Designing a School-based Junior Secondary Writing Programme with reference to the Learning Progression Framework

English Language Education Section
Curriculum Development Institute
Education Bureau
18 & 20 March 2015
Objectives of the Workshop

• To introduce the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) as a reference tool for designing a school-based writing programme to facilitate progressive development of writing skills at the junior secondary level

• To provide hands-on activities to examine students’ work and introduce effective strategies to give quality feedback and promote assessment for/as learning

• To provide suggestions on fine-tuning the existing writing programme by improving the design of the writing tasks to encourage imagination and foster creative thinking
By the end of the workshop, you will have

• a better understanding of the key considerations in planning for the progressive development of writing skills at the junior secondary level; and

• explored some effective strategies for helping students to formulate, develop, elaborate on, organise and present ideas in their writing.
Activity 1

Imagine you have invited a writing expert to conduct a one-off writing workshop for your students at the JS level. To help the facilitator prepare the materials and activities, you have to write a short description of the students’ writing abilities.

Think about the writing performances of your students in TSA and/or internal assessments. Compare their performances with the findings on student performances from the TSA Report 2014 and do the following:

1. write two points beginning with “My students can...”.
2. identify one or two areas that require improvement.
Although students could write well-organised paragraphs, few could elaborate on the topic and generally based their comments on the prompts.

Students, in many instances, misspelled common words and it was evident that proofreading was not being done. It was also evident that some students were hindered by their inability to spell simple vocabulary.

Using a wider range of vocabulary with fewer grammatical errors, capable students could provide more supporting details to their main ideas in their writing.

TSA Report 2014, pp.212-213
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Only a moderate number of students could provide reasons &amp; elaborate on topics such as…</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>•</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>… school life &amp; keeping pets &amp; choosing activities to do on an overseas trip</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>… a visit by overseas students &amp; protecting the environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>Topic elaboration was limited/ A lack of topic specific vocabulary hindered some students from expressing their ideas logically / fluently &amp; they relied predominantly on prompts provided</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Misspelling of simple vocabulary affected meaning as well as with many not being able to spell simple topic based vocabulary, for example…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>… names of various animals &amp; items for clothing</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>… the name of the animal that attacked swimmers, food eaten &amp; vocabulary related to environmental issues/ measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>•</td>
<td>… not familiar with the format of a formal letter/ an email with features required, e.g. opening &amp; closing, tone</td>
<td>•</td>
<td>Some found it difficult to express what they were able to imagine resulting in simple stories about the typhoon day with little detail or individual input of student ideas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TSA Report 2014, pp.217-219
Activity 2

Share your view:

1. What are your concerns in teaching writing?
2. How is the writing programme for S1-S3 planned at your school?
What do I expect students to achieve at the end of a three-year writing programme at JS level?

What teaching strategies should I adopt when teaching writing?

What skills and learning strategies should students acquire in order to approach writing tasks with greater imagination and creativity?
Setting objectives
Identifying strengths and weaknesses of learners

Practical Tips

...with reference to the Learning Progression Framework for Writing
Writing Programme

Purpose

Audience

Text-type
- Narrative
- Information
- Exchanges
- Procedural
- Explanatory
- Persuasive

Structure (Framework)

Sequence of Related Learning Experiences

Language Features

Learning Intentions and Outcomes
To introduce the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) as a reference tool for designing a school-based writing programme to facilitate progressive development of writing skills at the junior secondary level.
What is the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) for English Language?

**The LPF:**

- represents the growth of learners on a developmental continuum as they work towards the Learning Targets and Objectives of the English Language curriculum;
- is made up of Learning Outcomes organised under the four language skills and divided into eight levels of attainment;
- helps teachers better understand and articulate learners’ performance; and
- helps teachers plan strategically how to enhance English Language learning and teaching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>........</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>........</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>........</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>........</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Relationship between the Curriculum Framework, LPF and BC

Knowledge

Values and attitudes

Skills

Basic Competency

Learning Progression Framework
(What students can do as a result of learning and teaching)
Curriculum Framework, Learning, Teaching and Assessment, and Learning Progression Framework (LPF)

**Goals**

Curriculum Framework  
*(What students are expected to learn)*

**Process**

Learning  
Teaching  
Assessment

**Attainment**

Learning Progression Framework  
*(What students can do as a result)*
LOs organised & presented under the four language skills

LOs for each language skill expressed in the form of outcome statements (a general description of learner performance)

Pointers provide specific examples of what learners are able to do in demonstrating the LOs.

Exemplars illustrate the expected student performance.

UPs elucidate some of the learning objectives which do not lend themselves to the description in terms of 8 levels of attainment but are essential to English language learning.
Outcome Statements give a general description of student performance at each level.
Activity 3

In groups,

• study the Outcome Statements for three levels of the LPF for Writing; and

• identify the aspects of progression in the Outcome Statements for Writing.
Relationship between Outcome Statements and Pointers

**Outcome statements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing - Level 1</th>
<th>Writing - Level 2</th>
<th>Writing - Level 3</th>
<th>Writing - Level 4</th>
<th>Writing - Level 5</th>
<th>Writing - Level 6</th>
<th>Writing - Level 7</th>
<th>Writing - Level 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completing blanks in short texts to convey simple information, ideas and personal experiences on familiar topics...</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing short texts to convey simple but limited information, ideas and personal experiences on familiar topics...</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing short texts to convey simple information, ideas and personal experiences on familiar topics...</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing short texts to convey simple information, ideas and personal experiences on familiar topics...</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing short texts to convey simple information, ideas, personal experiences and opinions on familiar topics with some elaboration...</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing texts to convey information, ideas, personal experiences and opinions on familiar and less familiar topics with elaboration...</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing texts to convey information, ideas, personal experiences and opinions on familiar and less familiar topics with substantial elaboration...</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Pointers**

Pointers tell what students are able to do at each level.

LOs for each language skill expressed in the form of outcome statements (a general description of learner performance)

Pointers provide specific examples of what learners are able to demonstrate the LOs.
Activity 4

The pointers across L1-8 show progression of writing skills. In groups, read the pointers to identify progression of students’ development of writing skills.
Progression of Learning Outcomes for Writing

- Content

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Complexity of information &amp; ideas</th>
<th>Length of texts</th>
<th>Range of purposes</th>
<th>Familiarity of topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Completing blanks in short texts to convey simple information centred around objects, people and actions</td>
<td>Level 4 Writing short texts to convey simple information, ideas, personal experiences and opinions on familiar topics with some elaboration</td>
<td>Level 8 Writing texts to convey information, ideas, personal experiences and opinions on familiar and less familiar topics with substantial elaboration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Progression of Learning Outcomes for Writing -

**Organisation**

**Level 1**
Putting words under appropriate headings/topics

**Level 4**
Linking ideas quite coherently in a **short text**, and showing some overall organisation of ideas

**Level 8**
Linking ideas coherently throughout the text, and showing effective overall organisation of ideas
Progression of Learning Outcomes for Writing - Language

- **Level 1**
  Using *some simple words* quite appropriately, and *showing an awareness of some simple formats*

- **Level 4**
  Using *a small range of quite appropriate and accurate language forms and functions*, and *showing an awareness of tone, style, register and features of some text types*

- **Level 8**
  Using *a wide range of appropriate and accurate language forms and functions*, and *appropriate tone, style, register and features of a range of text types*
The outcome statements show the progression in terms of:

**CONTENT**
- Complexity of information and ideas
- Length of texts
- Familiarity of topics

**ORGANISATION**
- Linkage between ideas within and across paragraphs
- Overall organisation of ideas

**LANGUAGE**
- Language forms and functions used at different levels of writing
The Underlying Principles in the progression of Writing Skills form an integral part of the LPF and include:

- the language development strategies, generic skills, and positive values and attitudes;

- the meaningfulness & appropriateness of the written texts to the context, purpose & audience;

- the development of writing strategies:
  - Generating ideas by brainstorming or seeking and selecting information & ideas from different sources
  - Asking questions to clarify & seek information for correction
  - Editing drafts by correcting errors in language
  - Revising drafts by adding, deleting, substituting or linking ideas
  - Reflecting on own writing based on feedback from teachers / peers
### What is writing to you?

**Product-oriented** | **Process- & progress-oriented**
---|---
Disabling approach | Enabling approach
Mundane and routine | Creative
Re-writing and re-vision | Re-writing and re-vision
  "error checking exercise" | "seeing with new eyes"
Teacher evaluation | Responsible writer
Pre-defined product | Product is not pre-conceived
Convergent | Divergent
Writing Programme

- Audience
- Purpose
- Structure (Framework)
- Text-type
  - Narrative
  - Information Exchanges
  - Procedural
  - Explanatory
  - Persuasive
- Sequence of Related Learning Experiences
- Language Features
- Learning Intentions and Outcomes
Development of Writing Skills Across Key Stages

**Junior Secondary**
- Write on topics with contexts related to their everyday life and some formal situations
- Write texts with some degree of complexity
- Describe, express or explain ideas
- ...

**Senior Secondary**
- Write on topics with contexts related to their everyday life and formal situations
- Write complex texts
- Present and elaborate main ideas and supporting details through exemplifications, paraphrases, explanations, etc.
- ...

Development of Writing Skills Across Key Stages
Curriculum Continuity
Consideration in Planning for Writing Programme at Junior Secondary Level

- Related topics
- Integration of language skills
- Variety of text types and sources
- Level of difficulty

When designing learning and teaching activities, it is important to:

- provide adequate support to students in content, organisation and language & style;
- integrate writing with other language skills in the context of the selected theme;
- adopt a task-based approach;
- choose materials which are at an appropriate level;
- include multi-modal input (a variety of stimulating prompts); and
- design a range of tasks to require students to react beyond the factual content to meet different challenge levels, e.g. applying and synthesising reading input to produce purposeful & interesting writing content.
To provide hands-on activities to examine students’ work and introduce effective strategies to give quality feedback and promote assessment for/as learning
Activity 5

You have received a draft of the article written by a S3 student. With reference to the task requirements derived from the LPF for writing, discuss the following:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Does the draft meet the task requirements? Provide a piece of evidence from the drafts to justify your evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>How could the draft be improved? Suggest improvements which could be made to the draft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>How could teachers bring about improvements to the writing skills?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You are a prefect and student member of the Discipline Committee. You have been asked by Mr. Lai, the head of the committee, to write an article for the newsletter about some events that happened at school recently, what action was taken and the results.

Read the email, look at the pictures and write the article. Give your article a title.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose?</th>
<th>Text type?</th>
<th>Context?</th>
<th>Audience?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student’s work</td>
<td>Task requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text type?</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Context?</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>Newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Audience?</td>
<td>Fellow students/Principal</td>
<td>Students, teachers, school head, parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purpose?</td>
<td>Report work of committee</td>
<td>Report work of committee/Praise improvement/Encourage further discipline/Build unity/Announce upcoming events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Territory-wide System Assessment, 2014 (Secondary 3, English Language, Writing 9EW1)
The use of the LPF

- shifts the **focus from the content to its outcomes**, which places emphasis on learners
- provides a **common “language” and “tool”** for teachers to use in the learning, teaching and assessment process
- explains what is expected of students in terms of:
  - where are they now? *(existing strengths and weaknesses)*
  - where are they going? *(goals)*
  - where to next? *(“feedback” /“feedforward”)*
Use of Quality Feedback

- Constructive
- Focused – Linked to Learning Objectives
- Quality Feedback
- Diagnostic
- Clear and Easy to Understand
FROM... Bringing about Improvements to a Draft

TO... Facilitating Progressive Development of Writing Skills
What writing skills should we start with?

What can/can’t our students do in this skill area currently?

What should we expect our students to be able to do next?

How should we help our students to progress further?
Five key strategies of assessment as learning

Where the learner is going

1. Identify and clarify learning goals and success criteria

Where the learner is now

2. Engineer effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit information about student learning

What the learner needs to get there

3. Provide descriptive feedback that moves learners forward
4. Through targeted instruction and guidance, engage students as learning resources for one another
5. Through targeted instruction and guidance, help students understand what it means to ‘own’ their own learning, and empower them to do so

Where the learner is now:  
Eliciting information about student learning

• Through conducting self- and peer-assessment, students can:
  – understand their learning progress
  – engage in reflective thinking of how they can improve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment criteria</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduce the setting &amp; characters in the opening</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Use the past tense correctly (e.g. walked, creamed)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Use figurative speech effectively to make the story more vivid (e.g. the use of metaphor / simile)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use a wide range of speech verbs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other comments for your classmate:

The climax of the story can be more exciting, like adding more adjectives to make the story more scary. The message of the story is not clear. You should not risk our life.
Where the learner is going: Identifying success criteria

- Identify the success criteria that will be used to assess student writing
- Articulate the success criteria in clear language and involve students in identifying, clarifying and applying these criteria

A Goal Setting Form for Students to Set Individual Learning Goals & Learning Goals for the Class
What the learner needs to get there: Providing descriptive feedback

• Use examples and models of strong and weak work to help students understand the assessment criteria:

(An Example of Weak Work)

Long time ago, in a city, an old man was in front of

(An Example of Strong Work)

Topic: The Magical Fortune Cookie
It was a usual school day. I paid good attention in the lessons as I always did. At recess time, I went to the tuck shop and bought myself some snacks as usual. However, something unusual happened. My classmate, Jacky, who had never talked to me before, is a shy cunning fox. He whispered to my ears, “You don’t have to buy snacks today, you can have this!” I opened the package and found that it was a fortune cookie! There was a note inside the cookie, “Close your eyes and make a wish!”
Possible Steps in Using the LPF to Enhance Students’ Writing Skills

1. Provide opportunities to engage Ss in a range of tasks that cover a variety of purposes and text types in the school’s writing programme.

2. Identify the requirements for each task in terms of the three domains in the LPF.

3. Develop a task-specific feedback sheet and set assessment criteria based on the task requirements.

4. Help Ss develop strategies to approach the writing tasks, e.g. highlighting keywords, drawing a mind map, structuring the text.

5. Ask Ss to complete the first draft independently. OR Help Ss develop the first draft through appropriate teaching strategies, e.g. shared writing.

6. Guide Ss to improve the first draft through shared writing, using a feedback sheet or conducting a discussion.
To provide suggestions on fine-tuning the existing writing programme by improving the design of the writing tasks to encourage imagination and foster creative thinking
Activity 6

1. Read the instructions of a writing task. Read a sample of the writing performance of the average S3 students in a school.

You have been asked by your English teacher to write a story about the day the last typhoon hit Hong Kong. She wants you to write about what happened and what you did on that day. Give your story an interesting title.

Source: Territory-wide System Assessment, 2014 (Secondary 3, English Language, Writing 9EW2)

2. Decide if the pre-writing activities provide adequate teacher support to help students make progression in the development of the writing skills. Make suggestions on how the activities can be improved.

Text-type: Story
Theme: The Weather
Suggested number of lessons: 4 (40-minute lessons)
Suggested target level: JS (Less advanced students)
Pre-writing Activities

1. Read lists of precautionary measures related to typhoon. Classify each measure as what can be done before, during, and after a typhoon.
2. Label each picture with a suitable weather-related word from the list.
3. Listen to the weather forecast in the evening. Note down the weather forecast for major cities in Asia.
Do the pre-writing activities provide adequate teacher support to help students to develop ideas for writing?

- Guiding students to generate and organise ideas on a given topic
- Preparing students to apply the vocabulary related to typhoon to the story
- Providing an opportunity to develop students’ creative thinking skills
Input: Structure and organisation

Do the pre-writing activities provide adequate teacher support to help students to organise ideas for writing?

- Raising students’ awareness of the overall structure and organisation of the text type

- Introducing some words/expressions for connecting ideas

- Developing students’ skills in writing well-structured body paragraphs

- Allowing students to revisit what they have learnt regarding the structure and organisation
Do the pre-writing activities provide adequate teacher support to help students to develop the language needed for the writing task?

- Consolidating students’ knowledge on selected vocabulary which they may use in the final writing task

- Equipping students with some vocabulary building strategies

- Providing students with phrases/expressions to describe typhoon scenes
Creativity in the writing classroom

To create a climate conducive to creativity, some principles can be employed ...

To develop learners’ creativity, we ask them to go beyond the given information, allow them time to think, strengthen their creative abilities, reward their creative efforts, value their creative attributes, teach them creative thinking techniques and the Creative Problem Solving model, and create a climate conducive to creativity.

English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6) 2004 P.75
**Using Creative Thinking Tools & Strategies**

*Think from a new angle and understand a topic / situation (e.g. typhoon day) more deeply*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Main character (a passenger on a vehicle/ a pedestrian on a street / a reporter for a TV station)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Classmate / Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Format</td>
<td>Story / Diary / Newsletter / Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Surprise holiday / House in chaos / Stuck in traffic / Stranded in airport or bus-stop / Work in rain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More Elaboration
Practise adding details to a given idea for further development.

**Where did people have fun on typhoon days?**
“People gathered by the pier.”

**What did people do to have fun?**
“People got wet by the waves.”

→ “People gathered by the pier to get drenched by the enormous waves.”

**What was the experience like? Show what you saw, heard & felt.**

“The thrilling experience was more like a theme park as people gathered by the pier to be drenched by the enormous waves crashing against the wall.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKW99zTj1tE
Damage
trees toppled
cars blown off roads
causing deaths
struck the coast
battering the city
depriving tens of thousands of power

Effect
bringing heavy rain and winds
drenched by spray from enormous waves

Typhoon

Inconvenience
stay at home
moved to safety
take precautions

Mind Map
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKW99zTj1tE
There are many ways students can practice creative writing...

1. Creative thinking tools
2. Image prompts
3. Writing prompts
4. Shared-writing
Using the LPF to Enhance Learning and Teaching

😊 To provide reference for understanding students’ learning progress

😊 To plan and review

😊 To help students progress along the learning continuum

😊 To provide a checklist of dos and don’ts in each and every lesson

😊 To record only

😊 To set benchmarks
Using the LPF for the Writing Skills to Plan Holistically for Effective Learning, Teaching and Assessment

- Understanding what students need to achieve as they progress in English language learning
- Identifying students’ strengths and areas for improvement
- Reviewing expectations of student learning
- Reviewing current teaching practices and content of learning
- Setting appropriate learning objectives
- Devising plans to provide support and challenge to help students achieve the learning outcomes
- Designing L&T activities / extra practices needed to progress to the next level of learning
- Setting appropriate assessment criteria
- Promoting quality feedback

Recap of Today’s Message
Understand what learners need to achieve as they progress in the development of writing skills

Provide suitable support and challenges that may take learners to the next level of learning
Reference

• English Language Curriculum Guide (Primary 1-6) 2004
• Lee, Icy. (2014) Workshop on “Assessment as Learning in the Writing Classroom” powerpoint slides
• TSA Report 2014
• Territory-wide System Assessment, 2014 (Secondary 3, English Language, Writing 9EW1)
• Territory-wide System Assessment, 2014 (Secondary 3, English Language, Writing 9EW2)
• Typhoon Usagi brings havoc to Hong Kong and southern China from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v(SKW99zTj1tE)