

Example 4

Enhancing the learning effectiveness of General Studies for Primary Schools through e-learning

Fung Kai Liu Yun Sum Memorial School has used e-learning since the 2013/14 school year. A Primary 4 General Studies lesson on “Hong Kong under the Japanese Occupation” that illustrates how e-learning helps promote interesting, interactive and self-directed learning in General Studies is presented as follows.

Lesson preparation

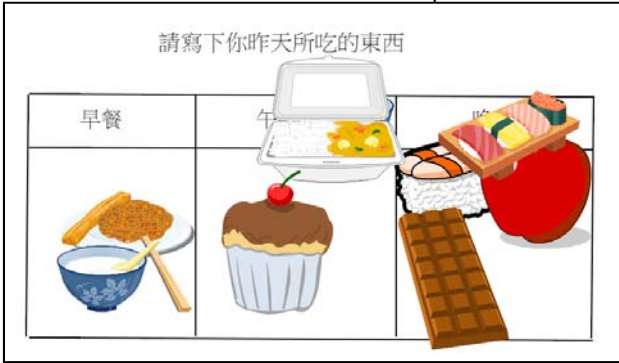
Before the lesson, Mr Lam Ho Fung, the panel chairperson of General Studies, designs and uploads learning activities, which are complemented by reading materials and video clips, to the e-platform. Students are to prepare for the lesson by watching a video clip that provides background knowledge on the fall of Hong Kong and answering questions set by the teacher on the e-platform.

Mr Lam recalls that in the past, when teachers asked students to study learning materials before class, they did not really know whether the students had actually prepared for class. With the e-platform, students must take lesson preparation seriously, as teachers can easily check if they have read the assigned materials. The information uploaded by students in their pre-lesson preparation gives Mr Lam an idea of their prior knowledge on Hong Kong under the Japanese Occupation and any learning difficulties they might have encountered. Based on the information, he can conduct group discussions in which students can apply their prior knowledge or address difficult learning points during the lesson.

During the lesson

To enhance students’ understanding of and arouse their empathy for life during the Japanese Occupation, students are asked to list their daily intake of food by using the drag-and-drop function of the e-platform. The responses of the whole class are then listed on the screen.

Students listing their meals using the drag-and-drop function of the e-platform.



After viewing the students' responses, Mr Lam asks them to study the information on the e-platform about food rationing in Hong Kong during the Japanese Occupation and asks whether they think 6.4 taels of rice per person per day is reasonable. Students discuss with their groupmates and upload their views to the e-platform. Mr Lam selects some students to further elaborate their views and then concludes the lesson with a debriefing.

Mr Lam reflects that compared with past General Studies lessons, the learning atmosphere has become more interactive with the implementation of e-learning and lessons have become more interesting. Students are excited when they see the responses of their fellow classmates on the screen and receive instant feedback on their responses. e-Learning also increases students' learning motivation. Students are more attentive and become more serious learners because they know that their views will be shown and commented on by their classmates. Students who would otherwise be reluctant to answer questions are more willing to express their views using the tablets. In addition, they learn other students' views, which can broaden their perspectives and stimulate further thinking. By studying and evaluating the answers of other classmates, students reflect on the inadequacies of their own answers and may seek out ways to improve.

Extended learning

The school also uses the e-platform to promote self-directed learning. Extended learning materials are prepared for each topic, and students are asked to complete self-study exercises. For example, on this topic, Mr Lam provides a video clip and reading materials related to the military notes on the e-platform. Students can further enquire into the effects of military notes on different people. Students also study the local anti-Japanese activities by themselves on the e-platform and can learn the history of members of Liu's clan who joined the Dongjiang Column.



Memoirs of an old Dongjiang Column guerrilla.

With e-learning, learning becomes more interesting, interactive and self-directed. Students are highly motivated and take responsibility for learning by effectively engaging in lesson preparation and extended learning. In addition, with students' prior preparation, class time can be used more effectively, with more time available for group discussion, student presentations and elaboration of views and debriefings. The teacher's role as a facilitator is thus enhanced.

If you are interested in e-learning, read also Example 5.