

“iMPACT”

i-Journey: Learning Beyond Borders, Impact Beyond Classrooms

*Showcasing Achievements in Overseas Learnings,
School-Based Innovation and the ‘i-Journey’ Fair (3rd and 4th Cohorts)*



Paid Non-local Study Leave Scheme for Teachers

COME WITH AN INQUIRY LEAVE INSPIRED

INQUIRE • INSPIRE • IMPACT





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About the '*i-Journey*' Scheme

The 'i-Journey' Paid Non-local Study Leave Scheme for Teachers (*'i-Journey' Scheme*) is an Education Bureau (EDB) initiative that empowers educators to embark on a transformative professional learning journey. The Scheme encourages participants to begin with inquiry, gain inspiration from local inspiration from local and overseas learning experiences, and ultimately generate a positive impact on teaching student learning and school development.

'i' refers to the three core elements of this Scheme:

- INQUIRE** Exploring authentic educational questions and identifying areas for professional growth.
- INSPIRE** Learning from global educational practices, innovative pedagogies and diverse school cultures.
- IMPACT** Transforming new understandings into sustainable changes in schools, classrooms and learning communities.

Objectives *of the Scheme are to:*

- **Enhance** teachers' professional capacity and inspire them with the latest global education developments;
- **Promote** a culture of research and inquiry in schools that brings positive changes and impact on learning and teaching; and
- **Create** space for teachers to engage in sustained professional development activities on a full-time basis.



Programmes under 'i-Journey' Scheme

Two customised programmes on self-directed learning and assessment literacy were implemented for the 3rd and 4th cohorts under the 'i-Journey' Scheme. Each programme comprises three components, including pre-trip preparation (about 1 week), overseas experience (about 4-5 weeks) and post-trip consolidation (about 2 weeks).

Global Learning Destinations

Two customised programmes were offered under the 'i-Journey' Scheme:

Self-direct Learning

Turku, Finland

Participants explored learners' self-directed learning and practices in Finland



Assessment Literacy

Perth, Australia

Participants examined assessment practices that support learning, evidence-informed instruction and school improvement.





Feathered Learning Moments

Visit to Turku Teacher Training School

Teachers engaged with innovative pedagogical practices and observed authentic classroom learning in Turku Teacher Training School, Finland.



School attachment at St. Hilda's Anglican School for Girls

Participants experienced school attachment and professional exchange with educators at St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls, Perth, Australia.



*Upon completing their **overseas learning experience**, participants synthesized their insights, developed strategic **school-based project proposals**, and implement innovative initiatives that delivered lasting benefits to their schools, enriched student learning, and advanced school development.*



From Compliance to Conviction: My 'i-Journey' of Nurturing Self-Directed Character Growth

AU Wai-fung

TWGHS Ko Ho Ning Memorial Primary School

A Day That Changed My Way of Seeing

The moment that reshaped my understanding of education came quietly. One afternoon, I stepped out of my classroom to collect some worksheets. Before leaving, the class appeared calm and focused. Yet when I looked back through the door window moments later, students were chatting, leaving their seats, and quickly losing focus.



At first, I questioned my classroom management. *Had I been unclear? Were expectations not reinforced enough? But a deeper question soon emerged: if students behaved appropriately only when I was present, what had I really taught them?*

That moment revealed the difference between managing behaviour and nurturing character. My students knew the rules, but knowing what is expected is not the same as choosing what is right. I realised I had mistaken compliance for growth; students were responding to supervision rather than acting from internal conviction.

This led me to a question that has guided my professional journey ever since:



How can we help students do the right thing even when no one is watching?

My Educational Belief: Schools as Gardens, Not Factories



That experience prompted me to reflect on the purpose of education. I have come to believe that schools should do more than produce students who simply follow instructions. They should nurture young people who think independently, act responsibly, and treat others with integrity and compassion.

I see schools not as factories, but as gardens. While factories depend on control and standardisation, gardens flourish through care and cultivation. Growth cannot be forced, only nurtured. Educators'

role is therefore to create the conditions in which character, responsibility, and self-discipline can thrive.



This belief also shapes my understanding of self-directed learning. Beyond setting goals and monitoring progress, self-directed learning has a moral dimension. If students can take ownership of their learning, they can also take ownership of their behaviour and values. They learn not only to ask, “What am I learning?” but also, ***“Who am I becoming?”***.

Why I Joined the 'i-Journey' Scheme: Seeking a Path from Belief to Practice

These reflections led me to join the Self-directed Learning Programme under the 'i-Journey' Scheme in Turku, Finland. While my educational philosophy was clear, I was seeking practical ways to translate belief into action.



The challenge was simple: despite well-established behavioural expectations and reward systems, many students behaved appropriately only under close supervision. Their actions were often driven by external control rather than internal motivation.

This prompted me to explore whether self-directed learning could foster not only academic growth but also character development. Could students set personal goals, reflect on their progress, and gradually act from their values rather than for rewards?

The 'i-Journey' experience reaffirmed my belief that lasting change is rooted in mindset, relationships, and reflection. It also revealed that young children are capable of far greater agency than we often assume.

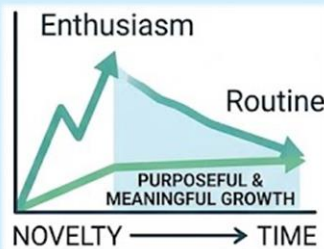
I returned with renewed purpose: to make moral education more personal, reflective, and student-driven.

The Reality of Bringing Vision to Life

Implementing this vision, however, proved challenging.

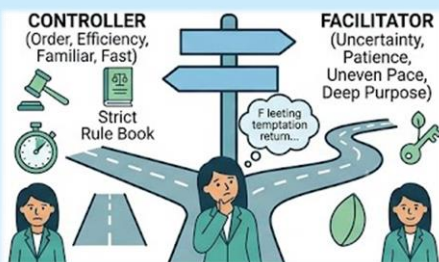
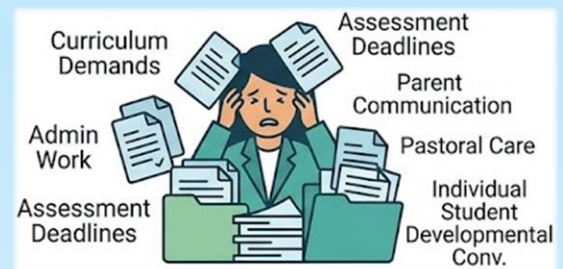
As inspiring as the vision was, translating it into practice proved far more challenging than I had anticipated. Perhaps the most important lesson was that a good idea does not become effective simply because it is well-intentional.

The first challenge was goal-setting. Many Primary 3 students struggled to identify meaningful personal targets. Goals such as “I will be good” or “I will be quiet” reflected what they thought teachers wanted to hear rather than genuine self-awareness. We quickly realised that reflection and ownership must be explicitly taught.



Maintaining momentum was another challenge. Initial enthusiasm gradually faded, and some students began to see target-setting as another routine task. This reminded us that sustainable growth cannot rely on novelty alone. Reflection must remain purposeful and meaningful.

Practical constraints also emerged. Teachers were already juggling curriculum delivery, assessment, parent communication, student support, and administrative duties. Supporting individual student reflection and developmental conversations required both commitment and a significant shift in practice.



Perhaps the greatest challenge was changing adult mindsets. While moving from controller to facilitator is appealing in theory, it is often difficult in practice. It requires replacing certainty and efficiency with patience, trust, and a willingness to embrace the uneven nature of genuine growth. At times, the pull of familiar forms of control was strong, but I knew they would undermine the deeper purpose of our work.

Reimagining Student Experience: Building Ownership and Meaning

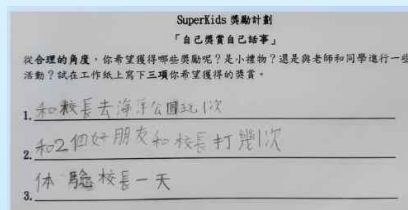
To address these challenges, we redesigned the student experience.

We introduced **Target Setting Workshops**, where teachers guided students through reflective conversations. Questions such as “What kind of classmate do you want to be?” and “What is one change that would make a difference?” helped students set more meaningful and authentic goals.

One student initially chose the goal of “being quiet”. Through discussion, he realised that he often called out because he was afraid of forgetting his ideas. He eventually reframed his goal as: “I will raise my hand and wait so I can share my ideas respectfully.” This shift reflected genuine self-awareness rather than simple rule-following.

We also connected behaviour to core values, linking listening with respect, task completion with responsibility, and helping others with kindness. Behavioural goals shifted from avoiding consequences to becoming the kind of person students aspired to be.

Rewards became more personalised, with students identifying incentives that were meaningful to them rather than receiving the same rewards as everyone else.



To encourage intrinsic motivation, students reflected not only on whether they had achieved a goal, but also on why it mattered and how it felt to make progress. Over time, many began expressing pride in becoming more responsible, suggesting a gradual shift from external rewards to internal satisfaction.

Peer mentoring further strengthened the initiative. Older students supported younger pupils by sharing goals, offering encouragement, and reflecting on their own experiences, fostering a stronger sense of community and collective responsibility.

Supporting Teachers as Co-Architects of Change

The success of the initiative depended as much on teachers' growth as on students' development.

Professional dialogue

- Teachers regularly discussed strategies, challenges, and observations, building a shared understanding of how to support authentic goal-setting and reflective practice.
- How do we help children set authentic goals? How do we respond when a student repeatedly falls short without reducing the process to punishment?***

Scaffolding

- Self-directed learning does not mean leaving students to manage on their own; it requires intentional guidance. Teachers learned to use questions that encouraged reflection and ownership rather than relying solely on correction.

Developing collective ownership among staff

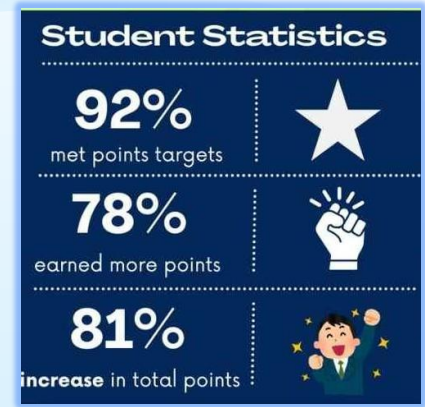
- Sustainable change could not depend on a single leader or initiative. Through ongoing collaboration, teachers became co-designers of the school's approach to character development.



From Prizes to Purpose: Joy, Impact, and the Road Ahead

The impact of this journey was visible in both measurable and human ways. Compared with the previous year, behavioural points increased by 81%, and 92% of students achieved their personal targets.

More meaningful, however, were the subtle changes in students' attitudes and language. They spoke more frequently about responsibility, respect, and personal growth. One student's journal reflection remains especially memorable:



"I used to do it for the prize, but now I want to be helpful and responsible."

That statement captured the essence of our journey: not better behaviour alone, but the development of an inner moral compass.

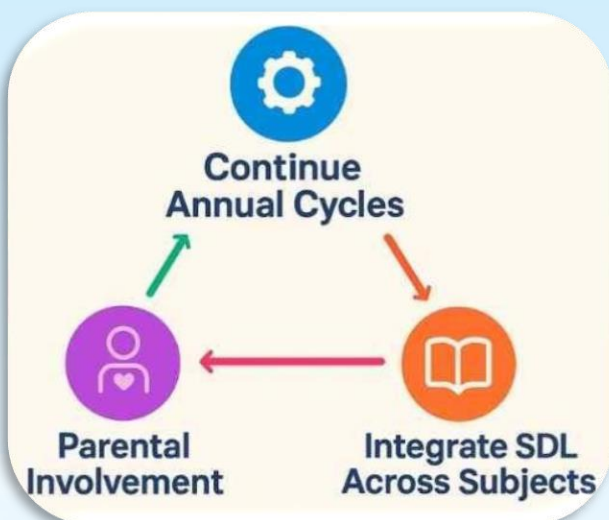
Teachers also reported fewer behavioural issues and more meaningful conversations with students, contributing to a more caring and reflective school culture.

Looking ahead



I hope to deepen parental involvement and strengthen the link between self-directed growth with academic learning. After all, the qualities that shape character, such as goal-setting, perseverance, self-reflection, and self-monitoring, are also the essential capabilities of lifelong learning.

When I think back to that moment at the classroom window, I no longer see a failure. Instead, I see a turning point: a catalyst that shifted my focus from managing behaviour to cultivating character. The '*i-Journey*' Scheme taught me that meaningful change begins with a question, grows through deliberate action, and flourishes through a steadfast belief in every student's capacity to choose what is right for the right reasons. The journey is neither simple nor swift, but few are more profound or transformative in education.



A Big Change in How I Think About Teaching: A Teacher's Journey of Looking Inward and Growing

CHEUNG Chung-wai

Po Leung Kuk Castar Primary School

The Blind Spots of My Early Career

When I first started my career as a teacher, I did not have the basic professional mindset that a good teacher should have. My perspective was shaped by a narrow educational experience. Having attended an elite English-medium primary school and a highly ranked traditional secondary school, I was immersed in an environment that equated success with examination results. Surrounded by high-achieving peers, I came to view education as little more than a race for grades and academic excellence.

Looking back, I realise how misguided that view was. By assuming that some students had less potential than others, I overlooked their capacity for growth and, unintentionally, widened the gap between stronger and weaker learners. More importantly, I failed to recognise that the true purpose of education extends far beyond academic achievement. It is about helping every student discover their strengths, realise their potential, and develop as confident, capable individuals.



The Awakening

Over time, my assumptions were challenged. Many students whom I had once considered “average” grew into successful, capable adults, building fulfilling careers, strong families, and meaningful lives. What moved me most was their generosity. Despite receiving little encouragement from me as students, they returned years later with warmth and gratitude.

Their success forced me to reflect on a difficult question:

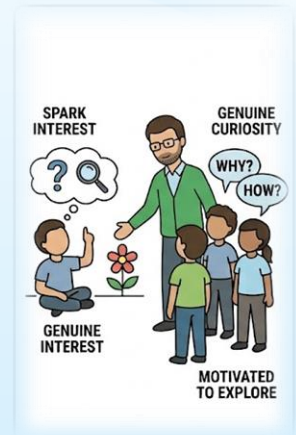
***Why had these students thrived
when I had underestimated them?***

I gradually came to realise that qualities such as resilience, adaptability, empathy, and communication skills often matter as much as, if not more than, examination results. These experiences transformed my view of education and reminded me that a teacher's role extends far beyond delivering knowledge. It is about helping students develop the skills and values needed for life.

Rebuilding My Beliefs

Changed by these experiences, my approach to teaching today is fundamentally different. I fully support Hong Kong's shift from a knowledge-centred education system to one that emphasises how students apply what they learn.

In my classroom, I no longer see myself as a transmitter of knowledge, but as a cultivator of curiosity. My goal is to spark students' interest through learning experiences that encourage them to ask "Why?" and "How?" I hope they leave the classroom motivated to explore further, driven by genuine curiosity rather than external pressure.



I also believe that values education is essential. Beyond academic success, I want students to develop empathy, social responsibility, and a concern for the wider world. Helping them become responsible global citizens is among the most meaningful aspects of my work.

To support this, I strive to create a classroom culture where mistakes are seen as opportunities for learning. Students are encouraged to reflect on their challenges, support one another, and celebrate each

other's strengths. In such an environment, learning becomes a shared journey of growth rather than a competition for success.

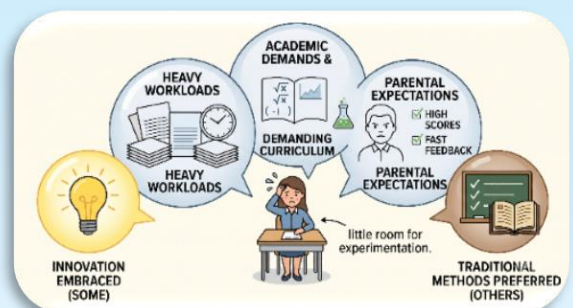


Confronting Resistance to Change

Changing beliefs was easier than changing practice. In a high-performing school, proposals for new approaches were met with understandable caution, as many teachers were concerned about their impact on examination results.

Practical constraints added to the challenge. Heavy workloads, curriculum demands, and parental expectations left limited room for experimentation. While some colleagues embraced innovation, others preferred approaches with a long record of success.

These challenges sometimes raised doubts about the possibility of meaningful change, but they also strengthened my conviction that students needed greater ownership of their learning.





The Finland Discovery

Just as I was feeling most discouraged, a valuable opportunity emerged. The 'i-Journey' Scheme gave teachers the chance to learn from education systems beyond Hong Kong and explore how they foster student independence and self-directed learning.



What impressed me most about Finland was not its international reputation for educational excellence, but its culture of **trust**. Teachers were trusted as professionals, and students as capable learners. Learning was meaningful, collaborative, and closely connected to real life.

The month-long programme was transformative. I observed a trust-based education system where principals trusted teachers and teachers trusted students. Learning was designed to be authentic, engaging, and relevant, from everyday routines to science projects.

The pre-trip preparation was equally valuable. Through discussions with programme instructors and school leaders, we clarified our learning goals and explored how Finnish practices could be adapted to the Hong Kong context.

The experience challenged me to rethink how we could foster greater independence and ownership of learning in Hong Kong, particularly in the context of the new Primary Science curriculum, which emphasises inquiry, experimentation, and problem-solving.

Putting the Plan into Action

A Study on Phenomena-Based Inquiry Learning in Primary Science and its Effects on Self-Efficacy and Academic Performance

Background & Objectives

This project investigates the implementation of phenomena-based learning (PbL) in Primary 4 science modules, aiming to enhance students' self-efficacy and academic performance amid a shift from traditional teacher-centered pedagogies. It seeks to enhance understanding of phenomena-based and inquiry-based learning, and teaching methodologies while providing the education sector with empirical evidence to facilitate the broader adoption of such methodologies in the future.

Method/ Implementation

A quasi-experimental study was conducted to examine the effects of phenomena-based learning (PbL) and inquiry learning on Primary 4 students within the General Studies curriculum, focusing on science modules (nutrition, water, and air). The experimental group (classes 4B and 4C) engaged in numerous PbL activities and inquiry-based tasks using a blended learning approach (combining in-school and at-home interactive experiences). The control group (classes 4A and 4C) followed traditional teaching methods to serve as a baseline. All Primary 4 students participated in an interdisciplinary microclimate project, with teaching methods differentiated by group (PbL for the experimental group and traditional methods for the control group). Academic performance was assessed by comparing results on specific exam questions tied to the modified modules. Self-efficacy was measured using a quantitative pretest-posttest control group design: both groups took a pretest, the experimental group experienced the PbL intervention, and both completed a posttest. Qualitative data were gathered through in-depth interviews at the academic year's end to explore students' learning experiences and explain variations in outcomes, such as differences in engagement or achievement.

Results

Overall, these findings support the notion that the intervention provided a protective effect against self-efficacy declines, potentially due to enhanced hands-on experiences fostering resilient confidence, despite broader factors (e.g., end-of-term fatigue) contributing to decreases in both groups. However, no significant differences were observed between the two student groups at this stage. Based on various studies, strengthened self-efficacy plays a major role in improving students' academic performance (Förnas, 2018; Grigg, 2018; Reber, 2018). It is suggested that improvements in students' performance require time, and a relatively short period may be insufficient; prolonged research duration could yield different results.

Organised by:
Education Bureau, Hong Kong SAR Government

Inspired by Finland's approach, our Science team developed a step-by-step plan to address our three big problems.

First, we **rethought homework and extended learning beyond the classroom**.

Recognising that meaningful learning does not occur only at school, we designed tasks for students to complete at home and after school. Online resources, videos, and independent inquiry opportunities enabled students to learn at their own pace while easing pressure on classroom time.

Second, rather than relying solely on discussion, we invited sceptical colleagues to **observe our lessons**. Seeing students actively engaged and achieving positive learning outcomes helped build confidence and gradually turns concerns to support.



Third, we adopted **more flexible classroom arrangements** to better accommodate students' diverse learning needs. Stronger and weaker learners worked collaboratively, while teachers adjusted the pace of learning to suit different abilities. This approach promoted learner autonomy.

After a year of implementation, phenomenon-based learning and self-directed learning have become integral to our Science curriculum. Students show greater engagement, deeper understanding, and sustained success as they progress to secondary school.

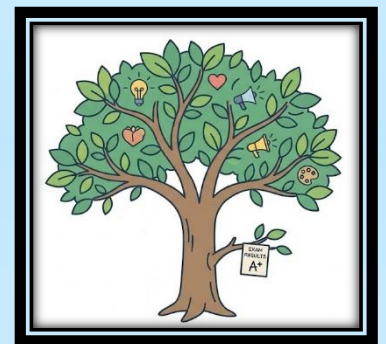
Looking Ahead

People often say that learning is a journey without end. My trip to Finland marked the close of one chapter and the beginning of another. Bringing those ideas back to Hong Kong and adapting them to my school has been both challenging and rewarding, but I know this is only the first step in a much longer journey of growth and innovation.

Looking ahead, I hope that the success we are having in the Science subject can extend to Mathematics, English, and Chinese. I also hope to share our experience with other schools, encouraging more educators to embrace a model of learning that is both empowering and student-centred.

Most importantly, I often think of the former students who taught me one of the most valuable lessons of my career: examination results reveal only a small part of a person's potential. Today, when I see a struggling student, I no longer see limitations. I see possibilities.

I also hope more teachers will have opportunities to learn from educational practices beyond Hong Kong.



*If we want our students to develop a global perspective, we must first broaden our own. By embracing lifelong learning, we empower our students to become **confident, capable, and compassionate** individuals who can shape the future.*



Engage, Empower, Excel: Levelling up Students' English Skills with Gamified SDL Writing Adventures

LI Wenyao
Christ College

A Classroom Wake-Up Call

One comment from a Secondary 1 student changed the way I viewed teaching:

"Miss, I never really know how to write."

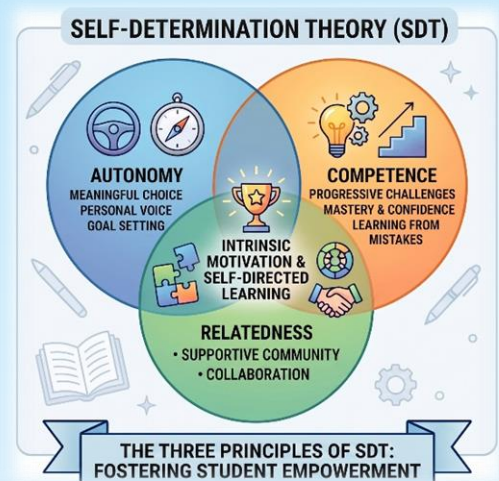
The remark came after I had marked 33 essays that strikingly similar. Students had faithfully copied the structure, ideas, and language from a model essay, and even their "personal" examples sounded almost identical.

That moment became a turning point. Years of teacher-centred routines, shaped by a packed curriculum and examination pressure, had unintentionally fostered dependence rather than curiosity, creativity, or confidence. particularly those from low socio-economic backgrounds with limited exposure to English beyond school, had learned to avoid mistakes rather than express their own ideas. If they could not write independently without extensive scaffolding, was I truly preparing them for lifelong learning?

This question prompted me to rethink my teaching and eventually inspired my participation in the 'i-Journey' Scheme in Finland.

My vision was guided by three principles of Self-Determination Theory (SDT): **autonomy**, **competence**, and **relatedness**.

I wanted students to make meaningful choices, build confidence through progressive challenges, and learn within a supportive community. Above all, I wanted them to become active, self-directed learners with their own voices, rather than passive recipients of knowledge.



Seeking Change in Finland



Although my school had promoted self-directed learning (SDL) since 2017, its impact in English classrooms remained limited. Students struggled with grammar, vocabulary, and original writing, relying heavily on teacher models and lacked motivation to learn independently.



As the junior form coordinator, I witnessed the gap first-hand. While the vision for SDL was clear, we lacked practical strategies tailored to English and to our Band 2 CMI context. This frustration motivated me to join the 'i-Journey' programme in Finland, a country renowned for its learner-centred approach to education.

I wanted to understand how Finnish schools balanced autonomy with structure, supported diverse learners, and cultivated intrinsic motivation. Before the trip, I had planned to develop four SDT-based online learning modules on **Idea Development, Vocabulary, Grammar, and Organisation**, and to pilot them with Secondary 1 students upon my return.

The programme became more than a study visit. It offered a pathway from belief to action.

Bringing Finland Home

Implementing new ideas proved more challenging than expected.

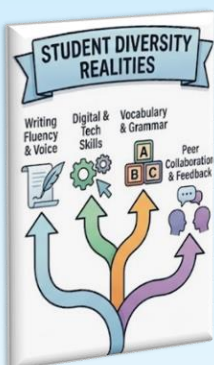


Technical hurdles

Our school lacked sophisticated learning platforms like those used in Finland. Although we adopted Quizizz as an alternative, technical problems often disrupted learning, particularly for students using older devices.

Mindset barriers

Some teachers viewed gamified learning as a distraction from examination preparation, while others were that greater student independence might reduce classroom control.



Student diversity realities

Many students lacked confidence to set meaningful learning goals and focused more on earning points than improving their writing. Those with limited English support at home often set modest targets, such as completing a single quiz, reflecting low self-efficacy, while others became distracted by leaderboards and rewards at the expense of deeper learning.

These challenges forced us to rethink our approach.

What Worked: Strategies and Impact

Building Student Ownership



To support self-directed learning, I redesigned writing activities into four online modules, each with three levels of progression:

Level 1

Recall and understanding

Students completed levelled Quizizz exercises, tracking their progress through SDL Writing Booklets and SMART goals. Reflection prompts encouraged them to consider their daily challenges and achievements.

Level 2

Application and guided practice

We provided clear exemplars showing how mastery of different modules improved writing performance. This helped students make meaningful connections between guided online practice and authentic writing.

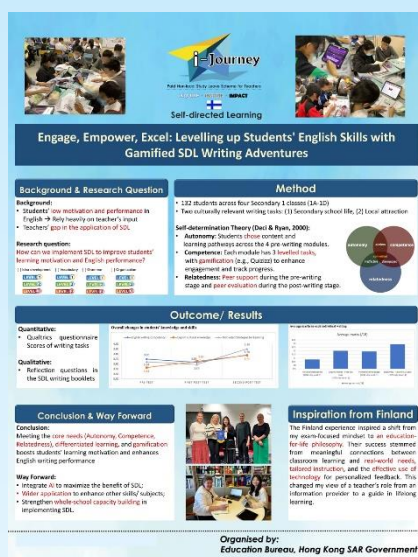
Level 3

Creative use and independent extension

To promote collaboration, we introduced peer brainstorming and structured feedback. Students also chose topics connected to their own experiences, increasing ownership of their writing.



Strategies for Teachers: Building Collaborative Trust



Successful change required more than student engagement; it also depended on empowering teachers.

Rather than imposing new practices, I organised interactive sharing sessions to introduce SDT and share insights from Finland. Bi-weekly meetings allowed teachers to exchange experiences, address challenges, and refine strategies collaboratively.

An important turning point came when colleagues observed SDL lessons in action. Seeing students actively discussing ideas, setting meaningful goals, and taking ownership of their learning helped ease concerns and build confidence in the approach.

Gradually, our department developed a stronger culture of collaboration and reflective practice.

Joy and Achievement: From Hesitation to Confidence

The impact became visible during our second SDL cycle.

One student, Anson, had previously relied heavily on model essays. During the project, he set a personal goal to introduce a Hong Kong tourist attraction using newly learned vocabulary. His final piece, though not flawless, was original, authentic and distinctly his own. For the first time, he was writing to express ideas rather than imitate them.

His progress reflected a broader shift. Goal completion rates rose from 50% to 82%, and students produced more diverse and personal writing. Teachers reported higher engagement, richer classroom discussions, and a marked reduction in students' fear of making mistakes.

Assessment data also showed improvement. Organisation scores increased by 15%, grammar accuracy improved by 12%, with the greatest progress seen among lower-achieving students.

For me, the most rewarding outcome was hearing students describe mistakes as opportunities to improve rather than signs of failure. They were beginning to see themselves as capable, self-directed learners.

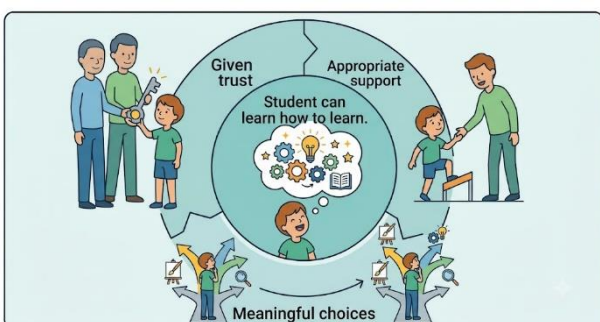
Looking Ahead: Sustaining the Spark

The journey is far from over. My next goal is to extend self-directed learning into senior forms while balancing the demands of public examinations. I also aim to leverage AI-supported feedback, enhance digital learning platforms, and disseminate effective practices across departments and schools.

Scaling up will require more than change within the English department. By sharing learning resources, opening classrooms for peer observation, and organising professional sharing sessions, we can help teachers across subjects adapt SDL principles to their own contexts. Cross-curricular projects in areas such as History and Science can further strengthen transferable skills, including metacognition and self-assessment.

While challenges remain, particularly in sustaining motivation and securing resources, my experience has reinforced a belief that now guides my practice:

When students are given trust, meaningful choices, and appropriate support, they can learn how to learn.



The ‘i-Journey’ Scheme was the catalyst that transformed my classroom practice. Today, my mission is no longer simply to teach English. It is to empower students with the confidence, independence, and lifelong learning skills needed to thrive beyond the classroom.

Beyond the Form: My Journey of Over a Quarter of a Century

NG Wai-lim

Society of Boys' Centres Hui Chung Sing Memorial School

The Video That Changed Everything

Before joining the 'i-Journey' Scheme in Finland, I asked a student to record a short video of his learning process. As I watched the footage, I noticed something unsettling. Although he followed every instruction perfectly, his eyes were vacant and his actions mechanical. He was merely complying, not truly learning.

After more than 25 years at the Society of Boys' Centres Hui Chung Sing Memorial School, where I now serve as Vice Principal, I believed I was at the forefront of innovative education. Guided by the belief of serving every student, I had introduced STEAM and Maker education and used my background in fashion design to help students build confidence and creativity. Receiving the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence further reinforced that belief.

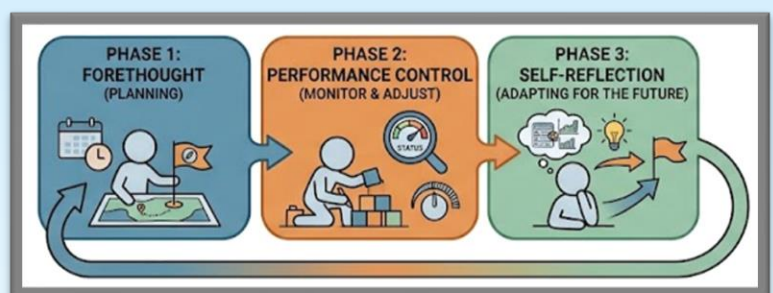
Yet that video exposed a critical truth: engagement cannot be measured by compliance alone. Students may follow instructions, but genuine learning occurs only when they are curious, motivated, and actively involved in the process.

"It was more form than substance! I had built the structures of learning, but I hadn't yet grasped the true essence of what it means for a student to truly direct themselves."

What Education Means to Me

For many of our students, education is about more than acquiring knowledge. It is a journey of rebuilding confidence and overcoming past setbacks, and discovering their potential. Many arrive carrying the burden of academic failure and negative labels. Our mission is to help them become active, confident architects of their own futures.

My educational vision is grounded in self-directed learning (SDL) (Knowles, 1975) and self-regulated learning (SRL) (Zimmerman, 1990), both of which emphasise learners' ability to set goals, monitor progress, and take ownership of their learning.





Three core values guide my practice:

❖ **Learner Autonomy**

Shifting the focus from teaching, so students take greater ownership of their growth.



❖ **Metacognition**

Developing students' ability to reflect on their thinking, monitor their progress, and make informed learning decisions.



❖ **Self-Efficacy**

Nurturing the belief that challenges can be overcome through effort, perseverance, and effective strategies.



Why I Joined 'i-Journey' Scheme?

The video became the catalyst for my learning journey in Finland. It made me realise that technology alone could not address the deeper challenges facing our students such as low motivation, passive learning habits, and behavioural difficulties.

In Hong Kong's high-pressure education environment, many of our students struggle with disengagement and a lack of ownership over their learning. I came to understand that these challenges could not be solved by adding more technological tools alone. What I needed to find was not a new method, but a deeper educational purpose.



I turned to Finland to see how student's self-directed learning could be translated into everyday practice. I wanted to learn from a system built on trust, equity, and the belief that every child can succeed. Most importantly, I sought to understand how students could become active owners of their learning rather than passive followers of instructions, while still having the freedom to enjoy their childhood.

One particularly memorable experience was watching colleagues emerge from a hot sauna and plunge into an icy lake. Their willingness to embrace discomfort became a powerful metaphor for my educational mission:

Not to remove challenges for students, but to create safe opportunities for them to face, overcome, and grow from them.

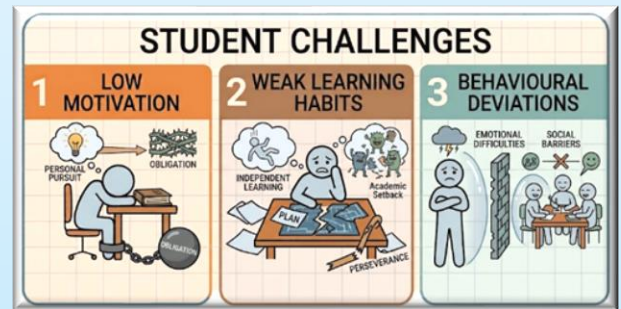
The Challenges of Turning Vision into Reality

Returning to Hong Kong, I quickly realised that implementing self-directed learning (SDL) was required far more than revising lesson plans. It demanded a shift in mindset, both among educators and students.

The first challenge was gaining colleagues' confidence. Some questioned whether students were ready for greater autonomy. Building support required ongoing dialogue and clear evidence that self-directed learning is not about reducing structure, but about fostering ownership and responsibility.

The challenges among students were even greater:

- **Low Motivation:** Many viewed learning as an obligation rather than a personal pursuit.
- **Weak Learning Habits:** Repeated academic setbacks had undermined their ability to plan, persevere, and learn independently.
- **Behavioural Deviations:** Emotional and social difficulties often affected engagement and participation in learning.



Breaking the Cycle

Supporting Students

To foster genuine self-directed learning, I conducted a 15-week action research project.

First phase

Introduced a HKDSE Self-Directed Learning Scheme, guiding students to:

- Create personalised study plans
- Set short-term and long-term goals
- Monitor their own progress
- Adjust learning strategies independently

Second phase

Established structured routines involving:

- Independent pre-lesson preparation
- Collaborative in-class learning
- Reflective post-lesson review



These routines gradually transformed students from passive recipients into active learners.

Supporting Teachers

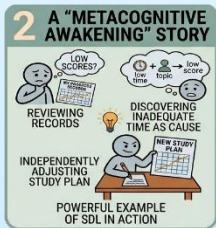
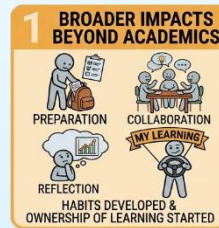
Sustainable change also required teacher development. I strengthened our **Professional Learning Community** by organising regular workshops, seminars, and sharing sessions. These opportunities enabled teachers to exchange experiences, discuss challenges, and explore strategies to promote student autonomy more effectively.



Reflection of Transformation

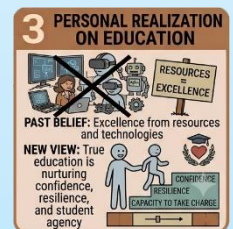
The results of the action research extended beyond academic performance.

Broader Impact: Across participating classes, students developed stronger habits of preparation, collaboration, and reflection. More importantly, they began taking ownership of their learning.



I witnessed a true "**metacognitive awakening**" during a review session. While examining his self-monitoring records, one student realised that inadequate study time on a particular topic had contributed to his poor results. Rather than becoming discouraged, he independently adjusted his study plan and took responsibility for improvement. It was a powerful example of self-directed learning in action.

Personal Reflection: Looking back on more than 25 years in education, I once believed that excellence lay in providing the best resources and technologies. Today, I understand that true education is about far more than tools or content. It is about nurturing students' confidence, resilience, and capacity to take charge of their own learning.



Looking Ahead: The Endless Horizon of Learner Autonomy

My journey has taught me that self-directed learning is not a destination but an ongoing pursuit. The next stage is to embed this culture across the entire school through enhanced learning support, expanded resources, and stronger professional collaboration among teachers.

Challenges remain. Changing deeply rooted habits takes time, patience, and sustained support. Yet my guiding belief remains unchanged:

Everything for the students, for all the students, and for the students' everything

Every student, regardless of his past experiences or personal struggles, has the potential to become a resilient, self-directed lifelong learner.

When I think back to the video that sparked my journey, I no longer see a student passively following instruction. Instead, I see the beginning of a young person discovering the confidence, agency, and capacity to shape his own future.

References

- Knowles, M. (1975). Self-Directed Learning: A Guide for Learners and Teachers.
Zimmerman, B. J. (1990). Self-Regulated Learning and Academic Achievement: An Overview. Educational Psychologist, 25(1), 3-17.

Teaching Mathematics in a Changing World: Reflections on Leadership, Learning, and Transformation Through 'i-Journey' from Hong Kong to Finland

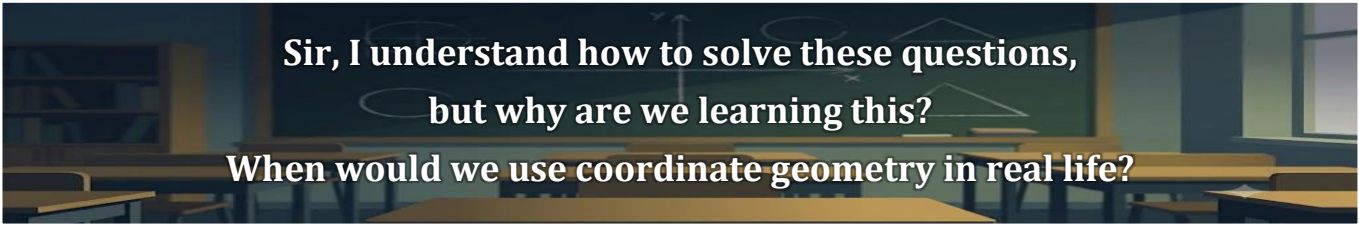
YEUNG Chun-yin

Wah Yan College, Kowloon

A Question That Changed My Perspective

Several years ago, I was teaching a Secondary Four lesson on coordinate geometry. The lesson was carefully planned, with clear explanations, worked examples, and practice exercises. Students listened attentively and worked diligently.

Then a student asked a simple but powerful question:



Sir, I understand how to solve these questions,
but why are we learning this?
When would we use coordinate geometry in real life?

His question stayed with me long after the lesson ended. Although my students could follow procedures and achieve good examination results, I began to wonder whether they truly understood the purpose and value of mathematics.

As a teacher in a school renowned for its academic excellence and long history, I realised that educational success should not be measured solely by examination performance. Education should help students understand the world, think critically, and continue learning throughout their lives.

That moment became the starting point of my professional transformation.



My Educational Belief: Cultivating Lifelong Learners

Through years of teaching and reflection, I have come to believe that the ultimate goal of education is not merely transmitting knowledge but cultivating lifelong learners. In a rapidly changing world, students need more than information; they need the capacity to learn, adapt, and grow.



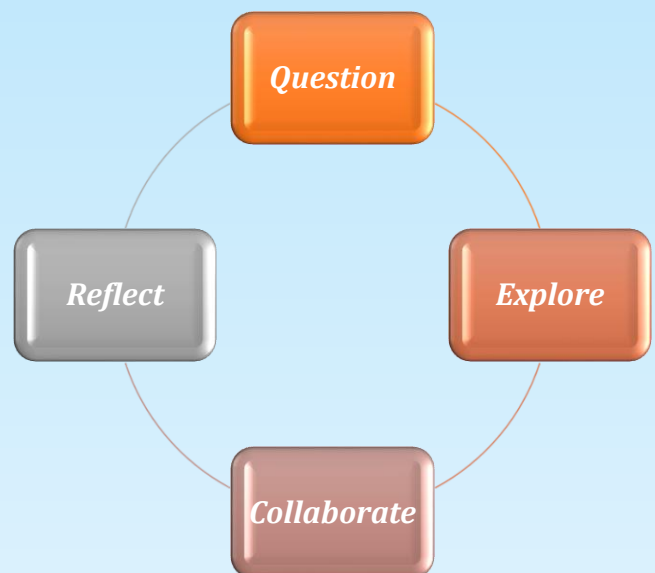
This belief is especially important in mathematics education. Mathematics is often seen as a collection of rules and procedures, but it is much more than that. At its core, mathematics develops logical reasoning, pattern recognition, creativity, and problem-solving. More importantly, it equips students with the habits of mind needed to navigate challenges and make sense of an increasingly complex world.

Several principles guide my educational philosophy:

Lifelong Learning	• Learning and reflection should remain lifelong habits.
Every Student Matters	• Every student has unique strengths and deserves opportunities to realise their potential.
Reflection Drives Growth	• Reflection turns learning from passive absorption into purposeful self-discovery.
Skills for the Future	• Education should develop transferable competencies such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and adaptability.

This requires a shift from teacher-centred instruction to student-centred learning. Teachers should act as facilitators, mentors, and designers of meaningful learning experiences. In such a learning culture, students are encouraged to **question, explore, collaborate, and reflect**. Mistakes are not viewed as failures but as valuable opportunities for growth.

As Mathematics Panel Chairperson, I wanted to nurture this culture both in my classroom and across the department. This aspiration led me to join the 'i-Journey' Scheme.



Why I Joined the 'i-Journey' Scheme ?

The Programme on Self-directed Learning at the University of Turku offered a valuable opportunity to learn from Finland, a country renowned for its commitment to student well-being, teacher professionalism, and meaningful, student-centred learning.



What fascinated me most was the philosophy underlying Finnish education: trust in teachers, student autonomy, holistic development, and learning driven by curiosity rather than examinations.

I joined the programme seeking answers to several questions:

- HOW**
- do Finnish schools foster intrinsic motivation?
 - do teachers encourage inquiry and creativity?
 - is professional collaboration sustained?
 - can these ideas be adapted to Hong Kong schools?

My goal was not to replicate another education system but to reflect on how its principles could enhance mathematics learning in my own context.

Challenges in Turning Vision into Practice

Educational change is rarely straightforward.

One of the first challenges I encountered was working within institutional constraints. Curriculum demands and examination schedules often left limited room for innovation, while teachers' heavy workloads made new initiatives difficult to sustain. Differences in colleagues' perspectives also required careful navigation, as some embraced change more readily than others.

Student diversity presents another challenge. While some students thrive in open-ended and inquiry-based learning, others preferred greater structure and guidance. Balancing these needs required thoughtful lesson design.

Most importantly, lasting change depends on culture. Without shared commitment and ongoing support, even the most promising initiatives can lose momentum over time.

Strategies for Students and Teachers

Meaningful change had to occur on two levels: **students needed greater ownership of their learning, while teachers needed a supportive culture of collaboration and professional dialogue.**

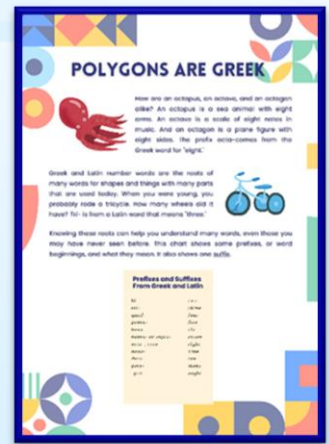
Empowering Students

To encourage greater ownership of learning, I introduced several initiatives.

Students completed **self-directed assignments with varying levels of challenge**, allowing students to choose tasks that matched their readiness and interests. They also maintained weekly learning logs to track study habits, learning strategies, and time devoted to mathematics.



Another important element was encouraging students to **bring interesting mathematical problems to class**. They explored puzzles, real-life applications, or thought-provoking questions, then share them with their classmates. These discussions often sparked curiosity and highlighted the creativity of mathematics. More importantly, students began to see themselves not only as learners, but also as contributors to the learning community. This shift transformed them from passive recipients of knowledge into active participants in learning.



Reflection became a key component of the learning process. Through regular self-reflection activities, students considered questions such as:

- What strategy did I learn this week?
- What did I learn from my mistakes?
- How did I challenge myself?



These reflections helped students view mistakes as opportunities for growth rather than failure.

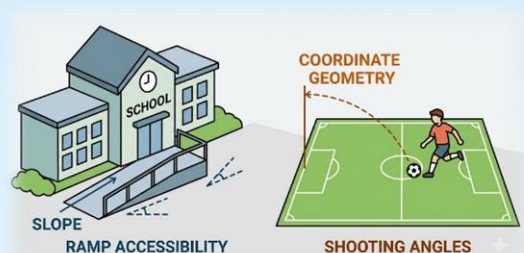


I introduced mathematical readings, real-world case studies, and cross-curricular tasks. Collaborating with colleagues from the Chinese Language Department, we designed activities that strengthened both reading comprehension and mathematical thinking.

Mathematical Modelling and Real-World Learning

A major inspiration from Finland was the use of authentic contexts to make mathematics meaningful and relevant. Students engaged in mathematical modelling activities such as:

- Analysing the relationship between education level and income using Hong Kong census data.
- Investigating how shooting angles in football relate to coordinate geometry.
- Assessing the accessibility of school ramps through slope calculations and design improvements.
- Exploring probability through sports tournament scenarios.



These activities helped students see mathematics as a tool for understanding and improving the world, rather than simply a subject for examinations.

Problem 1 (Choose a problem that you are familiar with and feel comfortable with):
Please state the source of your problem (e.g. Textbook Ex-2A Q.1)

2018 Shanghai gaokao Q.11

Please copy the problem to the space below and attach figures (if applicable):

known: $a > 0$.

$$\begin{cases} \frac{2^x}{2^x + 16} = \frac{1}{5} & \text{(i)} \\ \frac{2^y}{2^y + 8} = -\frac{1}{5} & \text{(ii)} \end{cases}$$
$$2^{x+y} = 3698$$

Find the value of a .

Please show your solution (you can use extra sheet if the space is not enough):

Using cras-mullti,
 $5 \cdot 2^x = 6 \cdot 2^x + 64$

$$2^x = -64$$

$5 \cdot 2^y = 2^y + 8$

$$2^y = \frac{-80}{6}$$

$\therefore x = \log_2(-64)$

$\therefore y = \log_2(\frac{-80}{6})$

$2^{x+y} = PQA$

$a = \pm 6, \therefore a = 6$

OR just hole force
(i) $+ (i)$
 $2(2^x + 16) + 2^y(2^y + 8) = 1$
 $(2^{x+1} + 32) + (2^{y+1} + 8) = 1$
 $2^{x+1} + 2^{y+1} + 40 = 1$
 $2^{x+1} + 2^{y+1} = -39$
 $2^{x+y} = PQA$
 $a = \pm 6$
 $\therefore a = 6$

Teacher's feedback:

You have solved the problem accurately with a nice presentation. Well done!

You have tackled the problem but your presentation is needed to be improved. Try to put more effort into making a good presentation of your work.

This problem is indeed too easy and straightforward for you. You could choose a moderate level to solve at here next time.

Optional: Problem 4 (Choose a problem that you find interesting and want to share with others):
Please state the source of your problem (e.g. Reference book with title, YouTube with hyperlink):

BSK Ch2.3 Example 3(e)

Please copy the problem to the space below and attach figures (if applicable):

$3^a = 5^b = c$
 $\frac{1}{a} + \frac{1}{b} = 2$ Find the value of c .

Please share your solution (you can use extra sheet if the space is not enough):

$3^a = c$
 $\log_c 3^a = 1$
 $a \log_c 3 = 1$
 $\frac{1}{a} = \log_c 3$ ✓
 $\frac{1}{b} = \log_c 5$ ✓
 $\log_c 3 + \log_c 5 = 2$
 $\log_c 15 = 2$
 $15 = c^2 \rightarrow c = \sqrt{15}$ ✓

Supporting Teachers

Sustainable improvement requires collective effort



As Mathematics Panel Chairperson, I promoted a culture of collaboration and professional learning. Through regular lesson-planning meetings, teachers shared classroom experiences, discussed challenges, and exchanged effective practices in a supportive environment.

I also emphasised collaborative leadership. Rather than adopting a top-down approach, colleagues were actively involved in curriculum planning, learning design, and assessment development. This strengthened both ownership and professional trust across the department.

Joy and Achievement

One of the most rewarding outcomes was seeing a shift in students' thinking.

Previously, many students focused only on obtaining correct answers. Gradually, they began asking deeper questions:

"Why does this model work?"

"Is there another way to approach the problem?"

"What assumptions are we making?"



These questions signalled genuine mathematical thinking. Students were no longer simply applying procedures; they were ***exploring ideas, questioning assumptions, and making meaningful connections.***

For me, this was a significant breakthrough. It showed that when students are given opportunities to explore, reflect, and connect mathematics with real-world contexts, curiosity and deeper engagement emerge naturally.

Looking Ahead

Education will continue to evolve in an increasingly complex world. As information becomes ever more accessible, teachers must shift from delivering knowledge to cultivating critical thinking, adaptability, and lifelong learning.

At the same time, educators must remain lifelong learners themselves, embracing new ideas and reflecting on their practice.

The 'i-Journey' experience reinforced my belief that meaningful education begins with curiosity, thrives through collaboration, and deepens through reflection.

By nurturing these qualities, we empower students not only to succeed academically, but also to become resilient, adaptable, and lifelong learners.



Example

Wah Yan College, Kowloon
Mathematical Modelling Activities
Shooting on the football pitch

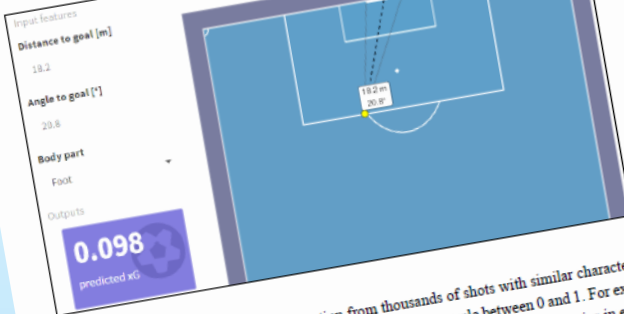
Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

Task 1: Defining parameters and mathematical model

In this task, we investigate the best strategy for a player to get the greatest possible shooting angle in some scenarios. To make the investigation valid in general scenarios, we should also consider other factors as well (e.g. shooting distance).

Nowadays, some sports scientists use Expected Goals (xG) to measure the chances of a shot successfully entering the goal from a given position on the pitch. This value is based on several factors when the shot is taken.

Here is a demonstration on how xG is calculated: <https://www.datafutbol.cl/blog/xg-calculator/>



Usually, an xG model uses historical information from thousands of shots with similar characteristics (i.e. make use of big data) to estimate the likelihood of a goal on a scale between 0 and 1. For example, a shot with an xG value of 0.2 is one that we would generally expect to be converted twice in every 10 attempts.

However, now we have no related data to work with. Therefore, we will try a different approach to calculating xG values using coordinate geometry, to see if this approach works or not.

Wah Yan College, Kowloon
Mathematical Modelling Activities
Chance of a football team to win a competition

Name: _____ () Class: _____ Date: _____

Introduction

In July 2025, four of the world's top football clubs, Liverpool FC, AC Milan, Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur, are set to make history at the Hong Kong Football Festival 2025, hosted Kai Tak Stadium, the city's newest hub for Asia's mega events.

Task 1: Modelling the winning probability in a match

Suppose 4 football teams are invited to join a mini competition, and the relative strengths of the football teams are as follows:

Football team	Ranking (1: strongest, 4: weakest)
Liverpool	1
Arsenal	2
AC Milan	3
Tottenham	4



Source: <https://www.marqwa.org/hk/en/index.php>

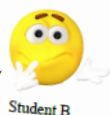
If one of the matches in the competition is Tottenham VS Arsenal, what is the chance of Tottenham winning the match? The following two students suggest different answers:



Arsenal is stronger and Tottenham has no chance of winning. In other words, the probability of Tottenham winning against Arsenal is 0. (i.e. Always the stronger team wins without any doubt.)

Student A

By referring to the rank of the two teams (Arsenal: 2, Tottenham: 4), the probability of Tottenham winning against Arsenal could be $\frac{2}{2+4}$, which is $\frac{1}{3}$. (Conversely, the probability of Tottenham loses is $\frac{2}{3}$.)



Student B

Wah Yan College, Kowloon
Mathematical Modelling Activities
Ramps on our campus

Class: _____ () Date: _____

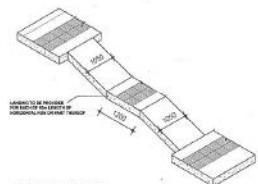
Use the ramp besides St. Ignatius Chapel? In your opinion, is it a good ramp in design?



The ramp besides St. Ignatius Chapel has a gradient less than 1:12 and width of at least 1.05 m. The ramp has provided with horizontal platform for every 10 m of inclined roads, which fulfills safety regulation in Hong Kong.

Source: https://www.bd.gov.hk/doc/en/resources/codes-and-references/code-and-design-manuals/BFA2008_e.pdf

However, how can we justify whether a ramp is good in design besides the safety factors?



*ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MM

H-STEAM in Physical Education (SDGs 3) - Self-directed Learning: Can Smart Sports Devices or Applications Enhance Students' Activity Levels?

YIP Chun-hing

Kwun Tong Kung Lok Government Secondary School (Boys' School)

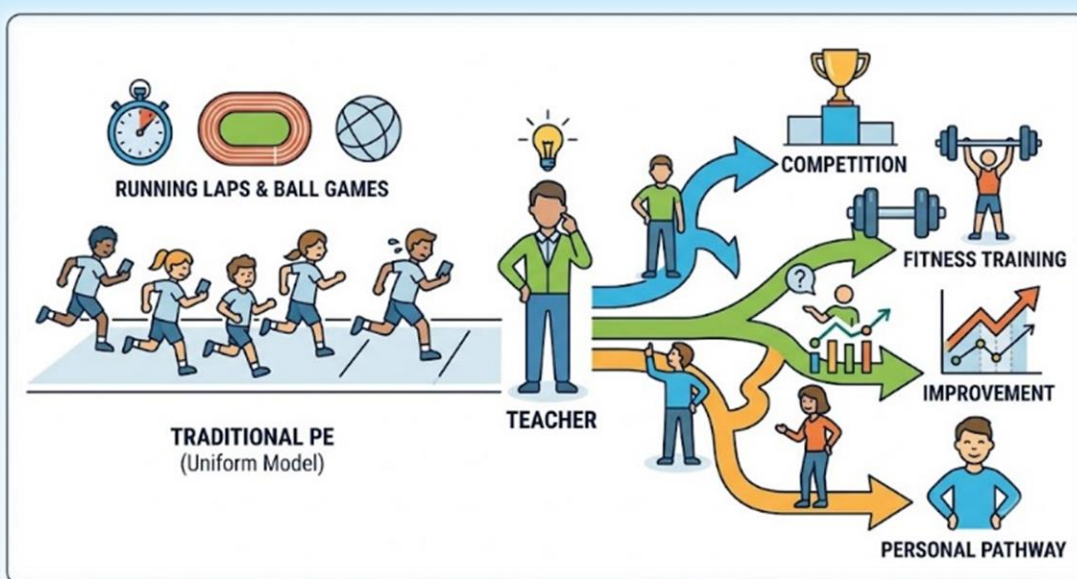
A Classroom Moment That Changed My Thinking

Shortly after joining Kwun Tong Kung Lok Government Secondary School, I was teaching a Secondary Five basketball lesson when I noticed more than ten students standing at the sidelines. Some were looking at their phones; others participated only reluctantly.

When I asked why, one student replied, *"I don't really like sports. It's always running laps and playing ball games. It's boring."* Another added, *"Even when we practise, we don't know whether we're improving."*

Their comments were a wake-up call. Although I believed I had designed a varied Physical Education (PE) curriculum, many students still viewed PE as an obligation rather than an enjoyable learning experience. This led me to question whether the traditional model of demonstration, imitation, and assessment could truly engage every learner.

As a PE teacher in a boys' school, I work with students of diverse interests and abilities. While some thrive on competition and others enjoy fitness training, some have little interest in sports. I wanted every student to discover a meaningful pathway to physical activity, enjoyment, and personal growth.





My Educational Belief

That experience led me to re-examine the purpose of Physical Education. I believe education should not simply teach skills but inspire students to become owners of their learning.

In PE, success should not be limited to athletic students. Every learner should be able to develop healthy habits, set personal goals, and experience the satisfaction of improvement.

Three values guide my practice:



Autonomy

- Students should have ownership of their goals and learning processes.



Data Literacy

- Technology and data can help students understand and improve their performance.



Inclusivity

- PE should cater to diverse interests, abilities, and fitness goals.

As Ho (2023) observes in *Vision and Creation: Nine School Leaders' Stories of Creating the Future*, meaningful innovation begins with responding to students' real needs rather than pursuing change for its own sake.

Seeking a Breakthrough: The 'i-Journey' Scheme



The '**i-Journey**' Scheme provided an opportunity to explore how smart technology and self-directed learning could transform Physical Education.

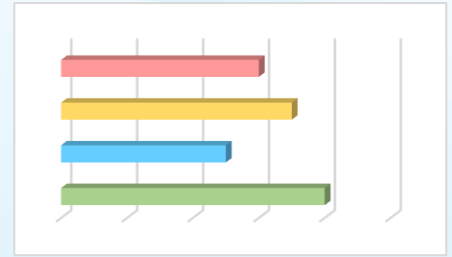
I joined the Programme on Self-directed Learning in Finland for three reasons:

1. To learn how smart devices and sports applications could increase student engagement.
2. To explore practical models of self-directed learning in PE.
3. To develop a sustainable approach suited to boys' learning characteristics, including their desire for challenge, immediate feedback, and technology-enhanced learning.



Upon returning to Hong Kong, I conducted a survey among 86 Secondary Five students. The findings confirmed my concerns:

- ❖ 60% exercised fewer than twice a week.
- ❖ 70% preferred football, basketball, or fitness activities.
- ❖ 50% expressed interest to try new sports.
- ❖ 80% were interested in wearable devices and sports applications.



The issue was not a lack of interest in sports, but a lack of engagement with traditional PE approaches.

To address this, I launched ten-month school-based project. Students learned to use smart technologies such as AR fitness bikes and smart mirrors, set personal fitness goals, tracked their progress, and shared their learning through Google Classroom and school-wide presentations.

Challenges in Implementation

Turning ideas into practice proved far more challenging than expected.

Access to Technology

- Less confident students were often hesitant to engage fully. Introducing weekly sharing sessions and recognising high-performing teams increased participation from approximately 65% to 75%.

Uneven participation

- Less confident students were often hesitant to engage fully. Introducing weekly sharing sessions and recognising high-performing teams increased participation from approximately 65% to 75%.

Time Constraints

- S5 students faced considerable examination pressure. To help them balance study and project requirements, I introduced time-management workshops and allowed greater flexibility in deadlines.

Technical Problems

- Equipment, like the AR fitness bike and smart mirror, occasionally malfunctioned, affecting the student experience. Once, the bike sensor failed and an entire group could not record their data. These incidents highlighted the importance of technical support and the need for teachers to develop stronger technology skills.

Teacher workload

- Managing equipment, monitoring student progress, analysing data, and preparing reports was demanding. Clearer assessment criteria and phased implementation helped make the workload more manageable.



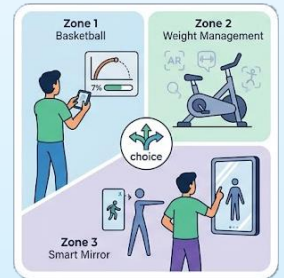
Strategies: A Dual Approach

Strategies for students

Interest-Based Learning

Students selected learning pathways based on their interests. Basketball enthusiasts used shooting-analysis apps, students pursuing fitness goals engaged with AR cycling, and others trained using smart fitness mirrors.

Giving students choice significantly increased engagement.



Immediate Feedback

One of the most effective features of sports technology was instant performance feedback. The basketball app, for example, provided shooting percentages, release angles, and shot distribution data. This transformed practice into a more motivating and game-like experience.

The basketball group achieved the highest participation rate, reaching 80%.



Data Literacy and Reflection

Students submitted bi-weekly reports analysing exercise frequency, heart rate, calorie expenditure, progress, and challenges.

As a result:

- ❖ 85% reported improvement in data-analysis skills.
- ❖ 75% produced high-quality analytical reports.



Students became more reflective and responsible for their own progress.

Strategies for Teachers

Building Trust

Some colleagues were initially sceptical about integrating technology into PE. By inviting them to observe lessons and try the equipment themselves, I gradually increased their confidence and support.



Continuous Professional Learning

I attended professional development programmes on sports science, technology integration, and self-directed learning to strengthen my own practice.

Professional Sharing

I also exchanged experiences with PE teachers from other schools, sharing both successes and challenges. These collaborations provided valuable feedback and reinforced the importance of collective learning.



"True leadership is not about position, but about influence."

As a frontline teacher, I do not have the authority to demand change from colleagues, but by sharing real student stories and data, I found that influence was slowly taking effect.



A Specific Success Story

One student, whom I will call Ah Chun, best illustrates the project's impact.

Initially, Ah Chun showed little enthusiasm for either PE or academic studies. During the third month of the project, I found him practising basketball alone after school while analysing his performance data on his phone.

Excitedly, he told me:

"My shooting percentage from the left side is only 30%, but it's 50% from the right. I want to improve my left side."

From then on, he practised regularly and used data to guide his improvement. In his final reflection, he wrote:

"I used to think PE was boring. Now I can actually see my progress."

His class teacher later reported improvements in both his classroom focus and homework completion.

Across the project, the proportion of students exercising at least three times per week increased **from 40% to 80%**, while confidence in self-directed learning also improved significantly.

These outcomes reinforced my belief that when students are given ownership, meaningful feedback, and opportunities to track growth, motivation follows naturally.



Looking Ahead

The project may be complete, but the journey continues.

My **next goals** are to:

- ❖ **Strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration**, particularly with Physics and Design & Technology.
- ❖ **Extend the programme to junior secondary students** to establish healthy habits earlier.
- ❖ **Develop student leadership**, training outstanding participants as "Smart Fitness Ambassadors" to mentor younger students.

Challenges remain, particularly in sustaining resources and building a wider teacher team.



However, one student's reflection continues to inspire me:

"Before, I thought exercise was for passing exams. Now I know exercise is for myself."



The '*i-Journey*' Scheme was more than a professional development experience; it transformed my understanding of teaching and learning.

From listening to disengaged students on the sidelines of a basketball court to witnessing them take ownership of their own fitness journeys, I learned that meaningful innovation begins by listening to students and responding to their needs.

Technology itself is not the solution. Its true value lies in how it empowers students to set goals, monitor progress, and discover their own potential.

When combined with self-directed learning, smart sports technology can do more than improve physical activity levels. It can cultivate confidence, reflection, and resilience, helping students become active, lifelong learners both on and beyond the sports field.

References

Ho, C. S. (Ed.). (2023). Vision and creation: Nine school leaders' stories of creating the future. Hong Kong Educational Publishing Company Ltd.



My '*i-Journey*': From Giving Feedback to Developing Reflective Learners

Cheung Wing Yiu, Elise

Po Leung Kuk Castar Primary School

A Moment That Made Me Pause

One afternoon, while marking my students' writing drafts, I found myself following a familiar routine—circling grammatical errors, correcting language mistakes, and adding comments in the margins. Like many teachers, I believed that detailed feedback would naturally lead to improvement. If students could see what was wrong and how to fix it, surely, they would learn. Yet when I returned the drafts, something caught my attention. Some students copied the corrections directly into their books. Others changed a few words without understanding the underlying problem. A few students barely looked at the feedback before moving on. Although the work looked improved, the learning behind it seemed limited. This led me to a simple but powerful question: ***If students cannot understand feedback, can feedback truly support learning?***

As I reflected, the issue was not how much feedback teachers provided, but whether students had the ability to interpret it, make sense of it, and use it to improve. This marked a shift in my thinking. Instead of asking how to correct errors more effectively, I began asking how to help students become active users of feedback.

My Educational Belief

This experience led me to reconsider the purpose of feedback. Too often, feedback is viewed as something teachers give and students receive. Yet, meaningful learning requires more than teacher correction.

Students need to develop the ability to interpret feedback, recognise learning gaps, make judgments about the quality of their work, and decide on appropriate next steps. In other words, they need to become active participants in the feedback process.

This belief resonates with the concept of feedback literacy. Feedback literacy is not simply about receiving comments. It is about being able to understand, interpret, and act upon them. When students develop these capabilities, feedback becomes more than a teacher's note in the margin, it becomes a resource for learning.

Therefore, an important goal of my teaching is to cultivate students' self-evaluative capabilities so that they can take greater ownership of their learning.



Why I Joined the 'i-Journey' Scheme

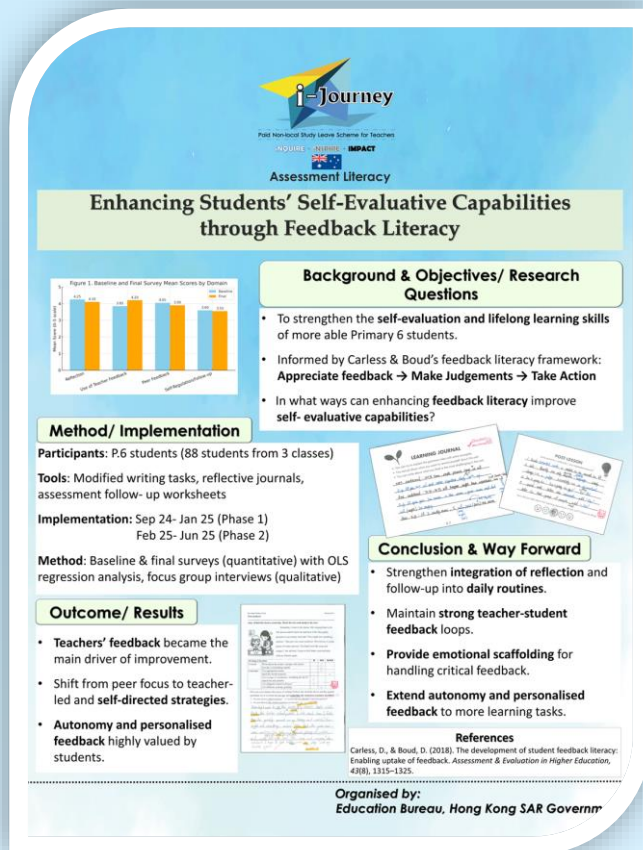
My interest in feedback literacy led me to join the Education Bureau's 'i-Journey' Paid Non-local Study Leave Scheme for Teachers, which encourages teachers to inquire, inspire, and create impact through professional learning and school-based innovation.



The programme provided an opportunity to examine my classroom practices from a broader perspective. Rather than focusing solely on correct answers, I began to consider how learning environments could empower students to think independently and take responsibility for their own improvement. One key insight from the 'i-Journey' experience was that effective feedback depends not only on what teachers say, but also on how students interpret and use it. This strengthened my commitment to redesigning feedback practices in my classroom.

Turning Belief into Practice

Putting this belief into practice was not without challenges. Time constraints, established learning habits, and students' emotional responses to mistakes often limited meaningful engagement with feedback. To address these challenges, I developed a **three-part approach** designed to strengthen students' feedback literacy.



Writing Task

Designing a Three-Part Practice to Support Feedback Literacy

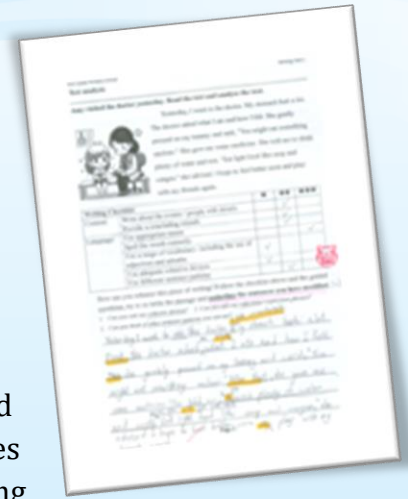
Before writing, students analysed model texts to identify key features of effective writing. Success criteria and rubrics were used to make expectations visible. After completing their work, students received teacher feedback highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.





Reflective Journal

Rather than simply correcting mistakes, students recorded and reflected on them. They considered why errors occurred and what they revealed about their learning. This encouraged deeper thinking about language use, organisation, content development, and task understanding.



Follow-up Reflection Worksheet

After assessments, students reviewed their feedback and identified specific actions for future improvement. They decided what strategies they needed, whether by checking rubrics more carefully, improving organisation, or reviewing their work before submission.

Together, these three transformed feedback from a one-way transmission into an ongoing cycle of understanding, reflection, and action.

Moments of Joy and Achievement

Over time, I noticed encouraging changes in students' responses.

In their notes, reflective journals, students increasingly moved beyond simply listing errors. Many began identifying what they had overlooked and why particular mistakes had occurred. Some recognised that they had misunderstood task requirements, overlooked success criteria, or failed to review their work carefully.

Most importantly, students were beginning to identify their own learning gaps and propose strategies for improvement. Feedback was no longer seen merely as correction from the teacher; it had become a tool for self-understanding and self-improvement.

These changes were especially rewarding because their growth not only in writing skills but also in students' ability to monitor and direct their own learning.

Professional Dialogue and Collaboration

The development of these practices also generated valuable professional dialogue within my English panel.

By sharing observations and discussing student responses with colleagues, we explored ways to make success criteria clearer, integrate reflection into daily teaching, and provide appropriate support for learners of different abilities.

These discussions reinforced an important lesson from '*i-Journey*': meaningful school improvement is rarely the result of individual effort alone. Sustainable change grows through collaboration, professional inquiry, and collective reflection.



Looking Ahead: Extending Reflection and Exploring New Possibilities

While the results have been promising, the journey continues.

One future direction is to extend reflective practices to Primary 5, allowing students to develop reflective habits over a longer period. Earlier exposure would help establish reflection as a natural part of learning rather than an isolated activity.

I am also interested in exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) might support feedback literacy. Rather than providing answers, AI could guide students through structured questioning that encourages them to identify errors, analyse their thinking, and select appropriate improvement strategies. Used thoughtfully, AI could serve as a scaffold that strengthens students' capacity to notice, judge, and act.

I now have a clearer answer to the question that first prompted my reflection. Feedback supports learning not when teachers provide more corrections, but when students learn how to understand, reflect on, and act upon feedback.

Helping students develop these capabilities may be one of the most valuable ways we can nurture independent, lifelong learners.



From Illusion to Agency: Enhancing Feedback Literacy and Evaluative Judgement through Structured Self-Assessment

CHING Wing-size

Rhenish Church Pang Hok Ko Memorial College



A Classroom Paradox

As a Biology teacher who values student-centred learning, I have always sought to create classrooms where students think, question, and engage actively. Yet one part of my teaching remained surprisingly traditional: post-exam review sessions.

The turning point came after a mid-term assessment. During regular lessons, my students were curious and vocal. However, once the review lesson began, the atmosphere changed completely. I stood at the front explaining answer keys, analysing mistakes, and breaking down complex concepts, while students listened passively, waiting for the “correct answers.”

Although I spent hours preparing detailed explanations, I began to question their impact. Students copied notes diligently, but few seemed to grasp the reasoning behind them. I realised that I was doing all the thinking while students remained passive observers.

This raised an important question: *Was I helping students learn from feedback, or simply delivering answers more efficiently?*

A Belief Grounded in Feedback Literacy

This experience reinforced my belief on student-centred learning, but with a sharper focus on **Feedback Literacy**. If students are expected to construct knowledge independently, they should also play an active role in understanding and using feedback.

For me, the goal is to move away from Assessment of Learning towards **Assessment as Learning**. I wanted students to move beyond asking, “*What is the right answer?*” and begin asking, “*Why did I get this wrong, and how can I improve?*” The answer lies in metacognition.

This belief aligns closely with the concept of feedback literacy—**the ability to understand, interpret, and act upon feedback**. When students develop these capabilities, assessment becomes more than a judgement of performance; it becomes a tool for growth.



Why I Joined the 'i-Journey' Scheme?

With these questions in mind, I joined the Education Bureau's 'i-Journey' Paid Non-local Study Leave Scheme for Teachers, which promotes professional inquiry, inspiration, and impact through overseas learning and school-based innovation.



My study programme at the University of Western Australia (UWA) focused on the use of assessment data to support student learning. Through seminars on assessment validity, Rasch analysis, and evidence-based teaching, I gained a deeper understanding of how assessment data can be used not merely to evaluate students but to guide improvement. Prof. Elaine Chapman introduced a far more sophisticated way of interpreting assessment validity. Seeing how statistical models could data can be used not merely to evaluate students but to guide improvement. It gave me the scientific language and tools to move from general observation to targeted, data-driven intervention.

School visits to St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls and Shenton College further strengthened my belief that effective assessment is closely linked to student agency. What impressed me most was how students were encouraged to take ownership of their learning through reflection and self-evaluation.

These experiences helped shape my project: *Enhancing Students' Feedback Literacy Through Self-Assessment Activities*.

Turning Belief into Practice

Joining the programme in Perth was a strategic quest to address the major concern of my school: **optimising the use of assessment data to help students develop their potential**. Being immersed in the academic environment of UWA allowed me to connect my classroom intuition with rigorous pedagogical frameworks, directly responding to the developmental needs of my school.

The Implementation Friction: Navigating Systemic Inertia

Returning to Hong Kong, I was eager to bridge the gap between my refined vision and classroom reality. However, institutional change is often met with the stubborn "gravitational pull" of long-established habits.

Many students were accustomed to a teacher-directed learning and expected explicit

i-Journey
Paid Non-local Study Leave Scheme for Teachers
Assessment Literacy

藉自評活動提升學生的回饋素養

背景及研究目的

研究背景：
(1) 因應學校關注事項：從AoL轉向AeL，賦權學生自主學習。
(2) 教師重視回饋，但學生焦慮高、信心不足，反映「回饋素養」缺口。
(3) 理論基礎：Carless & Boud (2018) 強調學生需主動理解、運用回饋。

研究目的：
透過結構化自評活動，培養學生的回饋素養及提升後設思維能力。

研究方法

第一階段：
進行前測，診斷學生回饋素養的基線水平；設計「考試後反思」及「錯題簿」作為初步儀表，引導學生反思學習表現。

第二階段：
針對「使用回饋」與「提供回饋」兩領域進行重點訓練，運用數據分析、解題示範、「設計追尋筆記」、「反思工作紙」、「反思指引」及「思考規程」(Thinking Routine) 以訓練後設思維。

融合自我評估、同儕互評及焦點訪談收集質性與量化數據。

研究成果

量化成果：
使用回饋 (UE) 平均提升 +0.33
提供回饋 (PE) 平均提升 +0.43
→ 針對性介入顯著提升學生的回饋素養。

質性成果：
學生反思更具邏輯與深度，由「記憶式學習」轉為「因果推理」。
學生能主動分析錯題，設定改進方向。

管理層 (MA) 略降，顯示需加強持續關注。

啟示及未來方向

廣眾式自評能有效促進學生的回饋素養與後設思維，推動自主學習。

三項重點啟示：
(1) 深度學習需明確標準與引導。
(2) 以數據導向的針對性介入最具成效。
(3) 後設思維是可被系統訓練的能力。

未來方向：
(1) 全校推廣回饋素養教學工具包。
(2) 加入情緒管理訓練。
(3) 將回饋素養融入初中課程，建立持續的校本回饋文化。

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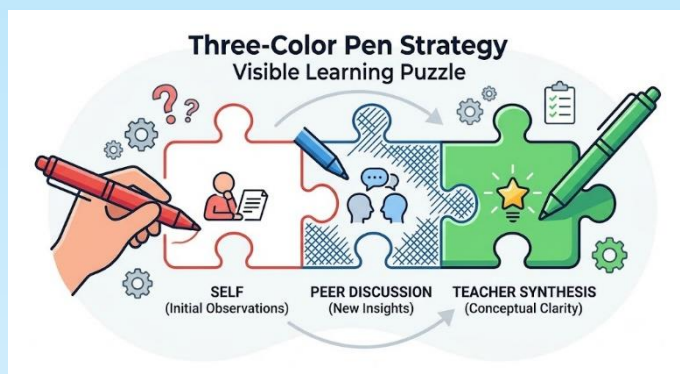
Organised by:
Education Bureau, Hong Kong SAR Government

corrections, so the introduction of self-assessment routines initially met with resistance. Time constraints within the DSE curriculum also limited opportunities for meaningful reflection. Moreover, I had to resist my instinct as an experienced teacher to provide immediate answers, instead creating space for students to engage in productive struggle and develop their Feedback Literacy. Trusting this process was essential to advancing my school's vision.

Architecting the Shift: Integrating Thinking Routines with Evidence-Based Pedagogy

To address these challenges, I redesigned my review lessons around a three-stage framework: ***Self-Directed Learning, Peer Synergy, and Teacher Synthesis***.

Students first analysed their own work using structured thinking routines and recorded their observations. They then discussed their ideas with peers before receiving teacher input. A simple **three-colour pen strategy**, adapted from the Harvard Project Zero (PZ) framework, and my adaptation of "**See-Think-Inspire**" which made their learning visible. Students used their **first colour** to document their initial observations and



thoughts on problems. This was followed by a **Peer Discussion phase**, where students used a second colour to add new insights gained from classmates. A **third colour** was used to record high-level conceptual clarifications. This multi-layered approach ensured that information was actively processed across three distinct cognitive stages. The three colours on their paper served as a record of their thinking journey.

To deepen reflection, I also introduced a **Metacognitive Notebook**, where students categorised their errors into areas such as carelessness, misinterpretation of questions, conceptual misunderstanding, or gaps in reasoning. Instead of merely correcting mistakes, students learned to diagnose them.

Gradually, feedback became something students investigated rather than something teachers delivered.

Evidence of Growth – The Harvest of Agency: Synthesising Evidence and Insights

Over time, I noticed meaningful changes in students' learning behaviours.

Students became more willing to analyse their mistakes and explain their thinking. Rather than focusing solely on marks, many began examining patterns in their errors and identifying strategies for improvement. They were becoming active users of feedback rather than passive recipients.

Survey results from my action research showed growth particularly in students' ability to use feedback and provide feedback to others. More importantly, classroom conversations became richer and more reflective. Students increasingly viewed assessment as an opportunity to learn rather than simply a measure of achievement.



Professional Learning and Future Directions

For Students: Enhancing feedback literacy directly fosters autonomy and self-regulation—the essential pillars of lifelong learning that transcend the DSE curriculum.

For Teachers: Our role must evolve from being mere "transmitters of feedback" to "facilitators of the feedback process." Professional development should focus more on building trust and creating a safe environment for academic dialogue.

Witnessing this shift, from the "illusion of learning" to the reality of self-diagnostic mastery, has been the most rewarding chapter of my career. It confirms that when we provide the right tools, metacognition is not a gift for the few, but a skill that can be cultivated in all, fulfilling the core mission of my school to help every student develop their full potential.

Looking ahead, I am interested in exploring how artificial intelligence can further support feedback literacy. Rather than providing answers, AI could help students identify thinking gaps through structured questioning and guided reflection. Used thoughtfully, it could strengthen students' capacity for self-evaluation while preserving the important role of teacher-student dialogue.

Beyond the Journey

Looking back, the greatest lesson from 'i-Journey' was not a new strategy or assessment tool. It was a shift in perspective.

I entered the programme seeking ways to improve exam review lessons. I returned with a deeper conviction that meaningful feedback is not about giving better answers; it is about helping students become better thinkers.



*The true value of ‘i-Journey’ Scheme lies in its encouragement to **inquire, reflect, and create impact**. Through this experience, I have become more committed to fostering student agency and feedback literacy, empowering students not only to learn Biology, but also to become confident, self-directed learners capable of navigating their own lifelong learning journeys.*

Turning Global Insights into Local Impact: Ms CHING's ‘i-Journey’ in Assessment Literacy and AI-Enabled Learning

Ms CHING delivers her learning experiences in Learning and Teaching Expo 2026.



Dialogues Beyond Scores: Cultivating Feedback Literacy and Self-Directed Learning Revolution Aided by Generative AI

Ms CHING Wing Sze was honoured to present her paper at the Future Education Theatre of the Learning and Teaching Expo 2026 on 25 June 2026. Her work focuses on advancing self-directed learning and strengthening assessment literacy through innovative classroom practices.

Drawing on her professional learning in Australia, Ms CHING effectively translated assessment literacy into practice by addressing learner diversity and integrating AI to enhance assessment for learning. She also built on insights gained from the i-Journey Scheme to further deepen her inquiry into these themes.





Learning Beyond Words: Building Confidence and Reading Skills through Formative Assessment

CHOW Ka-yan

Tack Ching Girls' Secondary School

A Student's Comment That Stayed with Me

One afternoon, a student handed in an exit ticket with a simple message: ***"I still feel lost."***

That comment stayed with me.

It reminded me that learning is not only about acquiring skills; it is also about building confidence. Ho (2023) highlights that effective educational leadership is about nurturing confidence and resilience as much as it is about academic achievement. Similarly, Black and William (1998) argue that formative assessment, when embedded in everyday practice, raises standards and strengthens belief in one's ability to learn.

Why I Joined 'i-Journey' Scheme????

My **goal** to join the Scheme was clear. Many students struggled to identify main ideas, interpret references, understand an author's attitude, and make inferences. These difficulties often affected not only their performance but also their confidence. Some students had the necessary skills but doubted themselves, while others were confident without fully mastering the skills required.

Through the programme, I hoped to learn how **formative assessment** could provide meaningful feedback, reduce anxiety, and help students become more resilient learners. The Education Bureau's Secondary Education Curriculum Guide (2017) stresses that assessment literacy is not just for individual teachers but must be embedded across schools.

This principle guided my plan: ***to embed formative assessment strategies into our English curriculum and to share them with colleagues through professional dialogue.***

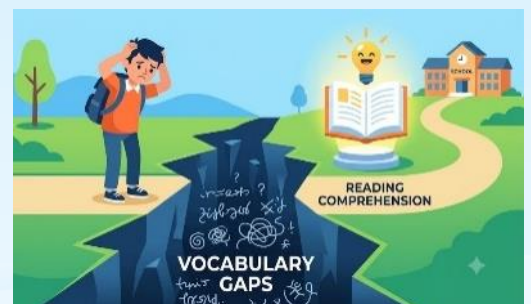


Challenges in Practice



As I explored this issue, **three challenges** became clear.

First, **vocabulary gaps** emerged as the most persistent obstacle. Nation (2001) emphasises that lexical knowledge is fundamental to reading comprehension, and my students' struggles reflected this reality. When confronted with too many unfamiliar words, they often became frustrated, lost confidence, and disengaged from the task.





Second, **assessment anxiety** discouraged students from attempting more demanding questions, particularly those requiring inference, analysis and interpretation. Many viewed assessments as a form of judgement rather than an opportunity for learning and growth.

Third, I observed **a disconnect between confidence and competence**. Some students underestimated their abilities and lacked the confidence to tackle challenging tasks, while others overestimated their performance and were unable to identify areas for improvement. Helping students develop an accurate understanding of their own learning became therefore just as important as teaching reading skills themselves.



Turning Assessment into a Learning Tool

To address these challenges, I introduced a structured **Reading Skills Booklet**.

This booklet sequenced skills progressively: **main idea, referencing, opinion/attitude, and inferencing**. Each section included explanations, visual aids, and tiered exercises. Clear explanations, visual supports, and graded exercises provided students with a roadmap for improvement.

Formative tools such as **think-pair-share** and **exit tickets** were also integrated. Fisher and Frey (2014) note that these strategies help students articulate understanding and reduce learning anxiety. Think-pair-share encouraged collaboration, allowing students to test ideas and reflect on their learning in a low-stakes environment. Exit tickets provided immediate feedback, enabling students to reflect on their learning and teachers to identify areas of difficulty.



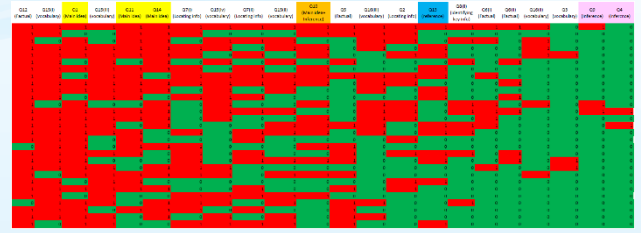
Another powerful tool was the **Guttman chart** which allowed which allowed both students and teachers to visualise progress across different reading skills. By making learning visible, students could identify their strengths, recognise areas for improvement, and celebrate growth.

Together, these strategies shifted the focus of assessment from grades to learning.



Moments of Growth

The *Guttman Chart* showed that students were becoming increasingly successful in higher-order reading tasks, particularly those involving inference and authorial attitude. More importantly, they were approaching these questions with greater confidence.



One student stood out. She frequently avoided reading tasks and often insisted that “she couldn’t do it.” Through the Reading Skills Booklet, regular reflection, and formative feedback, she gradually became more willing to participate. Eventually, she progressed from struggling with basic referencing questions to successfully answering inference questions.

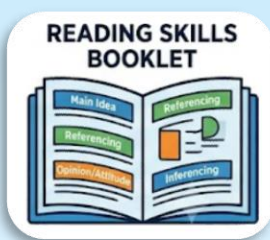
For me, her growth represented something important: confidence and competence can develop together when appropriate support is provided.

Professional Learning and Collaboration

The Scheme fostered valuable professional dialogue within the English panel.

Through the sharing of student work, assessment data, and classroom experiences, colleagues collaboratively refined reading instruction and formative assessment practices.

Professional development discussions focused particularly on scaffolding inferencing and opinion/attitude tasks, which many students found challenging. These exchanges reinforced a shared shift in mindset: **viewing assessment not as a tool for judgement to assessment, but as a vehicle for learning.**



Looking Ahead

Sustaining these improvements will require deeper integration of formative assessment across the curriculum. The continued use of the Reading Skills Booklet in Secondary 3 to 5 will promote consistency and progression, while individual Reading Portfolios will enable students to track their own progress over time.

Vocabulary development remains a priority, and future work will focus on integrating vocabulary learning more systematically with reading instruction. At the same time, professional dialogue among teachers will remain essential as we continue refining strategies for inferencing and critical reading.



Beyond the Journey

The Scheme has significantly enriched my understanding of formative assessment and its potential to enhance both teaching and learning. It has strengthened my commitment to student-centred practice and highlighted the importance of fostering learner confidence. As a result, I now place greater emphasis on developing reading proficiency through supportive and reflective learning experiences. While challenges remain, particularly in sustaining student motivation and ensuring that formative assessment remains purposeful rather than routine, the experience has reaffirmed the value of empowering students to take ownership of their learning.



I believe that my educational mission—to empower students with both skills and confidence—will continue to guide me. The voices of my students and their progress remind me that change is possible, and that even small steps can have lasting impact.

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Every Child Has a Talent: My i-Journey Journey in Transforming Assessment at a Primary School Level

KONG Pui-ying, Michel

Maryknoll Convent School (Primary Section)

A few years ago, a Primary 5 student received her speaking assessment feedback. After briefly checking her score, she quietly filed away the rubric without reading the descriptors. When I asked how she might improve, she replied softly, ***"It's okay, Miss. I'm just not good at speaking."***

That moment stayed with me. At Maryknoll Convent School (Primary Section), where students consistently demonstrate high levels of achievement, her response reminded me that success is not only about performance. It is also about believing in one's potential.

My Educational Philosophy

Education is not simply about measuring achievement; it is about unlocking potential: ***every child possesses unique talents, and it is our responsibility to help them develop and realise them.***

Motivation for 'i-Journey'

My participation in the 'i-Journey' Scheme was driven by both professional curiosity and practical classroom needs. As an English panel head at Maryknoll, I regularly analysed assessment data and supported colleagues in refining our practices. While our students consistently perform well in assessments, several recurring challenges became apparent:



- ❖ Rubrics were often used only at the end of learning cycle, limiting their value as formative tools.
- ❖ Students rarely revisited assessment criteria to inform subsequent learning.
- ❖ Peer feedback, although promising, frequently lacked depth and specificity.
- ❖ Reflection activities were incorporated into lessons, but rarely resulted in meaningful changes in learning behaviour.

Against this backdrop, my project, *“Empowering Language Learners: Cultivating Agency in Learning by Utilising Rubrics at Different Stages of Learning”*, sought to address a simple but important question: *Could young learners use rubrics not only to assess performance but also to guide learning?*

My *three* key learning from Perth:

1. To observe authentic Australian classroom practices that support diverse learners through effective and visible assessment routines;
2. To deepen my understanding of strategies that foster meaningful student agency in assessment and feedback processes; and
3. To bring back practical, sustainable approaches that could further strengthen Maryknoll’s established culture of assessment and learning excellence

Transformative Learning in Perth – Theory Meets Practice

Powerful Frameworks at University of Western Australia (UWA)

My study programme at the UWA deepened my understanding of assessment literacy, feedback, and student agency. Through workshops, school visits, and professional exchanges, I observed how assessment could be embedded seamlessly into everyday learning. Students regularly engaged with success criteria, monitored their progress, and used feedback to set meaningful goals, making assessment an integral part of the learning process rather than a final measure of achievement.

Inspiration from School visits

School visits further highlighted the value of student ownership. In the classrooms I observed, feedback was used not merely to evaluate performance but to promote reflection, autonomy, and continuous improvement. At Carine Senior High School, students participated in ongoing feedback cycles by reviewing previous work, setting clear improvement targets, and responding to timely

teacher feedback. Students were able to articulate their learning goals, monitor their progress, and identify next steps with confidence.

These experiences reinforced my belief that, with appropriate scaffolding, even young learners can become reflective, self-regulated learners who use feedback to drive their own improvement.



Research Rigor for Impact - Turning Ideas into Practice

Staged Rubrics Transform Learning

Upon returning to Hong Kong, I implemented the project with all Primary 5 students during an English unit on “Extraordinary People.” Rather than introducing rubrics only at the end of the task, I integrated them throughout the learning process. Students used rubrics during research, infographic design, presentation preparation, and final reflection. At each stage, students engaged in self-assessment and peer assessment. They examined exemplars, discussed success criteria, and identified areas for improvement before receiving teacher feedback.

Innovative Design – Four-Stage Rubric Integration

We adopted *research* → *infographic* → *oral presentation* strategies, and observe the improvements:

- ◆ **At Term 1 Baseline:** Traditional end-of-unit rubrics (summative focus); and
- ◆ **At Term 3 Intervention:** Progressive rubrics applied at four checkpoints with embedded self and peer assessments.

Stage 1: Research Mastery

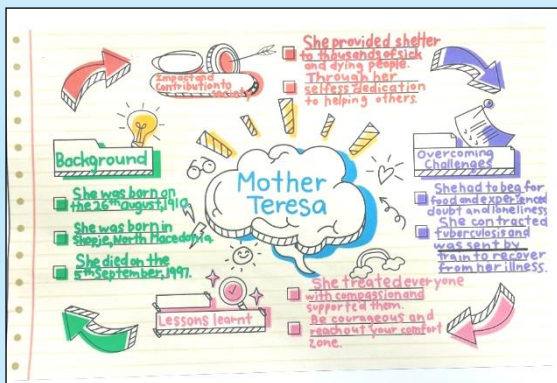


Figure 1: presented in a mindmap

Maryknoll Convent School (Primary Section)	
Walt Disney	
• Birth: December 6, 1901	
• Died: December 15, 1966	
• Where he was born: Hermosa, Chicago, Illinois, United States	
• What he did to the world	Examples
- created Mickey Mouse	Betting on
- changed how cartoons were made	Disappearance
- made the world a fun place	How a cartoon
• His achievements:	
- opened Disneyland and succeeded	
- raised \$3 million from the movie Snow White and Seven Dwarfs	

Figure 2: handwritten in bullet points

B) Students' Self-reflection:

3. How can you improve your research to ensure your research meets the criteria for 'exemplary' and you have enough information to do your later tasks?

Area for improvement	Steps for improvement
I can try to write more important information, not write less important details and write more detail about the person's background information.	Delete less important details and find more information about the background of the person.

(H)

Stage 2: Collaborative Infographic Refinement

Following explicit instruction in design principles such as visual hierarchy, information flow and appropriate information density, students created digital infographics using the Infographic Rubric. They then participated in structured peer-evaluation, providing feedback through rubric-aligned dialogue. After receiving feedback, students refined their work through our established Google

Classroom workflow. The process fostered genuine collaboration with many students adopting and adapting peer-inspired suggestions.

As one student remarked, *“My classmate suggested colour-coding achievement categories. Now my infographic stands out much more clearly!”*

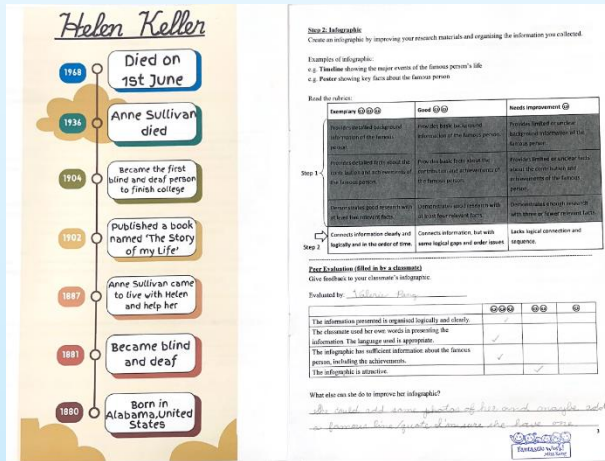


Figure 3: Infographic presented as a timeline

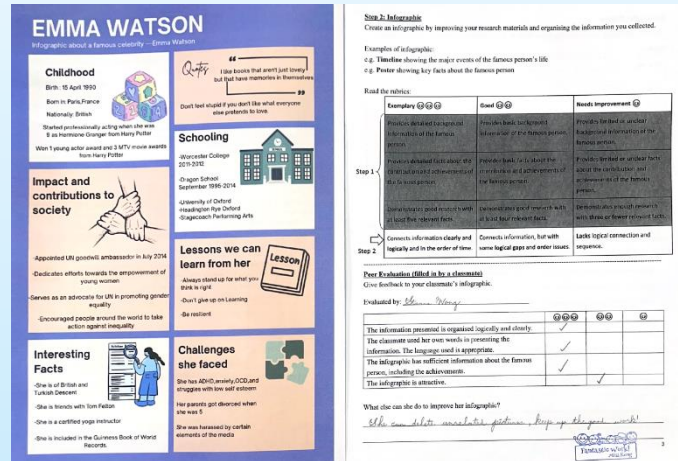


Figure 4: Infographic presented in categorised boxes

Stage 3: Purposeful Presentation Practice

This stage featured teacher-led scriptwriting, drawing on Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats framework to stimulate creative thinking and idea generation. Students were supported by learning materials that emphasised engaging introductions, logical organisation, and audience-friendly language. Through this process, they developed and shared well-structured presentations that communicated clear and meaningful insights.

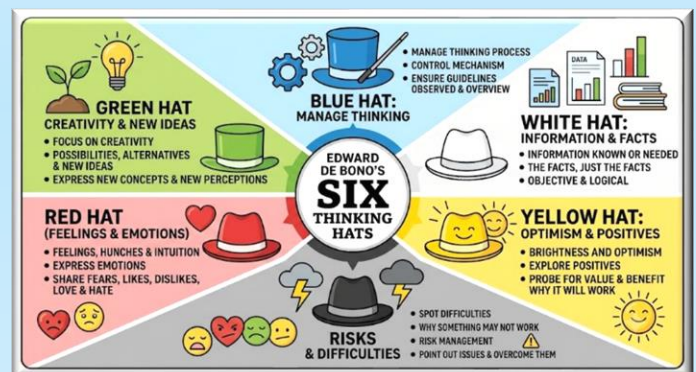
Stage 4: Culminating Oral Presentations

This stage became true celebrations of individual learning journeys rather than mere endpoint evaluations. Post-performance reflections revealed transformed mindsets.

Overcoming Challenges with Collective Wisdom

Implementation proved both rewarding and instructive:

- **Time Management:** Introducing staged reflection initially extended lesson time. To address this, we strategically moved reflective tasks to homework and streamlined presentations from 3 minutes to 2, ensuring learning objectives remained achievable within the available time.
- **Improving Feedback Quality:** Early peer feedback tended to be positive but superficial, often consisting of comments such as “Good job!”. Through teacher modelling, sentence





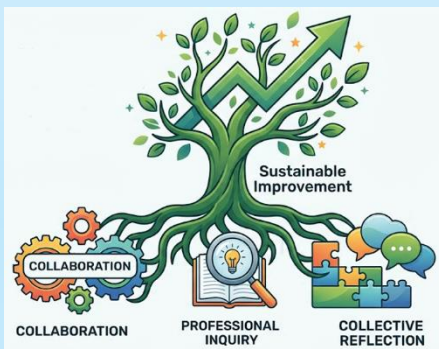
starters and explicit reference to rubric criteria, students gradually learned to provide more specific, constructive and actionable feedback.

- **Differentiation:** To prevent cognitive overload, less-experienced students were encouraged to focus on one to two priority criteria at a time. This targeted approach enabled them to engage confidently with assessment process while experiencing success.

These refinements, informed by weekly discussions within our professional learning community, strengthened the implementation of the project and reinforced a culture of continuous improvement, reflecting Maryknoll's pursuit of excellence.

Building Teacher Capacity: A Collaborative Triumph

The project also fostered meaningful professional dialogue among colleagues. Through the analysis of student work, the sharing of classroom observations, and reflective discussions on teaching practices, we explored how assessment could more effectively promote learning and student agency, and continuous improvement.



These conversations reinforced a key insight from 'i-Journey' Scheme: sustainable improvement is built on collaboration, professional inquiry, and collective reflection. The project's significance was further affirmed by our Principal, who commended its strong alignment with Maryknoll's forthcoming School Development Plan, particularly its emphasis on fostering visible learning and empowering students to take greater ownership of their learning.

Evidence of Students' Improvement



Individual Triumph: Students became more familiar with assessment criteria and increasingly used them to guide their work. Their reflections became more thoughtful and specific, moving beyond comments such as "*I need to do better*" towards clearer insights about organisation, content, and presentation.

Collective Excellence: students developed greater confidence in discussing their strengths and areas for growth. They were no longer passive recipients of feedback but active participants in the assessment process.

One of the most rewarding outcomes was seeing students view rubrics not as judgement, but as support. The assessment process became less intimidating and more empowering.

Looking Ahead

While the project has shown promising results, the journey continues.



I aim to further strengthen students' feedback literacy and self-assessment skills by integrating rubric-based reflection more systematically across year levels. I am also keen to explore how technology can enhance timely feedback and reflection while preserving meaningful teacher-student interactions.

Above all, I believe assessment should serve a purpose beyond measuring achievement. It should empower students to recognize their strengths, identify possibilities, and develop the confidence to realise their full potential.

Beyond the Journey

Looking back, the most valuable lesson from 'i-Journey' Scheme was not a new assessment tool or strategy, but a renewed understanding of assessment as means of nurturing confidence, agency and growth.



While challenges remain, including sustaining momentum amid staff turnover and balancing innovation with curriculum demands, my guiding conviction has only grown stronger: ***every student possesses unique potential, and through thoughtful assessment design, we can empower each learner to recognize that potential and flourish.***

This '***i-Journey***' Scheme has profoundly enriched my practice and reaffirmed my conviction in education's highest purpose: to create learning environments where potential is unlocked, confidence is nurtured, and every student is empowered to thrive. Through this journey, I have become even more convinced that thoughtful teaching and meaningful assessment can inspire every child to recognise her strengths, believe in her capabilities, and realise her fullest potential.

From Scores to Success: Empowering Learners with Pedagogical AI

LEE Chun-man

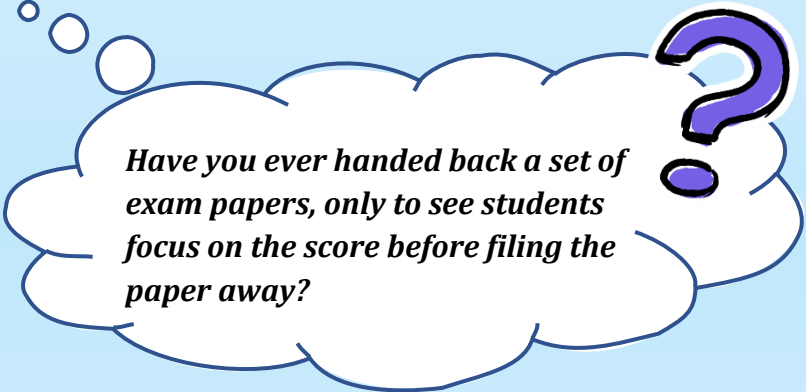
Cheung Chau Government Secondary School

Note: The project described in this article was conducted while the teacher was teaching at Sha Tin Government Secondary School.

One afternoon, a dedicated S6 Chemistry student stayed behind after class to discuss his examination results. Despite months of hard work, his performance had plateaued. When I asked why he had struggled with certain multiple-choice questions, he shrugged and replied, ***“Bad luck, I suppose. The paper was tricky.”*** His response stopped me in my tracks.

A Question That Changed My Thinking

Here was a capable student who attributed his performance to external factors rather than reflecting on his understanding or learning strategies. He did not know where his learning gaps were, and the feedback I provided was not helping him identify them. This made me realise that assessment was not achieving its most important purpose: ***helping students learn from their mistakes.***



Have you ever handed back a set of exam papers, only to see students focus on the score before filing the paper away?

That experience prompted me to join the ‘i-Journey’ Scheme, to explore how assessment could become a more meaningful catalyst for learning and growth.

The Catalyst for Change: Beyond the Score

I have always believed that education should go beyond examination results. Its true purpose is to develop self-directed, lifelong learners, with assessment serving as diagnostic tool for growth rather than a final judgment.

Yet many of my S6 Chemistry students were preoccupied with scores and often displayed an external locus of control—blaming luck or exam difficulty rather than identifying their own learning gaps. Too often, they focused on scores while overlooking the valuable information hidden within their mistakes. Through the ‘i-Journey’ Scheme, I sought practical, evidence-informed strategies to strengthen assessment literacy and student ownership of learning.



Workshops at the University of Western Australia and visits to local schools introduced me to the principles of ***Assessment for Learning and Assessment as Learning***, reinforcing the importance value of using assessment data to drive reflection, action, and improvement.

Most importantly, I shifted my perspective from asking “How did students perform?” to “***What does their performance reveal about their learning?***”

Inspired by these experiences, I designed a school-based project that focused on one of the most common forms of assessment in Chemistry: multiple-choice questions. (MCQs). Instead of simply returning scores, I introduced personalised diagnostic reports generated from students’ assessment data. These reports identified error patterns, highlighted conceptual misunderstandings, and pinpointed specific areas for improvement.

To ensure students could act on this feedback, targeted practice materials tailored to their individual needs were provided. Classroom review sessions also became more interactive, with students analysing their own performance and setting goals for improvement.

Confronting the Reality: Challenges in Actualising the Vision

Implementing the project was not without difficulties.

<i>Challenges</i>	
<i>Data quality and scope</i>	Insufficient assessment data limited our ability to generate meaningful insights. Hence, we adapted the original plan to draw on larger and more representative datasets. It was a classic implementation challenge: the theory was sound, but the existing assessment framework did not generate sufficient data to support it.
<i>Time</i>	With the HKDSE approaching, students and teachers were already under considerable pressure. Any new process had to be carefully integrated into existing routines without creating additional workload.
<i>Data literacy</i>	Rich data are only useful when they can be translated into practical action. We therefore worked collaboratively to simplify reports and focus discussions on actionable next steps. We helped teachers and students interpret assessment data effectively.



These ***challenges*** reminded me that educational innovation succeeds not through technology alone, but through careful design, collaboration, and adaptation.

Transforming the Experience: Strategies for Students and Teachers

(A) Strategies for Students: Redesigning the Learning Experience

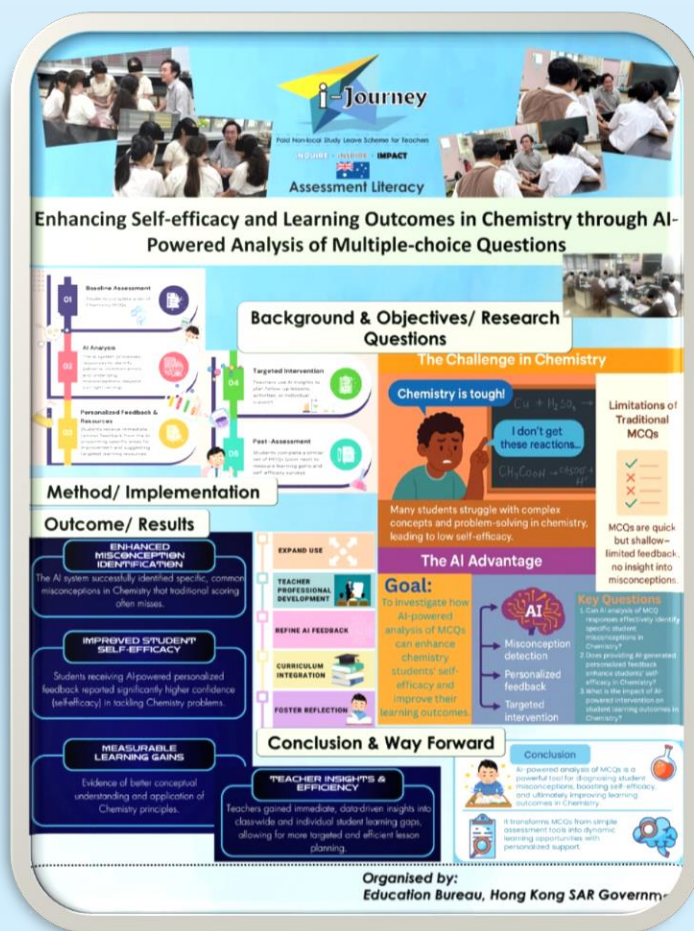


To strengthen student ownership of learning, I reimagined the post-assessment process. Students received personalised AI-generated diagnostic reports that explained their mistakes and highlighted key conceptual gaps. They were then given targeted exercises aligned with their individual needs. With clear, actionable feedback, students shifted from feeling discouraged by results to taking greater control of their learning and improvement.

(B) Strategies for Teachers: Cultivating Collaborative Leadership

The project also strengthened professional dialogue within the Chemistry department.

I led a professional development workshop where colleagues co-designed the AI analysis framework and prompts, ensuring the reports aligned with our shared pedagogical goals. This collaborative process strengthened evidence-based practice, shifting assessment discussions from reporting results to addressing learning needs and instructional responses.



Evidence of Growth: From Data to Empowerment

The student who had initially blamed “bad luck” was a memorable example. His diagnostic report revealed misunderstandings in topics such as redox reactions and chemical equilibrium, helping him identifying the real barriers to success. With focused revision and targeted practice, his performance improved markedly in the next mock examination. More importantly, he developed a greater sense of ownership and confidence in his learning.

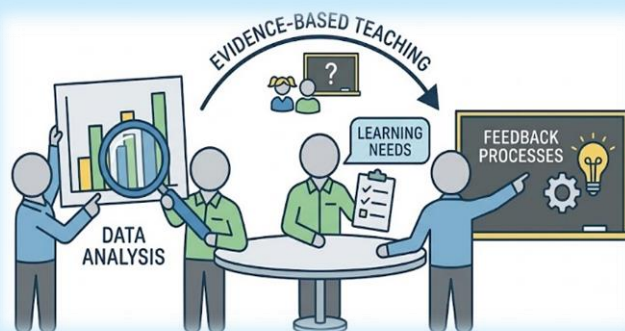


Many students reported that personalised feedback helped them better understand their weaknesses, focus their revision, and reduce assessment anxiety. The greatest achievement was not higher scores alone, but a shift in mindset: students moved from asking “What mark did I get?” to asking “*What can I learn from this?*”

Professional Learning and Collaboration

The project also strengthened professional dialogue within the Chemistry department.

Collaborating with colleagues to analyse data, design feedback processes, and evaluate student learning strengthened an evidence-informed approach to teaching. Assessment discussions shifted from reporting results to identifying learning needs and shaping instructional responses.



This culture of collaboration embodied a key lesson of the ‘i-Journey’ Scheme: sustainable improvement is driven by professional inquiry and collective learning.

Looking Ahead

I hope to extend this approach beyond Chemistry and explore how data-informed feedback can support learning across other subjects. I plan to collaborate closely with colleagues in Physics and Biology, and eventually Mathematics to adapt and implement this MCQ analysis framework. By sharing our prompts and Excel-based tools, we can build a cross-curricular Professional Learning Community focused on using assessment data to inform learning.

When used thoughtfully, AI can help identify learning patterns and provide timely feedback. However, it should complement not replace, professional judgement. Our ultimate goal remains unchanged: ***to develop reflective, confident, and self-directed learners.***



Beyond the Journey

The 'i-Journey' Scheme has reignited my passion for educational inquiry and innovation. It has shown me that meaningful change begins when we challenge established practices, embrace new possibilities, and place student learning at the centre of every decision.

I step into the future, I do so not only as a Chemistry teacher, but as a dedicated facilitator of learning experiences that empower students to think critically, reflect deeply, and learn independently. Ultimately, my aspiration is to help nurture a generation of reflective, resilient, and self-directed learners who are ready to shape the future, not merely adapt to it.

Embracing Change: Our Journey Through Formative Assessment

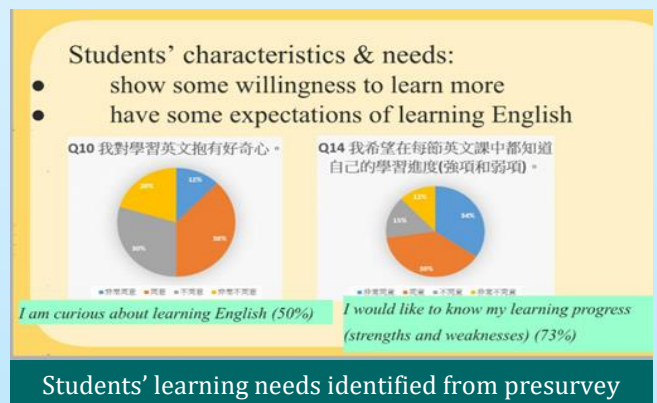
The influence of formative assessment on students' motivation & learning outcomes in the English language classroom.

TAN Sze-chi

Hong Kong Teachers' Association Lee Heng Kwei Secondary School

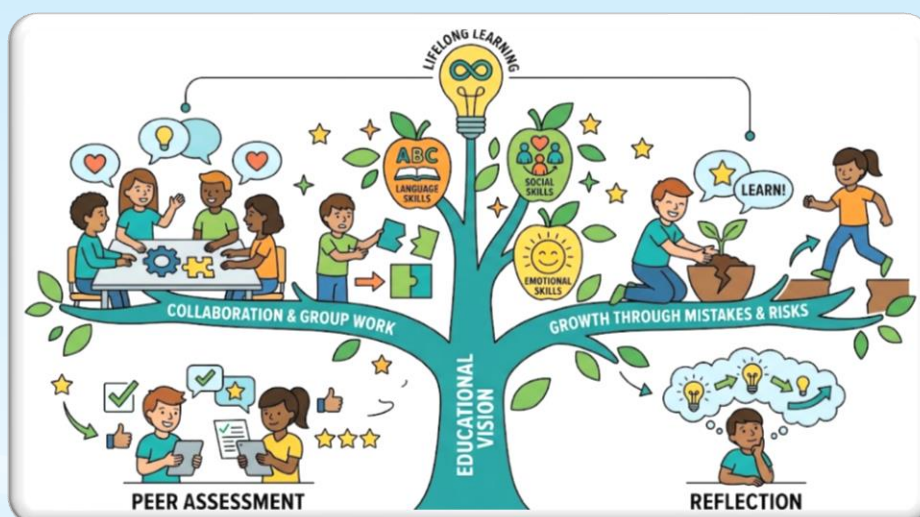
A Turning Point in My Teaching

Reflecting on my years of teaching in a secondary school that uses Chinese as the medium of instruction many students arrive believing they are “poor at English.” I still remember my first few months of teaching, when students sat quietly with their heads down, convinced that success in English was beyond their reach. Their low confidence was reflected in their performance and reinforced by years of disappointment.

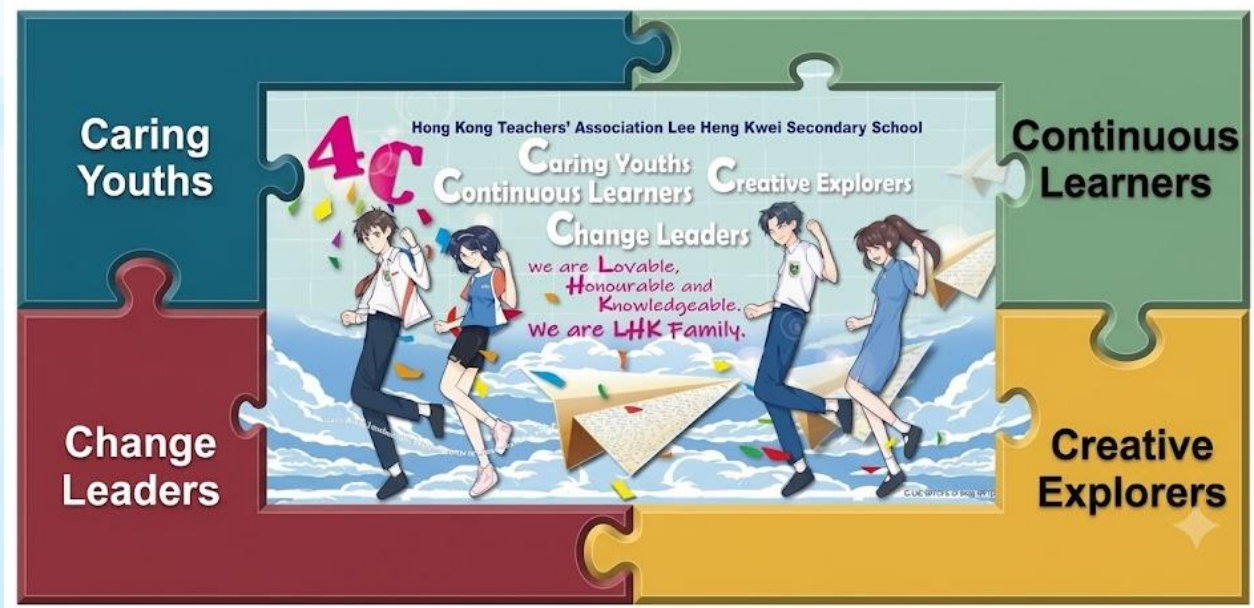


Observing their struggles reminded me that education is about more than academic achievement. It is also about nurturing confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging. I realised that my role extends beyond teaching English to helping students see themselves as capable learners.

This belief shaped my educational vision: creating a classroom where mistakes are valued as opportunities for growth, risks are embraced, and collaboration is encouraged. Through peer assessment, group work, and reflective, students develop not only language skills but also the social and emotional skills essential for lifelong learning.



'4C' educational vision



Enhancing students' engagement through effective group work

Why I Joined the 'i-Journey' Scheme?

Motivated by this vision, I joined the '*i-Journey*' Scheme and took part in a in Australia to explore how formative assessment could enhance student engagement and learning.

I was keen to move beyond traditional assessment practices centred on tests and examination results. Together with my Form 2 English teaching team, I sought to build a more supportive assessment culture, one that would help students monitor their progress, reflect on their learning, and develop greater ownership of improvement.

I went to Australia to see formative assessment in action. I returned with a clear plan to bring it into my classroom.



Challenges Along the Way - Implementing change was not easy

Institutional constraints

- Our school culture had long emphasised summative assessment and examination performance. Creating space for reflection and collaborative learning required careful planning.

Student mindset barriers

- Many students viewed assessment as a competition rather than a learning tool. Helping them appreciate the value of feedback and self-improvement took time.

Feedback systems

- Developing effective feedback mechanisms required teamwork, data analysis, and continuous refinement.

What Worked: Strategies for Students and Teachers

To address these challenges, we.....:

Awareness and Education

- Sharing research findings and successful case studies on formative assessment.

Pilot Programmes

- Testing formative assessment practices on a small scale before wider implementation.

Gradual Adoption

- Introducing changes in phases to allow teachers and students to adjust

Building Trust

- Encouraging lesson observations and professional dialogue among teachers.

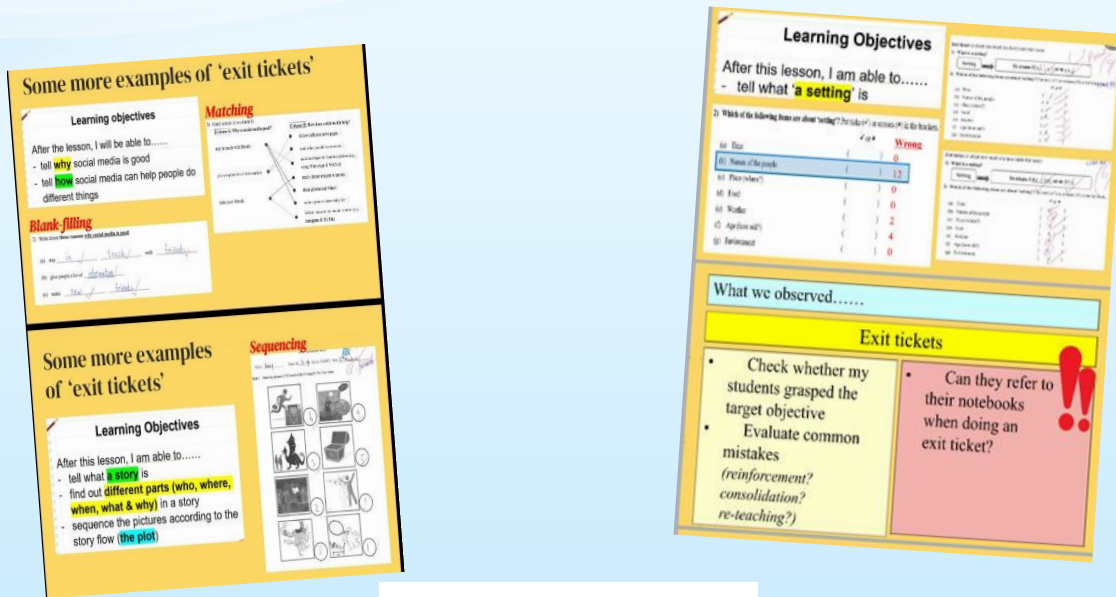
We also....

A. Strategies for Students

My team redesigned classroom learning around low-stakes formative assessment, incorporating strategies such as exit tickets, self-reflection, peer assessment, and group discussion.

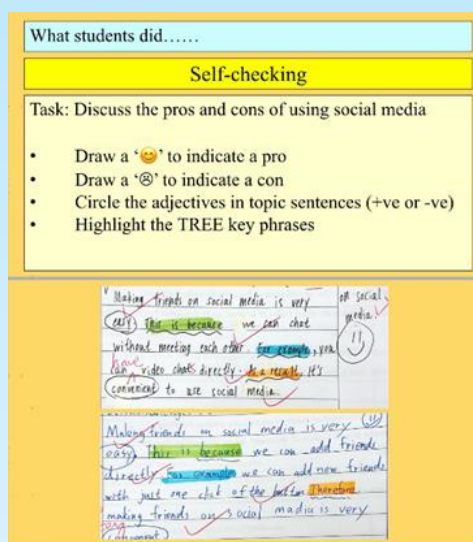


Exit tickets proved particularly effective. At the end of each lesson, students reflected on their learning while teachers gained immediate insights into areas requiring clarification. This created a continuous feedback loop that promoted active learning.



Samples of 'Exit Tickets'

Peer assessment was equally valuable. Through structured feedback activities, students learned to evaluate work using clear criteria, offer constructive suggestions, and learn from one another. For example, students reviewed writing drafts with peers before final submission, often using Google Docs for real-time collaboration.



Self-checking as formative assessment

Gradually, students began to view mistakes differently. They started to regard them as part of the learning process. They began to see mistakes as integral parts of the learning process rather than as failures, which fostered a growth mindset.

The culture of feedback encouraged them to set achievable goals for improvement, empowering them to take charge of their educational experiences actively.

What students did.....

**Group work
(cross-checking)**

Students displayed their discussion work and cross-checked each other's work

Group Work (Cross-checking)

What students did.....

**Gallery Walk
(presentations)**

Students worked in groups to prepare posters and give presentations

Gallery Walk

Before we move on..... 		
Teacher	Strategy used	Intended students' learning outcomes
LR	- Hand signals - Flipping cards - E-platforms - Accessible task design	- Participation - Engagement - Willingness to try
LTF	- Exit tickets (diverse question types) - Self-checking (criteria and symbols)	- Learning routines - Learning attitudes - Learning self-responsibility
SFM	- Presentations (gallery walk) - Self-evaluation - Peer-evaluation (justified)	- Interaction - Learner ownership

Use of Formative Assessment Techniques in different classes

Professional Learning and Collaboration

The initiative also strengthened collaboration within our English teaching team.

We established regular meetings for English teachers to share experiences, discuss challenges, and exchange effective practices. We also engaged in targeted professional development on providing actionable feedback and using assessment data to inform instruction. These collaborative efforts strengthened teacher capacity and embedded formative assessment as an integral part of our teaching practice.

Joy and Achievement

The most rewarding outcome was seeing students become more engaged, confident, and willing to participate. Classroom discussions became more active, and students demonstrated greater curiosity, collaboration, and ownership of learning.

Formal evaluations also showed encouraging results. Analysis of pre- and post-assessment data revealed improvements in students' writing, particularly among those involved in peer-review activities. Formative assessment enabled teachers to identify learning gaps more quickly and provide timely support.



Beyond academic gains, a stronger sense of classroom community emerged. Students felt more comfortable expressing ideas, taking risks, and learning from mistakes. These changes reinforced our belief that assessment can be a powerful tool for both learning and personal growth.

Looking Ahead: New Challenges and Opportunities

The transition to formative assessment is an ongoing journey. While increased student engagement has been encouraging, the next challenge is translating these gains into sustained academic improvement.

To support wider adoption, our school has included formative assessment as a key strategy within its School Major Concern for learning and teaching. As assessment literacy becomes a major focus of school development, opportunities for collaboration and professional learning will continue to expand.

Formative assessment is more than a teaching strategy. It is a pathway to a more inclusive, engaging, and empowering learning environment. By fostering reflection, feedback, and continuous improvement, we can help students become confident, motivated learners who are prepared not only for examinations but also for lifelong learning.

As both teachers and students embrace on-going reflection and feedback, they become better equipped to thrive in an evolving landscape.

Moving forward, I remain committed to advancing these practices, ensuring that every student can flourish as a capable and confident, and self-directed learner.



Sparked by Experience: Insights Gained Through 'i-Journey' Scheme

Programme on Self-directed Learning in Finland



My five-week study leave in Finland was a transformative professional learning experience that reshaped my understanding of student-centred pedagogy. Inspired by the Finnish emphasis on learner autonomy, I developed a phased self-directed learning (SDL) model for my S4 ICT students, incorporating generative AI as a scaffold to support learning while positioning the teacher as a facilitator rather than a lecturer.

The impact was encouraging. Students with weaker foundational skills, who had previously struggled with the English-dominated nature of coding, gained confidence and became more independent learners. Data from my school-based project showed a clear reduction in problem-solving difficulties, with 80% of participants reporting significant improvement in their programming abilities. Equally rewarding was the emergence of a collaborative learning culture in which students actively supported and learned from one another.

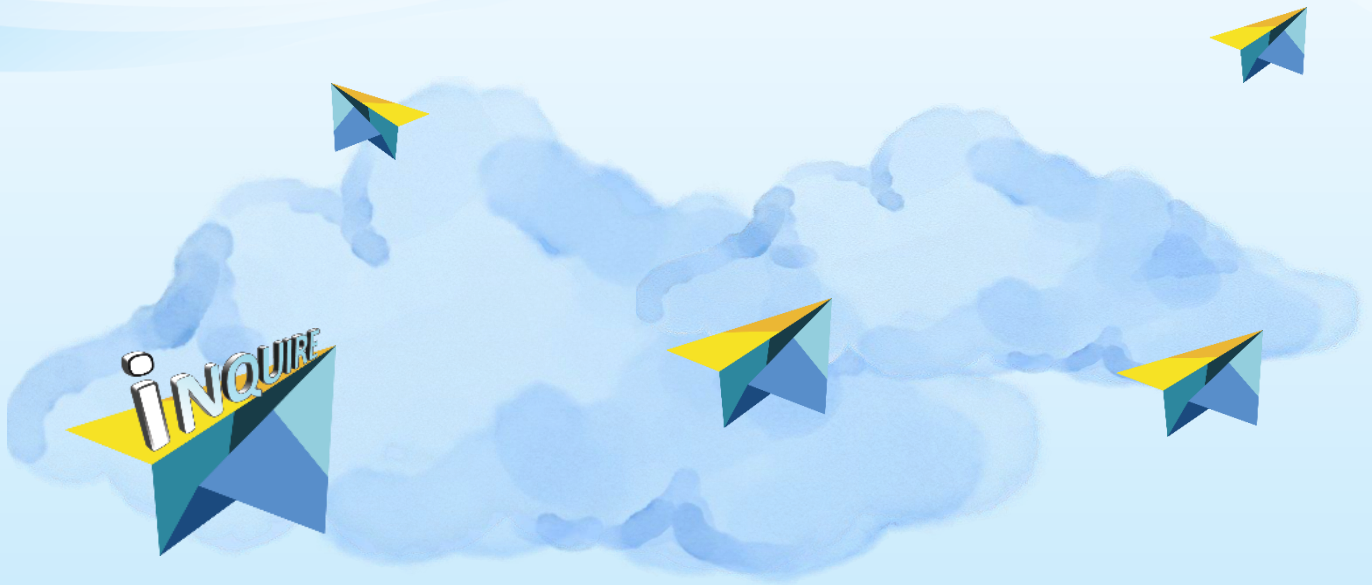
This experience strengthened my belief that combining AI-supported inquiry with self-directed learning can effectively bridge learning gaps and cultivate the independence needed for lifelong learning in the digital age.

CHIU Man-chun

Lingnan Dr. Chung Wing Kwong Memorial Secondary School

*Come with an inquiry
Leave inspired*





Most students are highly examination-oriented. Although many possessed strong English proficiency, their abilities were often overshadowed by rote learning and limited engagement. I recall a quiet student who came alive during an informal discussion of a current event, revealing a passion and critical insight rarely seen in traditional classroom settings. This experience reinforced my belief that language learning flourishes when students engage with authentic issues, think critically, and take ownership of their learning.

After completing the Programme on Self-directed Learning in Finland under the '*i-Journey*' Scheme, I introduced a News Forum Project at my school. The project supported with curriculum goals by promoting inquiry-based English learning, developing generic skills, and nurturing responsible citizenship.

Implementing was not without challenges. Students often struggled to narrow broad topics and evaluate the vast amount of available information. The quality of fact sheets varied, and limited lesson time constrained the depth of feedback during presentations.

Despite these challenges, the project achieved positive outcomes. Students demonstrated stronger critical thinking, research and source-evaluation skills, as well as greater confidence in public speaking. Their presentations reflected notable growth in communication and self-reflection. Professionally, the experience enhanced my pedagogical practice through reflection and collaboration, leading to improved teaching materials and lesson design. It strengthened my ability to create engaging, student-centred learning experiences that prepare students to become informed and active members of society.

LAI Ching-yee, Evita
St. Mary's Canossian College



Through the Programme on Self-directed Learning, I explored Finland's education system, where students enjoy greater autonomy, face less pressure from homework and examinations, and consistently achieve strong learning outcomes.

This experience reinforced several important beliefs about teaching: trusting students' potential, viewing mistakes as learning opportunities, valuing every question, promoting collaboration over competition, and preparing learners for life beyond school.

While Hong Kong cannot simply replicate the Finnish model, the experience reminded me that effective education is built on trust. When teachers provide appropriate support and encourage independence, students become more confident and self-directed learners.

In an increasingly fast-changing world, I remain committed to nurturing creativity, adaptability, and resilience in my students to help them thrive in the future.

LAU Sau-woon

TWGHs Sin Chu Wan Primary School

During my study visit to Finland, I observed three practices that effectively foster self-directed learning: giving students autonomy in choosing tasks and learning pathways, creating a supportive environment that encourages collaboration, and using assessment as a tool for learning rather than ranking.

One moment remains vivid in my memory. A student paused in front of the StoryTellAR app, unsure how to project her sculpture into a virtual space. That hesitation reflected the uncertainty often involved in independent learning and reinforced my belief that education should empower students to take ownership of their learning. This conviction motivated me to join the i-Journey Scheme and explore how self-directed learning and technology could nurture greater independence in my classroom.

Implementing this vision was challenging. Time constraints, diverse learning needs, and the complexity of AR tools required careful support. Through peer collaboration and structured reflection, students gradually became more confident learners. High achievers set goals, sought feedback, and refined their work with resilience, while their AR exhibitions showcased creativity and inspired their peers. The higher achievement rate of the experimental group further demonstrated the value of combining autonomy with appropriate scaffolding.

This journey strengthened my belief that when students take ownership of their learning, they develop not only stronger skills but also greater confidence and enjoyment. Moving forward, I will continue refining the project by extending learning opportunities and providing more targeted support for students who need it most.

LI Lik-man

Sir Ellis Kadoorie Secondary School (West Kowloon)



Participating in the Programme on Self-directed Learning in Finland was a transformative professional learning experience. I was particularly inspired by the learning environments, teaching resources, and assessment practices that enabled students to monitor and take ownership of their learning.

Upon returning to my school, I initiated a learning programme and invited teachers from different Key Learning Areas to participate. Through collaborative discussions, we identified challenges and selected topics for classroom experimentation.

The learning strategies enhanced students' focus, engagement, and awareness of their learning needs. As a result, teachers were able to provide more targeted support, leading to noticeable progress within a short period. The positive impact on student learning also encouraged colleagues and department heads to adopt similar practices.

This experience deepened my understanding of how to foster self-directed learning. It also rekindled my passion for education and strengthened my commitment to nurturing confident, independent learners.

YEUNG Hiu-wai

Yan Chai Hospital Lim Por Yen Secondary School



Through my learning journey in Finland, I gained firsthand insight into how self-directed learning differs from traditional teaching. Through meaningful exchanges with Finnish educators, I learned practical strategies and innovative lesson designs that I could apply in my own classroom.

This experience broadened my perspective, helping me identify areas for growth, draw inspiration from effective practices, and continually refine my teaching. Most importantly, it has enriched my professional practice and strengthened my commitment to supporting students as independent, lifelong learners.

YU Kwok-hong

Yan Chai Hospital No.2 Secondary School



Programme on Assessment Literacy in *Australia*



I vividly recall an articulate student staring at a blank sheet of paper and whispering, “*I don’t like writing, and I can’t think of any ideas.*” That moment challenged my belief that assessment should empower rather than intimidate learners. Although many of my students demonstrated above-average language proficiency, they remained heavily dependent on teacher guidance and lacked learning autonomy. This tension inspired me to join the ‘*i-Journey*’ Scheme.

After completing the Programme on Assessment Literacy in Perth, Australia, I initiated a school-based project to foster greater student independence through assessment. However, unlike the successful examples I observed in Perth, my students struggled when peer support and explicit teacher prompts were removed, even though they thrived in collaborative settings.

These challenges ultimately shaped my growth as a teacher-researcher. I learned to view data as a mirror of students’ needs rather than a judgement of my effectiveness. I became more intentional in developing autonomy by explicitly teaching goal-setting, reflection, and self-monitoring through manageable routines. Above all, the experience taught me patience and adaptability. While balancing support and challenge remains an ongoing pursuit, I have come to recognise that sustained inquiry, collegial collaboration, and honest reflection are at the heart of effective teaching and learning.

CHEUNG Wai-yan

St. Francis of Assisi's College



i-Journey



Participating in the Programme on Assessment Literacy under the ‘*i-Journey*’ Scheme was a transformative milestone in my professional development. Driven by a desire to help students enjoy Mathematics and build confidence in their learning, I explored innovative teaching practices during my school visits in Australia. One key insight was that students achieve more when they believe in their own abilities.

I was particularly inspired by the use of Traffic Light Cards in Perth, which enabled students to communicate their level of understanding and seek support when needed. Upon returning to my school, I adapted this strategy for my Mathematics lessons.

The impact was encouraging. My school-based project found that more students believed they could learn Mathematics successfully. They became more engaged in lessons and less afraid of making mistakes. The programme provided valuable opportunities for professional growth and reinforced my belief that small changes in teaching can have a meaningful impact on student learning. I look forward to continuing to share these practices with my colleagues.

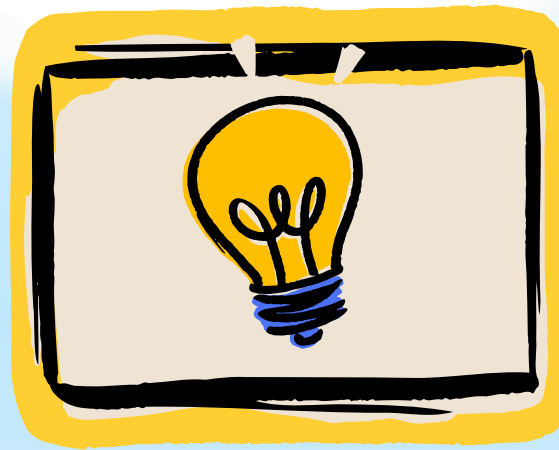
KWOK Yuk-wah

TWGHs Kwok Yat Wai College



The Australian education system places strong emphasis on nurturing students' interests and using engaging classroom activities to enhance motivation. This experience prompted me to reflect on Hong Kong's examination-oriented culture. It reinforced my belief that learning is a lifelong journey and that teachers play a vital role in helping students develop the competencies and mindset needed for lifelong learning.

Law Yee-ka, Carol
TIACC Woo Hon Fai Secondary School



A parent once requested an assessment exemption for her daughter, an upper-form student who experienced severe anxiety during examinations. As a SEN teacher, I understood this challenge well.

Joining the 'i-Journey' Scheme equipped me with new ways to help students view assessment more positively. I introduced greater flexibility by allowing students to demonstrate their learning through video or audio recordings and PowerPoint presentations, alongside traditional written assessments.

Students appreciated having choices and reported feeling less pressured. Although the quantitative results were modest, the positive changes in confidence and engagement were significant. This experience has encouraged me to further develop the approach and share it with colleagues.

The '*i-Journey*' Scheme broadened my perspectives and inspired me to step beyond my comfort zone as an educator.

LOCK Suk-han
Fortress Hill Methodist Secondary School

i-Journey: A Starting Point from Professional Learning to School-Based Practice

Dr HO Chun-sing, Maxwell

Associate Co-Director

Academy for Educational Development and Innovation

The Education University of Hong Kong



The true value of 'i-Journey' is not just about finishing a trip or giving a final presentation. Its real worth is in starting new conversations, building relationships, and trying new ways of working in schools."



As education continues to change, teachers are increasingly expected to go beyond classroom instructions become reflective practitioners, innovators and agents of change.

Through professional preparation, overseas learning experiences and follow-up activities, the 'i-Journey' supports teachers in transforming new ideas into meaningful educational practices. To truly understand 'i-Journey', it's important to look beyond the obvious activities, such as exchanges and presentations. Teachers face real challenges during this process. Rather than simply observing global trends, participants are challenged to reflect, adapt and create changes that respond to the unique needs of their own schools. This work adds to their already busy schedules, requiring extra time for reading, discussion, planning, and reflection. Teachers also need to balance different expectations and decide which changes are possible, which need adjustment, and which should be introduced step by step.

From Learning to Meaningful Change

'i-Journey' is not about simply copying ideas from other places and using them in schools. Instead, it focuses on helping teachers move from learning to real change. Before the programme, teachers participate in team-building and learn about topics such as assessment, research, innovation, and design thinking. These activities help everyone develop a shared understanding and a common way of thinking. During the exchange and after returning, teachers are encouraged to reflect on what they learned, connect it to their own schools, and work on new plans or projects. The goal is not quick results, but to help teachers start new projects with a better understanding of their own context.



Teachers as Leaders of Change

Teachers often act as facilitators of change, connecting ideas gained from external experiences with the realities of their own school. This role requires them to balance innovation with curriculum needs, student learning, available resources and colleagues' readiness for change. When they introduce new things, uncertainty, tension and slow progress are inevitable, but these are signs of genuine development, not failure.

As project leaders, we believe that meaningful school improvement takes time, trust and collaboration. Beyond enthusiasm, schools need a supportive culture that encourages professional dialogue, values teachers' efforts and allows room for experimentation and reflection. When teachers feel respected and trusted, new ideas are more likely to take root and lead to lasting change.

The lasting value of 'i-Journey' beyond with an overseas visit

The true value of 'i-Journey' is not just about finishing a trip or giving a final presentation. Its real worth is in starting new conversations, building relationships, and trying new ways of working in schools. When teachers are open to outside experiences, look closely at their own schools, and work together to find practical ways forward, change has already started. This change might not be dramatic or show results right away, but it can lead to better teamwork, more professional discussions, and new ways for schools to grow.

'i-Journey' Scheme values not just what teachers learn, but their willingness to take the first step toward new possibilities, even when things are difficult. It is not the end of learning, but the beginning of new practices, teamwork, and creative thinking in schools. What matters most is not copying outside practices right away, but using them to inspire school-specific ideas and actions.

*When teachers see themselves as **educators, researchers, and leaders of change**, 'i-Journey' Scheme can help bring about greater and longer-lasting improvements in schools.*



'i-Journey' Fair

The **dissemination event** for the '**i-Journey**' Scheme was successfully held on 10 January 2026, bringing together teachers and school leaders from Hong Kong's primary and secondary schools to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the 3rd and 4th cohorts. More than a celebration of success, the event served as a powerful platform for sharing innovative practices, inspiring professional learning, and reaffirming a collective commitment to nurturing self-directed learners through high-quality assessment and teaching.



The event served as a vibrant platform for **professional exchange** and **knowledge sharing**, highlighting the transformative impact of overseas learning experiences on educational leadership and pedagogical innovation. '**i-Journey**' **Ambassadors** showcased the key insights, innovative practices, and professional growth gained through their immersive learning journeys in Finland and Australia.



Through engaging presentations and reflective sharing sessions, they demonstrated how international exposure had broadened their perspectives, deepened their understanding of effective education practices, and inspired new approaches to enhancing teaching, learning, and school development within the local context.



Certificate Presentation Ceremony

The event was officiated by **Dr LAU Wing-yin, Verena**, Deputy Secretary for Education of the Education Bureau, who delivered welcoming remarks to open the programme. In her address, Dr Lau expressed her sincere appreciation to school sponsoring bodies, school supervisors and principals for their steadfast support and commitment, which had been instrumental in facilitating the successful implementation of the **'i-Journey' Scheme**.



Welcoming speech by Dr LAU Wing-yin, Verena

Dr LAU also commended the participating educators for their enthusiasm in pursuing professional growth through international learning opportunities. As a highlight of the ceremony, Dr Lau presented certificates of completion to the **'i-Journey' Ambassadors**, recognising their dedication, active engagement and achievements throughout their overseas learning journeys. The presentation underscored the Scheme's commitment to nurturing forward-thinking educators equipped with global perspectives and the capacity to drive innovation and excellence in education.

Memorable moments



Following the certificate presentation, **Dr HO Chun-sing, Maxwell**, Associate Co-Director of the Academy for Educational Development and Innovation at the Education University of Hong Kong, delivered a talk on the role of teachers as educators, researchers and change brokers. He spoke about the challenges commonly encountered by the ‘**i-Journey**’ Ambassadors when implementing school-based projects and introducing innovative practices in their respective schools. He also shared practical strategies to navigate these challenges and sustain meaningful change.



To further enrich the professional exchange, four ‘i-Journey’ Ambassadors shared learning drawn from their experience in Finland and Australia, including participation in school attachments, lectures on educational theories and policies, as well as guidance received from mentors on their school-based projects in Finland and Australia.

Principal AU Wai-fung (TWGHs Ko Ho Ning Memorial Primary School) and **Principal CHENG Suk-wah (Tuen Mun Catholic Secondary School)** highlighted the key takeaways from the Programme on Self-directed Learning in Finland. They found the school attachment experience valuable, noting that hands-on craft lessons encouraged students to plan and problem-solve independently, while project-based learning allowed them to make choices and work at their own pace. Together, these approaches supported learning autonomy.



Ms CHEUNG Wing-yiu (Po Leung Kuk Castar Primary School) and Ms KONG Pui-ying, Michel (Maryknoll Convent School (Primary Section)) reflected on the learning gained from the Programme on Assessment Literacy in Australia. A key takeaway was the importance of building students' feedback literacy. They noted that being told what is wrong only signals error while discovering the error oneself is where learning truly begins.



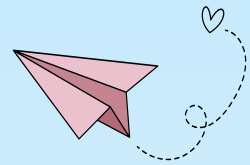
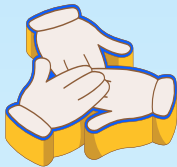
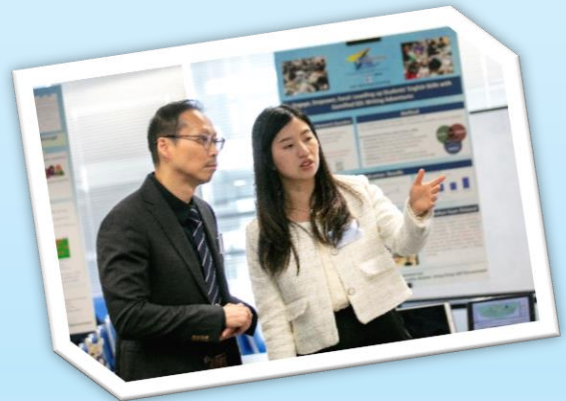
The “i-Journey” Fair : A Catalyst for Professional Knowledge Sharing and Innovation





Poster Presentation

Following the sharing sessions, the '**i-Journey**' **Ambassadors** showcased their initiatives in **self-directed learning** and **assessment literacy** through poster presentations. Through rich professional dialogue with participants, they exchanged innovative pedagogical practices, curriculum designs, and assessment strategies that have transformed learning in their schools. These meaningful interactions deepened understanding of the programme's key themes, inspired fresh perspectives, and fostered cross-school collaboration to scale impactful practices across Hong Kong.



i-Journey