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**G1-PP-04****Immersion of gifted education elements in the Chinese reading-writing learning classrooms with differentiation and its effectiveness on improving students' performance**

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**ABSTRACT:**

Hong Kong government has laid down a 3-tier implementation framework of gifted education (Education Department, 2000). The Level 1 gifted education provision advocates the infusion of three core elements of gifted education, namely, high-order thinking skills, creativity, and personal-social competence, into regular classroom learning, and enriching the school curriculum, with reference to the characteristics of all students. Po Leung Kuk Grandmont Primary School has implemented the level 1 gifted education provision since 2014. With the support from the **Jockey Club "Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents" Project** (Project GIFT) which is funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, this study examined how the immersion of elements of gifted education in an integrated reading-writing Chinese language unit enhances students' high-order thinking ability, creativity, and collaborative skills, and how such practice cultivates students' moral values and improves their reading and writing abilities.

Five classes of Grade 3 students, 159 in total, participated in the study. The integrated Chinese reading-writing unit was co-designed by six Chinese Language subject teachers and a gifted education coordinator, with the support by a school development officer of Project GIFT.

In the first lesson, a fable "The Little Bear Who Get Stuck in The Sunroof" was used. Students were divided into groups of four with heterogeneous learning ability. Guided by questions set by teachers, students read the story and analyzed the rhetorical pattern: introduction (起"qǐ"), development (承"chéng"), transition (轉"zhuǎn") and conclusion (合"hé"). They also needed to understand the characters' personality through detailed analysis of the story. A post-lesson assignment as an extension learning, using the story "The Boy Who Cried Wolf", was provided to the students. Tiered with three difficulty levels, the assignment catered for the diverse learning needs of students. Students needed to read the story and completed one of the worksheets with guided questions matched with their ability to strengthen their understanding of the structure of a story, the personality of characters and the moral of the fable.

In the second lesson, teacher infused creativity and affective education into students' learning. With the completed worksheets on the fable, "The boy Who Cried Wolf", students worked in groups to suggest ways that the boy could make fun of during watching a flock of sheep. Then, teachers guided students to learn the moral of the story. Students were asked to think about all possible means to regain the villagers' trust in the end of the story. More stories, including "The ant and the grasshopper", "The lion and the mouse", and "Two friends and the bear", varied in levels of difficulties were provided for students as an extended learning task. Students could choose one or more stories that they were interested in to read and analyze the rhetorical pattern of the story, the personalities of characters, and the moral of the fables.

The third lesson focused on boosting students' creativity and affection (e.g., empathy). Students were asked to discuss what they would do if they were one of the characters and thought about the consequences of the stories. As another extended activity, students were asked to appreciate and make critics of the story "The Young Thief and His Mother", to rewrite unfavorable part and to generate their own story endings. The fourth and fifth lesson were carried out with differentiated strategy to enhance students' writing skills. Applying the "Cinderella" story, students were divided into four groups, with Cinderella in each group assigned a personality according to students' own trait, including "lazy group", "greedy group", "helpful group", and "studious group". Students were asked to rewrite the story and develop a new meaningful ending after group discussion.

In evaluating the learning process and effectiveness of learning, class observation, review of students' writing tasks, questionnaire survey, and post-unit interview were conducted. Findings supported the effectiveness of differentiation with the integration of creativity and affective education on students' writing.

First, such implementation enabled more active participation of students. The interactive and open atmosphere encouraged students to speak out, to share with, and to discuss with each other. The differentiated strategy allowed more initiative and fruitful group discussion, such that enhancing students' collaborative learning, creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. In addition, teachers and students interacted with each other in a timely manner. Therefore, problems emerged could be solved and students' learning needs be addressed immediately. These positive changes were confirmed by students' feedback, as they enjoyed the new learning experience, and by students' improved learning outcomes. Students showed improvement on the comprehension of the roles of characters and the structure of the stories. Their fluency in thinking and writings was also substantially increased. Meanwhile, the differentiated strategy provided multiple options for students, they could choose their learning materials according to their personal interest and ability, achieving a higher level of learning autonomy and learning satisfaction.

This study provided an example of how to enrich and extend the learning activities, and immersion of creativity and affective education into the Chinese reading and writing unit as the whole-class Level 1 gifted education provision. The positive learning process and learning outcomes implied the usefulness of this kind of enriched and differentiated strategy: in addition to improve learning of language, it also help students develop their moral values and creative writing with their own feelings from the heart.

**KEYWORDS:**

Differentiation; Hong Kong, Jockey Club "Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents" Project; reading and writing; language learning; whole-class enrichment



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