

Aiming at a greater success through realising our students' potential

"I can no other answer make but thanks, and thanks, and ever thanks." (Twelfth Night, Shakespeare)

2 February 2013 was a memorable day that saw hundreds of educators, including NETs and LETs, school principals, academics and Bureau colleagues, attending and enjoying our Primary NET Scheme 10th Anniversary Conference – Literacy for a World City. With drama on stage, an Oscar theme and engaging montage, the packed school hall of C. C. C. Heep Woh Primary School (Cheung Sha Wan) was filled with cheers, applause and camaraderie.

The Conference will be remembered not only for the theatrical ambience, but also for the inspiring ideas shared in the two keynote addresses, one on literacy challenges in the transition from KS2 to KS3 and one on motivating children to learn English in the Digital Age, as well as the professional sharing in the twenty-three parallel sessions that addressed a range of literacy-related topics.

On a lighter side, the exhibition in the covered playground provided our guests with an opportunity to take a trip down memory lane where the achievements of the various projects undertaken by the NET Section, in collaboration with our primary schools, were showcased and celebrated. The icing on the cake was the puppet show designed and performed by our Advisory Teachers and seconded teachers on the mini-stage. As for the climax, it was definitely the moment when, escorted by our Regional NET Coordinators and Project Coordinator in Blues Brothers costumes, the Godfather, Simon Tham, founding Head of the NET Section, made his entrance to present Certificates of Appreciation to each of our long-serving NETs on stage.

The feedback from our guests indicates that, apart from being a rewarding experience, the Conference has given an added impetus to the Primary NET Scheme by rekindling the fond memories of the key milestones. The success of the event was attributed not only to the gifts of those who simply shone on stage, including our talented Advisory Teachers, but also to the beautiful and dedicated work of the session presenters, the staff of C. C. C. Heep Woh Primary School and all other members of the NET Section. It was their professionalism, keen sense of responsibility and problem-solving capabilities that helped make the Conference successful and one of a kind.

In an international professional community like the NET Section, diversity in terms of cultural background, professional experience and practice is our wealth. We celebrate it and we believe it drives innovation. The success of the Conference has proved this and so has the range of our signature literacy programmes¹ which have been developed from scratch since 2004.

However, we understand that diversity among our students remains a challenge in many of our classrooms and may be seen in a negative light in some. In view of this, we have been exploring and trying tirelessly different approaches to addressing the diverse needs of our students. In the coming years, taking a more proactive approach to addressing diversity, we will focus more on realising students' potential through promoting READ – reading across the curriculum, e-Learning, assessment as and for learning, and differentiated instruction.



Mr Simon THAM (left), the 'Godfather' and founding Head of the NET Section, sharing an Oscar moment with the current Head, Mr Joe LEUNG

¹ These include the Primary Literacy Programme – Reading and Writing (PLP-R/W) (Key Stage 1), the Key Stage 2 Integration Programme (KIP), the Supported Reading in English (SuRE) Programme and the Strategies for English Learning through Language Arts and Reading (STELLAR) Programme.



A moment of cheers, applause and camaraderie as 10-year NETs assemble in the school hall of C.C.C. Heep Woh Primary School during the Anniversary Conference

Building on what we have achieved through our signature literacy programmes, we will continue to engage our NETs and foster their collaboration with our LETs in enriching the school-based English curriculum and their students' English learning experiences. We will place more emphasis on providing students with exposure to different types of quality text on topics that appeal to their intellectual curiosity, and on encouraging students to 'interact' with the text that they are reading, thereby developing their critical literacy.

As shared by Dr Rodney Jones, one of the keynote speakers in the Conference, it requires more thoughtful steps in the Digital Age to understand and address our students' needs. In the race between pedagogy and technology, we, as educators, need to keep abreast of the ways of using technology to create an environment that supports learning beyond the classroom and school hours while providing multiple choices to meet students' needs. At the same time, we need to equip our students with information skills with which they explore the web, learn to make right choices and share what they have learnt from the web to support each other's learning, thereby developing a greater sense of ownership of their learning.

Assessment is an integral part of differentiated instruction. It allows teachers to know where their students are and it informs instruction. Good assessment tasks should also be good learning tasks. They provide opportunities for students to demonstrate and apply their learning, to learn about their own progress, and to plan and improve their learning. We do have quite a good collection of such

tasks in the literacy programmes and resource packages that we have developed for different key learning stages. We will continue to enrich the programmes and packages to meet a wider range of learning needs. In a classroom that embraces diversity, learning is facilitated through the differentiation of the content, process, product and environment. In the coming years, we will work with our NETs and LETs to promote assessment as and for learning and differentiated instruction. By so doing, we will provide multiple avenues for our students to realise their potential, to respect each other's differences and to learn from each other.

In this issue of the newsletter, we have contributions from our NETs, LETs, our own colleagues and seconded teachers on catering for learner diversity. We also have personal thank-you notes from some of our long-serving NETs about the experience they had at the Conference in February. Adding value to this issue are the experiences that some of our primary students share of English learning with the help of their NETs.

As educators, we understand that it requires a shared commitment to create a learning environment where diversity is embraced. Let's put our heads and hands together to help our students realise their potential and achieve success in learning.

Joe LEUNG
Chief Curriculum Development Officer (CCDO), NET Section

Conference Album







NETs' Statements



I had the great pleasure of attending the Primary NET Scheme 10th Anniversary Conference on 2nd of February, 2013. It was a fabulous and fun event organised by the Native-speaking English Teacher Section. Interesting workshops were conducted and Certificates of Appreciation were presented to the NETs who have completed 10 years of dedicated service in Hong Kong. I was one of the privileged teachers to receive this certificate and it was a great honour to be appreciated in this way. On behalf of all the Native-speaking teachers who attended, I would like to thank the NET Section for making it a truly memorable event and supporting us every step of the way.

Aaliya JEFFERS, PNET, Buddhist Chung Wah Kornhill Primary School

It was great to see and catch up with NETs I met at the Induction ten years ago. I loved the way we were recognised by country and the Oscar theme. It was really nice to be recognised for all the positive work we do in Hong Kong schools. I was so touched that my principal took the time to attend the ceremony. Thanks a million!

Cheryl BRENNAN, PNET, SKH Ka Fuk Wing Chun Primary School



The Primary NET Scheme 10th Anniversary Conference was an enjoyable occasion with its relaxed tone and presentation style. It afforded me the chance to meet and reconnect with a number of people I have known over the years. It was also rewarding to share a stage with other NETs and be recognised and appreciated for our lengthy service.

Russell LAYFIELD, PNET, TWS St. Bonaventure Catholic School



As a ten-year NET, I was moved by the Anniversary Conference. The event helped me to find meaning and purpose to my time here. The conference organisation and activities, including the excellent presentations, made me feel extremely proud to have served on the NET Scheme and to have worked with so many fine local and non-local colleagues.

Daniel HANNAH, AT, NET Section



STUDENTS PAYING TRIBUTE TO THEIR NETS



CCC Kei Faat Primary School

I like writing letters to Ms. Faith because she will reply back to me.

Nancy Choi (3B)

I like Ms. Faith because she teaches me English and encourages me.

Abby Woo (3A)



Marymount Primary School

Ms. Louise taught me drama in P3. It was fun. I like her.

I like English class because we learn about many useful things.

Two students (anonymous)



TWGHs Ko Ho Ning Memorial Primary School

My English teacher is Mrs Czermak. She is from Canada. She is kind and always wears a smile on her face. I like her sweet smile. We play games and sing songs in the English room. We are happy in the English room. I like Mrs Czermak.

Cheng Fei Fung, Angela (3B)

I'm a P.6 student now and I will soon study in a secondary school. It makes me look back and think about the time when I was in P.1 and saw Mrs Czermak, the foreign teacher, in our school. When I was in P.1, I would bow my head every time I met Mrs Czermak. I knew more about her later because I saw her in some English lessons.

Mrs Czermak always asked us "How are you?" before she started her lesson. Then she would read a story to us. Once she had finished, we had to read with her. Then she taught us the words that we did not know. After that we needed to use the new words to write sentences. Once I wrote a sentence and Mrs Czermak read it to my classmates and said, "Calvin has written a good sentence. Well done, Calvin!" I was very excited with the praise. Then Mrs Czermak gave me a small, white shell which I have kept till now!

I had a great time with Mrs Czermak from P1 to P3. However, I have not had lessons with her since P.4. Although I can't have lessons with Mrs Czermak, I meet her at school! I enjoy the time when I meet her during recesses and lunch breaks.

I hope Mrs Czermak will teach in my school forever.

Wong Hong Ki, Calvin (6B)



Pentecostal Gin Mao Sheng Primary School

I really enjoy reading stories with Miss Jo-Ann. The way she tells stories is very interesting and easy to understand. She is very nice to all students so I love her very much.

My favourite activity is singing English songs with Miss Jo-Ann because the rhythm is very pleasant and we always dance when we sing these songs. We learn lots of new words from the songs too.

I hope I could have lessons with Miss Jo-Ann every day!

Kwok Hoi Ching (3C)



PLK Chee Jing Yin Primary School

My NET teacher is Mr. Wong. He teaches us once a week. I like his lessons because he is friendly and kind to us. He is funny too because he tells us jokes sometimes. I have learned a lot of new words from him and he teaches me how to remember them.

Mr. Wong helped me a lot in my English Solo Verse Speaking at the Hong Kong School Speech Festival this year. He taught me how to read the words and how to make the poem sound better by using expression. It was not easy but Mr. Wong was very patient with me.

Andes Ng (4A)

I really like learning English with the NETs in class because I can learn more about writing skills so that I can write different kinds of text types well. We can do different activities and games. The NETs make a difference in the English lessons.

Chan Wing Sam (6B)



QES Old Students' Assn. Branch Primary School

Miss Nicole is my teacher. She is a Canadian. She teaches me English. She is tall and has long hair. She is always kind. Miss Nicole looks like an angel.

She teaches me how to speak fluently in English. I think it is very useful and enjoyable.

One recess, I saw her in the playground. She said to me, 'Well done, Hinson! Keep up with the good work! You should keep helping others and work hard!' I felt warm at that time.

I like her because she is very nice.

Law Pak Hin, Hinson (3A)

Miss Nicole is my English teacher. Her eyes are bright like stars. She has long hair and she lives in Hong Kong but she is a Canadian.

She teaches me English. When I use an incorrect word, she helps correct me. Then, I will try again. On our school Open Day, she told an interesting story and played with us. I felt very good and happy.

She is a happy lady. She smiles like an angel. I feel warm because she is nice to me.

I like her because she is very kind and pretty.

Wong Hoi Lam (3C)

CNEC Lui Ming Choi Primary School

I like English because it is fun. We read and listen to English books during lessons. The reading bag has English books for me to read at home.

Tina Fong (3A)

In lessons, I can read, sing and play English games.

Mr. Sowden is fun! He plays with us.

Raymond Yue (3A)



Learner Diversity

Catering for Learner Diversity : Live in Reading Fair 2013

"Impressive!" was the verdict after watching the demonstrations by teachers and students of TWGHs Ko Ho Ning Memorial Primary School and TWGHs C.Y. Ma Memorial College at the Reading Fair 2013 held on 20 April. The audience was treated to simulated classroom lessons showcasing teachers modeling and explicitly teaching reading strategies, and students engaging in guided and independent practice using these and other previously learned strategies.

TWGHs Ko Ho Ning Memorial Primary School focused on using shared reading to explicitly teach decoding and comprehension skills and strategies. With the aid of reading strategies posters, the teacher explained to the students what the strategies are, why and when they should be used, and how they can be applied. Then, students in cooperative learning groups actively engaged with the poem, the text used in the lesson, using a number of strategies with teacher or peer support to gain meaning from it.

TWGHs C.Y. Ma Memorial College demonstrated the reciprocal teaching of reading to illustrate how motivated early fluent readers at junior secondary school could improve their decoding and comprehension reading skills and strategies. In the lesson, teachers used a simple and repeated scaffold procedure to model and explicitly teach a range of reading skills and strategies. Students were then given guided practice as a class before breaking into ability groups, during which the audience could circulate and see the students in action. In three groups, students showed how they explicitly applied decoding reading strategies and comprehension strategies to a piece of text. The audience was particularly impressed by the independent student-led group.

The NET Section would like to thank the teachers and students of TWGHs Ko Ho Ning Memorial Primary School and TWGHs C.Y. Ma Memorial College for their participation and enthusiasm in sharing their teaching and learning experiences at the Fair.

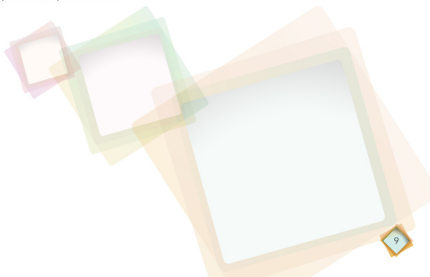
Nicola GRAM, Joanna MOE, and Helena WONG, RNCs & AT, NET Section



"Young teacher" shares reading strategies that his group used to decode unfamiliar words



"Impressive" independent student-led group



Providing Multiple Avenues for Language Learning : QCOBASS for the Third Straight Year

QCOBASS continued to ExEL in 2012/13! This is the third year that my school, Queen's College Old Boys' Association Secondary School (QCOBASS), has participated in the Extending English Language (ExEL) Seed project run by the NET Section. On a personal level, I am thrilled to have been seconded to the NET Section for this year's ExEL project as this has allowed me to play a more active role in providing QCOBASS students with opportunities to learn English beyond the English classroom.

This year, our ExEL aim has been to extend and integrate English language learning with content learning in Form Three Physics by developing and implementing cross-curricular units of work. With the support of the NET Section, a school-based ExEL team was formed. It is headed by the Vice-Principal (VP), Mr Tong, and includes the English Panel Chair (EPC), other English Panel Members (EPMs), the Physics Panel Chair (PPC), the Regional NET Coordinator (RNC) from the NET Section and myself. It was decided that Form 3A would be our target ExEL class and that they would learn about the physics of Infrared (IR) and Ultra-Violet (UV) Radiation in English.

The plan was to implement ExEL lessons in November 2012. Six IR/UV Radiation lessons were to be taught in English by the Physics teacher. Prior to that, six co-planning meetings were held during which the English and Physics teachers collaborated on the development of the lesson plans and materials. Issues such as the language demands of the content subject materials were often discussed and requisite scaffolding was always included to cater to learner diversity.

To prepare students for the language demands of the IR/UV Physics unit, several complementary tasks were tailored for two English language lessons. For example, a superhero called 'SupIR Kid' was created and a set of exercises about the hero and his/her IR equipment was designed. Specifically, a short story with comprehension questions and eleven Reader's Theatre scripts were created for two English language lessons. The short story provided students with some 'SupIR Kid' background and was assigned as homework. To introduce Reader's Theatre, the EPs, the RNC and I co-taught an English lesson to help students understand and to give them time to practice. The result was eleven groups presenting Reader's Theatre in English during their Physics lesson!

Although materials developed in this year's project may not have been perfect, the success of the NET Section's ExEL project at QCOBASS has been the culture of collaboration that it has fostered among EPs and other content subject teachers. There was a positive sense of teamwork within the ExEL team where everyone was keen to make a contribution to accomplish a well-designed co-curricular unit of work.

Support from the school administration (Principal and Vice-Principal) was integral to the success of the project and the resultant establishment of the collaborative culture as it has facilitated time-table arrangements for co-planning and, crucially for myself, the secondment arrangement.

The content subject teacher's positive attitude towards using English as the medium of instruction for the IR/UV Radiation unit was key to the team's collaboration. Always modest about his English language abilities, he conducted the unit lessons entirely in English using a variety of activities such as pair work, group presentations, experiments and video. His teaching strategies were multi-sensory



S3A students discuss a physics infrared experiment in English



Reader's Theatre performed in English... in the Physics classroom!

in the visual, auditory and kinesthetic aspects, which were essential to cater for the various learning styles and interests of the students. To foster his professional development, he was keen on discussing ways of presenting language (vocabulary and structures) with the team members. He quickly picked up strategies and even took time in his Physics lessons to explain certain language features i.e. syllabification and decoding.

How could QCOBASS better ExEL in the future? To ensure teaching materials are fully utilised and more sustainable, reading and specific reading strategies need more primary focus.

Students were found to be weak in interpreting illustrations and diagrams common in non-fiction texts. To address this issue, a Reading Across the Curriculum (RAC) mini-project has been proposed for our school so that students are better equipped with the reading strategies required to handle non-fiction texts (in the HKDSE Exam).

In short, the scale of ExEL at QCOBASS in 2012/13 was not large; however, these small but significant efforts have brought about effective learning and teaching. The readiness to change and the concerted efforts of all are vital to students' learning across subjects to improve their English and subject knowledge. Hopefully, the RAC mini-project will be conducted in different junior forms to better equip our students to face their studies and life-long learning.

Katherine IP, Seconded Teacher, NET Section

'Science on Stage' : Realising Students' Potential

Thirteen secondary schools from around Hong Kong took part in the first 'Science on Stage' Drama Competition held on April 17th 2013 at the Tuen Mun Town Hall. The competition was organised jointly by the NET Section and the Science Education Section of the Education Bureau to enhance the use of English in Science in a novel and appealing way.

Students were asked to work in teams of 4 to 6 to perform an English drama of 4 to 6 minutes, and provide a multimedia background to support the performance. The topic was 'Waste Not, Want Not, the Science of ...'. Schools looked at the science aspect of various topics such as the Science of Recycling Aluminium, Water Purification and Air Quality.

Mr Alex Shung Wing Chung, one of the teachers in charge of the 1st prize winning team, Kwun Tong Government Secondary School, said the competition contributed to the students' language development as students had to work on their pronunciation, voice projection and the use of stress and intonation. This resulted in their gaining confidence to use the language, which was fundamental to their motivation in language learning. He added that the competition also helped students learn more about scientific concepts and aroused their concern about the environment. 'With all these positive outcomes, it would be a unanimous opinion that the competition be held again,' Mr Shung said.

Jacinta Tse Wing Yan, the winner of the Best English Award and a Form 4 student from St Stephen's Girls' College, agreed with Mr Shung that the competition was a rewarding experience and said her team was looking forward to next year's competition. Ms Tse said that although it was actually much more challenging than her team had realised to create an interesting plot on a commonly discussed topic – leftover food – the process taught them a lot about dramatic techniques as well as the fact that suitable facial expressions, body language and intonation could do a lot of the work!

As well as improving their English and drama skills, Ms Tse said, 'Watching 12 other performances from a scientific point of view, we all learnt a lot more about our mother Earth and the urgent need to protect her.'

Overall, there were three main prizes of book coupons worth \$1,500, \$1,200 and \$900 for the top teams. There were four other team prizes of \$600. Two individual prizes of \$200 were also presented to the best actor and the student who used the best English.

Here is the prize winners' list.

1st	Kwun Tong Government Secondary School
2nd	Lok Sin Tong Wong Chung Ming Secondary School
3rd	St Stephen's Girls' College
Teamwork	St Stephen's Girls' College
Use of Language	Queen's College Old Boys' Association Secondary School
Integration of Science and Drama	Lok Sin Tong Wong Chung Ming Secondary School
Integration of Multimedia Technology	Sai Kung Sung Tsun Catholic School (Secondary Section)
Best English Award	Jacinta TSE Wing Yan, St Stephen's Girls' College
Best Actor Award	NG Cheuk Fai, Ho Yu College & Primary School (Sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen)



Queen's College Old Boys' Association Secondary School, 'W.N.W.N. The Science of Water Purification'



Ho Yu College & Primary School (sponsored by Sik Sik Yuen), 'W.N.W.N. The Science of Detergent and Plastic'

Article jointly submitted by St Stephen's Girls' College and Kwun Tong Government Secondary School

Where there's WIELD, there's a way

Po Leung Kuk Chee Jing Yin Primary School has been in the WIELD (Developing Key Stage 2 Student's Potential in Writing: Intervention and Enrichment Programmes) Seed Project for two years. The programme has been trialled in P.5 and P.6. The lessons use the teaching strategy of process writing and have focused on a range of text types. The students are taught during class time but are streamed into two separate classes, one for enrichment and the other for intervention. The lessons are conducted by a local seconded teacher.

Where appropriate, the same text types have been taught. The difference between the lessons is the way the students are supported. This may be through different activities, instructions, and levels of reading material. The lessons and resources have been developed into kits which provide lesson plans and teaching resources. When kits were being developed, the following were considered: content, process and product.

With regard to the content, the text type to be taught is chosen to meet the needs of the students and, where possible, to integrate with the grammar being taught in the GE lessons. For example, the 'intervention students' wrote a recount about an activity day but the 'enrichment students' wrote a diary for the whole week. The intervention students revisit and then use previously taught grammar items and vocabulary, whereas the enrichment students use previously taught grammar items and vocabulary and are introduced to new grammar items and vocabulary.

In the lessons, students participate in the same cooperative learning activities, but with differentiated instructions and grouping. The enrichment students have open-ended tasks and fewer instructions. The activities for the intervention students are broken down into smaller steps and more scaffolding is provided. Students produce the same final product but there is a different expectation for the language used by the different groups.

When students were asked for their thoughts about being in the programme and the teaching style, they were keen to express their opinions.

The consensus among the students was that the scaffolding made a difference to their ability to carry out the writing tasks. As expectations from the teachers were clearly stated, for example, the grammar items to be used, the students knew what to write. The students felt they were confident to write a particular text type because they were systematically taught the structure and language features of that text type. The different pre-writing activities gave the students enough ideas, grammar and vocabulary to be able to complete the task. Both groups of students felt they had learnt more. The enrichment group was challenged and the intervention group gained in confidence. Each group viewed writing in a more positive way. When the students were asked if the programme should continue next year, they wholeheartedly agreed!

The WIELD kits will be available for schools to use in the coming academic year. Further information about the WIELD kits will be available through a briefing for schools in September.

Kirsten FREEMAN, Ribbon DAI, Alice CHOW, ATs & ST, NET Section



Brainstorming and recording arguments, using a graphic organiser



Identifying a narrative structure through categorisation

Embracing Diversity

The class in room 305 is one of my favourite classes to teach. Inside, 27 P.3 students from eight different countries (Pakistan, India, Thailand, England, Nepal, U.S.A., Hong Kong and The Philippines) wait for me to arrive. When I enter, their excitement boils over as they stand to greet me. It's only when the lesson truly begins that the students regain focus and quiet down.

The students are reading Hansel and Gretel with their partners. Reading partners are paired by ability, with one more-able student and one less-able student working together. This mixed ability pairing has two key advantages. First, it helps to emphasise and promote the use of English as English tends to be their only shared language. Second, kids like talking, they like playing, they're social creatures. Structuring lessons which capitalise on a child's innate desire to interact has increased participation to the point where there are no longer any shy kids in the class.



In 2007, Chiu Sheung School became a designated school for Non-Chinese Students (NCS) with about 25% of incoming students being NCS. By 2010, more than 80% of the incoming students were NCS and this year, 91% of P.1 students are NCS. Their English abilities range from near fluent to nonexistent. Finding a balance between the demands placed on the students and the support provided by the teachers is always a challenge.

In the first few months of P.1, we focus heavily on teaching phonics. Doing this enables students to have a similar foundation for the reading and writing strategies introduced later on in KS1. Focusing on phonics is also very important when teaching a class with many different accents. It's not just about teaching students to pronounce sounds correctly, but also training their ear to hear how people from different countries say the same thing differently.

Finally, students' eagerness to participate extends beyond the classroom and beyond P.3. For the last few years at the end of October we've had a Halloween fashion show that has become increasingly popular. I also help a group of 'Little DJs' produce a radio show every week, which we broadcast over the school's PA system. Having fun is an important component to many school activities, but ultimately it's about providing a safe environment for students to be creative and take risks.

Ryan COSTLEY, NET, Chiu Sheung School, Hong Kong



Some thoughts on Learner Diversity

The village school at that time provided all the instruction we were likely to ask for. It was a small stone barn divided by a wooden partition into two rooms — The Infants and The Big Ones. ...Every child in the valley crowding there, remained till he was fourteen years old, then was presented to the working field or factory, with nothing in his head more burdensome than a few mnemonics, a jumbled list of wars, and a dreamy image of the world's geography.

(From *Cider with Rosie* by Laurie Lee)

Somehow, thoughts about L.d. (learner diversity) have brought me to Laurie Lee's vivid description of his school life. Right from classroom configuration to management and content knowledge, everything is against what is now being propagated to cater for learners' diversity. Of course, education has advanced tremendously since. The pendulum of education has swung from being a wholesale industry, fitting individuals to the workforce to something that is more diversified. However, has the outcome really changed from individuals moulded to suit a system to the other way round? How often is L.d. embraced as opportunities to help learners fulfil their potentials?

'To deal with it', 'to tackle it' — these are the usual expressions associated with L.d. as if it were something to be dreaded like a monstrosity, whereas the truth is that L.d. is the most natural phenomenon, as natural as the unique loops and whirls on our fingerprints. But I also agree that L.d. can be a problem, though it is not the cause of the problem itself. I'd rather think that the cause is the tendency to have fixed expected outcomes. The village school cited earlier fell short not because of its odd combination of infants and big ones, but the lack of purpose of its curriculum, which was imposed on the learners. If knowledge can be internalized according to the learners' interest and abilities, L.d. can even be an asset, not an obstruction.

As awareness of the importance of differentiated teaching grows, I see teachers employing a range of strategies to nurture learning. In a recent visit to a school musical, I saw not just a display of talents but a whole learning community comprising the backstage crew, the performers and the audience, all contributing to the work by playing different roles. This is just one of the many examples of how learning outcomes can differ to cater for L.d. Rather than putting learners all on the same conveyor belt, there are multiple pathways to develop their diverse interests and potentials. I like to think of different learners blossoming in their own ways. Not all trees flaunt their beauty like the cherry blossoms. There are some that quietly display their character and can play their part perfectly well. The crux is whether as educators, we are trying to condition our learners or to provide them with conditions that help them blossom.

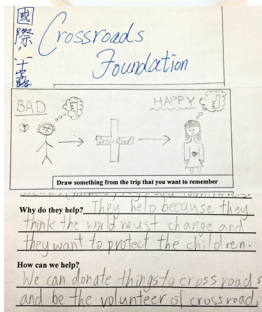
Carrie CHEUNG, Seconded Teacher, NET Section



Visiting Crossroads Foundation: An Opportunity for English, Civic & Moral Education

Crossroads Foundation is a local non profit organisation based in Tuen Mun and has been running for over 15 years. Crossroads provides an intersection, literally a crossroads, to bring together those who are in need with those who can provide help. The site, which was once a British Army camp, is easily accessible.

Crossroads provides engaging and memorable simulation experiences and tours of their spacious site. While we were there, we were treated to eye-opening displays and many inspiring stories providing the perfect fertilizer for growing minds! Now our "English Stars", our English leaders of the school, are busy making a TV show about our trip and organising a school stationery collection drive!



Rundown of our day

9.30 am	Boarded coach. Groups shared their research on their special topic using the bus microphone.
10.00 am	Arriving at Crossroads Foundation
10.15 am	Introductory talk by tour leader Mr David Begbie
10.30 am	Walking through the “War Zone” and “Slum Village”
11.00 am	Simulation activity “Some Tonnes, None”. Students experienced the reality of unequal food distribution in the world.
11.30 am	Tour of the sorting warehouses
12.15 pm	Group photo and back to school

One of the biggest benefits of our trip is that it served as a reminder of the functional importance of English as a global language in the real world. With many volunteers coming from all over the world, English is the functional language on site. It also broadened our minds with plenty of scope for follow-up activities and projects in school.

To find out more, please visit the Foundation’s website: www.crossroads.org.hk

Practical Tips:

- Book early (at least 3 months in advance).
- Bring mosquito repellent!
- Think about what you particularly want your students to gain from the trip. For instance, the tour leader helped tailor our programme to show our students ways to help others besides using money.
- The activity is more suitable for KS2 students.

Ms Rachel WINSTON (NET) & Ms Vikki LAU (English Panel), Hoi Pa Street Government Primary School





The Joys of Pregnancy

Ah, the joys of pregnancy. I'm one of the lucky ones who was spared from major morning sickness. But, sometimes the expanding belly does prove interesting when facing classrooms full of curious primary school children.

There's the English classroom itself. The light from the projector does something funny to my eyes and sets off migraines. Then there's my pregnancy brain, constantly forgetting not only the date, but the year as well. There's my increased clumsiness - where usually I glide around the room like a graceful ballerina, I'm suddenly running into desks and losing my balance when I'm just standing there. Thankfully, I've got five students who will fly out of their seats to assist me whenever I drop the caps from the whiteboard markers. This happens about every five minutes these days, thanks to my water retention-induced 'sausages' I used to call my fingers.

There's the reaction of the baby - she seems to have a particular class where she really gets going on her morning aerobics. I'm not sure if she is extra excited from my dramatic reading of our big books or if she feels like kick-boxing some particularly rambunctious students for being too noisy and waking her up.

And last of all, there is the reaction of the students to my ever-growing middle region, and the amusing ways they find to communicate this amazement to me in their limited English. "Mrs. Choi has 10 babies!" "Wow! Very very very BIG!"

Ah yes, I've forgotten to mention recess, when students surround me as I walk through the halls in a belly-rubbing P2 mob. I suppose I should just be glad that my baby is already so adored!

Erin CHOI, NET, GCCITKD Cheong Wong Wa Primary School



OUR NEWSLETTER TEAM

- Editor-in-chief : Teresa CHU
- Team Members : Garlanda KWAN, Cicely SHUM, Phillip WEBER, Sterling WU, Kit YONG

This Newsletter is prepared by the NET Section, CDI, EDB.

All comments and suggestions on the Newsletter may be sent to  teresachu@edb.gov.hk