

3.1 Fostering cross-curricular connections in KS2 through conducting a Reading across the Curriculum project

Background

The teachers from Tuen Mun Government Primary School believe that reading is a fundamental ability which enables students to access a wealth of information and, consequently, is essential for academic and lifelong success. Implementing a "Reading across the Curriculum" (RaC) project encouraged students to make connections among different subjects, gain a holistic understanding of the chosen topic and develop values and attitudes. It could also enhance students' comprehension skills, vocabulary development, and critical thinking skills.

Through holistic curriculum mapping of the school's English Language, General Studies (GS) and Visual Arts (VA) curricula, teachers were able to provide opportunities for students to learn to read a variety of reading materials which shared a common theme. As GS was taught in Cantonese, text types such as graphs, charts and diagrams together with the specialised vocabulary students learnt in GS could be reinforced in English lessons through engaging students to read different non-fiction texts related to the same theme. Students were also able to incorporate the text type learnt in both English and GS into a Visual Arts activity. The visual representations created by students proved that they could communicate information and demonstrate their understanding of the content learnt in both English and GS.

Different curriculum initiatives such as life-wide learning, Life Planning Education, national education, STEM education and values education were also organically integrated into the project to arouse students' learning interest, extend their learning beyond the classroom and facilitate students' whole-person and all-round development.

Level

P4

Strategies used

1. Mapping the General Studies and English Language curricula to identify a common theme for implementing the RaC project

Teachers of the two subjects identified a common theme from both curricula by looking for connections between the texts used in English and the content covered in General Studies (see Figure 1).

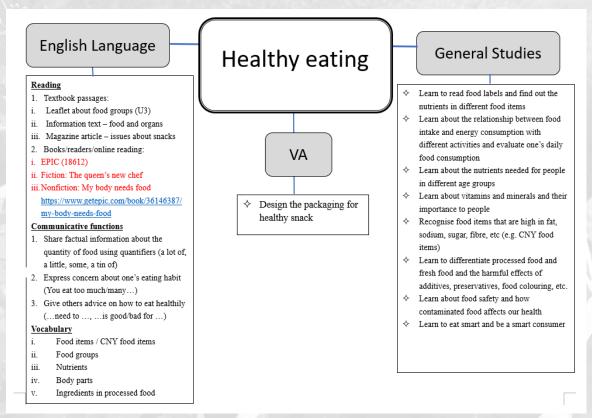


Figure 1. Curriculum plan for the RaC project

The theme "Healthy eating" was subsequently chosen because of its high relevance to students' daily life and its potential to engage and motivate students. Students were given opportunities to demonstrate their ability to use the knowledge gained from both subjects by doing a Visual Arts activity and sharing reading experiences through different means.

2. Integrating various new curriculum initiatives into the RaC project to foster students' whole-person development

Different curriculum initiatives such as STEM education, Life Planning Education, national education and values education were organically integrated into the RaC Project. Apart from building students' knowledge on the topic, teachers believed that language teachers could play a crucial role in supporting students' personal growth and well-being. By conducting a variety of activities for promoting curriculum initiatives, students' critical thinking skills, creativity and proper values could be nurtured and their awareness of the importance of setting short-term and long-term goals for their future was heightened.

3. Engaging students to read a variety of materials to foster their intellectual curiosity

With a variety of theme-based materials chosen, including fiction and non-fiction, print and non-print, English teachers taught reading skills explicitly in class to ensure students understand text types and the language features that characterise them, learn more vocabulary items and analyse the use of target language items. They also helped students develop a more in-depth understanding of the topic and improve their critical thinking skills. Students' learning needs and interests could also be better catered for.

4. Engaging students in sharing their reading experiences through a variety of tasks

In order to increase students' motivation to learn, General Studies, Visual Arts and English teachers worked together to design meaningful activities such as a visit to a pizza making restaurant, ice cream making, food bag design for students to strengthen connections between reading and real-life experiences. Teachers used different ways to sustain students' learning interest, empower them to learn independently and maximise their learning time.

What happened Planning

At the planning stage of the RaC project, curriculum mapping was conducted as it encouraged collaboration among teachers from different subject areas and facilitated discussion about the role of reading in various disciplines. This process allowed teachers from the two KLAs to have a better understanding of the learning content of the two subjects. The English teachers took the lead to think about how GS content knowledge and related vocabulary could be enriched in the English lessons. English teachers also collaborated with the Visual Arts and Mathematics teachers to work out relevant fun activities which were related to the chosen theme and infuse them into the project.

Implementation

Learning inside the classroom

To address the diverse needs of the students, a range of pedagogical strategies were deployed to cater for their learning interest and increase their engagement in the learning process. Teachers also aimed at fostering deeper comprehension, critical thinking and engagement with cross-curricular texts which could help students develop a better understanding of the theme "healthy eating".

	Pedagogies		Tasks	Learning evidence	
1.	1. Maximising digital		Watch a video and	A 0 a 4 6 H i a 1 2 W M 6 W 12	01580
	reading and viewing		evaluate someone's	A. Go to the following website: Healthy food for kids (Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKuYfLM0yDc)	
•	Leverage online	1//	eating habits based on	(Ellis, Ingos i with i residence with a second seco	
	reading resources and		the knowledge gained	B. Choose the correct answer by blackening the circles for question 1-3 and for question 4.	give <u>long</u> answer
	multimodal learning		from GS and English	1. What unhealthy food did Steve eat?	
	resources to optimise	•	Reflect on and	• A. Crisps. • B. Chocolate.	
	students' reading time		evaluate personal	C. Cake. D. All of the above.	
	and engagement in		daily eating habits	2. What will happen to Steve if he keeps eating too much unhealthy food	1 ?
	self-directed learning	•	Watch a video to	He will be	
	tasks (see Figure 2)		learn the steps of	O A. fat B, strong	
•	Encourage students to		making ice cream to	C. tall D. fit	
	do preparation for the		prepare for the ice	Figure 2. Students watch a video abo	out one's
	lessons		cream making	eating habits and answer some que	stions.
•	Engage students to		activity in class (see		
	apply the knowledge		Figure 3)		
	gained in lessons for	٠	Think about the		
	independent learning		ingredients needed		
•	Cater for different		for homemade ice		

cream and the ones used in ice cream bought from supermarkets	1. SDL: Watch the video and note down the ingredients needed for making the ice cream. https://www.youtube.com/watch/v. Ke/bx/VEX/sd
supermarkets	Soral whole milk The ice oran is ready to be served. [9] Soral whole milk Add the obliged cream into the milk. [1] Soral whipping cream Power and part finite that centained: [1] 30g sugar Add sugar out smill; exercit into the mint are. [1] At few drops of vanilla extract Whop the ice hope of the about and value in the 10 minutes. [1] Half bag of ice Add stritt morther ice hope of the about and value in the 10 minutes. [1]
	Figure 3. Students watch a video and sequence the steps of making ice crean
 Preview text features and identify key vocabulary for part of the text modelled by teacher Apply the same strategy to read the whole text independently 	
	 and identify key vocabulary for part of the text modelled by teacher Apply the same strategy to read the whole text

identifies key words for telling the functions of different nutrients. He then reads and annotates the text by circling the names of the nutrients and underlining their functions.

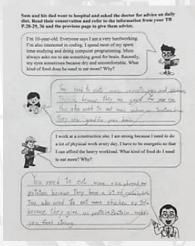


Figure 5. Students compare people's needs on nutrients and explain their needs by conducting case studies (e.g. You are a fireman. You need to eat more chicken or tofu because it gives you protein. Protein makes

- guiding them to identify common knowledge structure, in non-fiction, such as cause-and-effect, compare-and-contrast, problem-solution and the associated language features
- the passage and answer textdependent questions (see Figure 4)
- Apply the same nonfiction navigation strategies to read more theme-related texts across the curriculum
- Apply the knowledge gained for making suggestions to people on the kinds of food they need based on the jobs they do for developing students' analytical and critical thinking skills (see Figure 5)

Pedagogies Tasks Learning evidence you strong.) 3. Interacting with Identify the names of stories healthy food items from the story and Select captivating recall the names of stories that are healthy food items thematically linked to the target non-fiction learnt before topic "Healthy eating" Design a menu using Enhance students' the vocabulary items motivation to engage learnt for encouraging with non-fiction texts the main characters to Figure 6. Students design a menu for the main through including a eat healthily (see character using the target vocabulary learnt. story which is related Figure 6 and Figure 7) Activity 2 Bree used a lot of vegetables to make the stew. to the theme so as to Think critically in the foster students' food selection process based on the personal connections with the theme knowledge gained from reading fiction and non-fiction texts Figure 7. Students learn more vocabulary items on vegetables after reading the story about healthy eating. 4. Making content Learn the thematic connections through vocabulary by reading cross-curricular non-fiction texts (e.g. reading amount of calories. Expose students to a carbs, fat, fibre, diverse range of nonprotein, and vitamins fiction text types per serving of the food (e.g. food labels, from food packaging tables) (see Figure 8) and food label) Provide Reflect on the snack Figure 8. Students read information on food opportunities for intake and analyse the labels. consequences of taking students to apply their learning from those snacks cross-curricular Design food packaging reading content to to apply the knowledge real-world problems learnt from English and non-language subject and decision-making Figure 9. Students design food packaging in

(see Figure 9)

scenarios

Visual Arts lessons using different materials

Pedagogies	Tasks	Learning evidence	
	Encourage peers to eat healthy snacks	and include a food label on the food packaging.	
5. Connecting with national education • Weave elements of national education and cultural awareness into the school English Language curriculum for fostering students' understanding and appreciation of their	 Discover Chinese New Year festive food items and learn the names of them in English (see Figure 10) Learn about the culture of Chinese New Year Evaluate the nutritious values of Chinese New Year food items 	A. Exchant the soutifiens values of Chinese New Year Food? **Three Highs* 1. Which of this deliveing Chinese New Year Food are the high societa, write I and for food are the high societa, write I and for food with high societa, write I and for food with high source with the contract of the contract	
national identity		comment on their nutritious values.	

Learning outside the classroom

To maximise students' learning time, teachers extended students' learning beyond the classroom. Apart from arousing students' learning interest through a variety of activities, different curriculum initiatives were strategically incorporated into the project.

Purposes	Learning Evidence
 Enable students to get some hands-on experience in cooking Utilise the life-wide learning fund to organise meaningful learning activities for students so that they can put what they have learnt in use Provide opportunities for students to select their own ingredients based on their own needs on different nutrients which the ingredients can provide (see Figure 11 and Figure 12) 	Figure 12. Students try the pizza they made and they all enjoy the cooking experience in this life-wide learning
	 Enable students to get some hands-on experience in cooking Utilise the life-wide learning fund to organise meaningful learning activities for students so that they can put what they have learnt in use Provide opportunities for students to select their own ingredients based on their own needs on different nutrients which the ingredients can provide (see Figure 11 and

2. Making ice cream in the classroom

- Infuse a STEM activity into the project to enable students to understand the role of different ingredients, the correct proportions of ingredients to use and the effect of salt on the freezing point of liquid in the formation of ice cream
- Teach students to read a procedural text on ice cream making for task completion (see Figure 13)
- Engage students to observe the change of state of the mixture in the ice cream-making process (see Figure 14 and Figure 15)
- Guide students to compare the ingredients used in homemade ice cream with the ones they buy from the supermarket and tell the difference between homemade food and processed food to encourage students to eat healthily (see Figure 16)

activity.



Figure 13. Students read a procedural text in class before making ice cream.



Figure 14. Students learn to make the right mixture.



Figure 15. Students add the right amount of salt into the bag of ice.



Figure 16. Students taste the ice cream to feel the texture.

- 3. Researching jobs related to the catering business as a selfdirected learning task and making a video to share with others a job they want to take up if they can serve in the catering business
- Incorporate Life
 Planning Education into
 the project to enable
 students to learn the job
 names in the catering
 business (see Figure 17)
- Help students understand the development trends and rapid changes in the workplace
- Provide opportunities for students to share with others their vision and expectations for future career if they enter the catering business (see Figure 18)

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Figure 17. Students write about the job they want to take up in the catering business.



Figure 18. Students make a video for presenting the written work.

- 4. Watching a cartoon about "Count your blessings" and learn the meaning of the Sayings of Wisdom (SOW) (see Figure 19)
- Encourage students to reflect on their daily practices and habits on food consumption and remind them not to waste food (see Figure 20)
- Teach the concept of "waste reduction" using the resources on the government waste reduction website
- Give a brief introduction to "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDG) and guide students to think about how they can contribute to some of the goals to improve their wellbeing and others' (see Figure 21)



Figure 19. Students watch a cartoon to understand

the SOW.

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Figure 20. Students think about when people

Waste food.

If we don't wante food, which of the foliating gaids are set trying to antivers? WITH the remiter is the base.

SUSTAINABLE GOALS

THE STAINABLE GOALS

THE STAINABL

Figure 21. Students show their willingness to contribute to SDG number 2 "Zero hunger" and SDG number 3 "Good health and well-being".

Evaluation

Through observing students' engagement and participation in the lessons and in different activities, analysing student work and collecting teachers' reflection and feedback on the feasibility and usefulness of the RaC project, the impact of the project on teachers, students and curriculum could be evaluated.

Impact

Student development

- Though most students initially found learning English difficult and did not have a strong motivation to learn English, their improvement in reading ability and reading interest could be observed. Students learnt to make connections between what they read and their daily experience and practices. They also learnt to synthesise and summarise information gathered from different disciplines in the RaC project. They were able to read to learn after they had learnt to read and read more independently.
- The knowledge gained from General Studies was consolidated and extended and students' vocabulary was enriched through reading a variety of topic-related materials in the English lessons.
- Students' proper values and attitudes were nurtured when they were guided to respond to stories, reflect on their daily practices and understand better the needs of the world.
- Students' generic skills and lifelong learning skills were enhanced through participating in a variety of RaC activities. Their learning motivation was also raised as learning was no longer confined to the classroom setting.

Teacher development

- The teachers involved gained a broader view of the school curriculum. Both language and non-language subject teachers could see more coherent links between subjects when they conducted curriculum mapping. They aligned the themes of the two subjects for carrying out the RaC project.
- Curriculum leadership was nurtured through implementing the RaC project. English teachers took the lead to make connections across subjects and General Studies teachers realised that content and language learning could be integrated to create more coherent learning experiences for students. The panel heads could propose concrete and workable actions when implementing the RaC project for the first time and they were able to demonstrate their subject and pedagogical knowledge. Teachers made the best use of the available funding to facilitate life-wide learning activities so as to maximise students' learning time and help increase students' motivation to learn.

Curriculum development

- RaC encourages the integration of knowledge and skills into various subject areas, fostering a more holistic and cross-curricular approach to learning. This helps students understand the relevance and application of knowledge and skills in diverse contexts.
- Exposing students to a variety of texts and subject-specific content allows students to learn a broader range of vocabulary, including subject-specific terminology. Students' vocabulary can

- be enriched in RaC projects. Apart from vocabulary enrichment, students also have a wider exposure to text types and they can learn the different text structures and text features.
- RaC projects engage students to read extensively on the selected themes and they subsequently learn to comprehend, analyse and interpret information, which help enhance their overall understanding and mastery of the subject matters.

Conclusion

Facilitating factors

The strong support and involvement from the principal, curriculum coordinators and panel head contributed to the success of the project. They were proactive in allocating funding and manpower to ensure the smooth implementation of different activities. The strong teaching team also allowed for the development of cross-curricular connections, shared resources and consistent application of pedagogical strategies across the curriculum. Teachers also developed the shared goal of increasing students' engagement and motivation. Thus, the activities and materials were engaging and relevant to students, fostering their interest and motivation in the RaC project. Sufficient time was also allocated for the teachers to plan, collaborate and implement the project. All the parties in school helped create an environment that supported the successful implementation and sustainability of an RaC project. The P4 teachers were empowered to lead RaC projects at other levels in the new school year and they are prepared to refine this year's project and explore new topics for another RaC project.

Difficulties and suggestions

Assessing the effectiveness of an RaC project can be a complex task. In this RaC project, teachers mainly aimed at assessing students' knowledge on text structures and language-related knowledge such as their ability to apply the target language items and vocabulary items learnt in English and non-language subjects for completing different reading, writing and speaking tasks. Teachers mainly assessed students based on how well they completed the worksheets developed. However, insufficient attention was paid to assessing students' interest, enthusiasm and participation in the different activities or evaluating the project from the point of view of different stakeholders. Thus, more advanced planning needs to be done to improve the data collection processes so that more relevant data and information can be obtained throughout the implementation of the project.

Way forward

Based on the experience generated this year, curriculum leaders should ensure that RaC should be integrated into the core curriculum across different subject areas, rather than just be treated as an add-on or a supplementary activity. Teachers, regardless of their subject allegiance, should build up their capacity in implementing effective literacy instruction and strategies across the curriculum so that teachers from more KLAs can participate in the future RaC projects. Curriculum leaders should foster collaboration among teachers from different KLAs so that their instructional approaches can be aligned and there would be more cross-curricular learning opportunities for students.

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Tuen Mun Government Primary School Amy FAN (Language Support Officer)

3.2 Supporting students' learning and whole-person development through Reading across the Curriculum

Background

In 2021/22, St. Clare's Girls' School introduced a Reading across the Curriculum (RaC) programme in S1, with an aim to enhance students' reading skills and increase their knowledge about what was happening around them locally and internationally. To plan the newly-introduced RaC curriculum, the English Language teachers reviewed the existing reading curriculum in Key Stage 3 to identify the reading strategies needed to be introduced in S1 and reinforced in the following two year levels. Since fostering students' self-learning and whole-person development were also the school's development focuses, the English Language teachers addressed these two focuses by infusing selfdirected learning (SDL) elements and values education into the RaC curriculum.

Level

S1

Strategies used

When planning the RaC programme, the English Language teachers used the following four strategies to support S1 students' learning and whole-person development.

1. Using the VASK framework as the backbone of the RaC programme

The English Language teachers adopted the VASK (i.e. Proper values and attitudes, Skills and Knowledge) framework as the backbone when planning the RaC programme (see Figure 1). This framework is characterised by the interconnected components of the curriculum framework - Knowledge in Key Learning Areas, Generic Skills, and Values and Attitudes (Curriculum Development Council, 2017). The English Language teachers ensured that the RaC programme, the learning and teaching materials, and tasks and activities designed for students could address these three domains of the framework.

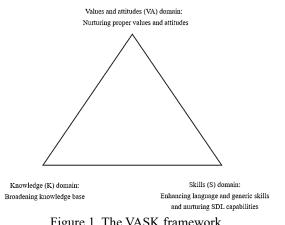


Figure 1. The VASK framework

(Adapted from p.8 of Secondary Education Curriculum Guide Booklet 2 Learning Goals, School Curriculum Framework and Planning)

- 2. Fostering cross-curricular collaboration to identify and address students' learning needs
 To have a better understanding about students' learning needs in non-language subjects, the
 English Language teachers analysed the learning and teaching materials used in those subjects
 to know more about the themes and the language demands. They also consulted non-language
 subject teachers on the choice of reading materials and design of tasks to ensure that students'
 learning needs in the non-language subjects could be addressed.
- 3. Diversifying input, designing different tasks and using life-wide learning to enrich students' learning experiences
 - The English Language teachers used a range of texts, including multimodal texts to cater for students' diverse learning interests. They also designed different tasks (e.g. oral presentations, self-reflection) that helped students develop generic skills (e.g. collaboration) and SDL capabilities, and enabled them to apply the knowledge and skills learnt in the RaC programme. Through these tasks, teachers could evaluate students' learning performance more holistically. In addition, life-wide learning, which aims to extend student learning from the classroom setting to other contexts (Education Bureau, 2024), was deployed to enable students to experience the topic in a more immersive way. The English Language teachers arranged virtual cultural visits, enabling students to deepen their understanding about the topic covered in the RaC programme.
- 4. Using different pedagogical practices to develop students' literacy skills in the RaC programme While planning the RaC programme, the English Language teachers considered how to build up students' vocabulary, develop and reinforce their reading strategies, and help them learn new grammar items more effectively. They deployed different pedagogical tools and strategies (e.g. use of visuals, recycling) to help students enhance their language skills.

What happened

1. Curriculum planning

The English Language teachers took the steps below when designing the RaC programme:

Steps	Domains in the	What was done
	VASK	
	framework	
	addressed	
1	Knowledge (K)	• Decided to collaborate with one non-language subject at a time by taking into consideration the time frame of the project (i.e. one year) and teachers' experience in planning and implementing RaC.
		• Identified three non-language subjects, namely Technology and Living (TL hereafter), History, and Computer Literacy (CL hereafter) based on teachers' perceptions of students' interests and linguistic demands of the subjects.
2	K & Generic skills (S)	Adopted the language-based approach to implementing the RaC programme, focusing on the language items that students would encounter in non-language subjects.

Steps	Domains in the VASK framework addressed	What was done			
		Identified students' learning needs (e.g. rhetorical functions, language features, note-taking) in each non-language subject by analysing the textbooks and other learning and teaching materials (e.g. PowerPoint) used in the English Language subject and the three non-language subjects. Sequenced the language items to be progressively developed by considering students' prior knowledge, the complexity of the language items used in each non-language subject, and the transition between S1 and S2. Incorporated generic skills (e.g. communication skills) into the RaC programme.			
3	K	• Mapped the learning elements of the English Language subject and each non-language subject by identifying the common theme, language items and visual representations between the two subjects. Figure 2 serves as an example to illustrate how curriculum mapping between English Language and History was conducted.			
		Topic: Human Needs: Past and Present Vocabulary: Affixation (e.g. civilisation) Language: Simple past tense and time expressions (e.g. In about 3200) BC, King Menes set up) Visual presentation: Timeline RaC Topic: Ancient Civilisations Language items: Prefixes, roots and suffixes Simple past tense Visual representation: Timeline Paglish Language Unit 3: Food and Nutrition Unit 5: Worldwide Festivities Language items: Simple past tense Visual representation: Timeline			
Proper values and attitudes (VA) Infused proper values and attitudes self, appreciating cultures and carin programme to address two of the namely, national and global identity		 Figure 2. Curriculum mapping between English Language and History Infused proper values and attitudes (i.e. building a healthy self, appreciating cultures and caring our city) into the RaC programme to address two of the seven learning goals, namely, national and global identity and healthy lifestyle, and the school's framework of fostering students' wholeperson development. 			

The curriculum plan was produced after the above four steps were taken (see Figure 3).

		S1 RaC Curriculum	
Subjects:	English and Technology and Living (TL)	English and History	English and Computer Literacy (CL)
Themes & Topics:	Personal Health: Food Lab	Four Civilisations: Ancient Civilisations	Artificial Intelligence: Smart Living, Smart City
Content-related objectives	To choose food carefully	To understand how writing characters were developed in ancient times (e.g. hieroglyphics in ancient Egypt)	To explore technology that makes Hong Kong a smart city
Proper values and attitudes	Helping students build a healthy self through increasing their awareness of food choice	Enabling students to appreciate cultures through exploring different writing systems including our own writing characters	Cultivating students' care for our city through deepening their understanding about Hong Kong's technological advancement
Reading strategies and other skills:	 Previewing strategy Identifying the main idea of a paragraph Note-taking 	 Skimming and scanning Working out the meaning of unknown words (I): Definition and affixation Plotting a timeline 	- Working out the meaning of unknown words (II): Compounding - Listing techniques
Rhetorical functions and related language items:	Rhetorical function: To propose solutions Related language item: Imperative (e.g. add)	Rhetorical function (1): To present past events Related language item: Simple past tense	Rhetorical function (1): To introduce goals, objectives or purposes Related language item: To-infinitive and prepositional phrases (e.g. with a view to)
		Rhetorical function (2): To give definition Related language items: (e.gis defined as, refers to)	Rhetorical function (2): To describe things Related language item: Defining relative clauses

Figure 3. Curriculum plan of the RaC programme

2. Instructional design

The English Language teachers selected different kinds of texts, developed varied tasks, and incorporated a life-wide learning activity in one of the units to broaden students' knowledge base, develop their language and generic skills, and cultivate their proper values and attitudes, with an aim to support students' learning in both language and non-language subjects, enrich their learning experiences and foster their whole-person development.

Strategies	Domains in the VASK framework addressed	Details
Selecting different kinds of texts	K	 To increase students' knowledge and cater for their learning interest, the English Language teachers selected reading texts based on three principles: authenticity of the texts, multimodality and variety. Authentic written materials published by the government (e.g. a pamphlet, a blueprint), online videos, and an online flipbook were selected. To suit students' English levels, the English Language teachers would adapt reading texts when necessary. The English Language teachers used the selected reading texts to draw students' attention to the target skills and language items, as well as to enable them to learn subject-related vocabulary. Below are some examples:

Strategies	Domains in the VASK framework addressed	Details			
7 (an-		Food Lab	Ancie	nt civilisations	Smart Living,
		(English	(E :	nglish and	Smart City
		and TL)	1	History)	(English and CL)
	No.	Through an	Using a	n adapted	Using an authentic
		authentic	forewor	rd, students	blueprint, students
		pamphlet,	and the same of th	refixes (e.g.	learnt CL-related
		students		c-) that may	vocabulary (e.g.
7.00		learnt to use		in History,	digital identity) and
		the		ing them to	compounding (e.g.
1		imperatives to propose		at the meaning miliar words.	broadband), a common word
V. C.		solutions.	Of unita	illilai words.	formation process
		Solutions.	7		in CL, and how to
The same					describe data and
		69			trends using
		h (e)(adjectives and the
					language of
					approximation.
Developing	K & S	• To develop	p students	'generic skills (e	e.g. communication and
varied					m to apply knowledge
tasks					er skills (e.g. research
ALL ALL	FER				ners designed tasks in
	10000	written an	Modes	modes.	Tasks
TO B		Group	Written	- Leaflet des	
		Gloup	WIIII		t presentation
			Spoken	- Oral preser	
		Individual	Written		earch project
					ation and reflection
		independent were interinformation language. developm • Upon the conducted improvem would be	mini-research project designed to develop the learning, students researched a language the lested in by searching and identifying relevant on their own to understand more about the They then used a timeline to show ant. completion of the RaC programme, student a self-reflection on what was done well, when the could be made and what follow-up activations. All these are the key elements their SDL capabilities.		

K, S & VA	teachers prepared a denabling students to u			
K, S & VA	To promote assessment for learning, the English I teachers prepared a detailed rubric for oral prese enabling students to understand the assessment cruget feedback from their teachers.			
(appreciating Chinese culture)	Due to the pandemic, life-wide learning action the unfavourable circular teachers arranged two students to understand (OBI), the writing syview to enriching students could choosappreciate the master and/or to visit a virtual institution, in which calligraphic works and Students completed	it was difficult for teachers to organise vities outside the school. To get round reumstance, the English Language vo virtual cultural visits, enabling d more about oracle-bone inscription estem used in ancient China, with a dent' learning experiences. See to visit Shanghai Museum and expieces through watching a video, all gallery organised by a local tertiary the they could appreciate exhibits, d Chinese couplets written in OBI. questions of different complexity their learning after the visit. Two		
	A more challenging question: Translating a Chinese heptasyllabic couplet written in OBI to English after the visit to the virtual gallery	2. The museum is making a catalogue in English for this exhibition. Can you help translate the Chinese couplet into English? Make sure your translation is poetic and accurate.		
		students to understand (OBI), the writing sy view to enriching stude Students could chood appreciate the master and/or to visit a virtual institution, in which calligraphic works and Students completed levels to consolidate examples are shown in An easier question: Extracting information from the video A more challenging question: Translating a Chinese heptasyllabic couplet written in OBI to English after the visit to the virtual		

3. Pedagogical design

The English Language teachers deployed a variety of pedagogical tools and strategies in the RaC programme to develop students' language skills. Below are a few examples:

a. Using recycling to help students internalise a reading strategy
In the first unit, the English Language teachers introduced to students a previewing strategy
- T.H.I.E.V.E.S., which stands for "Title", "Headings", "Introduction", "Every first sentence", "Visuals and Vocabulary", "Ending" and "Summarise thinking/So what".

Students used this previewing strategy to get the gist of a reading text and anticipate what to read in the paragraphs. To internalise the strategy, students repeatedly used T.H.I.E.V.E.S throughout the RaC programme. They were also expected to apply this previewing strategy in non-language subjects and when searching information for their mini-research project.

b. Breaking a new skill into small steps

The English Language teachers broke a new skill or technique into smaller steps, facilitating students to learn it more easily. As an illustration, in the second unit, students learnt to plot a timeline after reading an adapted written text in four steps:

Step 1:	Highlight numbers, words and expressions related to time.			
Step 2:	Read the line(s) before and/or after the time expression to retrieve the full			
5 ON/	description of the event. Change pronouns when necessary.			
	(An example was given for students to understand how to change pronouns.)			
Step 3:	Step 3: Follow the examples given to complete the rest of a timeline for the read			
3//	text.			
Step 4:	Provide a title for the timeline.			

In the third unit, students worked out how to list items by following six steps (see Figure 5). They were expected to use the same techniques to present listed items when preparing their PowerPoint presentations.

Practice
Can you re-write the paragraph below to increase its readability?

We will continue to explore and formulate initiatives to achieve three goals. The first goal is to adopt new green technologies when they become commercially available. To create a low carbon, more sustainable environment for the people is the second goal. Optimising the use of city rescources, including waste reduction, reuse and recyle is the third one.

You may follow the steps to re-write the above paragraph:

- 1. Find out three goals in the paragraph.
- 2. Find the the verb in each goal.
- 3. Use to-infinitives (i.e. to + the base form of the verb) to start each point.
- 4. Use a semi-colon ";" at the end of each point but a full stop at the end of the last item.
- 5. Connect the second last and the last item with "and".
- 6. Add an introductory statement.

Figure 5. Students learning a new skill through small steps

c. Deconstructing authentic texts to increase the text comprehensibility
It could be challenging for S1 students to comprehend authentic texts. To address the issue,
the English Language teachers deconstructed those texts by:

- i. drawing students' attention to the text features (e.g. headings, visuals);
- ii. looking at the function of each paragraph (e.g. to give details, to propose solutions); and
- iii. analysing the language items used in the authentic texts (e.g. proposing solutions through imperatives).

d. Using visuals to help students acquire new knowledge

The English Language teachers helped students understand word composition and learn a new grammar item more easily through graphic organisers (see Figure 6) and the use of colours and shapes (see Figure 7) to highlight key features.

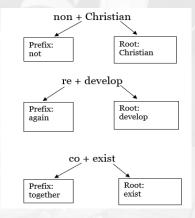


Figure 6. Learning the compositions of words through hierarchical charts



Figure 7. Learning a new grammar item through colours and shapes

- Using two different colours (i.e. red and green) to highlight the subject and defining relative clause respectively
- Using "circle" to draw students' attention to the relative pronoun "which"
- Using an arrow to link the relative pronoun to its referent, i.e. noun representing what the pronoun refers to

Impact

1. Curriculum level

The school's English reading curriculum has been systematically developed to meet the specific needs of students and subject requirements. Reviewing the existing English reading curriculum enabled the English Language teachers to identify the reading strategies that could be introduced to S1 students through the RaC programme (e.g. identifying the main ideas in a text, working out the meaning of unknown words). The enriched reading curriculum has

enhanced the vertical continuity of the reading curriculum at the junior levels since students' reading strategies are developed in a progressive manner, building a smoother transition of English learning from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.

2. Teacher level

When planning the RaC programme, the English Language teachers' knowledge about RaC grew steadily, and their capability in curriculum planning and mapping was strengthened. In addition, closer collaboration between subject departments was observed as there was more communication between the English Language teachers and non-language subject teachers when they were conducting curriculum mapping and designing materials. Cross-disciplinary collaboration was also strengthened through their joint effort to give students feedback on their oral presentations in RaC lessons (see Figure 8).



Figure 8. A TL teacher and English Language teacher giving students feedback

3. Student level

First, as revealed by students' learning products in Unit 2 and Unit 3, they were able to deconstruct reading texts about the development of a foreign language through a timeline (see Figure 9). They also used the imperatives to propose solutions to address the issues identified in the school and defining relative clause to describe things (see Figure 10).

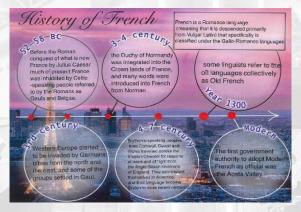


Figure 9. A student using a timeline to plot the development of French for Unit 2 (English Language and History)

(unedited student work)

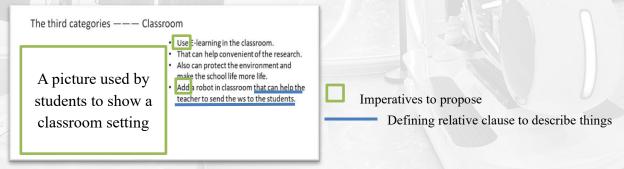


Figure 10. A group of students applying the target language items in their PowerPoint presentation in Unit 3 (English Language and Computer Literacy)

In addition, students found the skills learnt in the RaC programme useful and transferrable. Revealed by students' self-evaluation, about three-quarters of students tried to apply what they learnt in the programme (e.g. reading strategies) in other subjects (e.g. TL). Students' self-reflections also revealed that they found the reading strategies (e.g. T.H.I.E.V.E.S, working out the meaning of unknown words) and graphic organiser (timeline) taught in the programme useful.

Finally, students' SDL capabilities were nurtured, and proper values and attitudes were cultivated in them. Allowing students to research the development of a language gave them more autonomy in learning. Self-evaluation enabled students to build up their reflective ability, enabling them to become reflective learners. In addition, students could get to know more about the importance of OBI for us, as Chinese, to learn about the past and appreciate its beauty (see Figure 11).

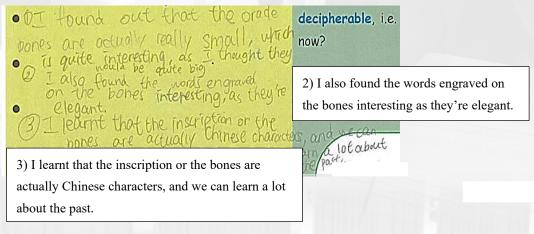


Figure 11. A student showing her appreciation towards OBI (Unedited student work)

Conclusion

When the RaC programme was launched in 2021/22, the English Language teachers collaborated with the teachers from one non-language subject at a time. With more experience gained in running the programme and cross-departmental collaboration, the school can consider adopting a theme-based approach with a few more subjects involved at a time, enabling students to complete a project on the theme or topic agreed by both English Language and non-language subject teachers. Teachers of different academic departments can also create text sets to facilitate students' deeper understanding about a certain theme or topic. In addition, the school can consider extending RaC to S2 to support STEM education. Finally, to facilitate S1 students' learning of non-language subjects through English, the medium of instruction for most subjects offered by the school, teachers are now well poised to take one step further – moving from RaC to Language across the Curriculum in S1.

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3.3 Adopting a whole-school approach to promoting Language across the Curriculum/Reading across the Curriculum

Background

Equipping students with "Reading to learn" skills and self-directed learning capabilities, which enhances one's overall learning and capacity leading to lifelong learning and whole-person development, is one of the key development goals of Pui Tak Canossian College. To broaden students' interests and horizons and develop their language competency, the school utilised the opportunity created from the optimisation of the four senior secondary core subjects to adopt a whole-school approach to promoting Language across the Curriculum (LaC)/Reading across the Curriculum (RaC) through implementing a variety of cross-curricular reading and language-related activities inside and outside class time to increase students' language exposure and enrich their learning experiences. It is expected that students' knowledge and concepts in different subjects will be enhanced and higher-order thinking capabilities such as critical thinking and problem solving skills nurtured.

Levels

S1-4

The table below shows the levels involved in the progressive development of LaC/RaC in various subjects from the 2019/20 to 2021/22 school years.

Subjects	Year 1 (2019/20)	Year 2 (2020/21)	Year 3 (2021/22)
English Language	S1	S1+S2	S1+S2+S3+S4
Music	S1	S1	S1
Integrated Science		S1	S1
Life and Society		S2	S2
Geography		S2	S2
History			S1
Computer Studies			S1
Visual Arts			S1
Home Economics			S1
Ethics and Religious Studies			S1+S3
Biology			S4
Mathematics			S2

Strategies used

1. Building a shared vision with the teacher team

Creating an English-rich and motivating language learning environment to maximise students' language exposure and experience is the top concern and priority of the school. To raise teachers' awareness and mobilise them to work towards the same vision, the school first set a clear direction in the school language policy to put strong emphasis on incorporating cross-curricular elements into a variety of English co-curricular and cross-curricular activities in different Key Learning Areas (KLAs) to strengthen students' language ability and enhance their confidence in using English across subjects in a more all-rounded manner. The management then empowered the panel heads of different subjects to work together to formulate plans and lead panel members to explore feasible entry points and effective strategies to promote LaC/RaC in their subject disciplines through regular meetings. This not only helped raise teachers' awareness of building an Englishrich environment, but also fostered closer collaboration and communication among them to work towards the same goal. In this school context, LaC serves as a gateway to a broad range of students' knowledge across various curricula, incorporating dynamic strategies such as RaC periods, crosscurricular projects, and diversified learning activities to integrate language development with academic content, with the aim of empowering students with the necessary skills in learning and using English in a multitude of subjects.

2. Breaking subject boundaries through LaC Committee

To foster collaboration among different KLAs and set clear goals and direction in formulating and implementing LaC/RaC plans and projects in the school, an LaC Committee involving panel heads and teachers of different KLAs was established with the aims to:

- a. provide support for different KLAs using English as the medium of instruction in different modes (e.g. subject-based teaching, cross-curricular projects and diversified learning activities at the junior and senior secondary levels);
- b. promote LaC/RaC inside and outside the classroom to enrich students' learning experiences; and
- c. monitor the implementation of the school language policy and evaluate its effectiveness.

During the year, the panel heads of different subjects made good use of the LaC Committee as a platform to share and exchange their ideas, concerns and difficulties and disseminate good practices. Through professional dialogues with teachers of different subjects, English teachers gained a deeper understanding of the difficulties students encountered when using English in different subjects and ways to infuse language elements to support students' learning in non-language subjects. For non-language subject teachers, there was a stronger awareness of how to integrate knowledge and concept development with academic use of language in an effective manner to strengthen students' language proficiency and develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills. Near the end of the year, the LaC Committee members met to review the work of the year with the quantitative and qualitative data collected and plan the way forward.

3. English Department taking the lead to promote LaC/RaC

To better understand the concerns and difficulties of different subjects in incorporating language into their curriculum and daily teaching, the English Department took the initiative to

offer support to different non-language subjects to maximise students' opportunities to use English effectively. This support includes:

- a. mapping the curriculum of English Language with different subjects using feasible entry points (e.g. vocabulary, language patterns, reading skills, text structures and themes);
- b. analysing past Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) papers of subjects to identify the language needs and use;
- c. conducting training workshops;
- d. developing learning and teaching materials; and
- e. supporting novice teachers through co-planning and co-teaching.

With the concrete support and guidance provided, the English subject acted as a super-connector to connect different KLAs strategically to promote LaC/RaC in a systematic and holistic manner.

4. Making good use of the opportunity created from the optimisation of the senior secondary core subjects

The optimisation of the four senior secondary core subjects provided the school with the impetus to holistically review the school curriculum to create space for developing students' potential and enriching their learning experiences. The school leadership team made good use of the released lesson time and learning time to provide diversified activities/programmes (e.g. reflection period, activity period and class teacher period) to promote cross-curricular initiatives such as LaC/RaC inside and outside the classroom, with the aim of increasing students' language exposure and enhancing their language and literacy development.

What happened

1) Conducting holistic curriculum planning

Levels	Work done	Rationales
S1-6	As stated in the Secondary Education Curriculum Guide Booklet 2	- To ensure a
	Learning Goals, School Curriculum Framework and Planning	balanced
	(Curriculum Development Council, 2017), systematic curriculum	development
.= 5172	planning helps ensure school priorities, in terms of vision, curriculum	of students'
- 5 mm (m)	goals, major concerns, focal points and major renewed emphases	knowledge
1, 1	(MREs) to be realised in student learning; and allows effective	and skills in
	learning to occur by making meaningful connections within and	KS3 and
	across the curriculum and progression from year to year.	KS4
		- To enable
	To enhance the vertical continuity (see Figure 1) and horizontal	learning,
11	coherence across the junior and senior secondary levels, a holistic	teaching and
	review of the school English Language curriculum was made. First,	assessment
	the Learning Progression Framework (LPF) was used as a reference	to be better
	tool for teachers to set out the target objectives and expected learning	connected
	outcomes about students' development in the four skills. On the one	and co-
	hand, the LPF provides a representation of the growth of learners on	ordinated
	a developmental continuum as they work towards the targets. On the	- To support

other hand, it gives a clear direction for schools to understand students' strengths and weaknesses and review the school language curriculum to align learning, teaching and assessment throughout the secondary education.

Second, to ensure a broad and balanced coverage of the curriculum objectives, essential elements such as knowledge, generic skills, values and attitudes and cross-curricular initiatives were embedded into the curriculum to facilitate students' whole-person development and enrich their learning experiences inside and outside class time.

students' learning progression from one key stage to the other

Vertical plann				
Reading skill: Knowing the meaning of unfamiliar words				
Intermediate	Advanced	Proficient		
Work out the meaning of words and phrases by using semantic and syntactic clues	 Work out the meaning of some idiomatic expressions (e.g. phrasal verbs and idioms) by using semantic and syntactic clues Work out the literal and implied meaning of words and expressions by using semantic and syntactic clues 	Work out the meaning of figurative language (e.g. metaphors) by using semantic and syntactic clues		

Figure 1. Vertical continuity of reading skills from junior to senior levels

In addition, different MREs (e.g. LaC/RaC, values education, national security education, life-wide learning and self-directed learning) were integrated into the modular/unit design to enrich students' learning experiences, develop their learning to learn skills and set a solid foundation for lifelong learning (see Figure 2).

reandary	ontal i	olanning s	cheme of Work	Cross Curri	cular Collabo	oration (Eng	lish & Scienc
	zontai į	Jianining	Skills				
Cycles	Theme	Reading, Vocabulary & Read	er Writing	Listening & Integrated Skills	Speaking (refer to Oral SOW)	Assessm	Generic Skills
Cycles 3-6 144/9 – 1/10) (16 essons)	Module 1: School & Me	*5 lessons will be spent. Same Sex? Opposite Sex? (A Blog, SBM) SDL Malala Yousafzai Biography (article, SBM) Extended materials: 1. Why do they Quarr (Pictures with Dialogu SBM) Reading skills: skimming, scanning, referencing, creating timeline of events & understanding a process Vocabulary building: SDL School(VB U19)	Grammar -Simple Present Tense	*3. lessons will be spent. I love school (LB UI) (short tasks) The Reading stematically neme of Wo	Teacher's self-introduction Passions People Expressing.	*3_lesso will be spent. Dictations/ Short tests	Critical thinking Study skills

Figure 2. Infusing cross-curricular elements into module planning

2) Implementing online RaC periods

Levels	Work done	Rationales
S1 and	Due to the pandemic, to facilitate students' learning of the	- To arouse
S2	knowledge and concepts in different non-language subjects	students'
	through reading, a structured online RaC period programme was	interest in
	designed to equip students with the core and essential reading skills	studying non-
	to study non-fiction texts in a step-by-step manner (see Figure 3).	fiction texts
400	A gradual three-step approach was adopted when the reading	- To equip
	strategies were introduced to students:	students with
		the essential
	First, students were taught basic reading skills such as previewing	reading skills
	and making predictions, which were then built upon with	in studying
	intermediate- to advanced-level reading strategies (identifying	non-fiction
1	main ideas, inferencing and summarising). This approach provided	materials of
	students with a systematic and progressive understanding of the	different non-
	reading skills to be covered in KS3 and enabled them to study in a	language
	systematic manner.	subjects
		- To develop
	Second, subject-specific reading materials were included in an	students'
	RaC booklet to illustrate reading strategies and broaden students'	critical
	knowledge of various subjects. Short and simple non-fiction texts	thinking,
	from different subjects were introduced together with the core	problem
	reading strategies at the beginning to engage students and maintain	solving,
	their interest in learning. Longer and more complex texts were	independent
Accessed	presented at a later stage to help students apply some higher-order	learning and
7	reading strategies such as summarising, evaluating and drawing	communication
	conclusions and develop their critical thinking and problem	skills
	solving skills.	SKIIIS
A The	Online English RaC programme	
	+ + C ← the recognism conjugation conditions (the recognism conditions) + C ← C ← C ← C ← C ← C ← C ← C ← C ← C	
Fire	Marry beginning	
	Teaching the	
	essential reading	
	strategies for	
	studying non-fiction studying honor-fiction	
140	Assessment of the state of the	
	texts	
	● ① ② ○ The investment of the control of the contr	
	Figure 3. Teaching reading skills explicitly to students through	
	non-fiction texts	

Third, the task design incorporated elements of self-directed learning and inductive reasoning. To foster independent learning skills, students were required to complete flipped learning activities at home during the pre-task stage to familiarise themselves with the necessary reading skills. Teachers then introduced the lesson's learning objectives and focuses to enable students to set their learning goals. Follow-up exercises and activities were designed to help students track their progress. This approach enabled students to monitor their learning progress and internalise the reading skills they had acquired. To make learning more interactive and meaningful, an inductive approach was adopted to help students deduce the rules of applying different reading strategies. For instance, when reading skills related to unknown words were taught, students were given sentences containing unfamiliar words and asked to infer their meanings using clues such as antonyms, synonyms, and homonyms within the sentences. Afterwards, students worked out the strategies they used and shared with their classmates. To further challenge them, teachers asked them to collaborate in groups to create sentences containing unknown words and share them via Google Docs. Students from other groups were then required to figure out the meanings of the unknown words and share their strategies with the class. This activity helped students apply and internalise the skills they had learnt, as well as develop their critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills.

3) Implementation of cross-curricular projects

Levels	Work done	Rationales
S1-4	The English Department took the lead in collaborating with	- To provide a
	different non-language subject departments to develop various	platform for
	cross-curricular projects that enabled students to acquire subject-	students to use
	specific knowledge, concepts, and skills through English while	reading as a
	enhancing their language competencies in the four skills. To	thinking tool
	facilitate cross-subject collaboration, the English subject took the	to learn other
1 / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / / /	initiative to identify students' learning needs and difficulties when	subjects
	they studied non-language subjects by seeking advice from the	- To broaden
	panel heads of different subjects and referring to the curricula and	students'
	HKDSE papers of different subjects. English and non-language	horizons and
	subject teachers then worked together to identify feasible entry	deepen their
1 1/4 6	points, such as subject-specific vocabulary, language patterns	understanding
AFR	and structures, reading skills, text structures, and themes in	of the
	English Language that can be mapped to relevant modules of	knowledge
	different non-language subjects.	and concepts
		across

Purposeful and interactive tasks and activities (e.g. matching, classification and case studies) were designed to stimulate students' interest in the topic and enable them to apply language in subject-specific contexts in a meaningful way (see Figure 4). Different levels of questions were set to assess students' comprehension of the knowledge and concepts in different subject contexts, and to develop their critical thinking and problem solving skills.

Application of reading skills in different subjects

| Compared to the compare

Figure 4. Using interactive and motivating activities to help students apply the reading skills

To prepare students for a smoother transition to senior levels, some subjects, such as Biology, integrated language learning into the S4 module titled "Transport of Respiratory Gases". This provided students with meaningful subject-specific contexts to apply the vocabulary, text structures and reading skills they had learnt, and to develop their language competencies. Pair work was used to help students communicate ideas and collaborate with their peers. To further challenge students, HKDSE type of questions were embedded into the project design to develop students' summarising, critical thinking and problem solving skills.

different
KLAs through
utilising
various
language skills
such as
reading,
speaking and
writing

4) Cross-curricular collaboration through diversified learning activities outside class time

1) 01000	if cross currection conditions through diversified fearining detrytices outside class thr				
Levels	Work done	Rationales			
S1-6	To develop students' full potential and enrich their learning	- To provide			
	experiences, the school utilised the opportunity created by the	authentic and			
	optimisation of the four senior secondary subjects to allocate	real-life			
140	more lesson time and provide diversified options that catered to	experiences			
	students' different interests, abilities and aspirations. The English	for students to			
	subject established cross-curricular links with other KLAs by	apply English			
	organising various interesting and meaningful activities to	- To make good			
	maximise students' language exposure and enhance their literacy	use of the			
	development.	released time			
		from the			

For example, the English subject collaborated with the Religious Studies Department to organise All Saints Day and Mother's Day activities during class and activity periods (see Figure 5). Students participated in English activities to learn about the history and traditions of these events and honour the holy saints and their mothers. This not only helped students apply English in meaningful learning experiences, but also promoted positive values and attitudes.

optimisation to increase students' language exposure and enrich their learning experiences



Figure 5. Students participating in meaningful learning activities

To nurture a culture of reading to learn, the school utilised learning time to create a self-reflection period aimed at cultivating an independent reading culture on campus. Students were encouraged to study non-fiction reading materials from different KLAs. Motivating and interactive activities such as book sharing and reflection were conducted to arouse students' interest in reading and broaden their learning experiences.

Impact

Teacher level

1. Increased awareness of teaching reading through a systematic and strategic approach at the junior secondary level

In the past, teachers believed that students' low motivation and weak performance in reading were primarily due to a lack of vocabulary. However, throughout the collaboration journey, teachers came to understand that, in addition to vocabulary building, it is essential to establish a strong language foundation at the junior secondary level by equipping students with core essential reading skills.

With a focus on holistic curriculum planning and the implementation of the online RaC period, teachers became more aware of the importance of making reading progressively more challenging in every module/unit and systematically recycling reading skills. Furthermore, teachers used thoughtful scaffolding when explicitly teaching reading skills through a structured and systematic programme. As a result, students gained a clearer understanding of the reading

skills they needed to learn at the junior secondary level and practical strategies for developing their reading competence.

2. Moving away from textbook-bound teaching to student-centred learning

Igniting students' curiosity and engagement in learning is one of the key concerns of the school. In the RaC period and cross-curricular projects, teachers adopted an inductive approach to arouse students' interest to explore and discover the knowledge, concepts and skills learnt in the given topics. At the pre-task stage, teachers designed flipped learning activities to motivate students to learn about the topic or reading skills they need to study in the upcoming task-based activities. This approach would allow students to take ownership of their learning and learn at their own pace. In the while-task stage, teachers designed different scenarios in which students needed to work collaboratively to deduce the rules for tackling specific types of reading questions. This helped students develop critical thinking and think beyond the surface level to explore the underlying principles and concepts. At the post-task stage, teachers designed follow-up tasks which challenged students to transfer their knowledge and skills to a different context. This step encouraged students to apply what they had learnt in a new and unfamiliar setting, promoting a deeper understanding of the concept (e.g. definition, examples and causes & effect) and the development of transferrable skills.

For instance, in the cross-curricular projects between Biology, Life and Society and Integrated Science, teachers presented authentic case studies to students and challenged them to apply their knowledge, concepts and skills to investigate and solve the problems in these case studies. This approach provided an authentic situation for students to apply what they have learnt in real-life context, encouraging them to think more deeply about the topic and develop their generic skills such as critical thinking, problem solving and decision making, which are essential for success in both academic and professional settings.

3. Fostering a sharing and collaborative culture across departments

In the past, non-language subject teachers often struggled with finding ways to increase their students' language exposure and proficiency within their own subject areas. However, through cross-curricular collaboration, English and non-language subject teachers started to work closely to expand students' knowledge and skills, while also increasing their language exposure through a combination of in-class and out-of-classroom activities.

By working collaboratively, teachers of different subjects contributed diverse viewpoints and specialised knowledge, creating a more diverse and engaging learning experience for students. Through this approach, students were able to develop their language skills and gain a deeper understanding of the content they were studying. Moreover, such collaborative culture helped build and sustain a positive learning environment where teachers of all subjects worked together towards a common goal of increasing students' motivation to learn and use English, while also building an English-rich environment in the school.

Student level

1. Gaining a wider repertoire of strategies in reading non-fiction texts

The RaC period adopted a systematic and structured approach to reading that focuses on teaching students a range of essential reading strategies such as identifying main ideas and supporting details, deducing unknown words, making inferences, summarising and drawing conclusion which helped them read critically and analytically in a strategic manner. The LaC projects, on the other hand, provided an authentic context for students to apply the reading strategies they have learnt in subject-specific contexts. By engaging in the cross-curricular projects, students were able to see how reading skills can be applied in real-world situations and gain a better understanding of how their learning can be used in practical ways. This not only makes reading more meaningful to students, but also helps arouse and sustain their interest in reading.

2. Understanding how language, content and thinking are connected in learning

Through cross-curricular projects, students had the opportunity to delve into the intricate connections between language, content and thinking. Students were first exposed to a diverse range of non-fiction texts related to various subject areas. These compelling texts helped not only expand their knowledge and broaden their horizons but also develop a deeper understanding of how language is intricately intertwined with the content they encounter. Teachers then designed authentic and motivating tasks that encourage students to dive deeper into the text and apply the knowledge, concepts, and skills in real-life situations. These tasks challenge students to extract meaning, identify main ideas and make connections between the content and the world around them. By actively applying their acquired knowledge, concepts, and skills to real-life contexts, students developed a more profound grasp of the subject matter and cultivated essential critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making abilities.

3. Expanding students' horizons: using inside- and outside-the-classroom activities to enrich students' learning experiences

The provision of released time allowed students to engage in a diverse range of cross-curricular activities that spanned different KLAs, both inside and outside of classroom time. These activities were designed to offer practical and meaningful experiences that went beyond the traditional classroom setting, providing students with opportunities to learn and apply their skills in real-world contexts.

Through their participation in these activities, students were able to broaden their horizons and develop new perspectives on various topics (e.g. arts and culture, life and career). They were able to engage with content in a way that was both interactive and immersive, allowing them to fully experience the subject matter. In doing so, they were able to deepen their understanding of key concepts while also honing their critical thinking and problem solving skills. Through these activities, students were able to improve their language proficiency and confidence in using English both inside and outside the school.

Conclusion

Facilitating factors

- 1. Strong support from the principal and management team through allocating human resources to support cross-curricular projects and placing LaC/RaC as a top priority in the school development plan
- 2. Early, systematic, and strategic planning to enhance cross-subject collaboration and better transition across key stages
- 3. Opportunities created from optimisation were maximised to provide cross-curricular activities inside and outside class time through better timetabling to increase students' language exposure and enhance their language and literacy development

Way forward

To sustain the positive impact of the cross-curricular projects conducted, the school will review the existing strategies and extend them to different levels. The school also plans to compile a "sharing kit" that includes curriculum design and lesson plans to facilitate the sharing of experiences in promoting LaC/RaC among teachers across the spectrum of experience.

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Pui Tak Canossian College Shirley LEUNG (Language Support Officer)