

# Professional Development Programme: Developing Students' Creativity and New Literacy Skills through Language Arts Elective Modules

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# Welcome

Introduction and Housekeeping.

What we will be doing in today's workshop.

What do we mean by 'creativity' and 'multimodality'?

Please go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com) on your device and enter the two codes below.

Now add some words to the word clouds showing how you would define creativity and multimodality.

# Defining Creativity (according to the ELE KLA Curriculum Guide (P1 – S6) (CDC, 2017)), A73-75

‘Creativity brings in changes or transformations and is manifested in new ideas, acts or products. It emerges spontaneously or through deliberate processes of divergent and convergent thinking. It involves the integration of general or domain-specific knowledge for a meaningful purpose.’

From: [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/renewal/ELE/ELE\\_KLACG\\_P1-S6\\_Eng\\_2017.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/renewal/ELE/ELE_KLACG_P1-S6_Eng_2017.pdf)

Accessed November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019

# Defining multimodality

‘A mode is generally defined as a communication channel that a culture recognises. Examples of modes are writing, gesture, posture, gaze, font choices and colour, images, video and even the interactions between them’

<https://www.learning-theories.com/multimodality-kress.html>

Accessed November 26 2020

‘Multimodal texts are now more pervasive than ever before. Compare reading an online newspaper today with one from 50 years ago – the experience has changed beyond all recognition, with scrolling and touch screen altering the way in which we engage with word and image’.

Goldstein, B and Driver, P. (2015) *Language Learning with Digital Video*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

# The Language Arts electives as Organising Units for today's activities

	Related activity/ text type	Generic skills, including creativity and/or New Literacy skills
Learning English through Songs and Poems	Fibonacci sequence and stem poetry writing	Creativity Critical Thinking through Controlled Language Practice
Learning English through Popular Culture	Transmedia - letters from mode to mode: referential question-asking	Creativity Critical Thinking Modality-shifting
Learning English through Drama	Autobiography/Embodied Drama	Creativity Critical Thinking Embodied learning
Learning English through Short Stories	Autobiography/Embodied Drama	Creativity Critical Thinking Embodied learning

# Warm-up and key concept

Key Concept: Comprehensible Input (Krashen 1998)

'comprehensible input' is the crucial and necessary ingredient for the acquisition of language. The best methods are therefore those that supply 'comprehensible input' in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are 'ready', recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production.

<https://www.sk.com.br/sk-krash-english.html>

Accessed: 26<sup>th</sup> November, 2020

Warm-up and working with comprehensible input: please go to one of these two sites and have a try at creating your own small-scale piece of creative work.

- \* [www.poetrygames.org](http://www.poetrygames.org)
- \* [www.languageisavirus.com](http://www.languageisavirus.com)

# Activity 1: Creativity in nano form - link to *Learning English through Poetry*

Micro poetry: Swain (1985) proposed the concept of Pushed Output. What is meant by the concept of Pushed Output is that learners are “pushed” or “stretched” in their production as a necessary part of making themselves understood.

Part 1: Fibonacci sequence poetry

(with reference to the extract from Clive James' *Unreliable Memoirs* autobiography from DSE Reading paper 1 2019)

Part 2: Erasure poetry (using *A Clean Well-Lighted Place* by Hemmingway as a stimulus text)

Part 3: Stem poetry writing

# Part 1: Fibonacci poetry writing

Fibonacci was an influential mathematician in the Middle Ages

In the Fibonacci sequence, each number is the sum of the two preceding numbers, for example,

$2 + 3 = 5$ ,  $5 + 3 = 8$ ,  $5 + 8 = 13$  and so on

1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 55, 89, 144....

We will write our own Fibonacci poem using the pattern for the given number of syllables in our writing. The words need to be from the *Clive James* autobiography extract on your Green Sheet P 1 and 2



# Fibonacci poetry

The Fibonacci series is well known in mathematics and nature: sometimes it is known as the 'golden ratio' or 'golden number'.

<https://www.goldennumber.net>

There is no particular requirement regarding the subject matter of the Fibonacci sequence poem. However, if we want the creative writing to reflect students' understanding of the excerpt, we can tell students that the chosen words and the subject matter of the poem should be related to that of the memoir and give a pre-set title. In the case of the Clive James text, the title might be, 'I Remember' 'Long ago' or 'Crime and Punishment'.

# *The pattern offers a convenient structure for organising poetry-writing and encouraging creativity*

*Addition poem using Fibonacci numbers – look at the **number of syllables!***

- 1 Take
- 1 A
- 2 Number
- 3 Like Thirteen
- 5 To be added to
- 8 Another number such as four
- 13 Seventeen – the sum obtained by combining them both

Bintz 2010: 510

# Part 2: Erasure poetry

**Erasure poetry** – An erasure is a poem that starts out with a piece of existing text, but instead of adding to it, you **subtract**. Some poets cut words or sentences out with a marker. The ‘starter text’ they are altering could be a newspaper article, a page from a book or a literary text – the original text-type to be ‘erased’ can be a language arts or non-language arts one.

Please look at the example as well as the ‘starter text’ on the Green Sheet.

# Erasure poetry

Any text can be a starting point for discussion and erasure.

The teacher can begin by pointing out the text's pronouns and verbs, as these are the engines of the text's narrative or sense and ask students to find interesting strong verbs and to continue creating their erasure poem. After some time, these erased poems can be shared in plenary form in class.

Show the original text - students compare and contrast their erased version with the original – for example, is the speaker still the same and is the setting different? If so, how?

# Part 3: Stem Poetry writing

Stem poetry offers the chance for *controlled language practice* as well as creativity through meaningful iteration

I wish I could \_\_\_\_\_

I wish I could \_\_\_\_\_

I wish I could \_\_\_\_\_

I wish I could \_\_\_\_\_

I wish I could \_\_\_\_\_

But I can't.

# Time to be creative!

Everyone will work with a partner to create either a Fibonacci sequence poem, erasure poem or stem poem.

Please look at the green sheet and your handout for today.

I will circulate around the room – if you want to ask anything, please call me over.

Please be ready to share some of your creative work in about 8-10 minutes

# Brief Reflection on Activity 1

You were creative just now – **how** were you creative?

Which strategy is most usable or relevant to your own professional situation?

# Activity 2: Authenticity in Creativity: using *Letters of Note* and *Letters Live* – link to *Learning English through Popular Culture and Learning English through Drama*

‘Schools are encouraged to enhance English language learning and teaching through utilising a variety of print and non-print resources which include ... **authentic online resources**’ (my emphasis).

ELE KLA Curriculum Guide (P1 – S6) (CDC, 2017)), A8

- \* In terms of considering what is ‘popular’, as the mode of production changes, so too does the way or mode in which we respond to what is ‘popular’.
- \* Are letters and letter-writing popular with your students?

Lets consider two sources of letters as a source of ‘popular’ culture.

## ***Letters of Note***

<http://www.lettersofnote.com/p/archive.html> and

## ***Letters Live***

<http://letterslive.com/>



# Lets listen to an exemplar:

Letter from a mother to J. K Rowling (the author of the *Harry Potter* series)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HeLHTUDrYE8>

Discussion point:

*Letters Live* are a type of **performance genre**. They are effective as they are read in a dramatic way that help to bring the letter and the writer 'alive'.

What is the difference between a letter in written and spoken form? Lets refer back to the multimodality wordcloud generated at the beginning of the session.

# Responding creatively *and critically* to examples of the letter genre

‘Creativity brings in changes or transformations and is manifested in **new ideas**, acts or products... It involves the integration of general or domain-specific knowledge **for a meaningful purpose.**’

ELE KLA Curriculum Guide (P1 – S6) (CDC, 2017)), A73-75

Teachers are encouraged to... applying suitable questioning techniques to stimulate thinking, encourage experimentation and facilitate knowledge construction’

ELE KLA Curriculum Guide (P1 – S6) (CDC, 2017)), A67

Asking *referential questions* in response to a text allows students to respond authentically and critically to that text.

# Asking challenging questions: what is a referential question?

‘...a referential question, which aims to elicit unknown information to the initiator, dominates the majority of questions asked in real situations. In the classroom, a referential question intends to draw answers referring to learners’ opinions, judgements, and real-life experiences, with the function of filling in the information gaps. The answers are usually longer than for display questions and carry content meanings.’

Kao et al, 2011, p.492

# Exemplars of referential questions in response to the *Letters Live* audio text

How did the *Harry Potter* books provide a ‘fortress’?

What is the attitude of the mother in this letter to the *Harry Potter* books?

What is the best thing about this letter?

Also: give one example of language used here that really interests you.

# Changing the modality again: from written to video-recorded form

Ask students to write their own letter (see the prompt on the next slide) and then video record these – practice task for SBA presentation.

Students can self and peer assess, as well as being assessed by the teacher.

There is an assessment rubric included on your handout for this workshop.

# Practice for the DSE Paper 2 letter-writing/email task: how would this prompt enable students to be creative?

**Task: write a letter of advice to the person who will mark your DSE English Writing Paper 2 examination paper.**

What sub-genre of letter writing is this?

What do students need to know in order to write it?

How would you help them scaffold it?

How would you assess this?

What feedback would you give students?

# Brief Reflection on Activity 2

How would these tasks and strategies enable students to be creative?

Which strategy seems most usable or relevant to your own professional situation?

BREAK



# Activity 3: New Literacies and Multimodality through Embodied Learning

New Literacies are made possible by the use of digital technology in activities such as that just carried out, but New Literacies do not **necessarily have to involve use of digital technologies – they are social and multi-modal in nature.**

“Brains are in bodies, bodies are in the world, and meaningful action in these worlds is in large part socially constructed and conducted.”

Churchill, E., Okada, H., Nishino, T., and Atkinson, D. (2010) ‘Symbiotic gesture and the sociocognitive visibility of grammar in second language acquisition’. *The Modern Language Journal*, 94, p. 237.

# Three principles of creativity

1. Creativity is not just an optional component in language teaching... it is seen as *central* to successful teaching and learning
2. Discussions of creativity go beyond traditional notions of 'creative language – the real text of linguistic creativity is whether or not *we are able to use language* to “pull off” situated meaning and discourses and to portray ourselves as certain kinds of people
3. Creativity is *social and collaborative*

Jones and Richards 2016: 6 - 7

## Creativity through Embodied Learning :

Key Concept: Interaction hypothesis(Long, 2009)

*Learning English through Drama and Learning English through Short Stories are combined*

- \* Warm-up: Six word stories of fear
- \* <https://www.marini.com/2019/10/28/six-word-stories-readers-share-short-tales-of-fear-2/>
- \* Please type 'Six words of fear' into your browser and scan some and read aloud a short selection to your neighbour – if we asked our students to do so, it would be 'nano practice' for DSE paper 4 Speaking.

# Creativity through Embodied Learning

“One of the key advantages that drama pedagogy can bring to the language classroom is its recognition of the centrality of the body in the learning process.”

Winston, J. (2012) p 4.

We will now use process drama strategies to explore the social, multi-modal and embodied nature of learning. An extract from Roald Dahl’s autobiography *Boy*, (chapter is titled *The Great Mouse Plot*) will be our stimulus text for this exemplar – please see the Green Sheet. The strategies and sequence are laid out on your handout.

# Definitions of key strategies

## Still Image

This is a frozen **picture** which communicates **meaning**. It's sometimes called a freeze **frame** or tableau. **Still images** can be naturalistic , a photograph of an important moment or abstract , more representational of feelings or an event.

## Tableau vivant

This is often shortened to **tableau** and the plural form is **tableaux vivants**. It is French for 'living picture', and shows a static scene containing one or more actors - a few words can be added like a caption to a photograph to make the tableau seem more 'alive'. These words can be spoken by one of the actors or another person from outside the tableau.

# Reflection on Activity 3

Post-activity discussion:

How could these strategies be used in relation to other language arts texts you use in class (particularly narrative texts) and/or multimodal texts?

# Round up

## What if...? The Creative Teacher

Nothing is more important than the teacher exemplifying the habits, behaviours and thinking they want students to demonstrate. They need to exemplify creative traits such as curiosity and the development of creative skills.

- \* How were you creative when you created your own texts today?
- \* Did you 'play' with the conventions of the language arts text which you created?
- \* Was this small-scale creativity?

***How might some of today's activities and ideas be adapted and fine-tuned for use in your own professional context?***

# Questions

THANK YOU FOR COMING TO TODAY'S WORKSHOP

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