Collaborative Research and Development (“Seed”) Projects for the 2015/16 School Year

The Power of Digital Texts in Promoting Literacies across the Curriculum in the Junior Secondary English Classroom

English Language Education Section
Curriculum Development Institute
Education Bureau
Leung Shek Chee College
INTRODUCTION
School Background – Leung Shek Chee College

School

• A well-established girls’ school
• e-Learning – direction of development
• 37 tablets for students’ use

Teachers

• Devoted teachers
• Ready to incorporate e-learning
• Strong culture of collaboration

Students

• With above average language abilities
• Interested in the use of IT
• Well-behaved and cooperative
Connecting reading and writing using digital texts

Designing a Task in Reading and Writing across the Curriculum

**Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tryout 1</th>
<th>Tryout 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monster Hunting</td>
<td>What a Mess!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A digital text on animals
- A digital text on oil spill
- Web-based e-book

**Writing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tryout 1</th>
<th>Tryout 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A digital poster on hybrids</td>
<td>An educational video on endangered species</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Pic Collage
- Explain Everything
Focusses of the “Seed” Project

Incorporating e-learning in the junior secondary English classroom

Promoting reading and writing across the curriculum

“Seed” Project 2015/16
e-Learning
- to develop students’ reading skills and strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>e-Books</th>
<th>The use of electronic features, e.g. multimedia and masking, to develop students’ reading skills and strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making prediction</td>
<td>Inferencing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Facilitated with the e-feature of masking</td>
<td>➢ Facilitated with the use of videos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
e-Learning
- to develop students’ ability to make predictions

Making use of “masking” to:

- guide students to make prediction while reading
- demonstrate how to predict the content of the text

Anticipation Guide:
Before reading, students listen to or read several statements about key concepts presented in the text; and then choose to agree or disagree. They confirm whether these statements are true after reading.

Students predicting the content of the text with the picture in the e-book and an anticipation guide.
e-Learning
- to develop students’ inferencing skills

Making use of “videos” to facilitate inferencing through:
- engaging learners with moving images and sound
- providing a sensory experience that allows concepts and ideas to become an experience and come to life

Students inferring the feelings of birds after watching a video
**e-Learning**

- to support collaborative learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Google Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Setting up a class-based website for students to upload their assignments (text, image, audio and video) for peer learning and evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
making writing tasks purposeful as students can share their works online
facilitating assessment as learning as students read information prepared by
other groups and comment on their content and language use
promoting peer learning through the interactive e-platform
Google Sites as a learning platform to support collaborative learning.

Communication tool to support collaborative learning.

Student-teacher communication

Peer-to-peer communication

ingaging everyone including the quiet ones

The dangers faced by the wildlife

The lives of porpoises in Hong Kong are threatened lost their habitat degradation, vessel strike, and water pollution. They will face going from endangered to extinct because their habitat has been decreased coastal development. Their habitat is in danger. Due to high-speed ferries travelling between Hong Kong and Macau/Zhuhai, they can be hit or even killed. As Hong Kong water contain a lot of high level of organochlorines and heavy metals, these can weaken the porpoises' reproductive capability.
## Access to the Internet

Online dictionaries, encyclopedia and access to the Internet facilitate the research of information and data and extend students’ knowledge base to other subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students researching information on an assigned topic on the Internet before giving a presentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>develop students’ research skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enable students to further explore the topic and acquire knowledge about other subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>empower students to become makers of their own knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
e-Learning
- as sources of input and information to facilitate self-directed learning

- Instant explanation on terminology from the online encyclopaedia
- Acquisition of knowledge in other subjects
- Enriching the content of the writing task
**e-Learning**
- to enhance students’ writing skills and multiliteracies

### The production of digital texts facilitates:

- process writing
- development of multiliteracies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tryout 1</th>
<th>Tryout 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- creating a poster using the app “Pic Collage”</td>
<td>- creating an educational video using the app “Explain Everything”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Image of a poster created using Pic Collage and a dolphin created using Explain Everything*
Incorporating the production of digital texts facilitates process writing by:

- making rewriting authentic and purposeful
- enabling students to rehearse and revise their recording, which facilitates self-directed speaking practice
Incorporating the production of digital texts to develop students’ abilities to:

- present their ideas with diverse modes of communication (e.g. pictures, videos)
- communicate with the use of new technologies (e.g. apps)
FOCUS 2:
READING AND WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
Reading and Writing across the Curriculum
- to introduce appropriate texts to promote language across the curriculum
Promoting reading and writing across the curriculum with digital texts

English for general purposes

Module:
Tryout 1 - My amazing world
Tryout 2 – My environment

Using adjectives to describe a pet on a blog

Language ↔ Content

Using adjectives to describe a hybrid in a poster

Theme:
Tryout 1 – Animals resembling dragons
Tryout 2 – Oil spill

Using adjectives to describe the climate change in an essay

Topic:
Tryout 1 – Urban development
Tryout 2 – Climate change

English for academic purposes
Reading and Writing across the Curriculum
- to develop students’ understanding of language features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tryout 1</th>
<th>Tryout 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➢ To describe:</td>
<td>➢ To explain:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- adjectives</td>
<td>- connectives of cause and effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- relative clauses</td>
<td>- modal verbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- prepositional phrases</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The target language item, modal verbs, is used in the digital text to explain what the government can do.

The production of the digital texts provides the context for:
- the application of language features
- the development of multiliteracies
The new hybrid is named Lemur Cat. It is the hybrid of cat and Ring-tailed Lemur. Its body and tail are both black-and-white-striped. Its fur is black. It also has a smooth tail which is as thick as the elephant’s 200 cm long trunk. With the size of 2 to 9 kg, Lemur Cat swims very fast and climb trees easily. It eats grass and nuts, so it is a plant eater. Besides, it lives in the enormous grasslands in Africa. When it sneezes, it will giggle and roll on the ground.

Why is it produced?

It is produced because some parent wants to have a more intelligent pet with a hybrid body.
Recommendations

• Whole-school approach can facilitate the implementation of e-learning.

• Technical problems are inevitable but can be solved by e.g.:
  - Collaborative learning
  - Allowing time for students to familiarise themselves with the e-resources
  - Strategic introduction of e-resources
Future Plan of the “Seed” School

- Making use of digital texts as reading input
- Identifying suitable topics / themes & incorporating reading and writing across curriculum at the junior secondary level
- Extending the use of apps to facilitate the production of digital texts by students
Acknowledgement of the photographs

- **Slide 5:** Dolphin by nakhon100 (2008)
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/8058098@N07/2718571627/

- **Slides 12 & 13:** Daisy the porpoise by Ruth and Dave (2012)
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/ruthanddave/6828030642

- **Slide 16:** Dolphin 2 by SSShupe (2013)
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/ssshupe/10446062696

- **Slides 16 & 18:** Zebra by steam_rocket (2014)
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/8015956@N04/14154222295

- **Slides 16 & 18:** Panther leo by Blake Matheson (2009)
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/34328261@N02/4073462214

- **Slide 23:** IMG_1408 by brianfagan (2011)
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/diamonddace/5379416194

- **Slide 24:** Cat by Amayita (2007)
  https://www.flickr.com/photos/amayita/427349249

*Attribution (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/)*