

AI in English Language Education: Integrating AI for Self-Directed Learning through Holistic Planning

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Content

- Tips on Systemic AI Integration into the English Language Curriculum
- Sharing of Experience at Ying Wa College
- Support from the EDB

What's your experience with AI in education?

- Have you used AI in your teaching / preparation of materials?
- Do you allow your students to use AI in their learning process?
- What are your initial thoughts—helpful, overwhelming, unnecessary?
- What's your biggest concern about AI in language education?

Tips on systemic AI integration into the curriculum

Starting small

- Begin with small-scale experiments in specific lessons / units.

☑ *Trial and Error*

Departmental Collaboration

- Share findings with colleagues and refine best practices.

☑ *Instructional Leadership*

Pilot Implementation

- Test AI-infused lesson ideas across different levels / subjects.

☑ *Language across the Curriculum*

School-Wide Strategy

- Align AI use with the school's curriculum framework and assessment policies.

☑ *Holistic Planning*

Process of systemic AI integration into the curriculum

Sharing of experience at Ying Wa College

- AI supports values education, diversified learning opportunities, and operational efficiency.
- AI integration should be aligned with school development goals to ensure long-term sustainability.
- A structured approach ensures AI serves both student learning and school-wide improvements.

AI & the major concerns of Ying Wa College

Major Concern	Connection with AI in Education	Examples from Ying Wa College
MC1: Growing Capable and Decent Young Gentlemen	AI promotes media and information literacy, ethical AI use, and critical thinking.	AI-human writing critique tasks, discussions on AI bias, ethical AI guidelines in school.
MC2: Widening Students' Learning Experience Through Diversified Opportunities	AI expands learning autonomy, interdisciplinary collaboration, and career exploration.	AI-assisted career research, AI in workplace communication tasks, cross-subject AI applications.
MC3: Enhancing School's Operational Efficiency and Effectiveness	AI streamlines resource management, assessment automation, and workflow efficiency.	AI-supported grading tools, AI for knowledge management, AI-assisted student feedback.

Mapping to major concerns of Ying Wa College

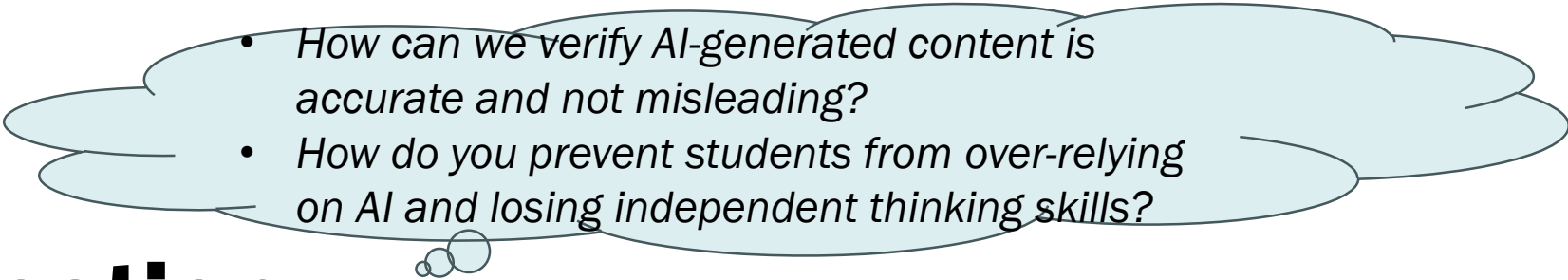
- Self-Directed Learning (SDL)
- Values Education
- Lifelong Learning

Objectives of AI integration

- *If AI helps generate well-written work, how do we assess students' actual abilities?*
- *Does AI blur the line between authentic student work and machine-generated content?*

AI & Self-Directed Learning (SDL)

- AI enhances SDL by providing immediate feedback, personalized learning paths, and opportunities for iterative refinement.
- Students must take ownership of the process—they should use AI to reflect, improve, and push their learning further, rather than just accepting AI-generated responses passively.
- Real-time feedback, iterative refinement, metacognition & self-assessment, synergistic interplay between human and AI intelligence.

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- *How can we verify AI-generated content is accurate and not misleading?*
 - *How do you prevent students from over-relying on AI and losing independent thinking skills?*

AI & Values Education

- AI is a powerful tool, but it also comes with risks—bias, misinformation, and over-reliance.
- Our role as educators is to help students develop AI literacy, ethical awareness, and critical thinking.
- AI-integrated lessons should include ethical discussions, decision-making tasks, and opportunities to reflect on AI's societal impact.

AI & Lifelong Learning

- AI is transforming every industry, from healthcare to finance to creative arts.
- Our students need to learn how to engage with AI beyond the classroom, using it as a tool for research, problem-solving, and innovation throughout their lives.
- Tasks should encourage them to ask better questions, analyze AI responses deeply, and refine their own thinking.

The Self-Directed English Language Study Plan

Purposes

- To facilitate students' development of sense of ownership of their English learning journey
- To equip students with self-directed learning competence to suit their diverse learning needs
- To foster autonomy and enhancing language skills through structured self-assessment and goal-setting

A step-by-step approach

Personal exploration

Contrastive exploration of AI-generated work
→ Trial → Feedback from students

Sharing of experience

Threats and opportunities
→ Tips on appropriate use of AI

Curriculum integration

Form-based & Department-based trials
→ Gradual expansion of exploration

My journey of exploring AI for enhanced self-directed learning in English language classrooms

- Exploration of ways to enhance self-directed learning and learning-oriented assessment
- Experimenting with AI on multiple levels through trial and error
- Research on GPT before ChatGPT appeared
- Realisation of AI's potentials and limitations in revolutionizing language education

- AI integration is more effective when departments work together rather than relying solely on individual initiatives.
- Cross-disciplinary collaboration (e.g., English × IT) helps enhance AI adoption.
- A strong sharing culture enables teachers to refine AI strategies collectively.

Strategies that worked well

AI's role in student's learning

- AI as a brainstorming tool → Idea expansion
- AI as a writing assistant → Feedback and refinement
- AI as a discussion partner → Critical thinking and reflection

Three core principles of AI in lesson design

1. Set clear learning objectives

- AI is not meant to replace traditional learning activities but to enhance specific skills like writing, critical thinking, and research.

2. Treat AI as a learning partner, not an answer machine

- One of the biggest risks of using AI in education is students passively accepting AI-generated responses. Tasks should require students to engage, refine, and critique AI outputs rather than just using them as final answers.

3. Experiment with AI-human collaboration to foster deeper thinking

- The best AI-infused tasks encourage students to compare AI responses with human-generated ideas, refine AI outputs, and reflect on AI's strengths and limitations.

Hands-on examples

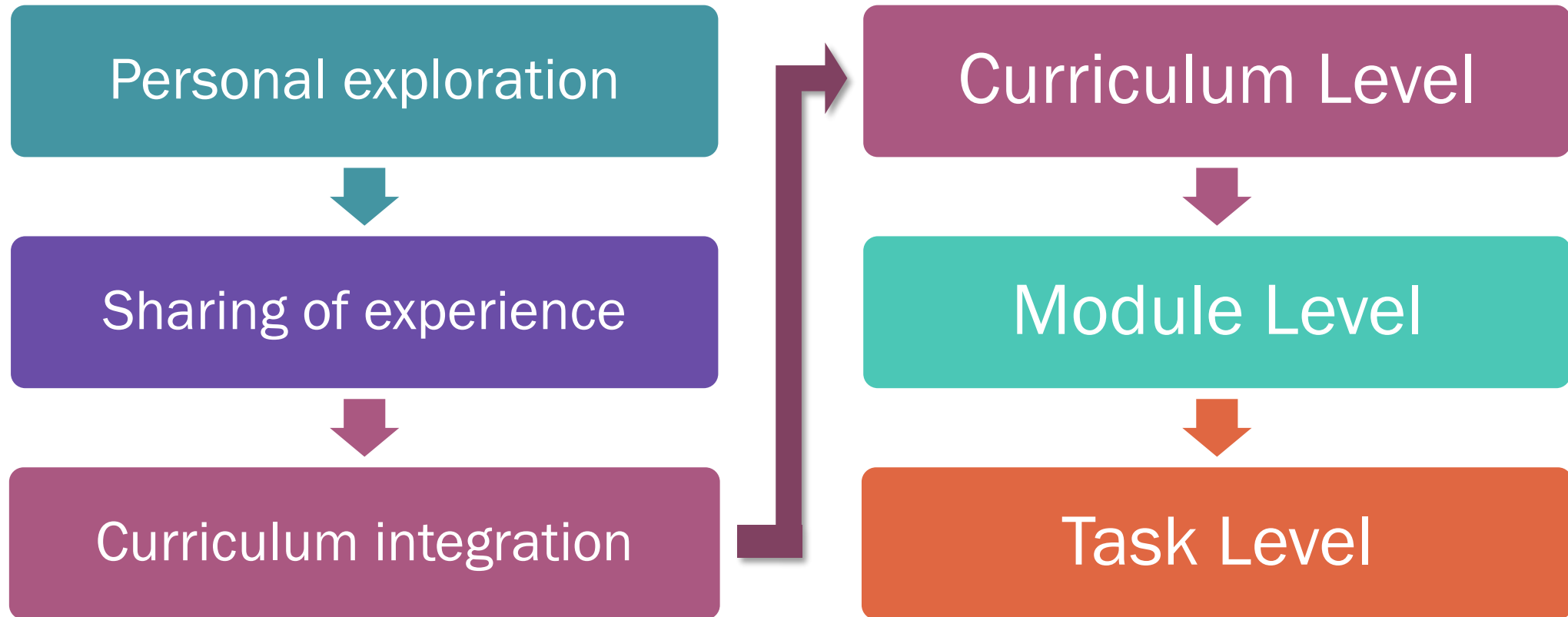
The following is an overview of some AI-integrated lesson ideas I have tried with varying degrees of responses from students.

The actual effectiveness of strategies may depend very much on the exact context in schools.

Task Type	Objective Example	AI's Role	Student's Role
AI vs. Human Writing Critique	Develop analytical skills in writing evaluation	Generate sample texts for human critical analysis	Compare AI-generated vs. peer-generated writing
SMART Goals Reflection	Improve self-directed learning	Provide AI-generated feedback on human-created SDL goals	Compare AI's feedback with peer suggestions
Prompt Engineering Task	Develop precision in language and questioning	Respond to different prompts	Experiment with wording to optimize AI responses
AI in Genre Analysis	Recognize writing conventions	Generate different genre samples	Identify errors and refine AI outputs
Career Exploration Task	Research professional fields	Simulate workplace scenarios	Evaluate AI-generated advice and cross-check with human sources

Selected examples of AI use in my English lessons

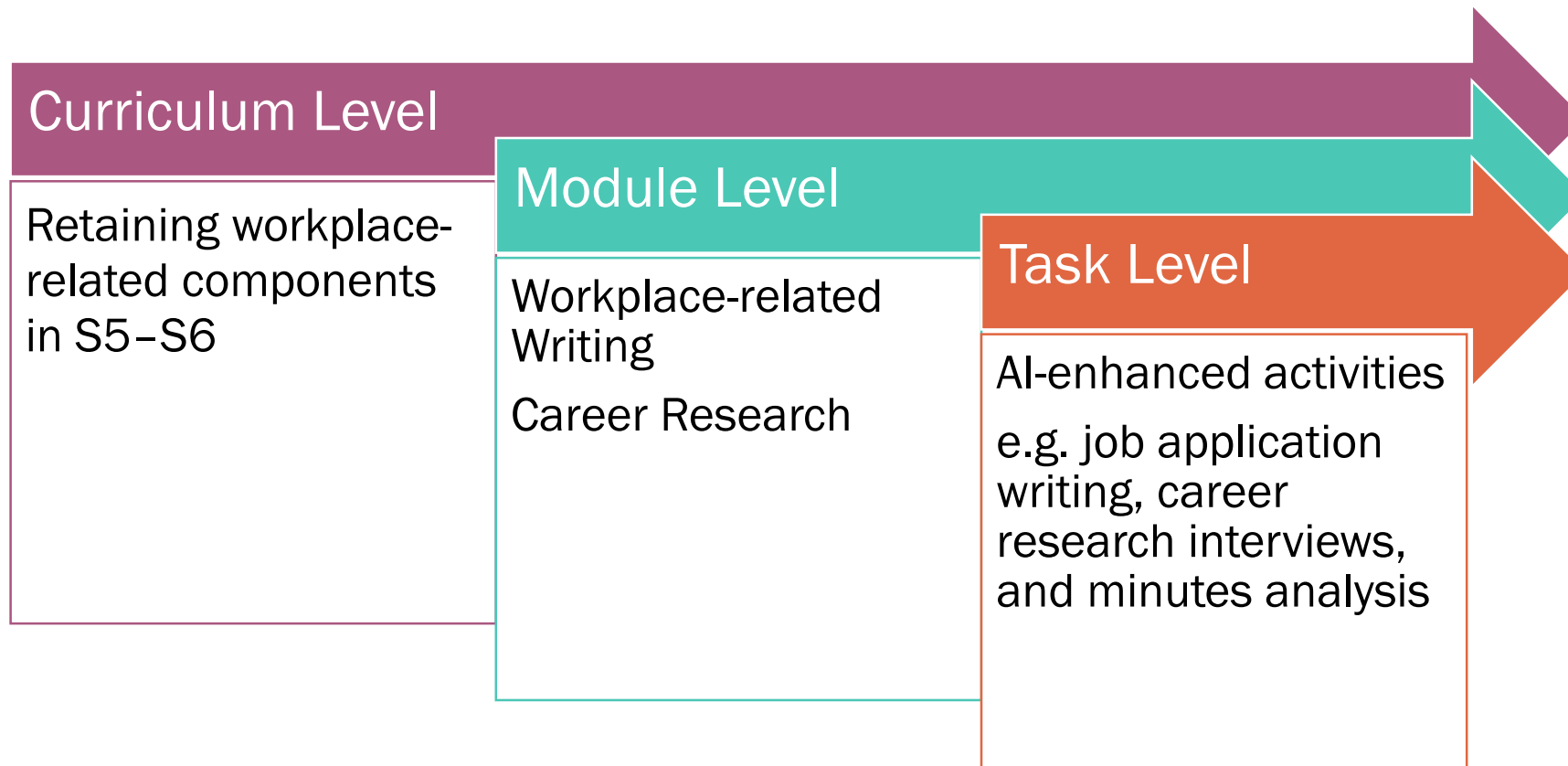
A step-by-step approach



Reviewing the Curriculum

- EDB's Optimization of the Senior Form English Language Curriculum
- Process of integrating past elective modules into the core curriculum
- E.g. Workplace communication skills & students' career and life planning
- AI's opportunity: writing and research

From Curriculum to Module to Task Design



Case 1

AI for Career Research

Case 1 – AI for Career Research & Project (S5)

Challenges:

- Limited availability of alumni for job shadowing and company visits due to restrictions and logistical constraints.
- Students needed alternative ways to gather industry insights for their career research projects.

AI-Enhanced Solution:

- Students used AI chatbots as “knowledgeable others” to simulate industry expert interviews.
- AI provided customized insights into different professions in Hong Kong.
- Students synthesized their findings into career research articles.

Case 2

AI for Workplace Writing

Case 2 – AI for Workplace Writing (Minutes Writing in S6)

Challenges:

- Students had uneven exposure to minutes writing (not all had leadership role experience).
- Limited access to authentic and comprehensible samples for analysis.

AI-Enhanced Solution:

- Students used AI to generate minutes samples based on different scenarios.
- They analyzed AI-generated minutes in collaborative Google Docs, identifying key features.
- Peer discussion and expert validation (students with real minutes-writing experience) ensured authenticity.

Reflection – Challenges & Lessons Learned

What Worked Well?

- ✓ AI provided access to workplace-related knowledge beyond students' direct experience.
- ✓ Encouraged critical thinking (students had to evaluate AI-generated content for accuracy).
- ✓ Promoted collaborative learning and self-directed exploration.

Reflection – Challenges & Lessons Learned

What Were the Challenges?

- AI-generated content was not always reliable – students needed fact-checking skills.
- Over-reliance on AI could lead to passive learning – teacher facilitation remained crucial.

AI is best treated as a companion coach



Start small

Experiment

Adopt /
Adapt


Refine

AI's Role in Curriculum Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does AI add to teachers' workload instead of reducing it? • How do you ensure AI is a meaningful learning tool and not just a passing trend?
AI's Reliability & Ethical Concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we verify AI-generated content is accurate and not misleading? • How do you prevent students from over-relying on AI and losing independent thinking skills?
Assessment & Student Learning Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If AI helps generate well-written work, how do we assess students' actual abilities? • Does AI blur the line between authentic student work and machine-generated content?
Readiness & Practicality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to ensure AI adoption is realistic to non-IT English teachers? • How can schools implement AI-enhanced learning with limited resource?

- AI is evolving rapidly → New possibilities emerging every day
- No “one-size-fits-all” solution; based on trial, reflection, and refinement
- How to leverage AI to support SDL is a continual process
- AI is just one of the means, not the goal
- Focus on developing students’ self-directed learning habits sustainably and holistically

The way forward...

Support from the EDB: One-off Grant for Promotion of Self- directed Language Learning



How is your department
/ school going to use
the grant?

Background

The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address on English Language Education

Chapter 5: Build Hong Kong into an International Hub for High-calibre Talents

Enhance Support for Schools, Teachers and Students

114. The Government will allocate \$2 billion to set up the Teacher Professional Development Fund to support the long-term development of the teaching profession, and to enhance the training and exchange programmes for teachers. **A provision of about \$470 million will be allocated to enhance the learning and teaching of English, Putonghua and other languages.** We will also strengthen support for students with special educational needs and continue to provide subsidies such as textbook assistance for students with financial needs.

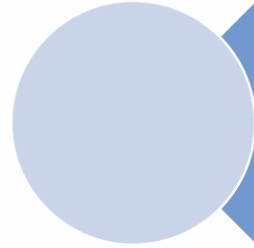
Supplement: Build Hong Kong into an International Hub for High-calibre Talents

Enhance Support for Learning and Teaching

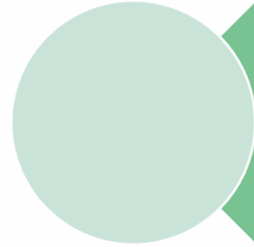
- Provide an array of **support measures** for publicly-funded primary and secondary schools (including special schools) in the 2024/25 school year for enhancing their learning and teaching of **English Language**, including provision of **subsidy**, setting up thematic **teacher learning circles**, offering diversified **learning activities** and **learning and teaching resources**, as well as organising an English **promotional campaign**. (EDB)

Some slides borrowed from the EDB's briefing session

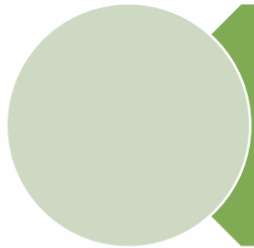
One-off Grant for Promotion of Self-directed Language Learning



One-off grant of **\$200,000 funded by Language Fund and endorsed by SCOLAR** for each public sector secondary school and DSS school offering local curriculum in the **2024/25 school year**.



Schools can **flexibly deploy** the Grant **until the end of the 2026/27 school year**.

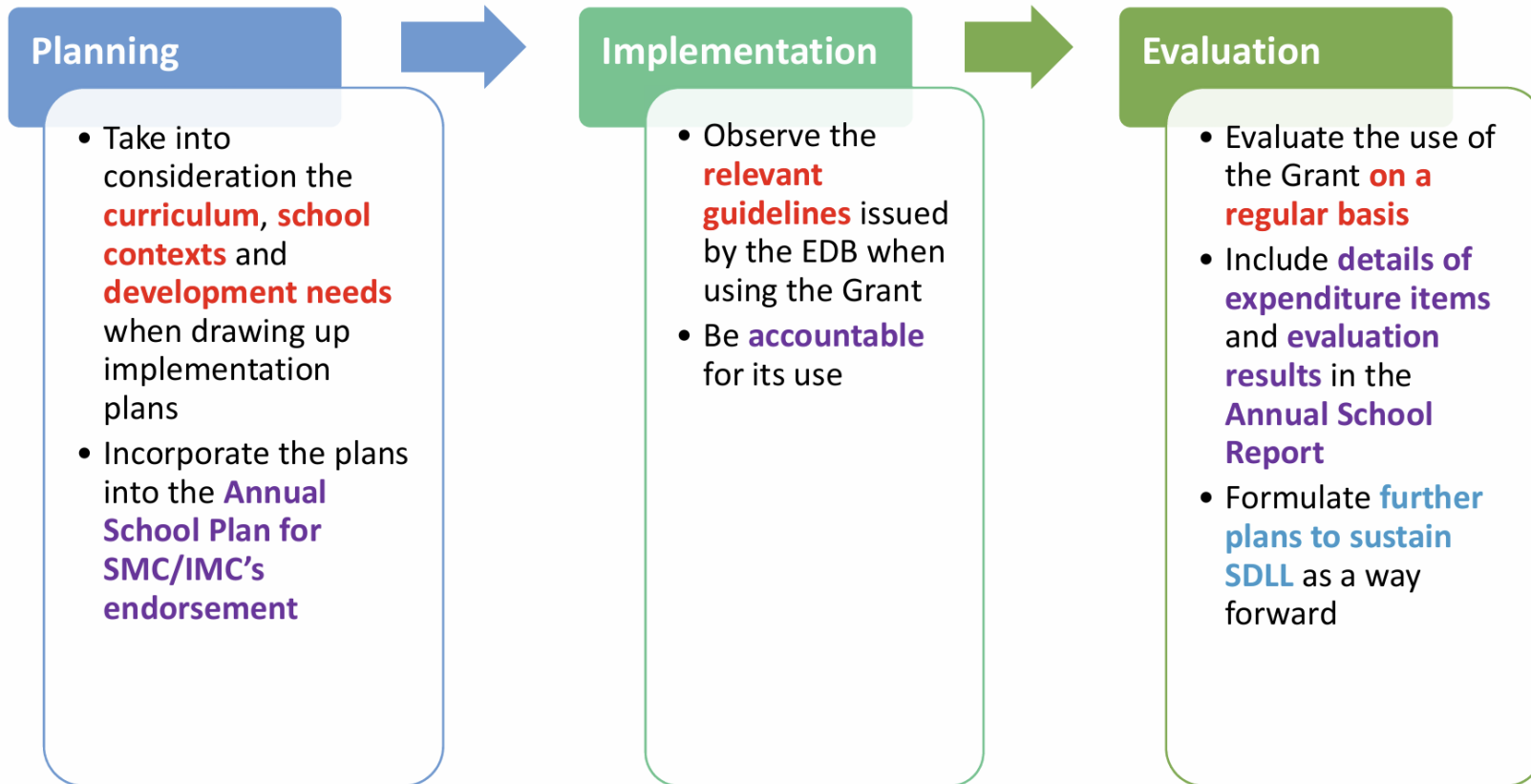


Schools may **combine other subsidies from the EDB* and other resources** on a need basis to cover the relevant costs.

Some slides borrowed from the EDB's briefing session

One-off Grant for Promotion of Self-directed Language Learning

Proper Use of the Grant



Some slides borrowed from the EDB's briefing session

One-off Grant for Promotion of Self-directed Language Learning

How would you allocate the grant?

*Let's see a show
of hands!*

- Subscribing to self-access learning platforms / AI-assisted learning systems?
- Organising English co-curricular activities?
- Developing school-based SDL resource bank?
- Collaborating with external organisations?
- ... Others?
- ... TBC?

Schools can **flexibly deploy** the Grant **until the end of the 2026/27 school year**.

Moving Beyond Initial Exploration

--Expanding and Refining SDL Initiatives

- Current Focus: Experimenting with AI-enhanced SDL strategies in select areas.
- Next Steps: Refining approaches and evaluating scalability to other form levels.
- *How can we ensure tools and strategies meaningfully contribute to students' independent learning growth?*

Moving Beyond Initial Exploration

--Expanding and Refining SDL Initiatives

Sustainable Curriculum Development:

- AI complements, but does not replace, teacher guidance and structured learning.
- SDL development requires a combination of factors, not just AI tools alone.
- Resources, including the SDL grant, should be used purposefully to enhance long-term learning autonomy.

Thank you