NET
SCHEME NEWS

Let Learning and Teaching Blossom Through School-based Support

Several years ago, the English panel at Lui Cheung Kwong Lutheran College in Tuen Mun was looking for external resources to help them develop the reading comprehension ability of their students. They were aware that the weaker students lacked the necessary skills and so the teachers were seeking new strategies to raise students' interest and enthusiasm.

The Lui Cheung Kwong Lutheran College Team: Stephanie Yim, English Panel Chair, Angel Lo, Junior English Panel Chair, and English teachers, Mercy Chan and Rita Lai with Julien Hawthorne and Catherine Lam, Regional NET Coordinators, NET Section

The EPC, Stephanie Yim, and the Junior EPC, Angel Lo, decided to attend some EDB workshops to get some ideas. The first workshop they attended was delivered by the NET Section. It was called *From Critical Thinking to Critical Literacy: Developing Smart Readers Through Identifying Teachable Moments in English Reading Lessons.* The content covered basic reading comprehension skills and also introduced the Four Resources Model which posits that reading is a social activity in which the reader plays the roles of Code-breaker, Text Participant, Text User and Text Analyst.

Stephanie and Angel thought this framework had the potential to assist their panel with new strategies for teaching reading skills, so they applied for school-based support from the NET Section to help them introduce the pedagogy to their colleagues. A collegial relationship thus began and has since grown and proved fruitful over time.

Four workshops were presented to the whole panel in the first year of support. The first workshop, conducted in August 2020 in preparation for the 2020/21 school year, focused on helping teachers to expand their understanding of the reading process, in particular how the

graphophonic, syntactic and semantic cueing systems work together in the mind of the reader. Reading comprehension skills were identified and ways to teach them were explored.

The second workshop was held during the uniform test period in November 2020 and focused more on pedagogy. Teachers explored the use of authentic texts for identifying text grammar; the use of graphic organisers for making learning visible; and the use of multiple readings to move students from a basic comprehension of the text to an understanding of how the text is constructed to influence the reader. Each reading of the text builds on the previous reading and enables the reader to dig a little deeper and understand more about the text, e.g. its purpose and influence, and how the language is used to position the topic, audience and author.

The third workshop took place during the exams in January 2021 and focused on the use of past Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) reading papers for teaching both reading and writing skills through text analysis. The text type and the use of specific grammar and vocabulary items were made explicit and investigated for the role they played in supporting the purpose of the text and influencing the audience. Elements of critical literacy were introduced, the less obvious purposes of the texts were exposed, and the social impacts of the texts were explored.

The final workshop revisited the Four Resources Model, reading comprehension skills, text analysis, multiple readings and the use of text sets, i.e. a variety of multimodal and multi-genre texts on the same topic used to recycle language and offer a variety of entry points to cater for learner diversity. A wide range of text types, such as films, film trailers, film reviews, articles, images, advertisements, infographics, webpages and videos, were used in the workshop to demonstrate how to develop a text set on a particular topic.

CRAAP TEST –
To assess information we read or view:

C Currency: The timeliness of the info

R Relevance: How the info fits your needs

A Authority: The source of the info

A Accuracy: Reliability and correctness of the info

P Purpose: The reason the info exists

Evaluating Sources

Relevance
Does it suit my purpose?

Currency
How up-to-date is the info?

Authority
An expert?
Is bias evident?

Purpose
To inform?
To persuade?
To sell?

Accuracy
Fact or Opinion? References?

Over the past two years, teachers met with NET Section support officers during timetabled co-planning meetings to collaborate on designing lessons that implemented the ideas presented in the workshops. While adopting new pedagogy can be challenging, the enthusiasm and open-mindedness of the teachers resulted in new ways of looking at how they could best meet their students' needs. Amid the school closures during both the social unrest and then the social restrictions created by COVID-19, the teachers continued to adapt their teaching style to incorporate even more new ideas related to e-learning and on-line delivery of lessons, e.g. the use of apps to make learning visible, collaborative activities and, in particular, the CRAAP test (**C**urrency, **R**elevance, **A**uthority, **A**ccuracy and **P**urpose).

Given the infinite supply of information on the Internet and the dubious quality of much of it, the CRAAP test is an essential strategy for participating in 21st century texts. Having been introduced to the teachers through the focus on information literacy, it has now become a permanent fixture in both the senior and junior secondary schemes of work, and questions about these aspects of a text are included in the uniform tests and examination papers. The students have responded well to the use of relevant, authentic texts and have become more willing to answer questions independently and have performed better on questions that they would previously answer incorrectly or not attempt at all.

Focusing on the CRAAP test, and the ways in which both text grammar and use of vocabulary position topics has given teachers a strong direction for identifying teaching focuses that are contextualised and meaningful, and these are best found in authentic texts. In general, the teachers can now better apply sound pedagogical theories to their classroom activities and believe that the support they received from the NET Section has been instrumental in helping them achieve this.

Julien Hawthorne
Regional NET Coordinator, NET Section

Benefits of using digital devices to learners

[11] As Vawn Himmelsbach, Education Technology writer, points out: there are seemingly lots of reasons why online digital devices help in the learning environment. Not only do students have access to a vast world of information and learning materials, that this kind of technology allows students to learn at their own pace through individualized instruction. Also, rather than just passively learning in the classroom, kids become much more interactive with the teacher who thus becomes more of an advisor or coach as the kids explore their learning more independently.

[12] Lastly, using online polls, quizzes and similar activities could help engage all students, including those who are normally shy and wouldn't always raise their hand in class to participate.

[13] It's no wonder that, in a recent survey, around 75% of educators think technology has a positive impact in the education process.

Questions to ponder when we read
- **Who wrote** this text?
- What is the **purpose** of this text?
- How does the author **position the topic**?
  (e.g. technology / digital devices)
- How is the positioning made clear?
- Whose **voice is NOT heard** from the text?
- Who **benefit(s) from** the text?
- What is the **social impact** of this text?

4. Who are the target audience of this text?
- **Educators** _____ who are using **digital devices in teaching** _____. ???

- People who are interested in the topic of **digital devices for learning purposes** _____