

# Learning English through News

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Reading news enriches our life and offers great educational values. News covers a wide range of topics at the local, national and global levels from economy, sports, business and commerce, current world affairs, entertainment, lifestyle and culture to science and technology and many more, providing a rich resource for students to enhance language and personal development. The multiple benefits of news reading are shown in the infographic below:

## Benefits of News Reading



Learning English through News

## Developing a School News Literacy Programme: Unlocking the Power of News Reading in English Learning and Teaching

To promote news reading and develop students' literacy skills, higher-order thinking and proper values and attitudes, a **News Literacy Programme** can be designed with clear learning focuses and the strategic use of news articles (both printed and electronic). With careful planning and implementation, not only can the school News Literacy Programme broaden students' horizons and foster their self-directed learning, but it can also complement the promotion of different curriculum initiatives in school, such as values education (including national education, national security education and media and information literacy) and Language across the Curriculum.

- 1 Introduce knowledge and skills necessary for understanding and analysing news media (e.g. knowledge of text types and structures, skills for interpreting images, statistics and graphs, media and information literacy skills for verifying sources) progressively and systematically
- 2 Incorporate the development of enabling skills (e.g. vocabulary building strategies, phonics skills, dictionary skills) to enhance students' competence in independent reading and self-directed learning
- 3 Select and adapt a wide range of quality news from both print and electronic media as learning input, with due consideration given to:
  - **Length and Complexity:** Start with shorter, simpler news articles and media texts before progressing to more complex ones
  - **Relevance and Immediacy:** Focus on current/developing events to make reading relevant to students' daily life
  - **Age-appropriateness:** Choose themes and topics appropriate for young learners (e.g. Hong Kong athletes' achievements at the Olympic Games to highlight the priority value of perseverance)

- 4 Identify suitable entry points for language learning by tapping into the unique features of news (e.g. text types, writing styles, use of language, rhetorical functions, visual elements)

- 5 Combine text-based news articles with audio and visual content (e.g. photos, story maps, infographics, videos) to support comprehension and cater for learner diversity

- 6 Use news as springboards for designing integrated and real-world tasks (e.g. research projects, role plays, debates, multimedia presentations) and connecting students' learning experiences

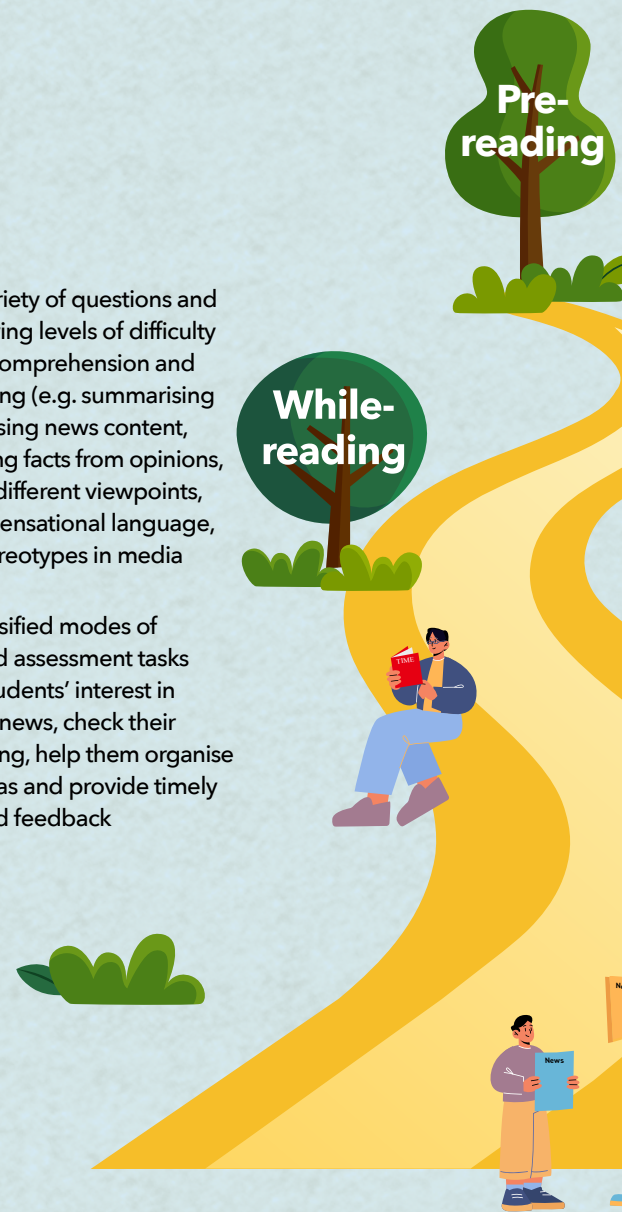
## Tips and Suggestions on the Design of a School News Literacy Programme

To be read in connection with the school cases overleaf

- 7 Engage students in reading an array of news related to the same theme/topic (e.g. Chinese culture, sports, science and technology) to deepen understanding, compare multiple perspectives, and develop different literacy skills and strategies

## Task and Activity Design

- Design a variety of questions and tasks of varying levels of difficulty to support comprehension and critical reading (e.g. summarising or paraphrasing news content, distinguishing facts from opinions, comparing different viewpoints, identifying sensational language, bias and stereotypes in media texts)
- Adopt diversified modes of activities and assessment tasks to arouse students' interest in reading the news, check their understanding, help them organise relevant ideas and provide timely and targeted feedback



## Whole-school Curriculum Planning

### Language-rich environment

- Make newspaper reading the talk of the school, for example:
  - setting aside a news reading session in the school timetable
  - sharing news headlines in the assembly
  - setting up reading walls and newspaper corners
  - inviting news editors/journalists to give talks

### Cross-curricular learning

- Collaborate with content subject teachers and the teacher-librarian to promote the use of news and Language across the Curriculum, for example:
  - identifying common themes for cross-curricular news reading
  - introducing an extensive news reading/viewing scheme
- Adopt diversified strategies, such as the life events approach and integrating cognition, affection and action, to connect news with students' daily lives and promote proper values and attitudes

### Co-curricular/life-wide learning

- Extend students' news-related learning experiences beyond the classroom through different activities, for example:
  - visiting Hong Kong News-Expo/news publishers
  - interviewing successful journalists
  - providing opportunities for student reporters to practise news reporting and journalistic writing in school publications/on campus TV

### Parental involvement

- Enlist support from parents to promote news reading and discussion at home



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## How Do Students Access News?



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## PARENTS' CORNER

Parents play an essential role at home in developing students' habit of reading news, especially when students can access news anytime and anywhere outside the classroom. Below are some tips for parents:

### Make it a shared experience

- choose suitable news publications/platforms together with your child
- read the news publications and explore different sections together (e.g. local news, sports, quizzes, horoscopes)
- encourage your child to think critically about the news they have read/listened to/viewed and share their views

### Create a routine

- set a designated family time for reading newspapers and/or viewing media news together (e.g. at breakfast/dinner or while commuting)
- choose topics appropriate for your child and engage in meaningful conversations about them on a regular basis

### Encourage participation/contribution

- encourage your child to send entries to sections that invite contributions from children (e.g. quizzes, photography, drawings, short stories, poems, letters to the editor)







# Promoting News Reading through Issuing a Monthly Bulletin in Hong Kong Chinese Women's Club College

Hong Kong Chinese Women's Club College has adopted various strategies to promote newspaper reading. By issuing the school-based **Monthly Bulletin**, the curriculum leaders aim to **enhance student's reading skills, widen their language exposure and develop their social awareness.**



## Monthly Bulletin

- ➔ 1-2 issue(s) each month with 4 pages only
- ➔ News articles carefully chosen in terms of **topics** and **text types**
- ➔ **Questions** set for extended tasks

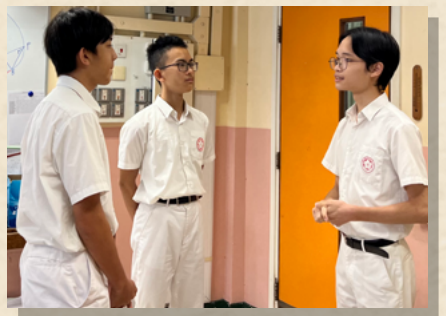
## Leaving No One Behind - A Whole-school Approach

- ✓ Besides the **reading lessons**, one particular home period is designated to reading English newspapers.
- ✓ Students can choose to read the school-based **Monthly Bulletin** or the **subscribed e-newspapers** on tablets.



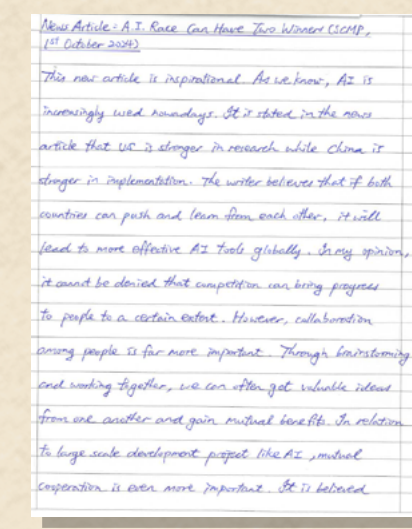
## Tailor-made Learning & Teaching Activities

- ✓ English teachers, based on the topics and text types, incorporate news articles from the Monthly Bulletin into **daily teaching** and design class-based **learning activities**, including:
  - ➔ group discussions
  - ➔ textual analyses



## Different Modes of Assignments

- ✓ In addition to traditional newspaper cutting and commentary, students are also engaged in tasks that require interaction with newspaper articles from the **word, sentence, textual levels** to **conceptual level** to develop their knowledge, skills and values and attitudes, such as:
  - ➔ **vocabulary journals**
  - ➔ **presentations**
  - ➔ **written responses**

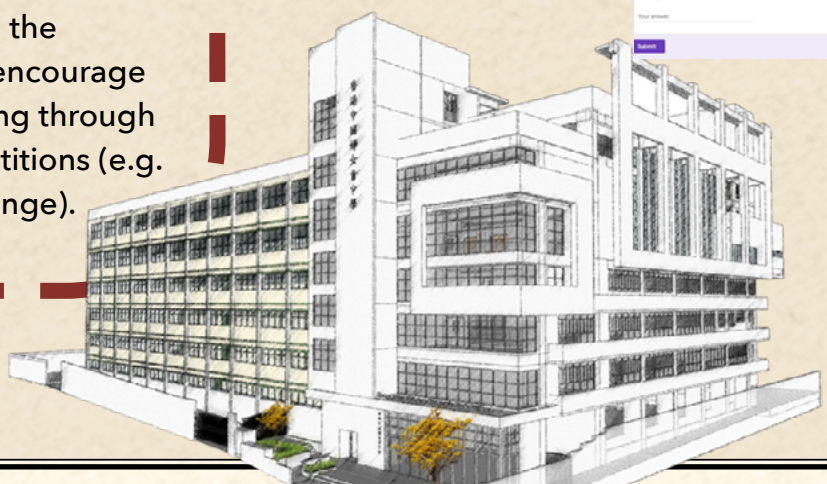
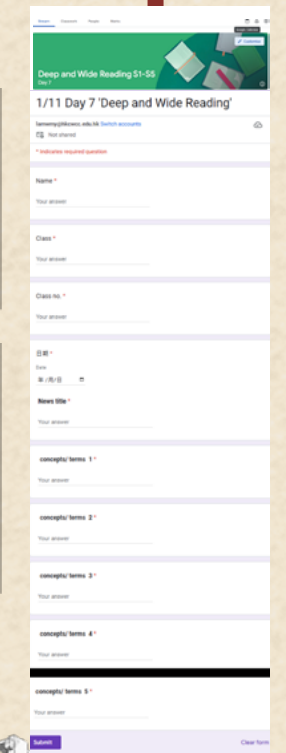
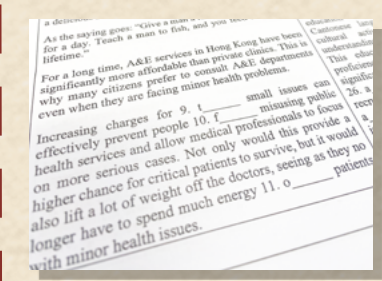
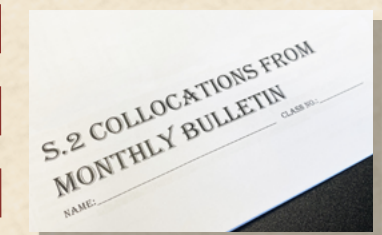


## Promoting Language across the Curriculum

- ✓ Newspaper articles are strategically chosen to map with the school-based priority values (e.g. an article about a patriotic song debuts in Hong Kong schools to develop students' national identity). English teachers can seamlessly integrate **values education**, including national security education (NSE) in English lessons. The English Panel has collaborated with the **school library** to encourage newspaper reading through inter-class competitions (e.g. vocabulary challenge).

## Promoting Self-directed Learning

- ✓ Newspaper articles in the Monthly Bulletin are compiled into **self-directed learning booklets** for students to revisit issues and viewpoints discussed and vocabulary learnt.



# Developing a School News Literacy Programme: The Case of The True Light School of Hong Kong

In The True Light School of Hong Kong, news reading is used as a “super-connector” to make students’ learning experiences more coherent and meaningful.



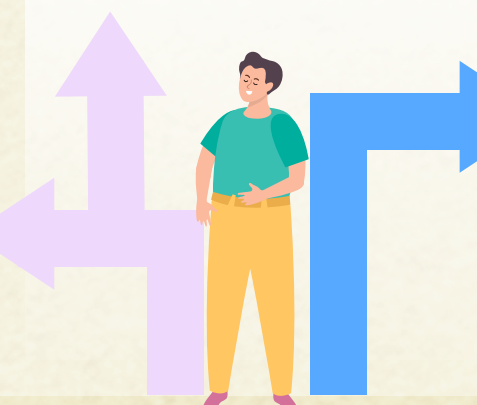
## Teachers have made concerted efforts to:

- ➔ provide students with access to both printed and electronic news materials
- ➔ nurture students’ higher-order thinking skills through the thinking routine “CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE”, which requires students to:

**CONNECT**  
make text-to-text, text-to-self and text-to-world connections



**EXTEND**  
synthesise learning from and across different Key Learning Areas



**CHALLENGE**  
consider new/multiple perspectives on current issues



For example, based on a featured article about K(orean)-pop labels, teachers have set the following NiE discussion questions to help students “CONNECT, EXTEND, CHALLENGE” their learning:

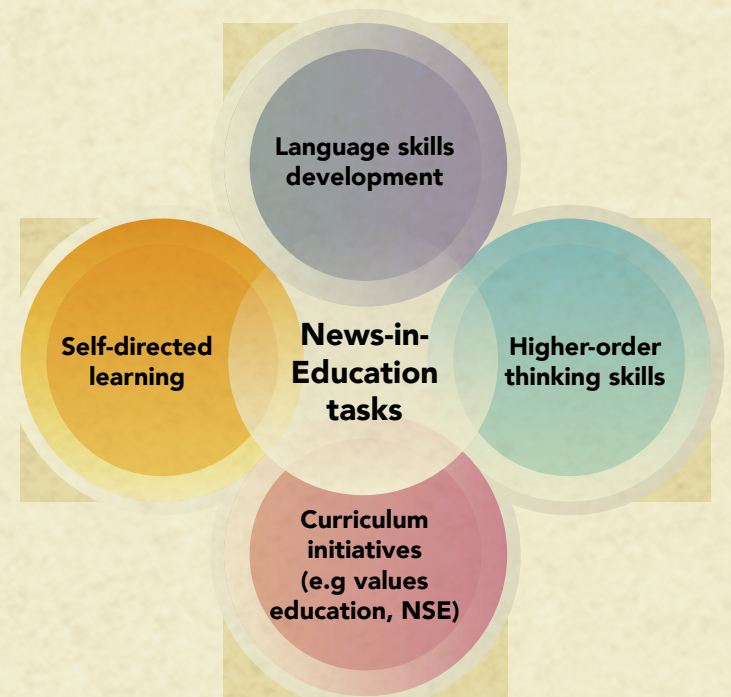
**Connecting to self**  
In what way might the rise of non-Korean members in K-pop influence your attitudes towards inclusivity and global collaboration in the music industry?

**Extending to the subject of Citizenship and Social Development**  
What economic impacts might the inclusion of non-Korean members have on the K-pop industry and the global music market?

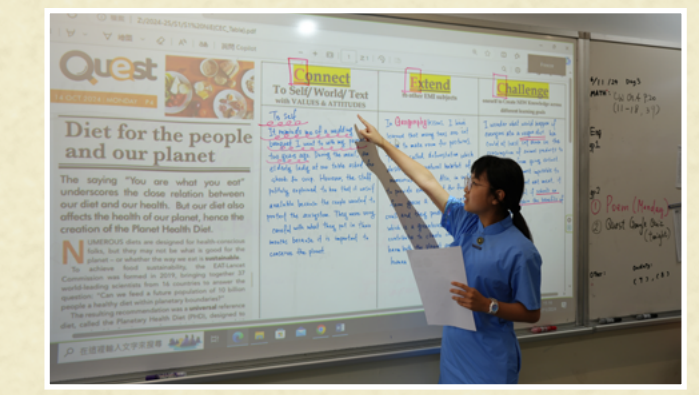
**Challenging a perspective**  
Do you think a K-pop group without any Korean members can still be considered a K-pop group?



- ➔ infuse into the design of NiE tasks different curriculum initiatives (e.g. making a pitch to promote Hong Kong’s pop culture scene to demonstrate the creative use of English)



- ➔ encourage students’ multimodal responses to news content (e.g. creating a poster to promote a national music festival)



- ➔ extend learning beyond the English Language classroom by engaging students in further reading (e.g. researching about cultural festivals in the world) and deeper exploration of the issues (e.g. reflecting in connection to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations)

- ➔ equip students with media and information literacy skills (e.g. evaluating information from different sources, comparing the presentation of content on different media)

