Catering for Learner Diversity in the Primary English Classroom through Effective Use of e-Learning Resources and Developing Students' Self-directed Learning Capabilities
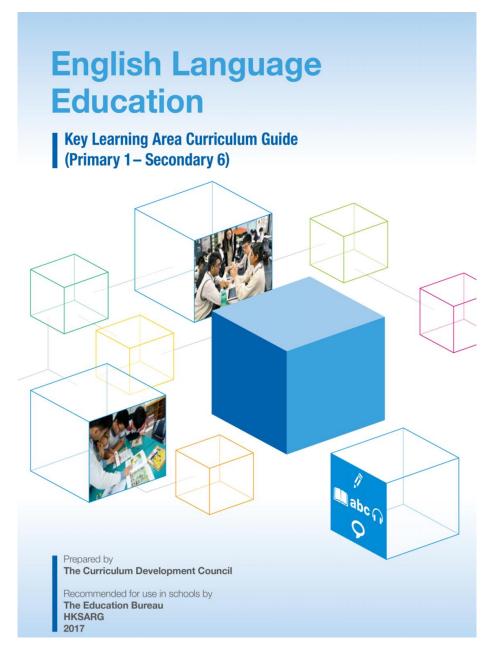
Workshop Developer and Presenter

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Year 2021-22

Introduction

- The concept of catering for learner diversity (CLD)
- The concept of self-directed learning (SDL)
- Relationship between CLD and SDL
- Role of e-learning in this domain

Some relevant extracts from curriculum documents that highlight the relationship

English Language Education

Key Learning Area Curriculum Guide
(Primary 1 – Secondary 6)

Prepared by
The Curriculum Development Council

Recommended for use in schools by
The Education Bureau
HKSARG
2017

Key Messages
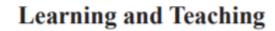
Learning and Teaching

Schools are encouraged to enrich English language learning and teaching through:

- incorporating the updated Four Key Tasks (i.e. Moral and Civic Education: Towards Values Education, Reading to Learn: Towards Reading across the Curriculum, Project Learning: Towards Integrating and Applying Knowledge and Skills across Disciplines, and Information Technology for Interactive Learning: Towards Self-directed Learning);
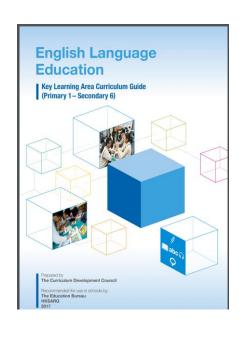
Key Messages

Learning and Teaching

- e-learning; and
- embracing learner diversity, including students with special educational needs (SEN) and gifted students.

IT for Interactive Learning: Towards Self-directed Learning

IT is an effective tool to facilitate both classroom and self-access language learning. The prevalence of online learning opportunities and easy access to the Internet allow students to assume greater responsibility in their own learning. Therefore, schools
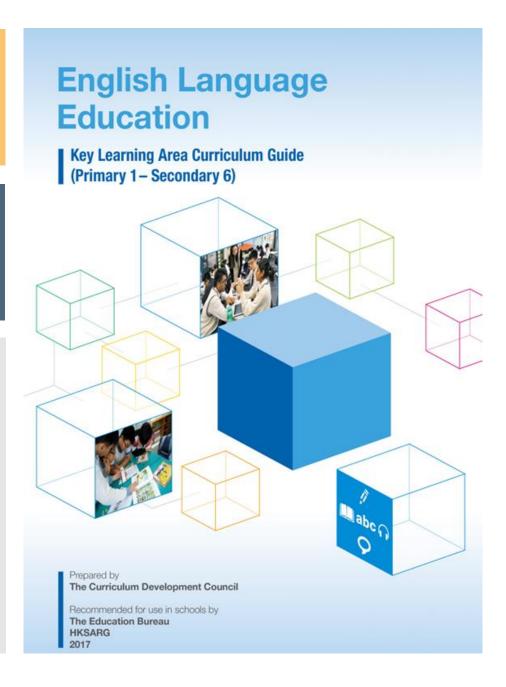
2017 ELE Curriculum Guide

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For you to check out:

- Go to the 2017 ELE CG: https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/Curriculum%20Document/ELE%20KLACG_2017.pdf

- Go to Section 4.3.2 (pp. 73-74), and skim through the list of 10 CLD strategies.

- Which of them have you applied in your teaching? Which of them look interesting to you?

English Language Education

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Some CLD and SDL Strategies as stated in 2017 CG

- Adopting a greater variety of strategies such as a multisensory approach to learning and teaching (p. 13)
- Selecting suitable learning materials and activities (p. 57)
- Trimming, addition, and/or adapting the teaching content (p. 72)
- Making use of graded learning tasks and exercises (p. 73)
- Varying teacher input and/or student output (p. 73)
- Varying the levels/types of support (p. 73)
- Varying the levels of task demand (e.g., open-ended vs closed-ended) (p. 73)
- Breaking down tasks into sequenced steps (p. 73)
- …

- engaging students in active and self-directed learning through the use of IT (e.g. e-platforms, "Flipped Classroom" strategy) to enhance learner autonomy and allow students to learn at their own pace.

Information technology can greatly enhance the effectiveness of CLD and SDL in the English Language classroom.

Course Objectives
(to update after workshop announcement on Training Calendar, if needed)

Objective(s)	1. To provide suggestions on designing tiered tasks to help students of different abilities to learn and practise English in meaningful contexts; 2. To enhance teachers' knowledge and understanding about designing tasks and learning activities to promote self-directed learning in the mainstream English Language classroom; 3. To provide suggestions on effective pedagogical use of various e-learning resources and tools to stimulate students' learning interest, enhance their critical thinking and creativity and address students' diverse learning needs and styles; and 4. To provide hands-on activities for participants to explore the use of some suggested e-learning resources for designing learning and teaching activities/tasks to cater for learner diversity and facilitate self-directed learning of students

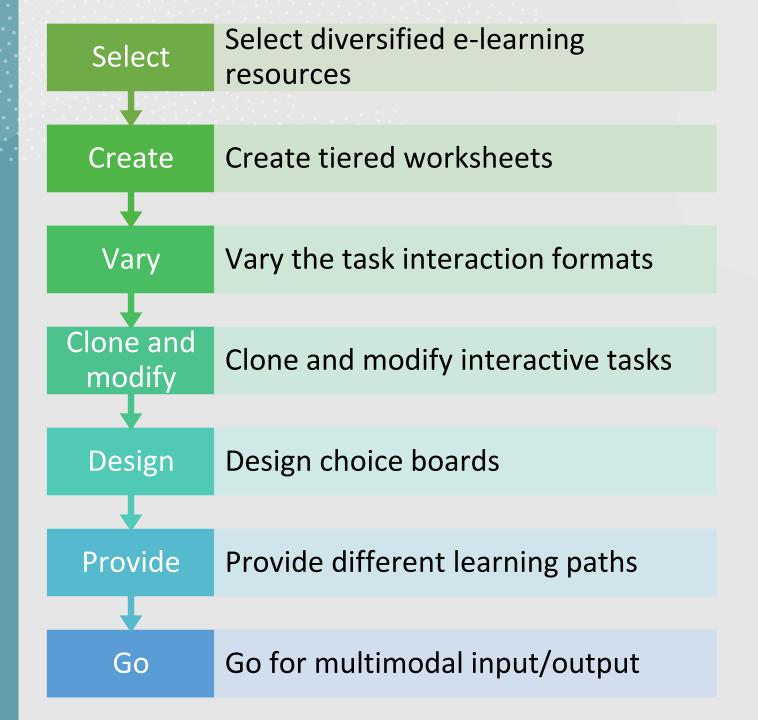# Some references and resources for this workshop

- **Fighting against COVID-19 – Learning and Teaching Resources** https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/references-resources/Covid/COVID19.html

- **Learning and Teaching Resources on Teaching Information Texts (Primary):** https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/references-resources/Information%20texts/Pri%20Info%20Texts.html

- **Videos on "Fantastic People"**
  - https://emm.edcity.hk/playlist/1_hea30nj2/1_gjbkgroh
  - https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/references-resources/fantastic_ppl.html

- **Fairy Tales (at Primary Level)**
  - https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/references-resources/Lit_Classics_Pri_FT.html
  - https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/Lit%20Classics_Pri/The%20Elves%20and%20the%20Shoemaker%20by%20the%20Brothers%20Grimm.html

- **Learning and Teaching Materials on Promoting Positive Values and Attitudes through English Sayings of Wisdom (SOW) at Primary Level**
  - https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/SOW/Lesson%20Plans/SOW_LT_Pri_Full_Version.pdf
  - https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/SOW/teaching_plans.html
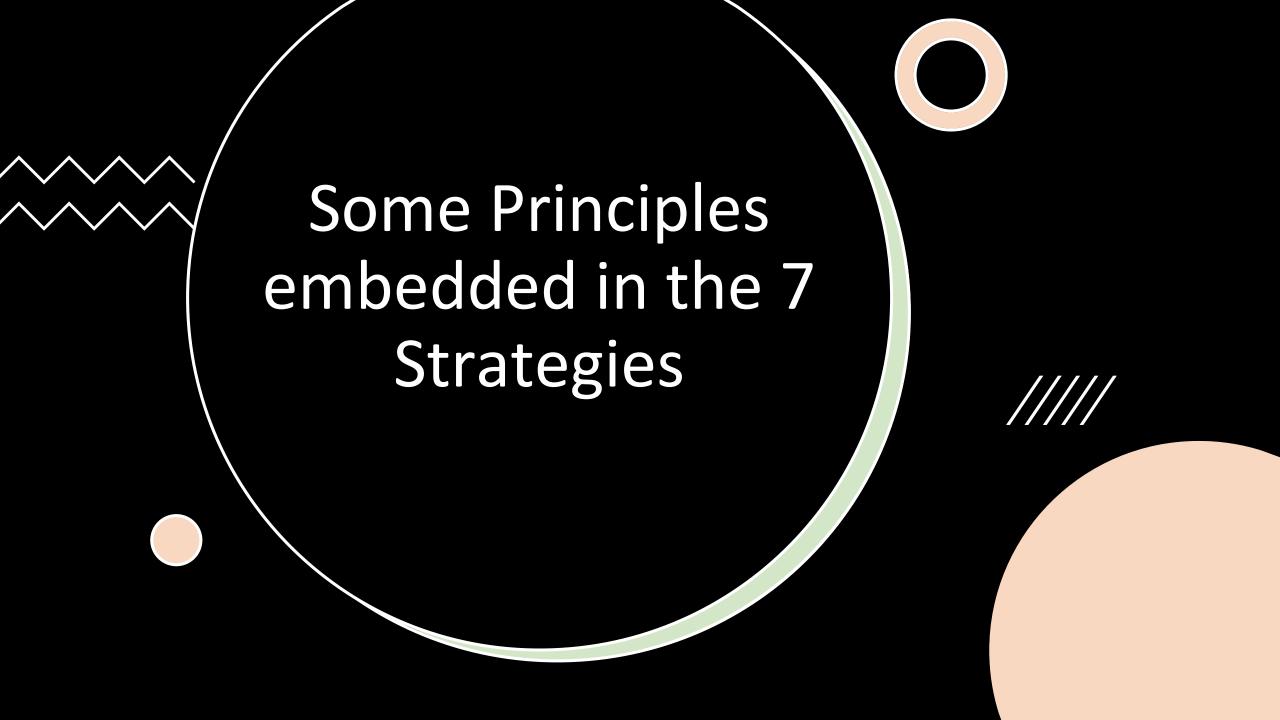
Organisation of the Workshop Content

"7 strategies" for easy understanding

But NOT mutually exclusive strategies

7 strategies to be presented in this workshop

Select	Select diversified e-learning resources
Create	Create tiered worksheets
Vary	Vary the task interaction formats
Clone and modify	Clone and modify interactive tasks
Design	Design choice boards
Provide	Provide different learning paths
Go	Go for multimodal input/output

Some Principles embedded in the 7 Strategies

3.2.1 Integrating Classroom Learning and Independent Learning

Learning is most effective when students play an active role in the learning process and when they take charge of their own learning. The promotion of learner autonomy and independence should start at an early age. While self-directed learning is regarded as an integral part of students' ultimate achievements, more effort should go into demonstrating how to monitor the learning process and providing opportunities for students to develop metacognitive strategies. In the learning process, teachers can help students:

- learn how to learn;
- make choices as to what, when and how they want to learn;
- use a range of language development strategies;
- carry out self-assessment and reflection;
- plan, monitor and evaluate the strategies adopted and their own learning effectiveness, which forms the basis for goal-setting in subsequent tasks or activities; and
- develop the knowledge, skills and strategies, attitudes and perseverance to foster lifelong language learning.

p. 33

2 essential elements: *Voice* and *Choice*

- *Students Making Choices*
- *Students Making Decisions*

The 4 stages of self-directed learning (G. Grow)

Stage	Student	Teacher	Examples
Stage 1	Dependent	Authority Coach	Coaching with immediate feedback. Drill. Informational lecture. Overcoming deficiencies and resistance
Stage 2	Interested	Motivator, Guide	Inspiring lecture plus guided discussion. Goal-setting and learning strategies.
Stage 3	Involved	Facilitator	Discussion facilitated by teacher who participates as equal. Seminar. Group projects
Stage 4	Self-Directed	Consultant, Delegator	Internship, dissertation, individual work or self-directed study-group.

The Staged Self-Directed Learning Model, G. Grow

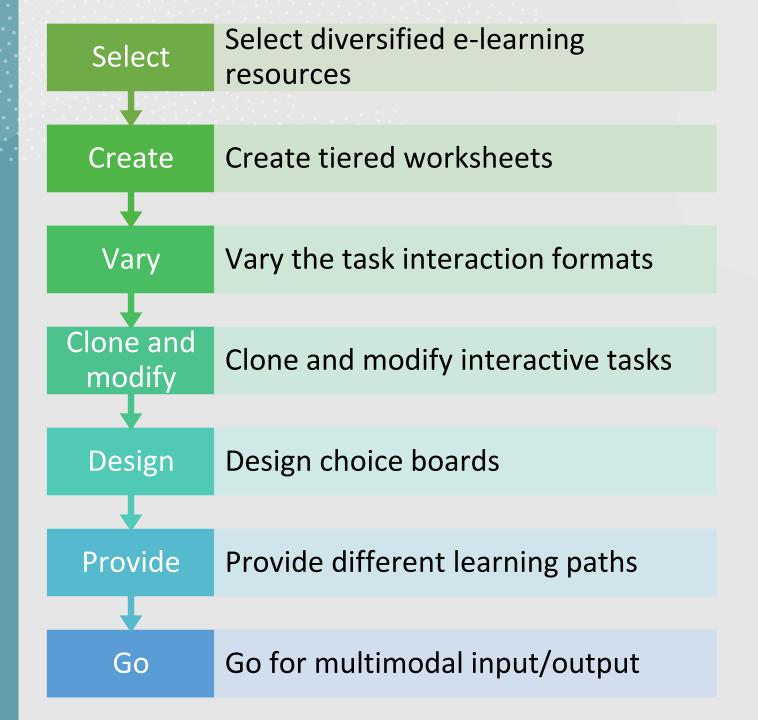# The 5 SDL Indicators : HKU Jockey Club **Self-directed learning in STEM** Programme

SDL indicators	Description
Goal setting	• Students identify own learning goals & learning activities
Self-planning	• Students regulate and plan for the detailed decisions and arrangements associated with own learning, such as planning, creating outline of schedule
Self-monitoring	• Students self-manage their own time • Students monitor own repertoire of learning strategies • Students adjust own learning pathway as they progress
Self-evaluation	• Students are aware of the assessment criteria • Students critically evaluate work according to set criteria
Revision	• Students revise their work based on the feedback received from their teacher or peers at various stages • Students reflect on their own learning and apply what they have learnt to new contexts

Table 1. SDL indicators and its description

Source: jcstem.cite.hku.hk

7 strategies to be presented in this workshop

Select	Select diversified e-learning resources
Create	Create tiered worksheets
Vary	Vary the task interaction formats
Clone and modify	Clone and modify interactive tasks
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Go	Go for multimodal input/output

Strategy 1

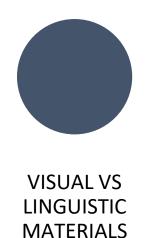# Select diversified e-learning resources

The strategy

Select e-learning resources that cater for different learning abilities, learning styles, etc.

Example types of diversified e-learning resources

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF LANGUAGE DIFFICULTY

FICTION VS INFORMATIONAL

MULTI-SENSORY

VISUAL VS LINGUISTIC MATERIALS

DIFFERENT LANGUAGE MACROSKILLS

Example eReading Resources for Different Learning Needs

Reading A to Z

Actively Learn

Read Theory

Epic

Bookflix

Storyline Online

Fluency Tutor

Strategy 2:

Create tiered worksheets

The strategy

Adapt the 'standard' version to cater for more able and/or less able students, and provide additional support for students who may need it.

Interactive Differentiated Worksheets

1 Include different interaction task formats in the same worksheet (matching, drawing, labelling a diagram, open-ended ques, etc.) on the same learning objective;

2 allow students to choose which format(s) they want to try.

3 Provide further support materials for students who need it.

Strategy 3

Vary the task interaction formats

The strategy

Present the same content in different task interact formats to cater for different learner interests and learning styles.

Examples of Interactive Task Formats

- Example interaction formats
  - Matching
  - Sorting
  - Sequencing
  - Drawing
  - Timeline
  - Game (e.g., maze chase)
  - Competition (e.g., Time to climb)
  - Quiz
  - …

Strategy 4

Clone and modify interactive tasks

The strategy

With an e-learning artifact you have created for the whole class, clone (copy) it, and then modify each copied version for more/less able students.

Examples

1. Clone a reading comprehension task in GoFormative (a) for more/less students, and/or (b) include different response formats (e.g. *Open-ended* vs *Drawing*)

2. Clone an Edpuzzle viewing task (a) for more/less students (e.g. use viewing guidance notes), and/or (b) include different response formats (e.g. *Open-ended* vs *MC*)

Strategy 5

Design choice boards

The strategy

Think up a number of tasks of different levels of difficulty and task nature (e.g., reading an infographic; listening to a podcast) under a broad topic. Allow students to choose which tasks to take up. To add interest to the activity, the tasks can be presented on a choice board.

For you to check out:

Go to: Pinterest

Type 'choice boards' in the search box.

Examine the results (use the Grade filters if you like): What are the boxes of a choice board about?

To create with Thinglink

Wildlife in HK

Strategy 6

Provide different learning paths

The strategy

Design branching learning paths under a broad topic. Students decide the specific learning path they want to follow. The different paths may be different levels of difficulty, or of different task nature (e.g., Reading vs Viewing vs Listening)

Tools for Creating Learning Paths

Classcraft

GoConqr

Loops.education

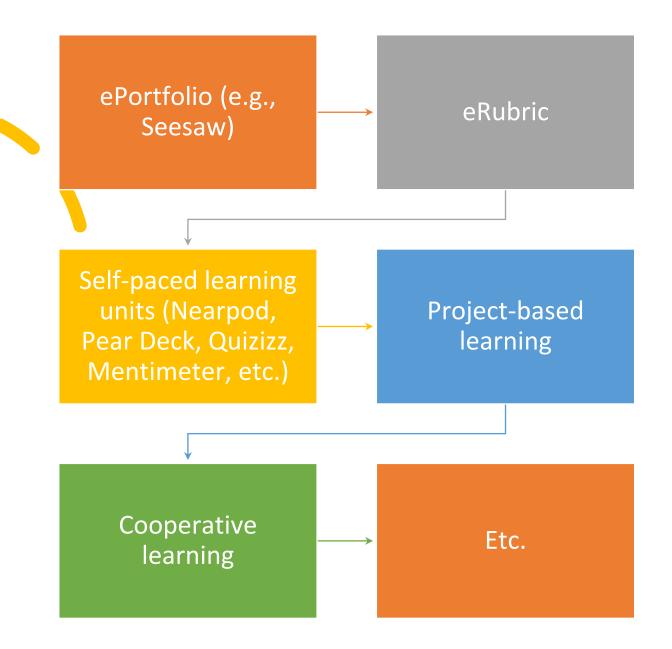Symbaloo Learning Path

Google Forms and Google Slides

Padlet

Strategy 7

Go for multimodal input/output

The strategy

Provide students with multimodal texts to process, and help students to express their ideas multimodally.

Other Strategies

ePortfolio (e.g., Seesaw)

eRubric

Self-paced learning units (Nearpod, Pear Deck, Quizizz, Mentimeter, etc.)

Project-based learning

Cooperative learning

Etc.

e-Assessment Tasks and e-Portfolios

e-Assessment tasks and e-portfolios are powerful tools for teachers to cater for learner diversity, provide timely feedback and promote AfL. e-Assessment tasks can be distributed, completed and marked automatically and administered electronically using the Internet or the local workstations. Some e-assessment platforms are equipped with an adaptive function, which can match items to students' ability levels, and provide instant feedback so that students can have more active involvement in monitoring their

4.3: ePortolios

Some Tools for Creating e-Rubrics

- Tip: Google-search for *'e-rubric'* (e.g. Profweb, Teach-nology)

Tools for Creating Self-paced interactive lessons

Mentimeter

Pear Deck

Nearpod

Quizizz

Be creative

The best CLD and SDL strategies come from teachers.