Reading Fair 2009

Pedagogical Decisions within the Constraints and Opportunities of the Language Environment and Student Ability

By
Ms Sally CHEUNG
C.C.C. Ming Yin College

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Who

- **Teachers**
  - 10 English teachers (including the Panel Head and one Seconded Teacher)

- **Students**
  - 200 students from five S.1 classes put in 9 groups
How – Planning

ELE KLA

PSHE KLA

Theme:
**Double R’s**
(Rights and Responsibilities)

Reading Texts

Focus Questions

Cross-KLA Activity

Greek Democracy

Topic: Democracy

ELE Textbook

History Textbook

[Image of Greek Democracy]
History

Topic: Greek Democracy

Theme: Double R’s

PSHE KLA

• Most teachers have the experience of teaching History.
• Most students find the History subject in the PSHE KLA uninteresting and remote from their real-life experience.
• Most students find learning History difficult in terms of vocabulary and display weaknesses in language use in History assignments.

• 2008 – the year of elections
• Connecting two KLAs:
  English - ‘Homecoming’
  History - ‘Greek Democracy’

• Rights & Responsibilities: moral duties as citizens & students
Reading Texts

Story
(2 sessions)

Informational text with content-area links
(3 sessions)

Poem
(1 session)

‘Work Hard Factory’
A simulation to revisit the theme, Double R’s, as explored in the three reading texts

Song
(2 sessions)
Focus Questions
Theme: Double R’s

1. Why are the children fighting for their rights?

2. When and why is it necessary to cast a vote?

3. In what ways is democracy realised in your school and family?

4. What makes a wonderful world?
Situation

• An old student has donated some money to set up a Saturday school ‘Saturday Smile’. It is - a place to study, play & have fun; and - a democracy.

• A competition is held to select the organisers of the activities at ‘Saturday Smile’. To take part in the competition, S1 students discuss in groups to:
  - suggest an activity that they were not able to have when they were primary students; and
  - write about the rights and responsibilities of the organisers and the participants of ‘Saturday Smile’.
Cross-KLA Activity – Saturday Smile

Activity: Treasure Hunt

When we were primary students, we could only play normal games, such as hide-and-seek. All of the games were set by our teachers.

Now, we suggest that we can set games by ourselves and also play more interesting games.

Our rights are:
- To decide where the things are placed.
- To look after the game during the game are holding.

Our responsibilities are:
- To set up things properly before the game starts.
- To pick up the things after we finishing the game.

Rights of the participants: Participants can enjoy the game.
Participants can use the things given by the game.

Responsibilities of the participants: Participants should obey the rules of the game.
Participants should keep the things in good condition.
The use of the simple present tense to describe one’s responsibilities

The use of the simple past tense to talk about past events, e.g. when and where the first democracy started

The use of the modals ‘can’ & ‘should’ to talk about one’s rights and responsibilities

The use of bullet points and ‘to-infinitives’ to list one’s rights and responsibilities

Students have to suggest to ‘Saturday Smile’ an activity that they were not able to have when they were primary students. Students also have to suggest the rights and responsibilities for both the organisers and the participants.
Constraints & Opportunities

- Teachers used to focus on asking comprehension questions when teaching English readers.

- Students used to follow teacher-centred instruction in learning English.
Pedagogical Decisions – Teaching Strategies for Reading

- Developing students’ strategies in silent reading
- Building in more questions for discussion

- Supported Reading
- Reading Aloud
- Independent Reading

Teacher Support

- Independent Reading
- Reading Workshops
- Reading Aloud
- Supported Reading
- Shared Reading
Pedagogical Decisions – Using graphic organisers in while-reading activities

Developing students’ skills in using graphic forms to organise information and ideas
Pedagogical Decisions –
Using open-ended questions in post-reading activities

• Developing students’ skills in interacting with the texts
• Providing opportunities for developing students’ critical thinking, creativity and communication skills