

School Talk

Reading and writing: diversified inputs for language learners at school

Reading and writing are two of the major academic focus areas in primary schools. Reading is essential in learning English because it provides a strong foundation for all other areas of English learning. Fluent readers are more likely to develop skills to advance their writing. In this issue, we are pleased to have the Principal and English teachers of C & W District St. Anthony's School (CWSA) share their valuable views on how to enhance their students' reading and writing skills.



School Profile

C & W District St. Anthony's School aims to increase students' interest and active participation in learning English by providing a positive and stimulating learning environment for students. Students are now using *Lighthouse for Hong Kong* textbooks and e-books in their English lessons.



We cultivate reading habits in our students by giving them a rich language learning environment and the application of appropriate learning and teaching approaches.

— Mr Kwok Tat Wah, Principal of CWSA



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“School Talk”

Interview School: C & W District St. Anthony's School
Interviewees: Mr Kwok Tat Wah (Principal), Mrs Lau Tang Miu Kuen, Erminia (Curriculum Development Coordinator), Ms Lee Ka Man (English Panel Chairperson), Miss Wong Mo Yee (English Vice-panel Chairperson)
Special thanks to C & W District St. Anthony's School for the interview



Mrs Lau Tang Miu Kuen,
Erminia
Curriculum Development Coordinator

Miss Wong Mo Yee
English Vice-panel Chairperson

Ms Lee Ka Man
English Panel Chairperson

Mr Kwok Tat Wah
Principal

Miss Beatrice Desseigne
NET

“Cultivate students' reading habits

Mrs Lau: We work together with our school librarian to improve the reading skills of our students. First, English teachers teach students some reading strategies, then our school librarians follow up during the weekly reading lessons in the library. We also provide worksheets for students to review the skills they have learnt.

In addition, we provide opportunities for students to recommend readers in English to the whole school during morning assembly regularly. Also, a reading rack with different types of readers is placed in each classroom. Students can choose to read whatever they wish between lessons or when they have completed their assignments during lessons.

Ms Lee: The English room here is specially decorated for reading purpose. We classify students into different coloured tables according to their reading levels. Students with similar reading levels are grouped together. In this way, teachers can easily focus on the needs of students with different reading levels and apply appropriate reading strategies flexibly so that every student's reading ability can be maximised. For higher reading level groups, additional readers will be assigned to them.



“Generate more inputs for students

Miss Wong: We have a home-reading programme and each student possesses a home-reading bag. For example, after teaching a big book and having guided reading sessions, we will provide readers of related topics to students to take back home and read, so as to consolidate what they have learnt at school.



Ms Lee: In order to generate more inputs for students and help them enjoy learning English, fun learning activities are arranged in class. For instance, one of our big books is about making robots, so we will prepare relevant materials and let our students make a real robot in class. Another learning topic is about baking cakes, so we will really arrange a cake baking activity and share the food in class! We believe that these kinds of interesting experiences can give students a deeper impression and a better understanding of the topics. The process of participation can help students in their final writing process and enhance their language learning.

Miss Wong: Our teachers like the content and materials provided by *Lighthouse for Hong Kong* coursebook series very much. We found the **content very authentic** and the **reading materials very interesting**. Some of the materials are quite challenging for our students, but they still enjoy reading them because of the interesting content. I remember a unit in Primary 5 textbook is about a child going to a beach in Hawaii, and the text type is a travel blog. After teaching this chapter, I can show students other real travel blogs on the Internet so as to expand their knowledge.

Ms Lee: We also appreciate the section *Light up the world*. It lets our students explore different cultures all around the world. Learning English is not only to know the language itself, but also the culture. Although our students may not have the opportunities to go to all the countries in the world, they can still **broaden** their **global vision**.

“ Inspire students' creativity in writing ”



Ms Lee: To inspire students' creativity in writing, we provide students with more contextualised examples so that they can easily relate the writing topics to their own lives. It can effectively help them brainstorm ideas and inspire them to think in a creative way.

In the process of writing, we always ask students to create endings for the passages. It allows more room for students' creativity. In addition, we encourage students to broaden their vocabulary and to express more with extended pre-writing tasks, in which they can get bonus marks.

Miss Wong: We like the content provided in *Lighthouse Teaching Planners*, especially the suggested **higher-order thinking skills**. Like 'Six Thinking Hats', it can really help students think and understand the articles. I think it is a kind of reading strategy for students to learn with. Once students possess this thinking skill, they can apply it to other topics later.

“ From vocabulary input to reading and writing ”

Ms Lee: The structure of *Lighthouse for Hong Kong* is very good. In each unit, the vocabulary is firstly introduced at the beginning of the reading text. This gives students a quick input on the topics before dealing with lots of words in the main reading text. Besides, we usually use the printed textbook together with the *Lighthouse e-textbooks* to teach the units. The **simplified version of the animations** in the e-textbook is a **good start to teach the topic** as some of our students are quite nervous when facing numerous new words. When students feel relaxed, the subsequent learning process, including the vocabulary input, reading and final writing section can take place in a relaxed mode.

Miss Wong: The **dictionary function** in *Lighthouse e-textbook* is also a **great tool to aid students** to **learn vocabulary**. Every word comes with a picture, pronunciation and example sentence. It is very convenient for us to teach vocabulary to students, especially for those less able ones.



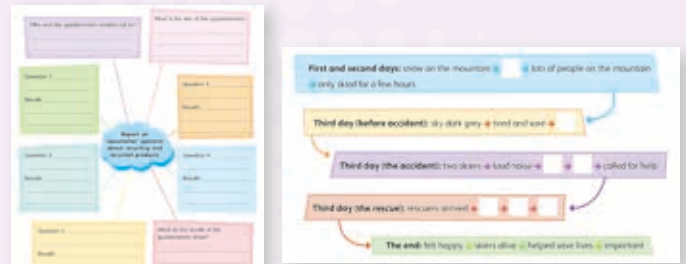
Light Up Reading

- Around 14–20 new words with themed topic in each unit
- Useful reading skills in every unit to help students understand the texts better
- Exposure to a wide variety of text types



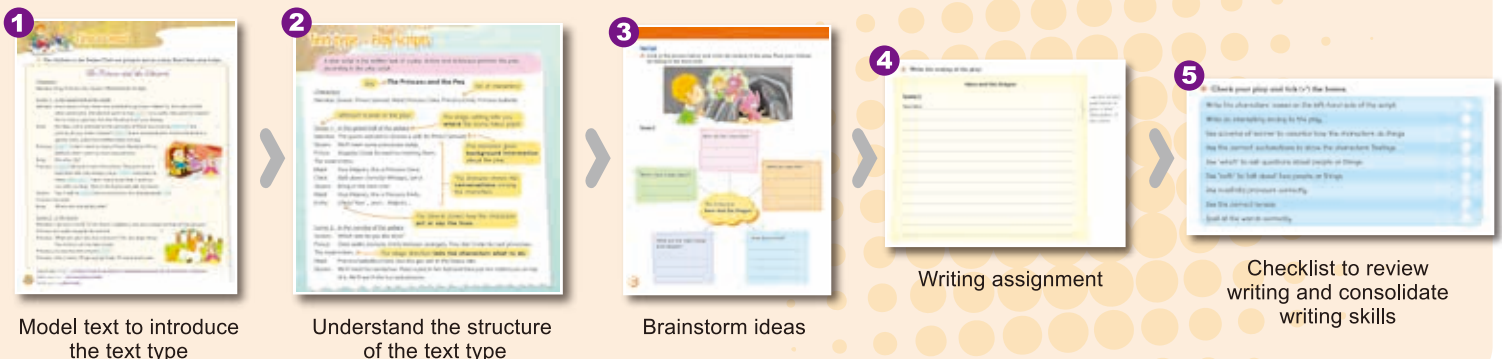
Light Up Writing

- Graphic organisers guide students from gathering information to creative writing in a logical order
- Tips for helping students develop writing skills



Smooth Transitions from Reading to Writing

- Guide students step by step from reading texts to final assignment



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