implementing LaC";

- formulate their whole-school language policy with regard to their MOI arrangements and plan their school-based LaC programme holistically taking into consideration students' learning needs across levels and the curriculum content of English Language and non-language subjects adopting English as the MOI to facilitate a smooth transition across key stages;

- seek professional development opportunities to enhance teachers' capability of supporting students in learning through English by enhancing their ability in processing and producing texts written for general/academic purposes; and

- allocate resources for the procurement of relevant learning materials that provide suitable contexts (e.g. information texts with themes, text types, language items and structures or vocabulary related to non-language subjects) for the LaC activities.

## 6.4 Teachers' Role in Implementing LaC

When planning and developing the school English Language curriculum, English teachers are encouraged to:

- take into consideration students' learning needs in English Language and non-language subjects where English is adopted as the MOI across levels to ensure a smooth transition from the junior secondary to senior secondary level;

- identify learning materials with suitable entry points (e.g. themes, text types, language items and structures, vocabulary) for connecting students' learning experiences between English Language and non-language subjects;

- help students develop the ability in processing and producing English texts through explicit teaching of reading and enabling skills as well as rhetorical functions, text structures and language items typical of academic texts making use of English texts written for general/academic purposes;

- reinforce students' learning experiences through developing learning activities that integrate the knowledge and skills gained in other KLAs (e.g. subject knowledge, generic skills, language skills); and

- collaborate with teachers of other KLAs to develop learning activities or cross-curricular projects that integrate language and concepts learnt across KLAs and provide students with the opportunities to recycle the knowledge and skills in suitable learning contexts, for example:

> ➢ identifying the entry points, setting realistic goals and drawing up a plan or schedule of work to facilitate the transfer of language knowledge and relevant literacy skills;

> ➢ developing learning, teaching and assessment materials and activities to help students recycle and consolidate what they have learnt across KLAs (e.g. enabling skills and strategies, concepts, language features);

> ➢ identifying a common topic and connecting students' learning experiences by encouraging them to read/write about and discuss the topic, and broadening students' learning experiences through learning activities or tasks outside the classroom; and

> ➢ raising students' awareness of the enabling skills to use as well as rhetorical functions, text structures and language items commonly found across KLAs to facilitate the completion of cross-curricular/subject-specific tasks.

Information related to planning the whole-school curriculum through adopting a cross-curricular approach is also available in Section 3.2.5 "Cross-curricular Planning" in Chapter 3 "Curriculum Planning" of the *English Language Education Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide (Primary 1 – Secondary 6)* (2017) (http://www.edb.gov.hk/elecg). For illustration of how LaC is promoted in the English classroom, please see Example 2 "Connecting Students' Learning Experiences between English Language and Non-language Subjects through Language across the Curriculum at the Junior Secondary Level" at http://www.edb.gov.hk/eleklacgexamples.

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