

Thinking in Action: Using cognitive tools to help students learn better

Participating Schools

Diocesan Boys' School Primary Division

SKH Mung Yan Primary School

Lok Wah Catholic Primary School

School-based curriculum development (Primary) section

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‘What a child can do in cooperation today, he can do alone tomorrow.’ ‘Therefore the only good kind of instruction is that which marches ahead of development and leads it ... **‘Instruction must be oriented toward the future, not the past.**

Lev Vygotsky (1962)

Going beyond the basics in today’s classroom

the amount of materials memorized should be reduced, with more weight put on

- making connections
- thinking through issues
- solving problems

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To Flip or Not to Flip?

Rationale of the Flipped Classroom?

For teachers	For students
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• nurture curriculum leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop self-directed learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• maximise the use of lesson time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• promote e-learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• enhance classroom interaction (more group work and classroom discussion)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cater for learner diversity (students can learn at their own pace)

Reflection

- Old wine in a new bottle/ digital natives
- **System, hardware & accountability**
- Start small and make use of you tube clips, Khan Academy, pictures etc.
- Have fun and enjoy the challenges

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Adopting differentiated writing tasks to enhance students' writing skills



Split P6 students into different ability groups



Devise differentiated learning tasks with focus on their writing problems



Carry out a tracking study to analyse how students perform in the writing tasks

Adopting differentiated writing tasks to enhance students' writing skills

Objectives of the writing programme

- To identify the students' levels of writing performance at P5
- To design writing tasks to enable students
 - use the basic convention of written English
 - present information and ideas clearly and coherently
 - learn the appropriate formats and language features when writing different text types
- To help teachers reflect on the teaching practices of writing

The Framework of writing skills

Content	• complexity of information and ideas
	• length of texts
	• familiarity of topics
Language	• language forms and functions used at different levels of writings including the range of sentence patterns and accuracy
Organisation	• linkage of ideas within and across paragraphs
	• overall organisation of ideas (use of cohesive devices)

Identify students' writing performance at P5

- use simple cohesive devices to link ideas
- give limited range of sentence patterns and vocabulary
- need to avoid careless grammatical and spelling mistakes

Problems identified

- lexical problems – lack of vocabulary to express ideas
- limited sentence patterns to construct the writing text with complex sentences
- lack interesting story ending

How can our students write better 'story endings'?

Students have many, wonderful ideas. Teachers need to:

- create a platform for their ideas
 - introduce different types of story endings
- fine tune their writing
 - proverbs, morals, and concluding sentences

Different types of story endings

SAD / DISAPPOINTING

ENDING

FUNNY / SILLY

ENDING

HAPPY / EXCITING

ENDING

SCARY

ENDING

Highflyers are encouraged to give interesting and reflective endings

possible Story Endings..

...I never want to stay alone in the house again!

...and so we'll never know what really happened.

...and now we could all have a well-earned rest.

...and so it was over.

...we had supper and went to bed, tired but happy.

...it had finished, at last.

...and that was the end of that.

...the horror was over and we were all safe.

...there was home at last. We had made it!

...so it had turned out alright in the end.

...and it was a wonderful way to end things.

...and I can't wait to do it again!

...and as the night drew in, I was glad it was all over.

...and they lived happily ever after.

Cohesive Devices are used to organize your ideas, making the writing more coherent and consistent

because and or but so so that

finally although then next suddenly however

unfortunately luckily

I lost my mobile phone. My dad bought me a new phone the next day.

Although I lost my mobile phone, my dad bought me a new phone the next day.

I was reading a comic book in my bedroom at noon. The light fell down.

I was reading a comic book in my bedroom at noon. Suddenly , the light fell down.

What can be done for writing?

Expand **students' vocabulary repertoire** is essential to enable producing a piece of writing more readily by

- vocabulary building skills; and
- explicit teaching of specific vocabulary items

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Strategies to help students integrate key reading skills in classroom practices

Model

- Select short texts on a familiar topic

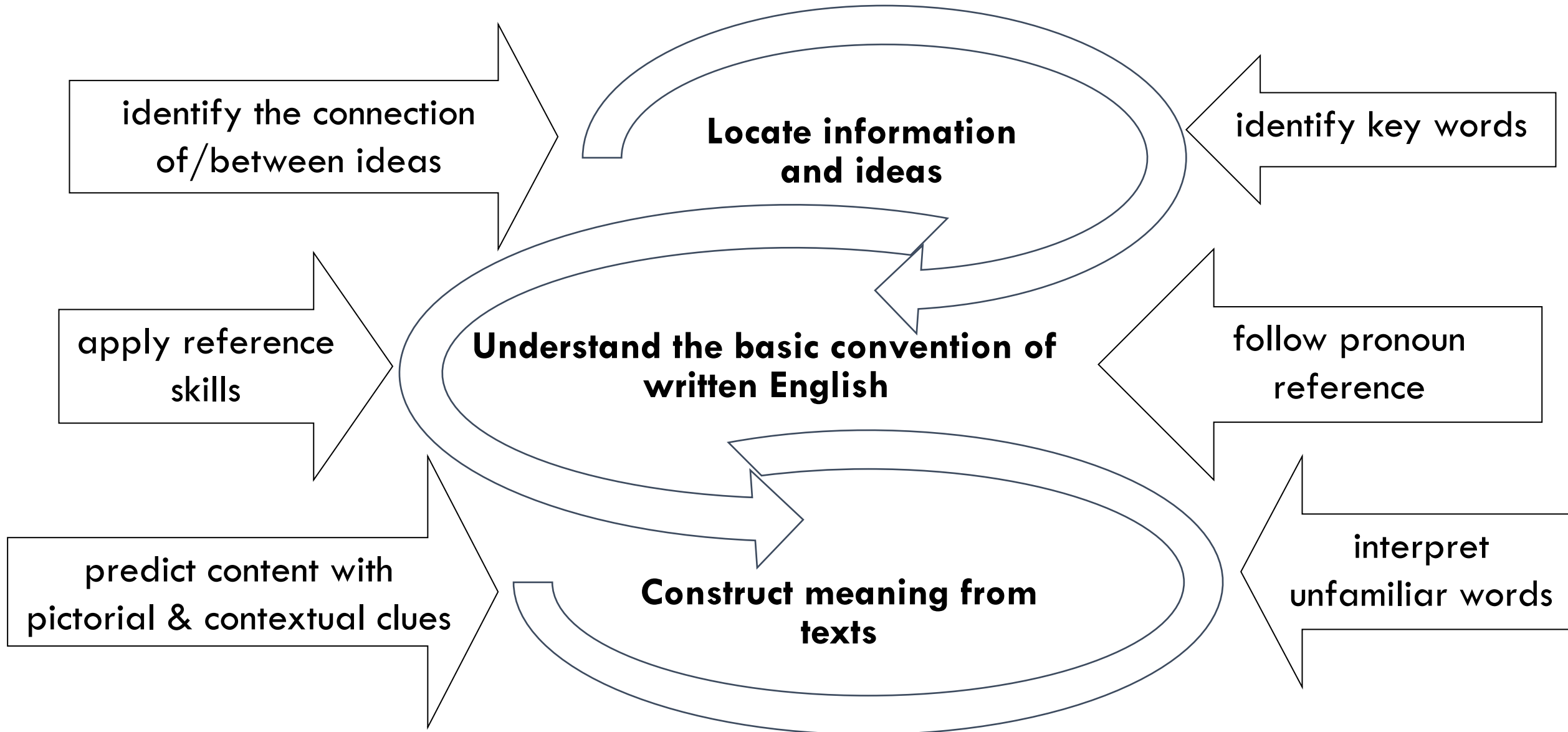
Guide

- Go through the procedure on a number of different texts
- Increase difficulty and fade teacher support

Independent

- Provide students with short texts that they can read
- Introduce longer texts

Key reading strategies



Vocabulary building strategies to help students interpret unfamiliar words

- Compounding
- Prefixes and suffixes
- Parts of speech
- Phonics skills to help pronunciation and spelling
- Riddles → High-order thinking skills

Compounding

Cinderella lived with her stepmother and two stepsisters.

step + mother = stepmother
step + sisters = stepsisters

Prefixes and Suffixes

er	dis	ful
ly	able	ful
un	ness	ion

unkind

slowly

comfortable

writer

correction

helpful

disagree

Parts of speech

Mimi and her family like dining out. They dined at a restaurant last night. When they arrived, there were not many diners. They had a big dinner there! They were happy.

Phonics skills to help pronunciation and spelling

Develop skills to read aloud texts fluently

Develop more confidence in decoding new words

→ achieve reading independence

How to encourage students to read more

- Read for pleasure
 - Colourful graphical magazines
- Make connections with reading and other issues
 - Read wider
- Teach reading strategies
 - Understand the main idea
 - Locate specific information

Using riddles to develop inference skills

I am made of flour.

I am thin and long.

People like to mix me with different sauces.

You can find me in Italian restaurants.

What am I?

I am spaghetti.

Conjunction Bingo

- Conjunction bingo gives students practice reading and saying conjunctions.
- To mark that space students must give a sentence with that conjunction in it.

while	so	before
if	both	neither
for	when	as

Link up the sentences

Adverbials of time	Adverbials of place
last week a few days ago a little later some time afterwards	behind the dresses above the door in front
Determiners	Conjunctions
seven more the all some her few	but yet because for and so

_____ my sister went to the shops in the city centre. She had plenty of money _____ she couldn't see anything she wanted to buy. Just when she thought that she would come home empty handed, she went into a shop and saw _____ dresses that she liked.