

NET Scheme News

Reading Strikes Back!

PLP-R (KS1) Conference reported by: **Trevor Daw**

August, 2005

The Primary Literacy Programme-Reading (KS1) Conference held at Holy Family Canossian Primary School, Kowloon Tong on 7th May, 2005 was opened by Chris Wardlaw, DS(EM)5.

The conference was very well attended and showcased the successes and energy generated by this initiative.

Various parts of the programme were cleverly linked together by presenters, Tong Shiu Chi and Nancie Brown utilising a key reading strategy – storytelling. The presenters wove the PLP-R story into an epic tale. The magic and power of reading was depicted making a comeback into the lives and imagination of Hong Kong students.

David Bartlett enthralled the audience with his expressive reading aloud demonstration of “The Gruffalo” proving once again that we all like to be read to, irrespective of age.

Of particular interest were the views on the project expressed by a principal, Mr Chow Yu Hong of St Andrew’s Catholic Primary School.

An advisory teacher’s PLP-R diary, presented by Kirsten Freeman, teased out the challenges and successes she has encountered in supporting her PLP-R schools.

The NET’s perspective was clearly portrayed by Gary Knight whilst Ms Yeung Ka Hing and Mr Ng Kai Him described their roles as PLP-R coordinators in Christian Alliance H C Chan Primary School [PM and AM respectively].

Videos of satisfied children and parents giving their views of the programme, completed the picture. The conference brought together the stakeholders in the PLP-R. The shared experiences helped to re-charge the programme’s energy and restate its direction.

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**David Bartlett:
reading aloud at
the PLP-R
Conference**



**PLP-R Conference Committee
Members Jenny Wai and Hyman
Wong welcome the participants.**

One NET One School

Peter Broe (Assistant Project Manager)

With the current round of NET recruitment underway, plans continue to enhance the provision of NETs under the Primary NET scheme. The objective of the one NET one school programme is to have a Native-speaking English teacher in each participating Primary School. Currently most schools under the PNET scheme share a NET between two schools.

The pace of implementation of the Enhanced (1 NET / 1 School) program is affected by the rate at which suitable NETs can be recruited. Various criteria have been established in order to prioritise which pairs of schools will have access to newly recruited NETs. These criteria include;

- The decision of the schools to apply for the enhanced NET provision
- Readiness of schools (it is expected that schools applying for the enhanced provisions will have completed at least one full NET contract),
- Combined Number of Classes; in general pairs of schools with a greater number of classes will have priority over those with fewer classes
- Proven effective deployment of NET for at least one contract will strengthen schools' applications for 1 NET one school.

Guidelines have been disseminated to schools which address the transition phase for 1 NET 1 school. These guidelines suggest an 8 week training/transition programme during which the new NET works along side the existing NET.

Editorial

Simon Tham (Chief Curriculum Development Officer)

The question has often been asked, "Why do we need deployment guidelines for NETs?" In the early days of the P NET Scheme, the Advisory Teaching Team soon became aware of a great range of deployment options used by the schools resulting in considerable variance in effectiveness. As the NET Section is accountable to the government, it is crucial that we do all we can to ensure the NETs are deployed in the most effective way possible. Of course the needs of schools and NETs can vary too and we need to be flexible in adapting the guidelines to best suit both parties. In order to establish authentic English language environments in schools and have the local teachers using innovative teaching and learning strategies while co-teaching with the NET, it is essential that the deployment is appropriate. As we draw near the end of three years of the P NET Scheme, there are obvious signs that these guidelines are working as we witness more schools embracing them thus leading to more collaboration between NETs and local colleagues.

Why do we need deployment guidelines for NETs?



NET Gary Knight addressing the PLP-R Conference

Second Language Learning

Elizabeth Leontieff-Johnson (Advisory Teacher)

The optimal environment for second language learning is one that nurtures natural spontaneous conversation and extensive dialogue within socially meaningful contexts between educators, parents and learners (Vygotsky 1978, Krashen 1988).

As children interact and play with others at school and at home, they develop specific models of communication, expression and explanation (Tharp & Gallimore 1988). Goodman & Goodman (1990) believe this social use of language forms the basis for literacy.

Therefore, when it comes to language learning, the authenticity of the environment and the rapport between the participants are crucial for making the learner feel part of this environment to ensure effective learning takes place. These elements rarely exist in traditional classrooms.

Best Practice

Fanny TSUI (Advisory Teacher)

At Fung Yiu Hing Primary School, Marian Tighe and SET Janet Yu have been making excellent progress with their P4 class in their shared writing lessons. By the use of prompt cards and taking care to ask similar questions in the oral segment of the lessons, Marian and Janette have found that the students have quickly become familiar with the language patterns. It has been possible to do this by carefully structuring the topics the children write on. The teachers report that it is most pleasing to see that the students of lower ability are now participating to a much higher degree in the lessons.



NET Marian Tighe and SET Janet Yu using prompt cards in shared writing.



Students from Baptist Rainbow Primary School making the most of visits to the local shopping centres and community venues.

NET Bruce Campbell and his SET and LETS use an experiential approach to teaching English with their P2 and P3 classes at Baptist Rainbow Primary School. This year they have taken their students on excursions to a local supermarket, a large toy shop, a fast food outlet and the local park. Advisory teacher, Fanny Tsui reported that the students are very excited and enthusiastic about the visits and that the experiences give real meaning to the vocabulary and language patterns used in their English classes. The approach has resulted in the students being much more motivated to learn a new language.

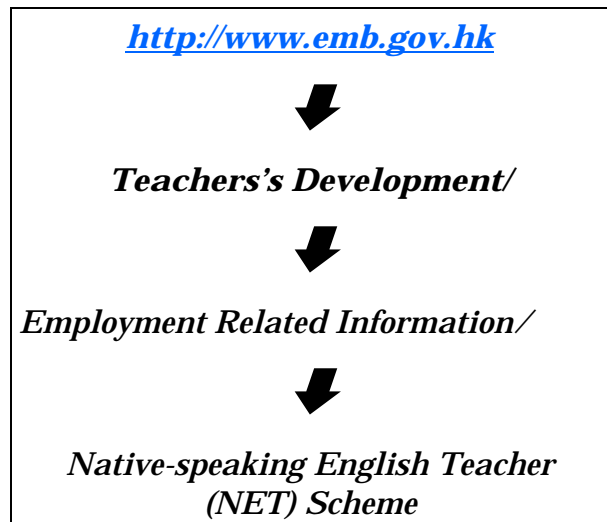
NET Website Updated

Hyman WONG (Advisory Teacher)

The NET Section Website has been updated. The site will now provide interested parties with an overview of the Professional Development opportunities being offered by the Section. These workshops deal both with lesson structure and material development and with ways in which collaboration within the English Panel can be developed.

The site also provides information on the role of the Advisory Teaching Team (ATT) in supporting Curriculum and Professional Development in schools. The site describes the ways in which Advisory Teachers (ATs) interact with schools in order to promote English Language development in schools.

A further recent addition to the site is a copy of the current deployment guidelines applying to NETs in schools. These guidelines have been updated to include the enhancement of the PNET scheme to the I NET I School model.



The flow chart above indicates the pathway by which the NET Section website may be accessed.

English Language Arts Promotes Phonics

Peter Broe (APM)

A series of workshops is in progress which link the use of poetry to the promotion of phonetic awareness. Teachers attending these sessions are encouraged to use the various forms of poetry to add humour and fun to English lessons.

In particular the nature of word 'families' is explored to heighten students' awareness of rhyme and pronunciation.

Teachers attending the workshops have greatly enjoyed working in groups to produce examples of poems following poetic structures such as limericks, acrostics and cinquains.

Various web-sites which deal with the role of poetry in the teaching of English are mentioned and their material is incorporated into the workshops.

Teachers have been relieved to discover that students can use existing poems as templates for their own works. By changing a few words, student can produce their own works which are fun to share or recite individually or in groups.

It is hoped that after this series of workshops, the NET Section will collate an anthology of students' poems submitted by participating teachers.

As a small teaser and in order to encourage other teachers we include a poem by a student whose teacher has implemented some of the practices from the workshops.

My Dog

My dog catches a frog.
He gets whole body wet.
He comes home in a hurry.
Because he wants to eat curry.
He catches a cat, that is my neighbour's pet.
They like to fight and that's not right.
My dog bumps his head and sleeps on my bed.

Wendy Shi (P. 6 L)
True Light Middle School