

Professional Development Programme

Exploring the Creative Use of English in the Senior Secondary English Language Classroom

(Event AB: Catering for more advanced
English learners)

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Workshop objectives

- To enrich teachers' pedagogical knowledge in conducting differentiated learning activities
- To enhance teachers' capacity to facilitate the analysis of creative elements in literary texts and language arts materials by students of different levels
- To provide examples of micro-activities for teachers to explore the use of language arts materials in senior secondary English Language classrooms

Rundown

- A. What is creativity in an English classroom
- B. Effective strategies for promoting creative use of English
 - 1. Adopting a new perspective
 - 2. Connecting different pieces of information
 - 3. Using similes and metaphors
 - 4. Expressing ideas in a poetic format
 - 5. Setting up provocations
 - 6. Writing to/as an inanimate object
- C. Assessing creativity
- D. Demonstration of activities to foster creativity

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

ELE KLA Curriculum Guide (P1-S6) (2017, p.77)

Promoting **creativity** and **original thinking** through:

- Equipping students with strategies to **generate new ideas, reorganise knowledge, seek alternatives purposely, and evaluate ideas and solutions;**
- Encouraging students to **identify problems** instead of always providing them with problems and solutions;
- Giving **autonomy** to students by allowing them to **decide** on how to present their products/ work;
- Encouraging transforming existing knowledge or input into new forms by allowing students to use **different modes of representation;** and
- Displaying/ publishing creative work to create an environment that values **originality**

The optimised senior secondary English Language curriculum

- Flexible arrangements to cater for learner diversity; multifarious activities to enhance English learning
- To promote creative expression and experimentation with English
- To enrich and extend students' language learning experiences
- To develop students' language sensitivity and cultural awareness, as well as creativity and critical thinking skills
- The creative use of English is **not an add-on**, but an existing part of the school-based English Language curriculum

**A. What is creativity
in an English
classroom?**

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

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.

Promoting the Creative Use of English

English Language Education
Key Learning Area

English Language
Curriculum and Assessment
Guide (Secondary 4 - 6)

Jointly prepared by the
Curriculum Development
Council and the Hong Kong
Examinations and Assessment
Authority

Published for use in schools
by the Education Bureau
HKSARG

2021

Effective from Secondary 4
in the 2021/22 school year

The promotion of the creative use of English helps enrich language learning experiences and it can be achieved through the effective use of language arts. In fact, language arts has much to offer in developing students' capability to appreciate language use, and respond and give expression to real and imaginative experience. Students' language sensitivity and cultural awareness, as well as creative and critical thinking, can be developed with the use of imaginative texts such as poems, novels, short stories, dramas, films, film scripts, advertisements, song lyrics, and radio and television programmes. To help students progress towards the targets and objectives of the Experience Strand, teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of language arts materials in the learning and teaching of English and design thought-provoking activities that encourage students to explore and experiment with the creative use of the language.

(p.43)

Promoting the Creative Use of English through Language Arts

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To stretch students' potential, promote literary appreciation and develop students' sensitivity to language use, more emphasis can be placed on the creative use of English. When designing the school-based English Language curriculum, teachers can make use of a broad range of language arts materials, such as poems, short stories, films, drama scripts, song lyrics and advertisements, to heighten students' awareness of the language used and effects achieved.

Relevant English learning activities (e.g. choral speaking, drama performance, film appreciation, talks or writing workshops conducted by authors) can be arranged to widen students' language exposure and provide opportunities for them to interact with literary/imaginative texts and explore the creative use of language.

(p.26)

Do you agree with the following statements?

1. **Creativity** is reserved for gifted learners.
2. **Creativity** is as important as, if not more important than, knowledge.
3. **Creativity** is out of reach in 'regular' classrooms.
4. **Creativity** is in-born; it cannot be taught.
5. **Creativity** is a generic skill that learners need across disciplines.

Adapted from Sawyer, R. K. (2019). *The Creative Classroom: Innovative Teaching for 21st-Century Learners*. Teachers College Press.

Defining creativity

According to the NACCCE (1999), **creativity** has the following elements:

Imagination - providing an alternative to the expected, the conventional, or the routine; attempt to expand the possibilities of a given situation; to look at it afresh or from a new perspective, envisaging alternatives to the routine or expected in any given task

Pursuing purposes - actively engaged in making or producing something in a deliberate way

Being original - individual originality (A person's work may be original in relation to their own previous work and output); relative originality (It may be original in relation to their peer group: to other young people of the same age, for example)

Judging value - The outcome of imaginative activity can only be called creative if it is of value in relation to the task at hand. There are many possible judgements according to the area of activity: effective, useful, enjoyable, satisfying, valid, tenable.

What do CREATIVE people have to say about CREATIVITY?

When delivering her commencement address in Harvard where she was awarded her honorary degree, **J.K.Rowling** highlighted the importance of imagination:

‘Imagination is not only the uniquely human capacity to envision that which is not, and therefore the fount of all invention and innovation. In its arguably most transformative and revelatory capacity, it is the power that enables us to **empathise with humans whose experiences we have never shared.**’

Source: Rowling, J.K. (2008) The Harvard Gazette - Text of J.K. Rowling's speech
<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2008/06/text-of-j-k-rowling-speech/>

'Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to **connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things.**'

Steve Jobs

Source:

Goodreads.com

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/1031045-creativity-is-just-connecting-things-when-you-ask-creative-people>

Part A What is creativity in an English classroom?

RECAP

- Definitions of creativity
- How creative people understand creativity
- Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of language arts materials in the learning and teaching of English and design thought-provoking activities that encourage students to explore and experiment with the creative use of the language (English Language (Curriculum and Assessment Guide Secondary 4 - 6))

Do you consider yourself a creative teacher?

How do you understand/ define creativity?

Share an example of a creative activity you've done with your learners recently.

B. Effective strategies for promoting creative use of English

1. Adopting a new perspective
2. Connecting different pieces of information
3. Using similes and metaphors
4. Expressing ideas in a poetic format
5. Setting up provocations
6. Writing to/as an inanimate object

Effective strategies for promoting creative use of English

Strategies	Examples of micro-activities
1. Adopting a new perspective	How would ... use ...?
2. Connecting different pieces of information	Mnemonics
3. Using similes and metaphors	Metaphors and similes in songs
4. Expressing ideas in a poetic format	Appreciating and creating poems
5. Setting up provocations	Using what-if questions
6. Writing to/as an inanimate object	Writing to COVID-19



Content



Language



Organization

1. Adopting a new perspective

Redefinition – Seeing a known object in a new way; introducing novelty into a context

C (e.g. Roald Dahl using AI)
(e.g. J. K Rowling using chopsticks)

The novelty of a product can only be understood in terms of a context that is changed in surprising, effective ways by the product.

(Crompton, 2001, p.98)

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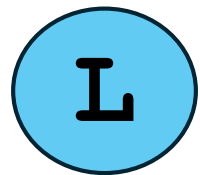
Questions:

How would Roald Dahl use AI?

How would J. K Rowling use chopsticks?

Fill the following blanks:

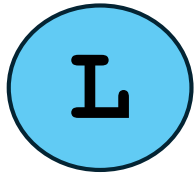
How would _____ use _____?



Complete the question - Adopting a new perspective

Other possible
characters...

- How would **Santa** use
this rocket?
- How would **Spiderman**
use this typewriter?
- How would **Shakespeare**
use the Internet?



**Asking 'How' questions
to inspire students to
imagine.**

Discuss with your groupmates and
explore how creative use of
English is nurtured in this
activity.

2. Connecting different pieces of information

Mnemonics are skills we use to help us remember information more easily. They work by helping us **connect** different pieces of information.

Eg. Creating a word from the first letters of the corresponding words

Group name

SUPER – Sonia/Ula/Penny/Elaine/Rita

LOVE – Linda/Olivia/Vivien/Eva

FANBOYS – The coordinating conjunctions in English

for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so

*'Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to **connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things.**'*

Steve Jobs

Using Mnemonics Across the Curriculum (MAC)

1. English/ Mathematics

PEMDAS: The order of operations in math (Parentheses, Exponents, Multiplication, Division, Addition, Subtraction)

2. English/ Music

Every Good Boy Deserves Fudge: The lines of the treble clef in music (E, G, B, D, F)

3. English/ Geography

Never Eat Soggy Waffles: The cardinal directions (North, East, South, West)

4. English/ Science

My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Noodles: The eight planets in order in the solar system—*Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune*

L Creative use of language - from the word level to the sentence level

'Big C' and Ordinary Creativity

'[There are] two types of creativity, commonly referred to as "Big C" and "little c" creativity, and others (e.g. Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009) distinguished among as many as four types of "C" (big, pro, little, and mini). Early understanding of creativity were based on research involving those who are outstanding in their field, individuals whose works contributed to a major change in one or more areas of human endeavour – the type of creativity often referred to as Big C creativity.'

Treffinger, et al. (2013, p.30)

Ordinary C for our learners

'Creative learning provides specific tools and strategies that students can use on their own whenever they encounter situations or challenges requiring them to generate or analyze new ideas.'

Treffinger, et al. (2013, p.41)

3. Using similes and metaphors

Starko (2005) identified how creative people **use their imagination to generate original ideas.**

'Creative people often are able to find parallels between unlike ideas. They take ideas from one context and use them in another context to create a new synthesis, transformation, or perspective. **Metaphorical thinking** makes it possible to use one idea to express another...' (p.104)

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An example of use of similes – a song by Lenka

Everything at once

As sly as a fox, as strong as an ox
As fast as a hare, as brave as a bear
As free as a bird, as neat as a word
As quiet as a mouse, as big as a house
All I wanna be
All I wanna be
Oh-oh-oh, all
I wanna be
Is everything
As mean as a wolf, as sharp as a tooth
As deep as a bite, as dark as the night
As sweet as a song, as right as a wrong
As long as a road, as ugly as a toad
As pretty as a picture hanging from a
fixture
Strong like a family, strong as I wanna
be
Bright as day, as light as play
As hard as nails, as grand as a whale

All I wanna be
Oh-oh-oh, all
I wanna be
Oh-oh-oh, all
I wanna be
Is everything
Everything at once
Everything at once
Oh-oh-oh, everything at once

As warm as the sun, as silly as fun
As cool as a tree, as scary as the sea
As hot as fire, cold as ice
Sweet as sugar and everything nice

As old as time, as straight
as a line
As royal as a queen, as
buzzed as a bee
As stealth as a tiger,
smooth as a glider
Pure as a melody, pure as I
wanna be
All I wanna be
Oh-oh-oh, all
I wanna be
Oh-oh-oh, all
I wanna be
Is everything
Everything at once

Do you think your students can manage using similes/ metaphors in their writing?

Siobhan Haughey won her Olympian medal again! She swims really fast.

Siobhan Haughey won her Olympian medal again! She swims **as fast as a dolphin**.

I love Taylor Swift. She is talented.

Taylor Swift is a talented singer and song writer. She is **my divine and legendary goddess**.

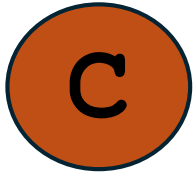
The school canteen is dirty. Students should clear their own rubbish before they leave.

The school canteen **smells like a dumpster**. Students should clear own their rubbish before they leave.

L Using literary device (eg. metaphors and similes) to express ideas.

Creating fresh metaphors

Compare 'mission of a teacher' to ...



Things you see in this classroom	Things at your home
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A <u>lightbulb</u> that illuminates the path to wisdom- <u>Whiteboard</u>: Offering a blank canvas for students to explore and express their creativity- ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Unlock the <u>doors</u> to knowledge and discovery- <u>Legs of the chairs and tables</u> - provide support for students to grow and glow- <u>Couch</u> - offer a shelter for students when they need support- ...

Examples of 'Thank-you card to my teacher'

Dear Ms Chan

You are the **sunrise**,
bringing light to the dawn.
You are like a **river**, with
flowing knowledge where
minds are drawn.

THANK YOU.

Dear Ms Chan

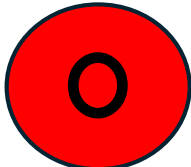
You are as strong as **steel**, providing
unwavering support to all of us.
You are the **platinum** that is rare and
exceptional, leaving a lasting impact
on all of us.

THANK YOU.

Dear Ms Chan

You are the **honey**,
sweetening the learning
experience with kindness and
patience.
You are our **chocolate**,
making learning a delightful
treat.

THANK YOU.

 Writing a thank-you card by
generating coherent ideas following
the same theme (eg. nature/ metal/
food) .

Literary Devices

PERSONIFICATION



Giving some human characteristics to something that is not human, such as animals, objects and non-living things

e.g. The school is **overjoyed** when we are back. It **spreads its arms wide** to **welcome** us.

SIMILE



Making comparisons between two things which have something in common, using the words "like" or "as"

e.g. A good teacher **is like a compass**. He always shows students the correct direction and guides them out of darkness when they are lost.

METAPHOR



Making a statement that says one thing is another, without using the words "like" or "as"

e.g. A teacher **is a gardener** who always nourishes and nurtures students, providing the most favourable environment for them to grow and bloom.

ALLITERATION



Repeating the same consonant sounds at the beginning of words that are near each other

e.g. I am thankful to the **tender teachers** who **touch** my heart with their hands of love. They **teach** me to **truly trust** myself and **treasure** my time and **talents**.

HYPERBOLE



Making qualities of people or things stand out by exaggerating them

e.g. My class teacher is the best teacher **in the entire universe!** She never fails to tend to our needs even when she **is drowning in work** and has **a million other tasks** to take care of.

PARALLELISM



Repeating phrases, clauses or sentences that are similar in structure and meaning

e.g. Teachers encourage **minds to think, hands to create** and **hearts to love**.

If you are to help students develop this writing skill – using similes and metaphors, what kind of input do you think they will need?

How will you scaffold your learners to help them produce?

- Providing examples/ sample sentences?
- Vocabulary input?
- Grammar input?

In what kinds of text do you think students will find this writing skill useful?

4. Expressing ideas in a poetic format

Three-word poems

C Describe how you are feeling now

L Stronger students can try to create acrostics as well

Fantastic
Uplifting
Nourished

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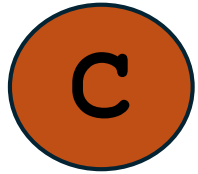
Hello-Goodbye poems

Hello sunshine,
Goodbye rain.
Hello smoking,
Goodbye health.
Hello paper,
Goodbye trees.

Hello DSE,
Goodbye rest.
Hello morning,
Goodbye sleep.
Hello food,
Goodbye hunger.

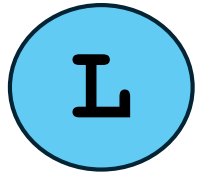
Bland & Lütge (Eds.) (2013, p.165)

A tercet



Describe what a
teacher does in a
tercet

Guiding hands and hearts so bright,
Igniting minds with wisdom's light,
Teachers shape our future's flight.



Create rhymes if
students manage
to

Teachers help us learn each day,
Show us new things, guide our way,
Make us better, come what may.

Creating your own poem

A to Z of Teaching

A for Activities

B for Behaviour

C for Creativity

D for Differentiation

E for Evaluation

F for Facilitation

G for Grouping

H for Humour

I for Imagination

J for Judgements

K for Knowledge

L for Language

M for Motivation

N for Nurturing

O for Observation

P for Planning

Q for Questioning

R for Resources

S for Special Educational Needs

T for Theory

U for Unit of Work

V for Visual Literacy

W for Work/Life Balance

X for Extra amount of patience

Y for Youth

Z for Zoom lessons

Adapted from Savage, J., & Fautley, M. (2013).
A-Z of teaching. Open University Press.

Writing a haiku/ limerick

An example of a haiku

Whispering pine trees,
Snowflakes dance on winter's
breeze –
Silent forest dreams.

An example of a limerick

A curious cat from Hong Kong,
Loved to sing a peculiar song.
With a meow and a purr,
It caused quite a stir,
As it danced through the streets
all day long.

Infusion
of
positive
values
in the
poems

UNLOCK THE POWER OF LOVE AND GROWTH FROM A TO Z



Sayings
of Wisdom

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<https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/SOW/website/home/index.html>

SIGHT



Visual words allow readers to see more clearly what is described. These words can be further categorised into groups based on size, shape, colour, etc.

Lighting:	Size:	Shape:	Colour:
shimmering	bulky	oval	dark blue
glowing	gigantic	curved	light grey
sparkling	enormous	flat	bright red
shady	tiny	pointed	pastel green

e.g. We sailed across the vast and furious ocean, pushing through the **shimmering** waves.

TASTE



Gustatory words turn the content flavoursome.

sugary	spicy	greasy
savoury	pungent	bland
bitter	tangy	minty
tart	mellow	juicy

e.g. The **salty-sweet** caramel melted on the baby's tongue. The surprising **sugariness** made her smile.

Creative Use of English

Sensory Language

Sensory words add **sparkles and sprinkles** to your writing as they make your readers **see, hear, smell, taste, or feel** your words!

SMELL



Olfactory words allow readers to smell the aroma.

fragrant	pleasant	musty
perfumed	refreshing	stale
sweet-scented	tempting	rancid
fruity	tantalising	revolting

e.g. Spring comes as the **sweet-scented** blossoms fill the air with their **refreshing fragrance**.

SOUND



Auditory words allow readers to hear what is happening.

humming	scratching	whispering
moaning	roaring	murmuring
groaning	deafening	screeching
rumbling	cracking	screaming

e.g. The little girl in the playground started **humming** a light-hearted melody in delight.



TOUCH

Tactile words let readers feel the texture and temperature.

fluffy	rocky	spongy
silky	soggy	coarse
prickly	gluey	scorching
spiky	foamy	icy

e.g. I love summer. The **warm** sun kisses my face and **fluffy** and **wispy** clouds float across the sky.

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Creative use of English, EDB

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/references-resources/Creative-Eng/home.html>

SAY

whisper murmur mumble whine grumble beg demand exclaim snap shriek

WALK



EAT

peck
nibble
savour
munch
swallow
devour
scoff
gobble
bolt



LOOK

scrutinise
inspect
examine
observe
stare
gaze
view
glimpse
glance
peek



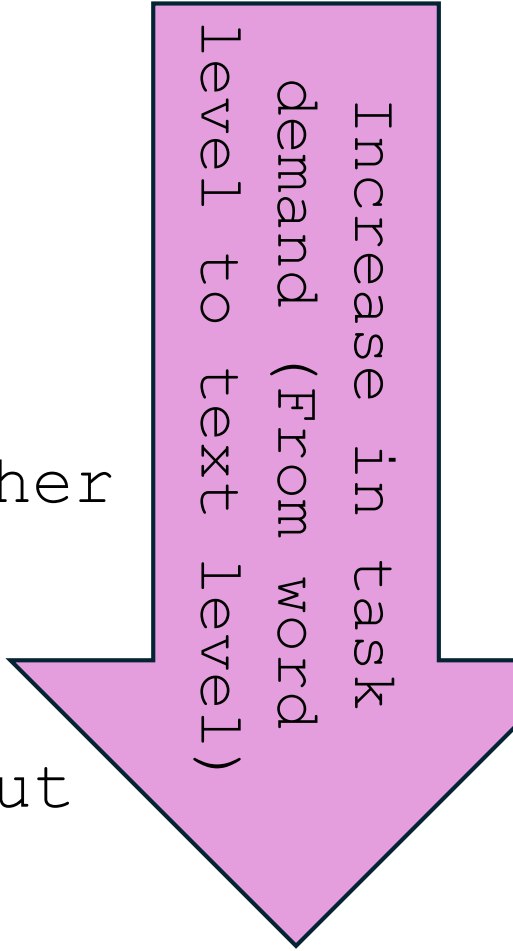
Creative use of English, EDB

<https://www.edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/kla/eng-edu/references-resources/Creative-Eng/home.html>

Creating your own poem

Possible tasks to design for our students:

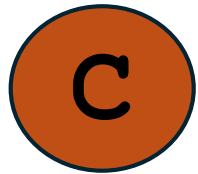
- Write a three-word poem about yourself
- Write a five-word poem about your English teacher
- Write a Hello-Goodbye poem about today
- Write a tercet about winter
- Co-create with your classmates an A-Z poem about your DSE life
- Write a haiku about nature
- Write a limerick about your pet



Increase in task
demand (From word
level to text level)

5. Setting up provocations

According to de Bono (1970) (cited in Starko (2005, p.210-212)), one way to nurture creativity is to set up **provocations**. 'In using provocations, statements are put forward to **provoke new patterns of thought** rather than to describe realistic situations [...] In a reversal provocation, you invert the situation being considered [...] they are reversed.'



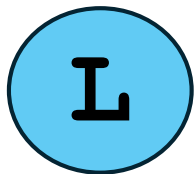
→What if Juliet woke up before Romeo took the poison?

→What if Harry Potter had an elder brother?

→What if Sandy did not betray Miss Jean Brodie?

→What if Willy Wonka planted five more golden tickets in the Wonka candy bars?

→What if...



Using conditional sentences to describe 'unreal' situations

What if ...

Possible tasks to design for our students using what-if:

What if...

What if...

What if...

- ✓ Open-ended
- ✓ No expected 'answers'
- ✓ Room for extended response

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An example taken from an HKDSE writing topic

2021 (Q4)

You are a professional athlete looking for a career change. You have seen the job vacancy shown below and would like to apply for the position of Assistant Coach.

Hong Kong Sports Foundation is hiring Assistant Coaches

Main duties:

- to design training programmes for elite athletes
- to organise international sporting competitions
- to identify and support local talent

Write a job application letter to the Human Resources Manager.

- Introduce yourself and your athletic history.
- Explain your interest and suitability for the job.

What if ...

Possible what-if questions to ask...	Possible tasks to design/ Promoting creative use of English
What if you received a rejection letter from the Hong Kong Sports Foundation telling you that you are not a suitable candidate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Write a letter of appeal to convince the Hong Kong Sports Foundation that they should reconsider your application <p>Appeal to Emotion (Pathos) <i>In the inter-school relay, I pulled a hamstring just before the championship race. Despite the pain, I remained determined. With support from my coach and teammates, I pushed through physical therapy and decided to compete. On race day, I ran through the discomfort and finished third. It wasn't the victory I wanted, but it taught me the power of perseverance and resilience.</i></p>

Episode 6: Show, Don't Tell



What if ...

Possible what-if questions to ask...	Possible tasks to design/ Promoting creative use of English
What if you received a rejection letter from the Hong Kong Sports Foundation telling you that you are not a suitable candidate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Write a letter of appeal to convince the Hong Kong Sports Foundation that they should reconsider your application <p>Appeal to Logic (Logos)</p> <p><i>A survey conducted by the Athletic Performance Association found that teams with structured training programs led by assistant coaches saw a 20% increase in overall performance. My experience in developing and executing such programs has consistently yielded positive results.</i></p> <p><i>The Director of the Sports Coaching Institute reported in his Annual Report 2025, 'Assistant coaches play a crucial role in reducing injury rates by implementing proper training techniques.'</i> My certification in injury prevention and rehabilitation has proven beneficial in maintaining athlete health.</p>

What if ...

Possible what-if questions to ask...	Possible tasks to design/ Promoting creative use of English
What if you received a rejection letter from the Hong Kong Sports Foundation telling you that you are not a suitable candidate?	<div><div><div>- Write a letter of appeal to convince the Hong Kong Sports Foundation that they should reconsider your application</div><div>Appeal to Credibility (Ethos)</div><div>As a certified sports coach with a proven track record of success, I am committed to fostering a positive and inclusive environment for all athletes through my hands-on approach and heart-centered coaching methods.</div></div></div>

Creative Use of English

Writing a

Tip #1 – Spicing up the review with sensory and emotional app

Compound words

A compound word links two or more words together to form a word with a new meaning. We can use compound words related to our body parts to comment on the plot of films/books to convey our feelings.

e.g. The movie is exciting. The movie is nail-biting. The movie is a nail-biter.

Complete the table below about different types of films.

Body part	Action Verb	Suffix	Compound noun	Compound adjective	Feeling (Adjective)
e.g. nail	bite	-er	nail-biter	nail-biting	thrilling / thrilled exciting / excited
1. hair	raise	-er	hair-raiser	hair-raising	horrifying / horrified
2. head	scratch	-er	head-scratcher	head-scratching	confusing / confused disorienting / disorientated
3. eye	pop	-er	eye-popper	eye-popping	surprising / surprised
4. heart	warm	-er	heart-warmer	heart-warming	happy pleasing / pleased
5. mind	blow	-er	mindblower	mind-blowing	astonishing / astonished
6. blood	curdle	-er	blood-curdler	blood-curdling	horrifying / horrified

What if ...

Possible what-if questions to ask...	Possible tasks to design/ Promoting creative use of English
What if you were the interviewer working in the Hong Kong Sports Foundation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- A role-play task - Draft some 'what-if' questions to use in the upcoming interview exercise to evaluate the readiness of the potential candidates to take up the position of Assistant Coach <p>Use what-if questions in a what-if scenario</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What if you were the coach of a teenage basketball team but the team was always late for training?- What if you identified a talented young swimmer but the parents were reluctant to enrol him/ her in your team?- What if you received feedback from players that they were unhappy with the current training regimen? How would you address their concerns and make necessary adjustments?- ...

6. Writing to/as an inanimate object

Dear COVID,

Thanks for visiting us back in 2019. Your visit was truly enlightening as you made us realize how tiny we human beings are. You taught us resilience and adaptability. Your presence forced us to cherish health, value connections, and innovate in ways we never imagined. Though challenging, you reminded us of our strength and the importance of unity. For these unexpected lessons, we are grateful.

P.S. Next time, a postcard would suffice.

- Using a formal and reflective tone when writing to an inanimate object
- Adding a humorous twist

An example - Writing to COVID-19

Dear COVID,

I am glad that you are long gone and I wish that you rest in peace and never come back.

A virus a year took my school life away. Do you know how much damage you'd done? Now go on and get lost!!! Leave me alone, leave HK alone, leave the world alone.

- Using an accusive and dialogic tone when writing to an inanimate object.
- Modifying an old saying and create a new one in the text (e.g. An apple a day keeps the doctor away)

An example - Writing to Wi-Fi

Dear WIFI,

Oh, how I adore your impeccable timing! Just when I'm about to send an important email, you decide to take a break. Your unpredictability keeps me on my toes, never knowing when you'll grace me with your presence or vanish into thin air. Your ability to turn a simple task into a frustrating ordeal is truly unmatched. Thank you for the countless hours spent resetting routers and reconnecting devices. Life would be far too easy without your delightful quirks. Stay unpredictable, WiFi. It's what makes you so 'special'.

Yours sincerely

An ever-frustrated user

- Using a sarcastic tone when writing to an inanimate object.
- Using figurative language (e.g. personification)

Writing a letter/ Shooting a video to future me

In a senior secondary classroom, we are teaching students who are about to take the high-stake public examination (e.g. HKDSE). Teachers can design tasks to facilitate goal-setting and self-reflection.

Asking students to write a letter to their future selves can help them:

- send a reminder of their goals to themselves in the (near) future
- devise a timeline to gauge how well they are meeting their goals
- exercise self-reflection

Hicks & Schoenborn (2020, p.39-40)

Defining creativity

According to the NACCCE (1999), **creativity** has the following elements:

Imagination - providing an alternative to the expected, the conventional, or the routine; attempt to expand the possibilities of a given situation; to look at it afresh or from a new perspective, envisaging alternatives to the routine or expected in any given task

Pursuing purposes - actively engaged in making or producing something in a deliberate way

Being original - individual originality (A person's work may be original in relation to their own previous work and output); relative originality (It may be original in relation to their peer group: to other young people of the same age, for example)

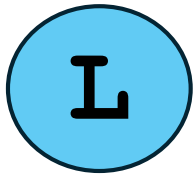
Judging value - The outcome of imaginative activity can only be called creative if it is of value in relation to the task at hand...There are many possible judgements according to the area of activity: effective, useful, enjoyable, satisfying, valid, tenable.¹¹

Dear Future Me,

By the time you are reading this letter, you should have received your HKDSE results. I want to remind you that two years ago, when you were still 15 years old, ...

Dear Future Me,

It's the end of the school year and you are about to be promoted to S6. Time and tide wait for no man. When you started your senior secondary study, you promised yourself that...

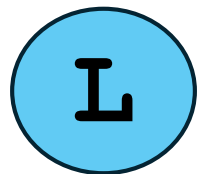


Using a proverb to
enrich the text (e.g.
Time and tide wait for
no man)

Dear Future Me,

Hi there...I am writing this to remind you to treasure every minute of your exciting senior secondary school life. I bet you can still feel the happily harmonious atmosphere the debate team maintains. Is Ms Chan still your coach? She is serenely satisfied with our performance in the debate competition held last month. We are all so gleefully grateful for her support and are eagerly enthusiastic about the upcoming tournament!

When you are reading this, I wonder if you have already become the debate team captain...



Tone – optimistic

Use of alliteration to express the positive tone

If you are to do this task with your class, what do you expect them to produce/ what kind of input will you deliver?

CONTENT

LANGUAGE
(e.g. tense/
voice)

TEXTUAL
INPUT

Part B Effective strategies for promoting creative use of English

RECAP

Strategies	Examples of micro-activities
1. Adopting a new perspective	How would ... use ...?
2. Connecting different pieces of information	Mnemonics
3. Using similes and metaphors	Metaphors and similes in songs
4. Expressing ideas in a poetic format	Appreciating and creating poems
5. Setting up provocations	Using what-if questions
6. Writing to/as an inanimate object	Writing to COVID-19

- ✓ Creative use of English at the word/ sentence/ text level
- ✓ Creative use of English in different dimensions - Content/Language/Organization
- ✓ Materials teachers may use when fostering creativity
- ✓ Designing different tasks (using the same text/context) to tailor different learning needs

C. Assessing creativity

Assessment literacy – Assessing creativity

An example – 'I wish I had a problem'

A first-grade girl named Suzanne Goodin hated one of her chores at home. She hated feeding her cat! Yet, Suzanne liked her cat and she wanted her cat to have food. There was only one thing wrong. She hated washing the cat food spoon. Every time she fed the cat, the spoon ended up covered with squishy, smelly cat food. It was disgusting to wash.

She thought, 'Aha! This is a problem I can solve!' And she did. Suzanne invented an edible pet food spoon. The spoon is made of hard pet food. After you scoop the pet food out of the can, you can throw the spoon right in the bowl with the food. The cat can eat it right up!

Source: Starko (2005, p.466)

A team of engineers was trying to design a mechanical tomato picker that didn't bruise the tomatoes when collecting them. They came up with some really creative solutions , but none worked. Eventually, a few botanists were brought in. Together, they reframed the problem: Why not try to breed a new kind of tomato, one with a skin that's less likely to get bruised? With this new problem framing, the interdisciplinary team in fact did develop a new type of tomato with a thicker skin that doesn't bruise as easily.

Source: Adams (2001, p.24)

An example - 'I wish I had a problem'

An owner of an office building had a problem. His building only had two elevators and his tenants complained that these elevators were too slow. Some were threatening that they would move out. The owner then explored different plans - building brand new elevators or upgrading the existing elevators. But both plans were too expensive. Yet, he could not afford losing his tenants.

He then came up with another plan. He thought, 'I need to find a way to make my tenants feel less upset about the waiting.' He installed mirrors on all floors so people felt a bit more at ease when waiting for the elevators. The waiting time *seemed* shorter.

Source: Baer & Kaufman (2012, p.97-98)

- Design of a '**Problem-Finding**' lesson
- Finding of problem → Need to solve a problem
→ **Using our creativity to solve the problem**

Assessment literacy – assessing creativity

Example – ‘I wish I had a problem’

- In this ‘Problem-Finding lesson,’ students are presented the following problem.

Situation

It’s now hot summer. The power company has just informed your school principal that there will be power outage on a regular school day next month. Without power, there will be no electricity, no light, no air-conditioning, etc. The principal invited you to write a proposal making suggestions of what can be done on that day.

Read the following suggestions your students proposed. Which one do you think is the most creative? Why?

Student A

I suggest the school remind all students to bring torches, candles, portable fans, tablets and power banks to school on that day.

Student B

My suggestion is we have online lessons on that day. Everyone will stay home and have zoom lessons.

Student C

I will use my superpower to provide electricity to the whole school.

Student D

I would suggest the school organize some OLE activities for students. We can go on field trips and visits outside of our school campus on that day.

Student E

How about the school principal announces that day as a discretionary school holiday?

Student F

We will go to school as usual and experience a day without power. That is a learning experience for us all.

What have we learnt from the exercise we did just now?

- Can you easily compromise with your tablemates which student's suggestion is the most creative?
- What could/ should have been done to help colleagues reach a consensus on our judgement?

What changes would you make to the instruction of this writing task?

Situation - It's now hot summer. The power company has just informed your school principal that there will be power outage on a regular school day next month. Without power, there will be no electricity, no light, no air-conditioning, etc. The principal invited you to write a proposal making suggestions of what can be done on that day.

Assessment of creativity - Some quick tips

1. Ask the right question (Treffinger, et al., 2013)

- '*How are you creative?*' is more informative than asking '*How creative are you?*'

- Inviting students to justify/ explain their creative answer in an organized manner

2. Develop students' awareness of appropriateness (Beghetto, et al., 2015, p.33-35)

- Creative students who cannot read the situation risk being labelled disruptive, unruly, or difficult.

- Successful creators know when to be creative and when not to be creative

Assessment of creativity – Some quick tips

3. Give clear instructions that align with the corresponding success criteria

Eg. Relevance

Eg. Feasibility

Eg. Responsiveness

4. Guide students to organize their creative ideas

Eg. Show, do not tell

Eg. Choice of conjunctions

Eg. Use of different senses

5. Promote Assessment as Learning among learners

- Let students vote for the most creative idea

- Dialogue with students why certain ideas are deemed more creative than others

- Alignment with the success criteria/ Enhancement of students' assessment literacy

Part C Assessing creativity

RECAP

- ✓ Nurture questioning techniques
- ✓ Develop students' awareness of appropriateness
- ✓ Give clear instructions/ Let students know our expectations
- ✓ Promote Assessment as Learning among learners

D. Demonstration of
activities to foster
creativity

An example of activities to infuse in your classroom to nurture creativity

The Average child

I don't cause teachers trouble;
My grades have been ok.
I listen in my classes.
I'm in school everyday

My teachers think I'm average;
My parents think so too.
I wish I didn't know that, though;
There's lots I'd like to do.

I'd like to build a rocket;
I read a book on how.
Or start a stamp collection...
But no use trying now.

'Cause, since I found I'm average,
I'm smart enough you see
To know there's nothing special
I should expect of me.

I'm part of that majority,
The hump part of the bell
Who spends his life unnoticed
In an average type of hell.

By Mike Buscemi

Hot seating

- Teacher-in-role
- The floor takes turns to ask the character questions

- Being constructive in a contextualized task
(e.g. Have a dialogue, raise questions, express ideas)
- Being original
- Adopting a new perspective

L

- Use of questions
- Asking open-ended questions/ asking closed questions
- Asking hypothetical questions/ Using 'if' / Using 'what if'
- Asking choice questions

Let's try this now.

The Average child

Role on the wall

- Explore the character's feelings
- Show sympathy and empathy
- Be kind and nice

Other possible tasks...

- Give the average child a gift
- Send the average child a card
- Give the average child a super power to make him/ her special
- Come up with a Word of the Day to improve school life for everyone
- Be the 'Agony Aunt' and write a reply letter to the Average child

If your students have potential to do more...

Recognition

By Carol Ann Duffy

Things get away from one.
I've let myself go, I know.
Children? I've had three
and don't even know them.

I strain to remember a time
when my body felt lighter.
Years. My face is swollen
with regrets. I put powder on,

but it flakes off. I love him,
through habit, but the proof
has evaporated. He gets upset.
I tried to do all the
essentials

on one trip. Foolish, yes,
but I was weepy all morning.
Quiche. A blond boy swung me up
in his arms and promised the
earth.

You see, this came back to me
as I stood on the scales.
I wept. Shallots. In the window
creamy ladies held a pose

which left me clogged and old.
The waste. I forgotten my purse,
fumbled; the shopgirl gaped at
me
compassionless. Claret. I
blushed.

Cheese. Kleenex. It did happen.
I lay in my slip on wet grass,
laughing. Years. I had to rush
out,
blind in a hot flush, and bumped

into an anxious, dowdy matron
who touched the cold mirror
and stared at me. Stared
and said I'm sorry sorry sorry.

Hot seating
Role on the wall

Use of AI-powered tools to foster creative use of English

HKDSE 2023 Paper2 Writing Q9

You work for *Restaurant Business* magazine. You interviewed a restaurant owner about his/her experiences of running a business during the pandemic.

Write a feature article for the magazine.

Situation

- An imaginary setting that offers room to create (ie. interviewing a restaurant owner)
- An unreal context that invites students to adopt a new perspective (ie. students playing the role as a journalist)
- An issue has emerged that demands solutions (ie. running a business during the pandemic)

- AI-powered tools can help students brainstorm ideas.
- Yet, these AI tools are Writing Assistants and **cannot do the work for students.**
- Based on the AI-generated ideas, students need guidance to further develop their writing.

Example of an AI-Generated idea

Idea 1: Highlight the innovative strategies the restaurant owner implemented to adapt to changing regulations, such as outdoor dining setups or delivery services, and how these changes helped sustain the business.

Possible guiding questions for our students:

1. **CONTENT** - Would it be feasible for local restaurants to set up outdoor dining areas?
2. **LANGUAGE** - 'Offering delivery services' sounds a good idea. How would you use language creatively to present this idea?
3. **ORGANIZATION** - Besides a 'Q/A/Q/A/Q/A' approach, how else can you organize your article?

Some possible language features to infuse:

Offering delivery services

1. Using a three-part list

*The restaurant's delivery service was **fast, friendly, and flawless**; the meals always arrived **hot, fresh, and right on time**.*

2. Using a proverb

***The proof of the pudding is in the eating** – the reviewers' comment unanimously praised the restaurant's delivery service for its exceptional speed and quality.*

3. Using an oxymoron

*Their delivery team operated with **calm urgency**, ensuring every order was handled swiftly yet carefully.*

Part D Demonstration of activities to foster creativity

RECAP

- ✓ A 'Problem-finding' lesson
- ✓ Use AI-powered tools as a Writing Assistant
- ✓ Accuracy not the only success criteria
- ✓ Encourage students to demonstrate creativity and imagination (e.g. use of dialogues/ use of proverbs in a featured article)

CONCLUSION

Objectives of promoting the creative use of English

- To enrich and extend students' language learning experiences
- Creative use of English is **not an add-on**, but an existing part of the school-based English Language curriculum

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