Developing critical multiliteracies in the primary English classroom

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Literacy for a World City – PNET Scheme 10th Anniversary Conference, Hong Kong

2 February 2013

Get your pink shades (pink shades!), and move on (move on!).
Get the pets you love and you're gone.
Who are you? Whatcha wanna do?
There's a littlest pet shop perfect for you.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYHMLt_Y1gg

Help

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How do we know if an Education Reform is Successful? Insights from European and Asian Education Inno...

Professor Stephen Andrews (by way of eduert) [eduert@hku.hk]

Sent: Monday, January 21, 2013 5:35 PM

To: mmlo

Dear Margaret,

I just wanted to make sure that you had received notification of a Public Forum which the Faculty of Education of The University of Hong Kong (HKU) is going to hold on Wednesday. The theme of the Forum is **"How do we know if an Education Reform is Successful? Insights from European and Asian Education Innovations".** It should be a great opportunity for exchanging ideas and sharing experiences in this area with education professionals and government officials from various parts of the world.

Date: January 23, 2013, Wednesday
Time: 5:30pm – 7:00pm
Venue: Rayson Huang Theatre, HKU
Registration: **http://www.cite.hku.hk/registration.php?id=478**

The Public Forum will involve a number of key figures in education in the world, among them:

- Professor Cheng Kai Ming, Co-Convenor of Strategic Research Theme on Science of Learning of HKU;
- Dr Yves Punie, Senior Scientist of Institute for Prospective Technology Studies of European Commission;
- Professor Nancy Law, Director of CITE and Associate Dean of Faculty of Education of HKU;
- Dr Gwang-Jo Kim, Director of UNESCO, BKK;
- Dr K K Chan, Deputy Secretary of Education Bureau of HKSAR;
- Ministries of Education of different countries; and
- Other Asian and European experts

Please come and join us!

Best wishes
Steve

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From: Faculty of Education [mailto:eduert@hku.hk]

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38177STP

38177RIB

1. Embroidered Skirt [32461]
Half elasticated back waist,
Outer 100% cotton, Lining
100% cotton, Machine washable
Sizes: 1½-5Y **£30** 5-10Y **£34**

2. Decorative Skirt [32455]
Elasticated waist with functional
drawstring, Outer 100% cotton,
Lining 100% cotton,
Machine washable
Sizes: 1½-5Y **£30** 5-10Y **£34**

3 Pack Knee Socks [38177]
Packaged in a gift box, Stripe:
73% cotton 25% polyamide 2% Lycra®
elastane, Rib: 73% cotton 23% polyamide
4% Lycra® elastane, Machine washable
Sizes: 6-8½, 9-12 **£12 per pack of three pairs**
12½-3½, 4-5½ **£14 per pack of three pairs**

I'm a trainee gourmand
I shop-mum pays
I'm a trainee shopper
I'm a junior VIP

I'm a trainee gourmand
I shop-mum pays
I'm a trainee shopper
I'm a junior VIP

- Life in fast capitalist societies is a text-saturated matter. That is, every waking moment is caught up in engagement with text of some kind: from children's story to political speech, from television sitcom to casual conversation, from classroom lessons to memorandum…Human subjects use texts to make sense of their world and to construct social actions and relations required in the labour of everyday life. At the same time, texts, position and construct individuals, making available various meanings, ideas and versions of the world.

(Luke, 1995 , p.13)

Multiliteracies

(New London Group, 1996, 2000)

- Multiplicity of communication channels and media, digital and mobile technology, the Internet
- Multiple modes of meaning making: linguistic, visual, audio, gestural, spatial etc.
- New and changing text forms and text practices
- Cultural and linguistic diversity
- Literacy as a social and cultural practice, connected to social identities, embedded in social, historical, political contexts.

➔ Education should aim to develop multiliterate persons, who are flexible, responsive, active and critically engaged citizens (Anstey and Bull, 2006)

Four Resources Model

(Freebody and Luke, 1990; Luke and Freebody 1997)

Role of reader	**Textual practices**
Code Breaker *"What does it say?"*	Decoding practices
Meaning Maker *"What does it mean?"*	Semantic practices
Text User *"What do I do with it? How do I use it?*	Pragmatic practices
Text Analyst *"What does it do to me? What version of the world does it construct?"*	Critical practices

Literacy in the Hong Kong primary English Language curriculum

Code breaking PNET scheme: phonics instruction, early literacy teaching through PLPR/W	**Text participating** Reading comprehension, schema/background knowledge, reading strategies
Text using 2004 ELCG: text types, topics and themes, grammar and communicative functions	**Text analysing**

Critical literacy assumptions

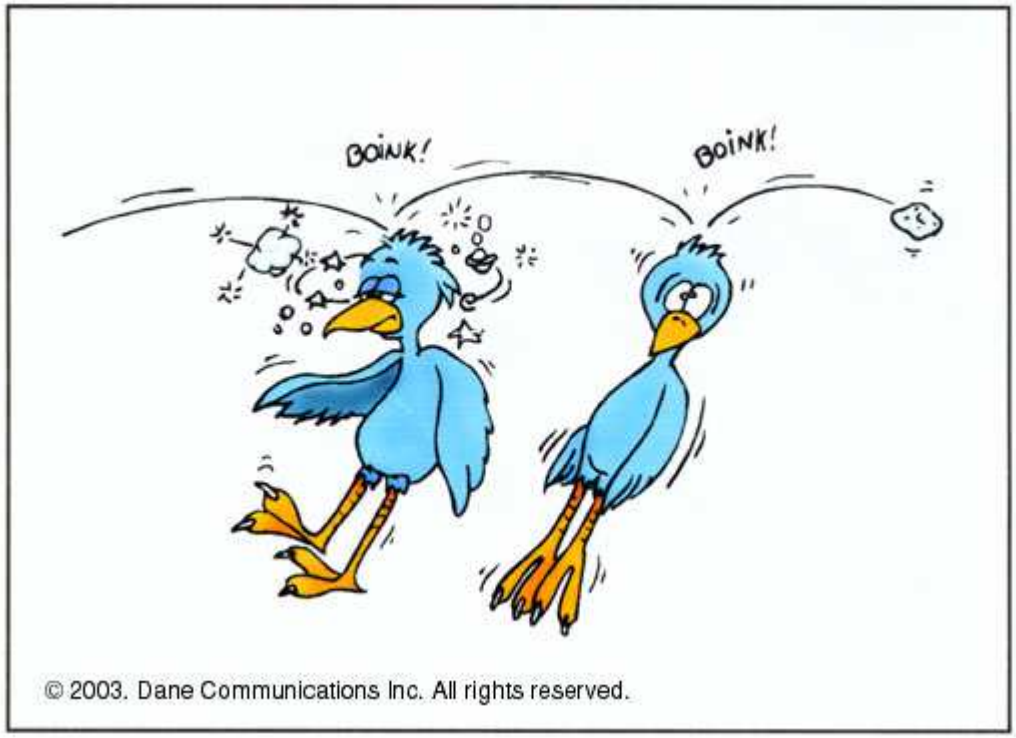
- Not just “critical thinking” ie understanding logic of texts and their arguments, thinking independently (Wallace, 2003)
- Texts are made and read in particular institutional, cultural, historical, and political contexts that condition what meanings can be made. ie ‘reading the word and the world’ (Friere and Macedo, 1987)
- Language-as-discourse and ‘reality’ are mutually constitutive. Language doesn’t merely reflect ‘reality’ but also shapes reality.
- Text participants are ‘positioned’ within discourses
- Texts are contestable: values, ideologies or “truth claims”, commonsense assumptions, power relations

Educational aims and values

- Education for democracy and social transformation
- Promote social justice, diversity and inclusion
- Student-centredness: identities, experiences, cultural and semiotic resources, students' views and perspectives
- Authenticity and real world use of literacy

Critical processes

- Noticing and analysing language, images, and other multimodal features in texts
- Locating texts within institutional, social, cultural, political and historical contexts
- Interrogating multiple viewpoints and positioning in texts
- Defamiliarising dominant text interpretations, gaining ‘distance’ from texts
- Understanding our own stances to texts, how our identities and values influence how we understand and interpret texts, ie reflexivity



"kill two birds with one stone"

Why do they want to kill birds?

And there's something else I want…..but it's for boys.

Some classroom strategies for developing critical literacy

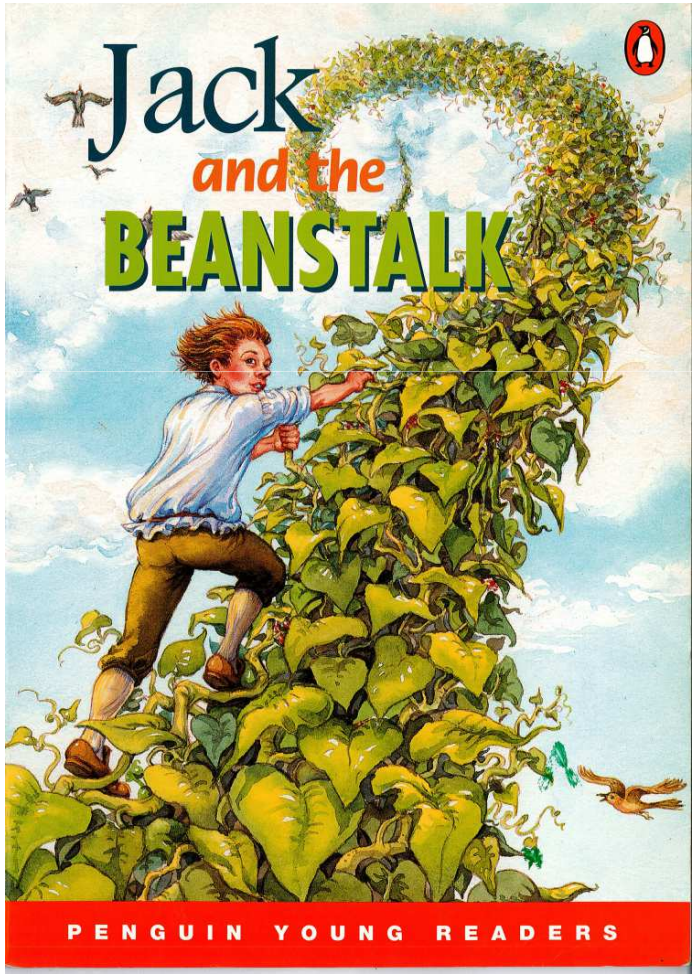
- Reading multiple texts
- Reading from a resistant perspective
- Examining multiple perspectives
- Producing countertexts
- Taking social action
- Focussing on sociopolitical issues
- Subverting taken-for-granted school texts
- Repositioning students as researchers of language (ie multimodality)
- Questioning and problematizing texts

(Behrman, 2006; Comber, in Larson and Marsh, 2003; Lewison et al, 2002)

Dominant reading, resistant reading

Who is the good guy in this story? Who is the bad guy? Why?

Did this story have a happy ending? Why?



What made Jack and his mother happy?

How did Jack and his mother get rich?

Was it right /ok for Jack to steal from the Giant?

If you are poor, does money make you happy? What other things could make Jack and his mother happy?

Examining multiple perspectives in texts; who is present, who is left out

Who are the characters in the story?

What happened to Jack and his mother?

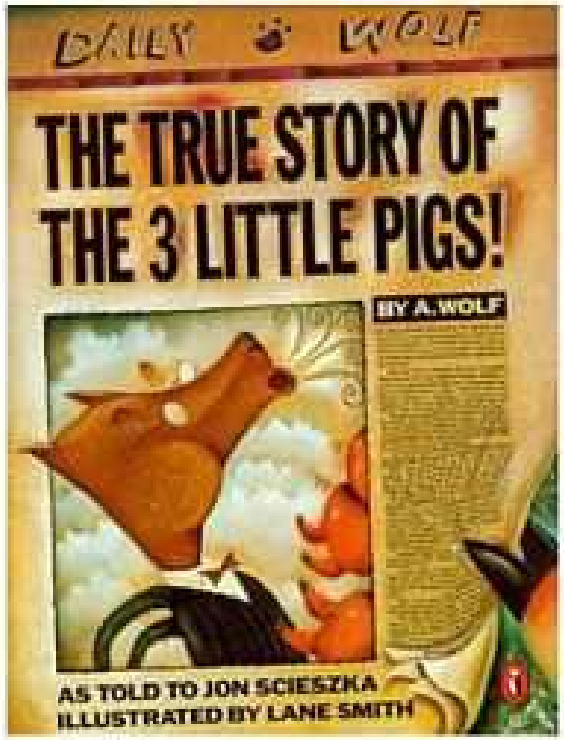
What happened to the Giant?

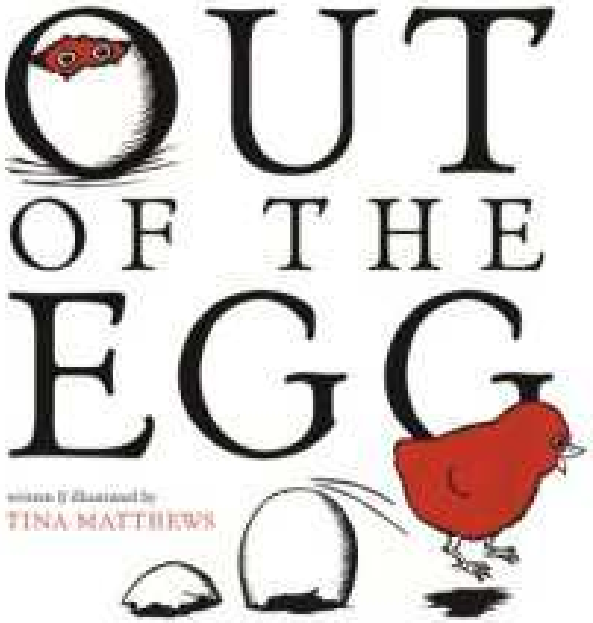
What happened to the Giant's wife?

What was her life like before she met Jack?

What was her life like after the Giant was killed?

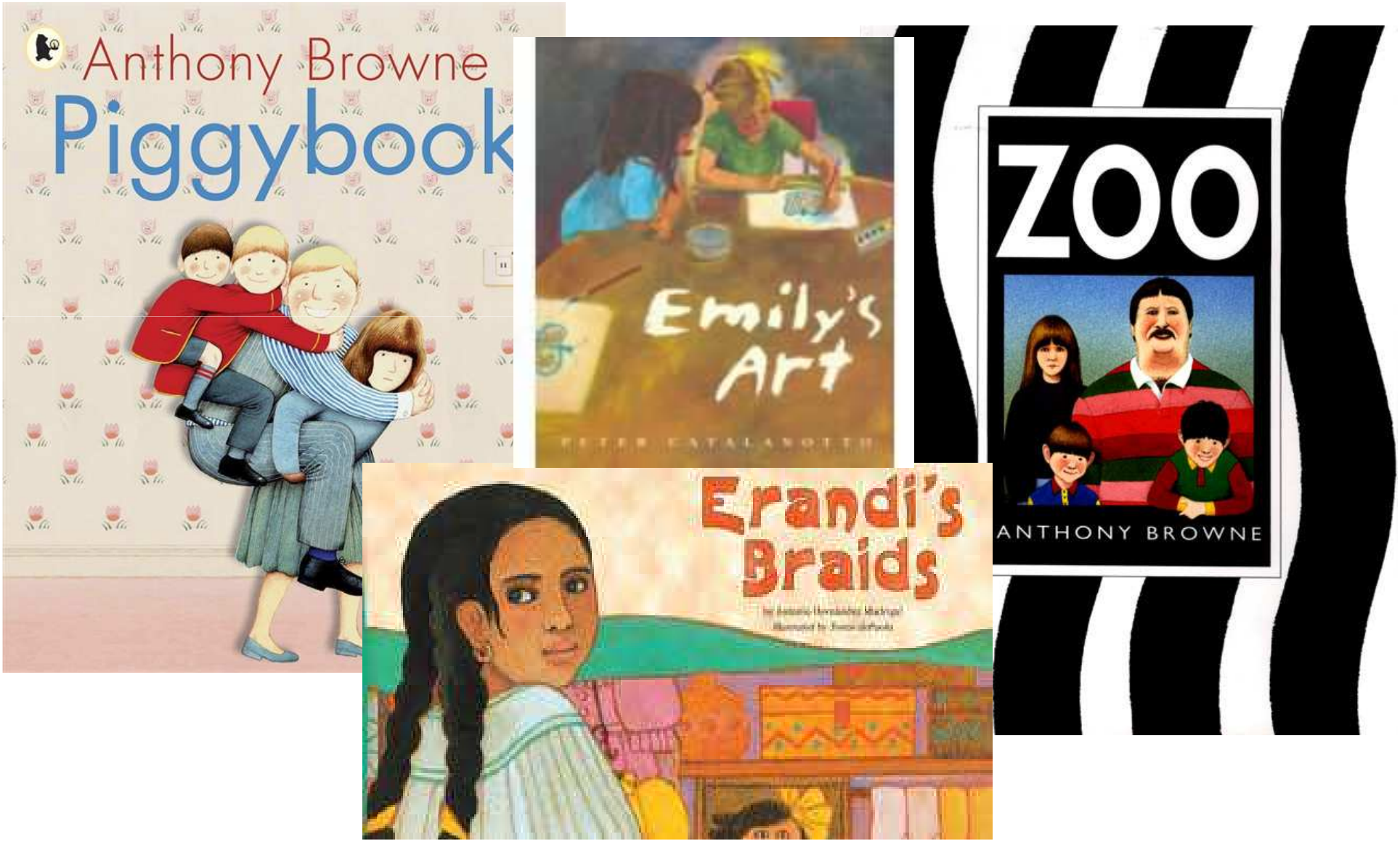
Using texts which present multiple perspectives and oppositional readings





Some alternative fairy tales and traditional children's stories

Using texts which raise social issues



Examining identity construction in texts

Have you ever been to a McDonald's birthday party?

How many birthday party themes are there? What are they?

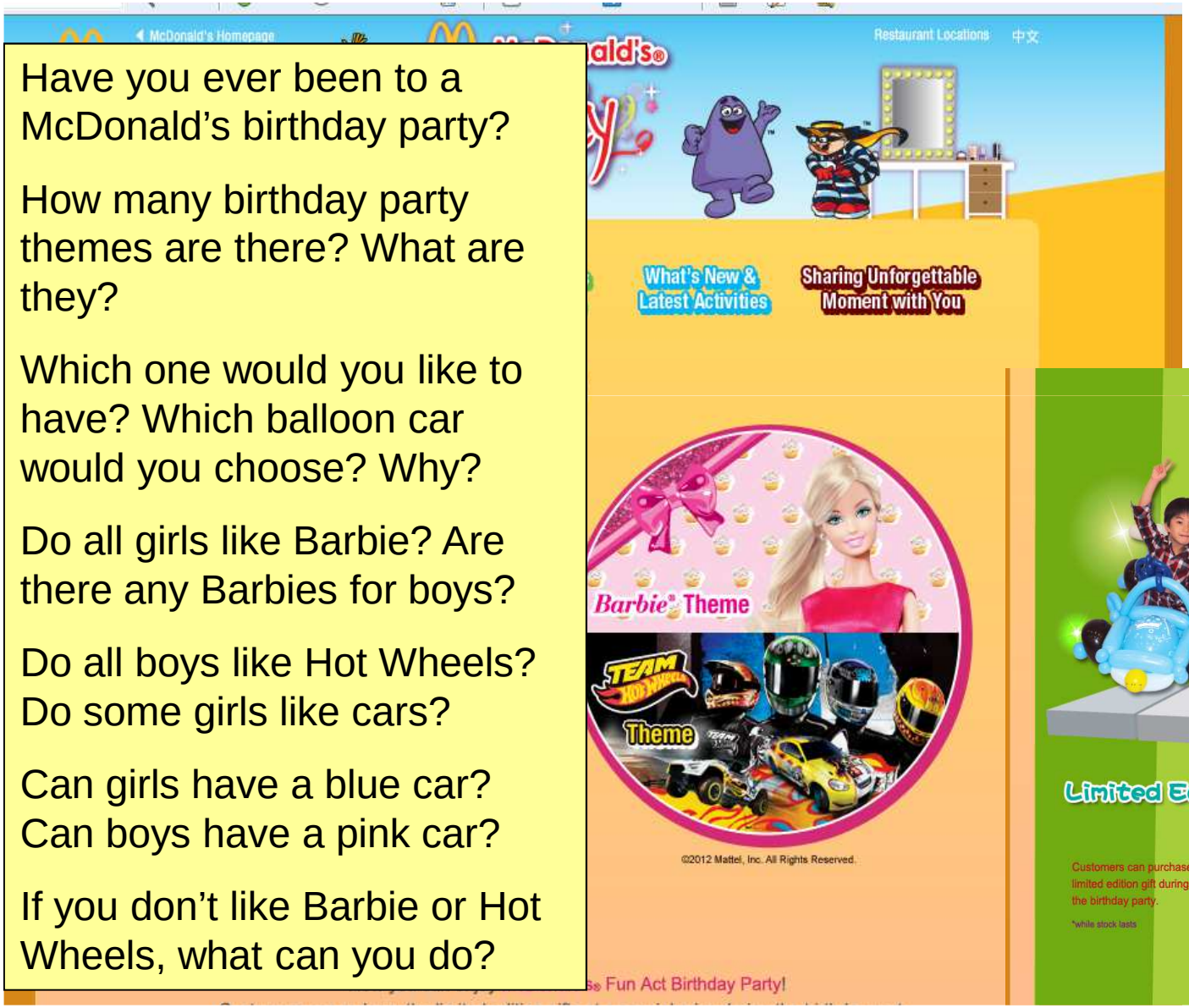
Which one would you like to have? Which balloon car would you choose? Why?

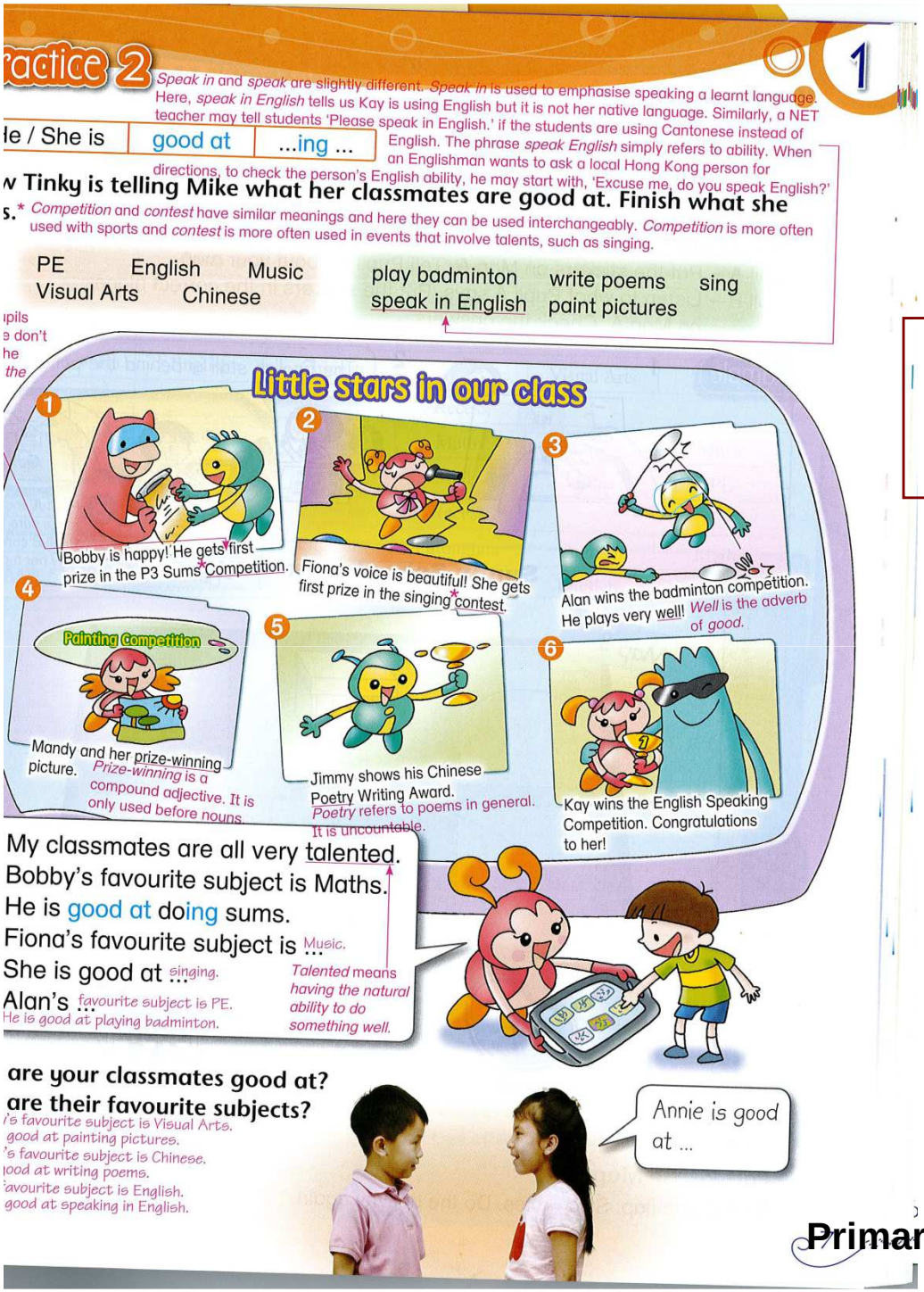
Do all girls like Barbie? Are there any Barbies for boys?

Do all boys like Hot Wheels? Do some girls like cars?

Can girls have a blue car? Can boys have a pink car?

If you don't like Barbie or Hot Wheels, what can you do?





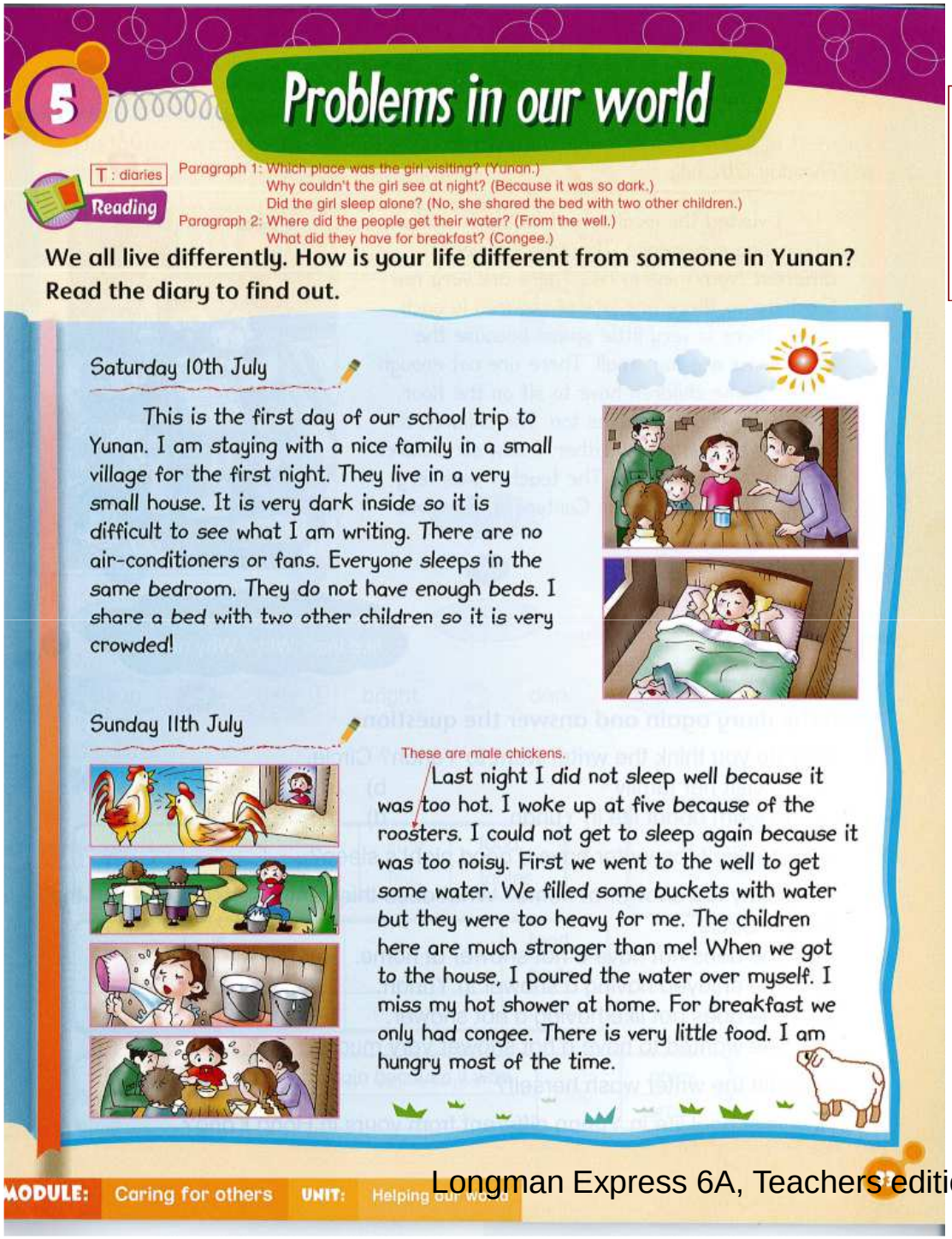
Problematizing social values in textbooks

Competition, being the best

Value from external recognition

Enjoyment and interest = being skilled

Primary Longman Elect 3B, 2009



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Problems in our world

T : diaries

Reading

Paragraph 1: Which place was the girl visiting? (Yunan.)
Why couldn't the girl see at night? (Because it was so dark.)
Did the girl sleep alone? (No, she shared the bed with two other children.)
Paragraph 2: Where did the people get their water? (From the well.)
What did they have for breakfast? (Congee.)

We all live differently. How is your life different from someone in Yunan? Read the diary to find out.

Saturday 10th July

This is the first day of our school trip to Yunan. I am staying with a nice family in a small village for the first night. They live in a very small house. It is very dark inside so it is difficult to see what I am writing. There are no air-conditioners or fans. Everyone sleeps in the same bedroom. They do not have enough beds. I share a bed with two other children so it is very crowded!

Sunday 11th July

These are male chickens.

Last night I did not sleep well because it was too hot. I woke up at five because of the roosters. I could not get to sleep again because it was too noisy. First we went to the well to get some water. We filled some buckets with water but they were too heavy for me. The children here are much stronger than me! When we got to the house, I poured the water over myself. I miss my hot shower at home. For breakfast we only had congee. There is very little food. I am hungry most of the time.

MODULE: Caring for others UNIT: Helping our world

Longman Express 6A, Teachers edition, 2005

Lexical analysis; binary constructions; "truth claims"
(Fairclough, 2003)

Yunan

very small house, very dark, not enough beds, very crowed, too hot; too noisy, live near animals; no running water; very little/not enough food

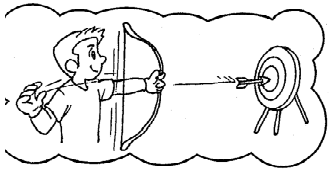
Hong Kong

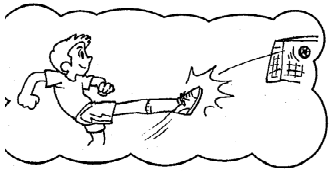
big house, electricity, own bed, not crowded, cool/comfortable, has aircons/fans; don't live near animals; running water; always enough food

Date: _____

D Write.

Model





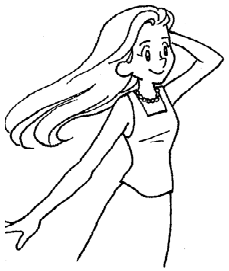
My Grandpa

When my Grandpa was young, his eyes were good. Now they are bad. His legs were strong. Now they are weak.

hair	long	short
face	smooth	wrinkled
beautiful	fat	slim

My Grandma

When my Grandma was young, _____



_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Producing countertexts

Lexical and visual analysis:

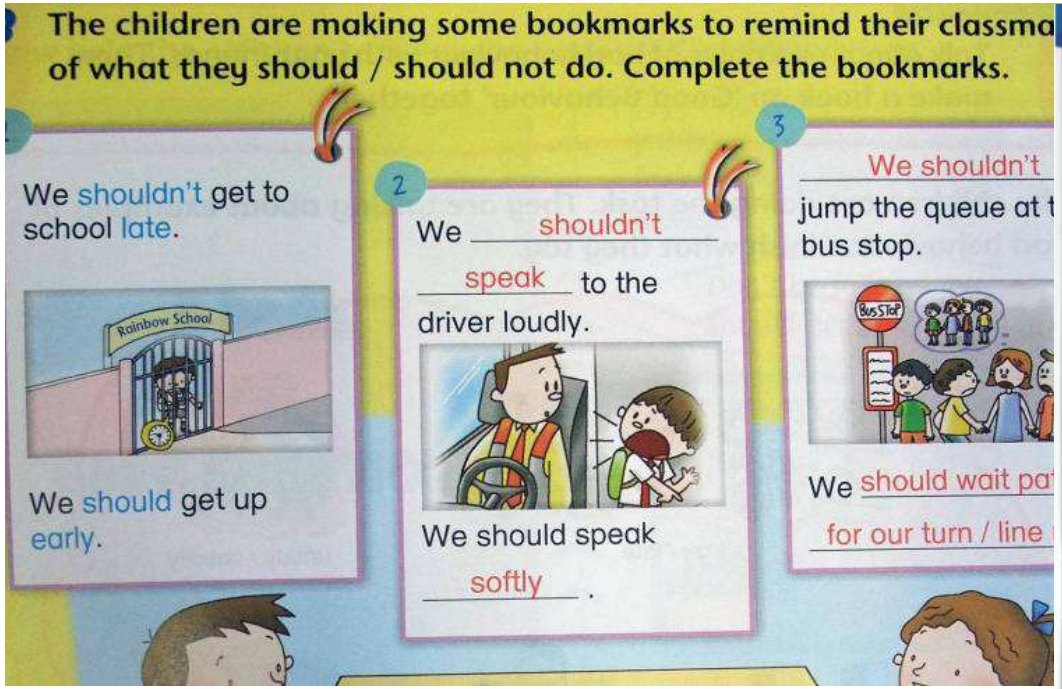
-male (Grandpa) vs female (Grandma)
-young vs old

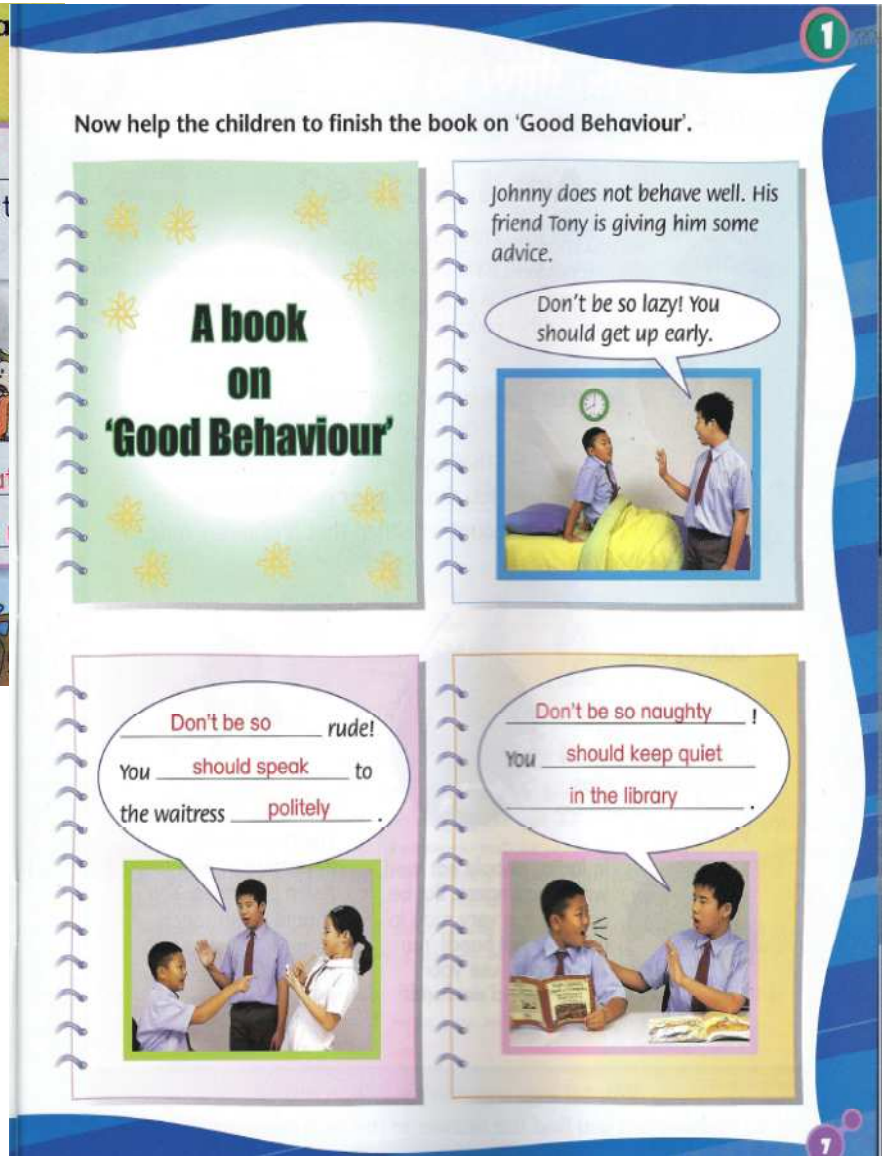
Elicit other possible adjectives and descriptions, e.g. make 'old' as positive/young 'negative' and examine their effects.

Consider own grandparents.

Rewrite and illustrate one or both paragraphs, showing your own view of your grandmother or grandfather.

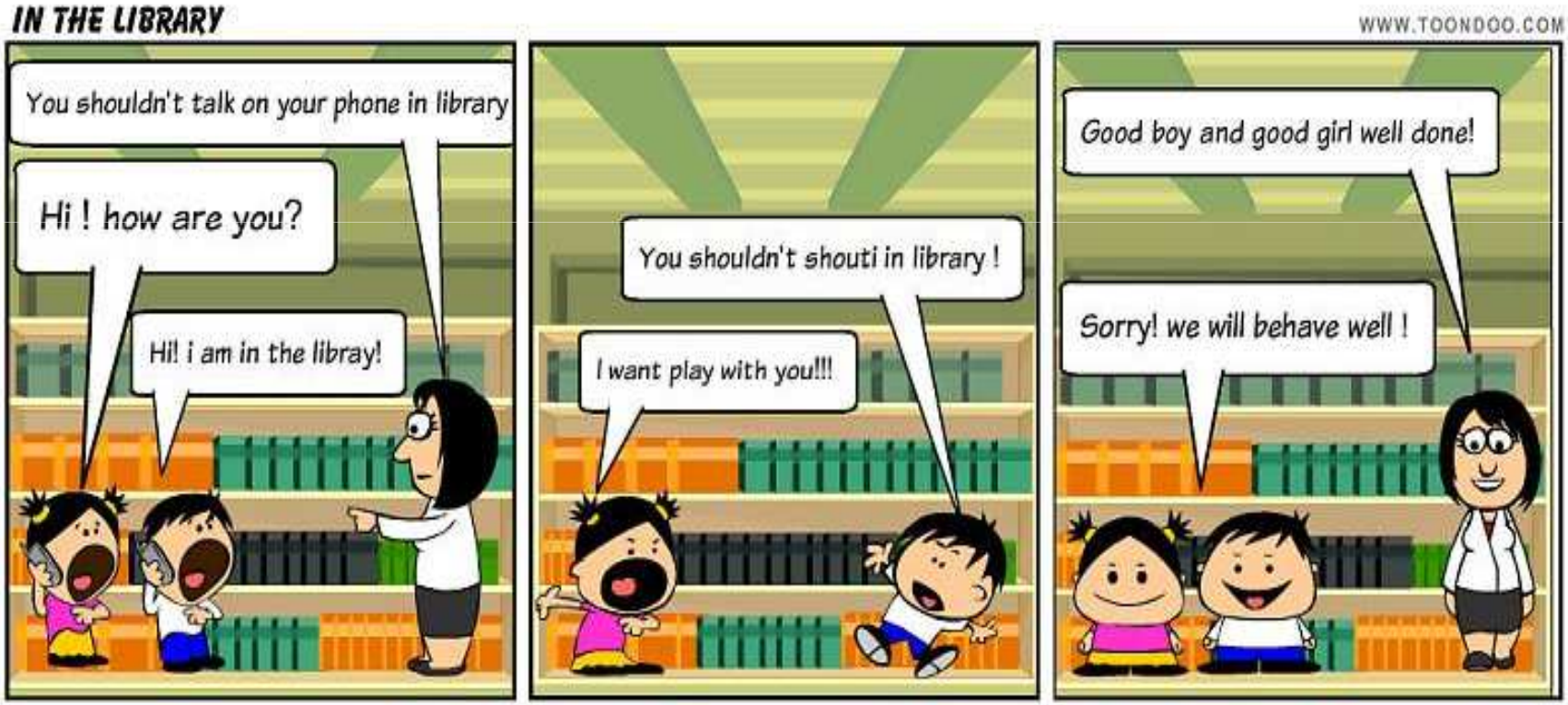
A case of P5 students as critical multiliteracies authors



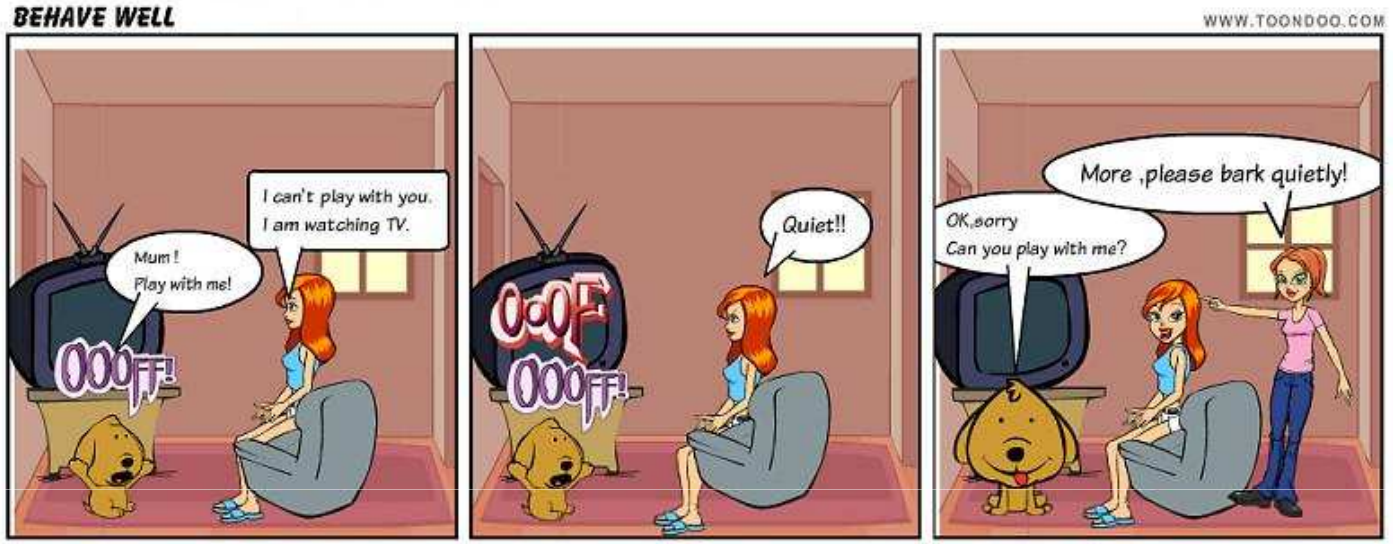


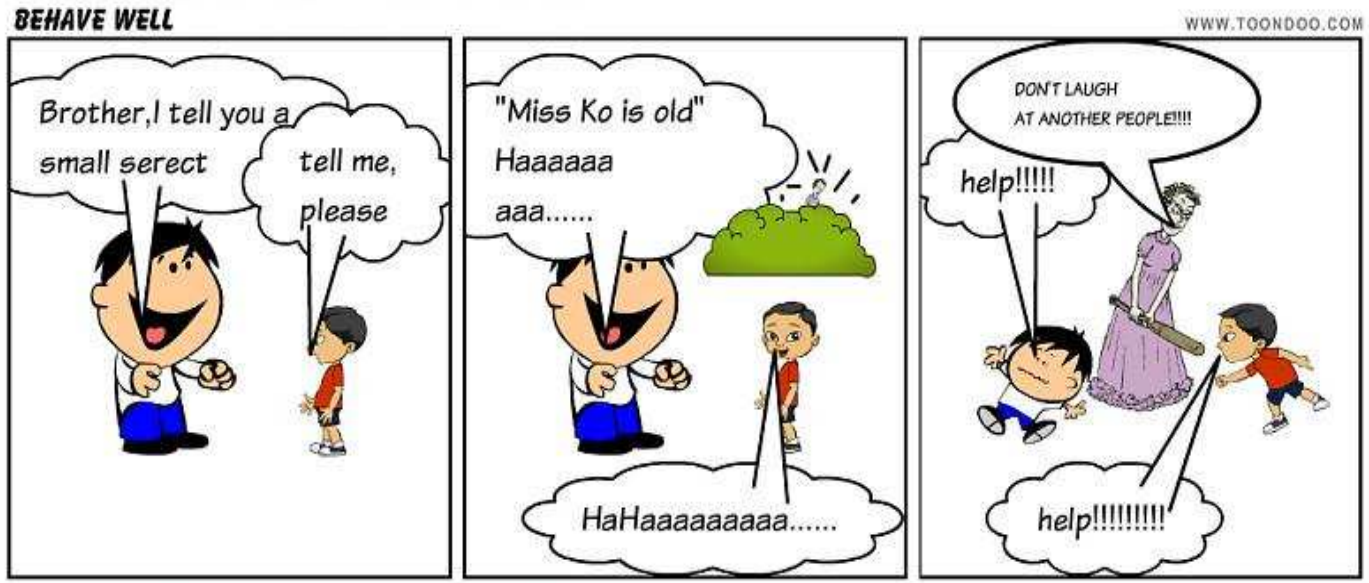
Longman Primary Express 5A, Unit 1: *Behave well*

Writing from a dominant perspective



Students' countertexts





Critical multiliteracies and the teacher

A critical literacy curriculum needs to be lived. It arises from the social and political conditions that unfold in communities in which we live. As such it cannot be traditionally taught. In other words, as teachers we need to incorporate a critical perspective into our everyday lives in order to find ways to help children understand the social and political issues around them.

(Vivian Maria Vasquez, 2004)

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