

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Primary and Secondary Curricula

Primary Curriculum

Secondary Curriculum

Chinese Language

Chinese Language (and Putonghua if preferred)

English Language

English Language

Mathematics

Mathematics

General Studies

Science and two or three of the following: Computer Literacy, Social Studies, History, Chinese History, Geography, EPA

Music

Music

Art and Craft

Art & Design and Design & Technology or Home Economics

Physical Education --

Physical Education

APPENDIX 2

Simplifying the S1 Text Materials

NOTES FOR ALL TEACHERS :

- The sentences should not be long. Complex sentences using various adverbial clauses should be avoided at the very beginning of S1.
- The amount of new words should be limited.
- The tenses should be simple and kept to the basic forms
- Use as much illustration (such as pictures, diagrams, charts, etc) as possible.

EXAMPLE 1 - SCIENCE (S1, Unit 1)

textbook "It would be very dangerous if you do not use a Bunsen burner properly and therefore safety measures need to be taken. Before starting to use a Bunsen burner you have to know its structure."

simplified "To use the Bunsen burner safely, you have to know its structure."

EXAMPLE 2 - SCIENCE (S1, Unit 1)

textbook : "Many inventions and discoveries are the result of scientists asking and trying to find answers."

simplified : "Scientists ask questions and try to answer them. So they make new discoveries."

EXAMPLE 3 - MATHEMATICS (S1, unit 1)

textbook : "There are several terms which we often use to describe the arithmetic operations. These terms and their meanings are listed in the table below."

simplified : "We use special words to describe the arithmetic operations: "

EXAMPLE 4 - MATHEMATICS (S1, unit 1)

textbook : "A lighthouse flashes its light every 16 seconds and another lighthouse every 30 seconds. If the two lighthouses flash together at 6 p.m., at what nearest time will they flash together again?"

simplified : "A lighthouse flashes its light every 16 seconds. Another lighthouse flashes its light every 30 seconds. The two lighthouses start together at 6 p.m. When do they flash together again?"

EXAMPLE 5 - GEOGRAPHY (S1, Unit 1)

textbook : "Maps are drawn on many different scales. The amount of detail on the map varies. Maps which show a large area but do not show many details are called small scale maps. Figure 5 is a small scale map of Kowloon. Most maps in your atlas are small scale maps.

A map which shows a lot of details of a small area is called a plan. Plans show features on a large scale. They are large scale maps. Some examples include plans of classrooms, home plans, school plans and housing estate plans."

simplified : "Maps have different scales. Small scale maps show a large area with few details. Figure 5 is a small scale map of Kowloon. Most maps in your atlas are small scale maps.

A plan shows a small area with a lot of details. Plans show features on a large scale and are called large scale maps, e.g. plans of a classroom, a home, a school or a housing estate."

EXAMPLE 6 - EPA (S1, unit 2)

textbook : "Hong Kong's earliest industries were to do with the sea and the harbour. These were ship-repair and ship-building industries. Sugar refineries were also started.

Much later, in the 1930s, small knitting and weaving industries developed. Small factories

manufacturing torches and rubber shoes were also started.

But in 1941, a hundred years after the British came to Hong Kong, trading was still the main activity. The port and wharves were always busy. Inland, Hong Kong remained quiet and rural."

simplified : "Hong Kong's earliest industries were to do with the sea and the harbour: ship-repair and ship-building. There were also sugar refineries. In the 1930s, the new industries were small knitting and weaving industries, torches and rubber shoes manufacturing.

In 1941, trading was still most important. The port and wharves were always busy. But other parts of Hong Kong remained quiet."

EXAMPLE 7 - HISTORY (S1, unit 1)

textbook : "Why Do We Study History?

We study history because we want : to know how people lived in the past, to know how other people live now, to avoid mistakes made in the past, to know the cause-and-effect relationship of things that happened - so that we can understand the world today better, and can make it a better place to live in; so that we can understand how, when and why things happened."

tailoring : This little thought-provoking exercise should be developed in a simpler way, using simple sentences throughout, instead of complicated sentence structures with both adverbial clauses of cause and effect. e.g.

"Why Do We Study History?

- To know how people lived in the past.
- To know how other people live now.
- To avoid mistakes made in the past.
- To know the cause-and-effect relationship of happenings.

So we can understand today's world better, and can make it a better place.

So we can understand how, when and why things happen."

EXAMPLE 8 - SOCIAL STUDIES (S1, Unit 9)

textbook : "Environment also affects development. Environment means the place we live in and everything around us. If you lived in a very crowded, dark and dirty place, where you could never see the sun, your body would probably be much less healthy, and your growth might be affected."

simplified : To avoid difficult grammar and complicated sentence patterns, the above paragraph can be simplified as follows:
"Environment is the condition we live in. It affects our health. Very crowded, dark and dirty

places are bad for health and our growth."

APPENDIX 3

Tailoring the S1 Curriculum or Textbook

NOTES FOR ALL TEACHERS :

- Start with what is basic and familiar to the students, such as revising what has been learned at P5-6.
- Start with the topics and areas that use language already taught in the primary school.
- Progress slowly with controlled language use and a lot of illustration.
- Teach the study skills together with the subject contents

EXAMPLE 1 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English Language curriculum should be reviewed to help cater for students' learning needs in the other subjects. For example, to enable students to study History and EPA, the present perfect tense should be taught before the future tense is revised in the early units. Also, the simple future tense needs to be revised as soon as possible, but the varieties of future tense can be deferred, and teachers of the other subjects can be asked to stick to one pattern for the time being.

EXAMPLE 2 - MATHEMATICS

To make the change to the English medium easy, S1 Mathematics can start with the topics that require simple language :

- Numbers and counting

- Formulas, open sentences and simple equations

All terminologies should be taught gradually and in context.

EXAMPLE 3 - SCIENCE

Some textbooks introduce scientific terms and expressions in a long list right at the beginning. This must not be taken to mean that S1 students should learn all these words at once. The words and expressions should be referred to, explained and used in stages throughout the school year, and only when they are absolutely necessary.

As far as possible, diagrams should be used to help explain the terms and expressions, such as a flow chart showing the key steps of a process instead of lengthy descriptions.

EXAMPLE 4 - Economics and Public Affairs

Teachers may consider rearranging the sequence of topics by teaching first the contents more suited to students' language ability and the topics that the students are more familiar with

By the end of primary education, students should be familiar with :

- a general idea of the supply of food, water and power in Hong Kong
- a general knowledge of the various means of communication in Hong Kong
- a general knowledge of the economic development of Hong Kong and the main factors leading to such development
- an understanding of the importance of civic responsibility

At S1, the topic "Transportation and communication" probably uses simpler language, and the topic "The growth of Hong Kong" probably provides familiar context for introducing the use of the English medium. These topics can be taught first.

EXAMPLE 5 - HISTORY

Instead of starting from the topic "Archaeological and written records" as recommended in the CDC Syllabus for History for S1, teachers may first teach the topic "The world of today" which is relevant to students' daily life. This topic can be covered in the first few weeks of S1 : the concepts taught in the primary school can be reinforced in the English medium and only the essential vocabulary items should be taught. The more difficult or less significant items should be avoided as far as possible.

The next possible topic is "In search of the past" and the third possible topic is "Life B.C."

EXAMPLE 6 - GEOGRAPHY

Teachers may consider rearranging the topics according to what the students are already familiar with and the language required for learning the topics. For example, S1 may begin with "Natural environment of Hong Kong" rather than "Locating where we live". The skills and concepts of the latter topic can be subsumed under the former. In the topic "How people of Hong Kong make their living", "Manufacturing industries in Hong Kong" can be taught before "Port of Hong Kong".

EXAMPLE 7 - SOCIAL STUDIES

The topics can be rearranged according to what the students are already familiar with. Taking the theme "My study and leisure" as an example, students should have learned some expressions related to hobbies and recreation in the primary school in the subject of English Language. The areas related to hobbies and recreation can therefore be introduced first, to be followed by the other urgently useful topics such as "Study skills".

APPENDIX 4

Helping Teachers who are Weak in English

The following discussion applies to teachers in general and makes no distinction of the primary and secondary school teachers, nor the teachers of English Language and teachers of the other subjects.

(1) Motivation

recognition of the need

All teachers should see the need to be concerned with students' language needs for learning and performing. Panel chairpersons in particular should explain to their teachers of S1-3 the language requirements for teaching in the English medium.

encouragement

It must be made known to all that everybody, including teachers, has the potential to improve his/her language proficiency. Teachers should encourage each other to improve their language skills as part of their professional development.

(2) Support and resources

language environment

Schools should provide an environment rich with English, e.g.

- (i) a lot of reading and listening materials displayed and in use around the school premises,
- (ii) constant reference to media and ideas and information delivered in English,
- (iii) assignments in partnership with native speakers in teaching or other school activities,
- (iv) plenty of extra-curricular activities conducted in English, and
- (v) regular English-speaking days/sessions during recess, lunch time or after school.

suitable materials, equipment and facilities

Schools should also provide easy access to a range of materials, equipment and other facilities that can enhance teachers' familiarity with English, e.g.

- (i) a good variety of tapes and videos,
- (ii) plenty of newspapers, magazines, notices, posters, dictionaries and reference books in English,
- (iii) word processing software including CD roms for computers, and
- (iv) useful sets of instructions and proceedings for conducting extra-curricular activities in English.

constant indication of concern

It is important for principals and panel chairpersons to show their concern about the progress of English proficiency development among the staff. Such concern

can be shown through

- (i) enquiry, discussion and encouragement,
- (ii) measures to ensure that the provisions of support and resources are used meaningfully, and/or
- (iii) records of teacher advancement and performance.

(3) Teacher training

courses and seminars

Teachers should be encouraged to participate in all courses and seminars that can enhance English proficiency. Principals and panel chairpersons should try to make arrangements that enable teachers to help each other find time for courses and seminars.

within school programmes

Teachers can be helped to improve their English through internal school programmes, e.g.

- (i) regular discussions first to be led by the teachers more confident in using English and then to be followed by the teachers weak in English,
- (ii) duties and sessions at assembly or extra-curricular activities requiring use of English,
- (iii) reading up on topics of subject or general curriculum development and exchanging views on these topics, and
- (iv) working in pairs or small groups (the weaker teachers to be paired or grouped with the teachers good in English) for developing schemes of work, preparing resource materials, organising activities, etc.

(4) Opportunities of improvement

opportunities inside the staff room

One's language improves best when it is used actively and frequently. Teachers can be asked to use English on all appropriate occasions, e.g.

- (i) preparing schemes of work and teaching plans,
- (ii) correspondence between principal and teachers,
- (iii) panel discussions of the subjects using English,
- (iv) liaison with outside organisations, both local or overseas.

opportunities through extra-curricular activities

The extra-curricular activities using English should be increased in terms of both quantity and frequency. As many teachers as possible should be involved in these activities in the various stages of planning and organisation according to their English proficiency, e.g.

- (i) a new teacher in English Language can be asked to work with the senior students in organising the activities under the guidance of a senior teacher,
- (ii) a Physics teacher weak in English can be asked to draw up plans for a certain activity and explain the plan to the students and teachers concerned, and
- (iii) a Music teacher very good in English can be asked to adjudicate a debate in partnership with two other teachers who are weak in English.