

# Immersion of gifted education elements in the Chinese reading-writing learning classrooms

**Authors**  
Hoi Lan LEE, Wing Kin LEE, \*Lai Kwan CHAN, and Xiaoyan SUN  
\*Corresponding author : Dr. Lai Kwan CHAN  
Email : laikwanchan@cuhk.edu.hk  
Address : Ho Tim Building, Faculty of Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, HONG KONG

## Summary

The Jockey Club "Giftedness Into Flourishing Talents" Project (Project GIFT) collaborated with a Hong Kong primary school in infusing gifted education elements into Chinese writing lessons. By adopting differentiation strategies, students' learning needs were being taken care of. The interventions could effectively enhance the performance of students in writing, and their motivation to learn and to write.

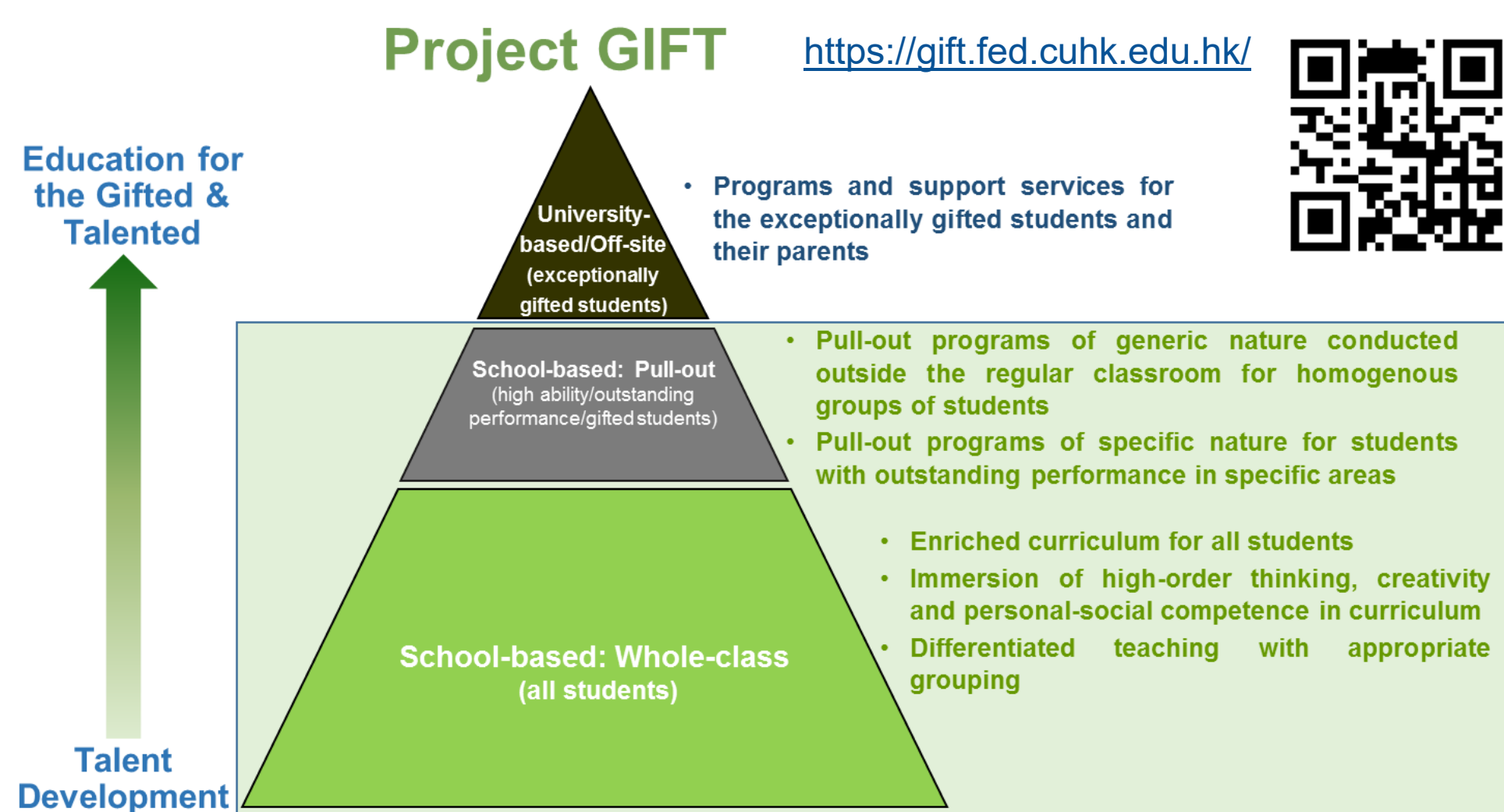
## Background

### Gifted education provision in Hong Kong

- Hong Kong laid out a 3-tier implementation framework for gifted education provision (Education Department, 2000)
- One of the key issues in Level 1 gifted education provision is to infuse three core elements of gifted education into the normal class learning. The three core elements are:
  - High-order thinking skills
  - Creativity
  - Personal-social competence

### Gifted education provision in Po Leung Kuk Grandmont Primary School

- School has implemented the Level 1 gifted education provision since 2014
- Lack of confidence and motivation in writing
- Lack of creativity and affective education for students
- Unsatisfactory performance in Creativity – Fluency Test
- Difficulties in expressing their own feelings in writing tasks
- With the support from the Project GIFT



## The Present Study

### Objectives

- 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
- Examined how such practice cultivates students' moral values and improves their reading and writing abilities



## Method

### Participants

- School: Po Leung Kuk Grandmont Primary School
- Students: 159 Grade 3 students in five different classes
- Subject and course: Chinese Language (Fables and stories reading and writing)
- Unit co-designers: 6 Chinese Language subject teachers and a gifted education coordinator, with the support by a school development officer of Project GIFT

### Procedure

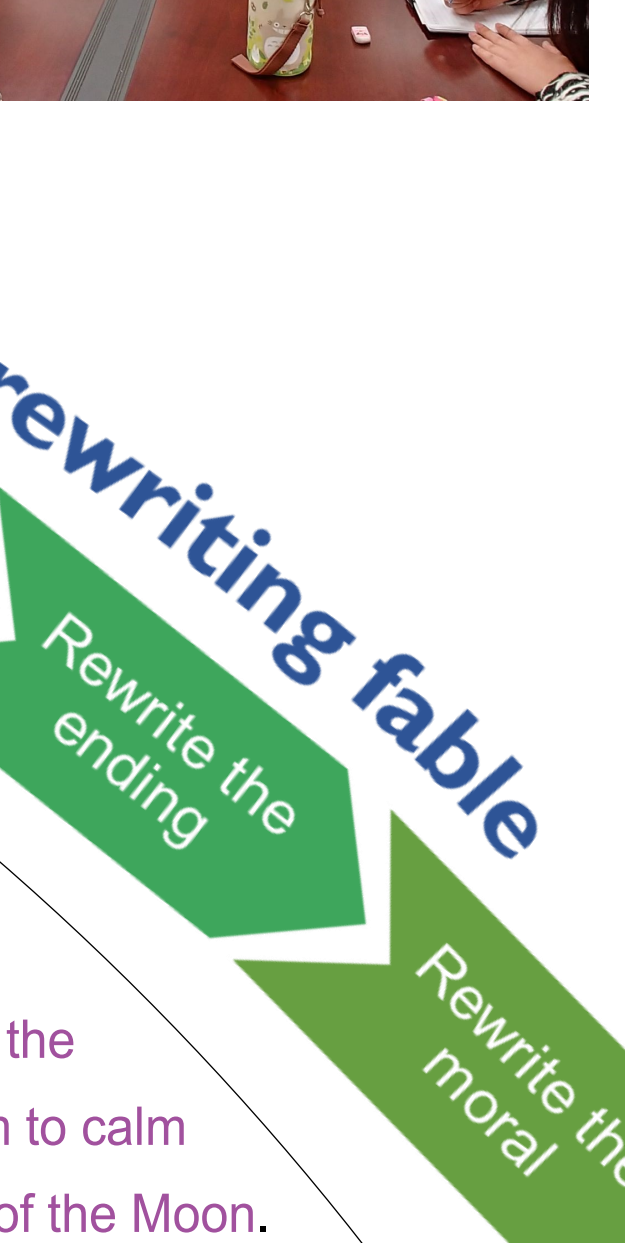
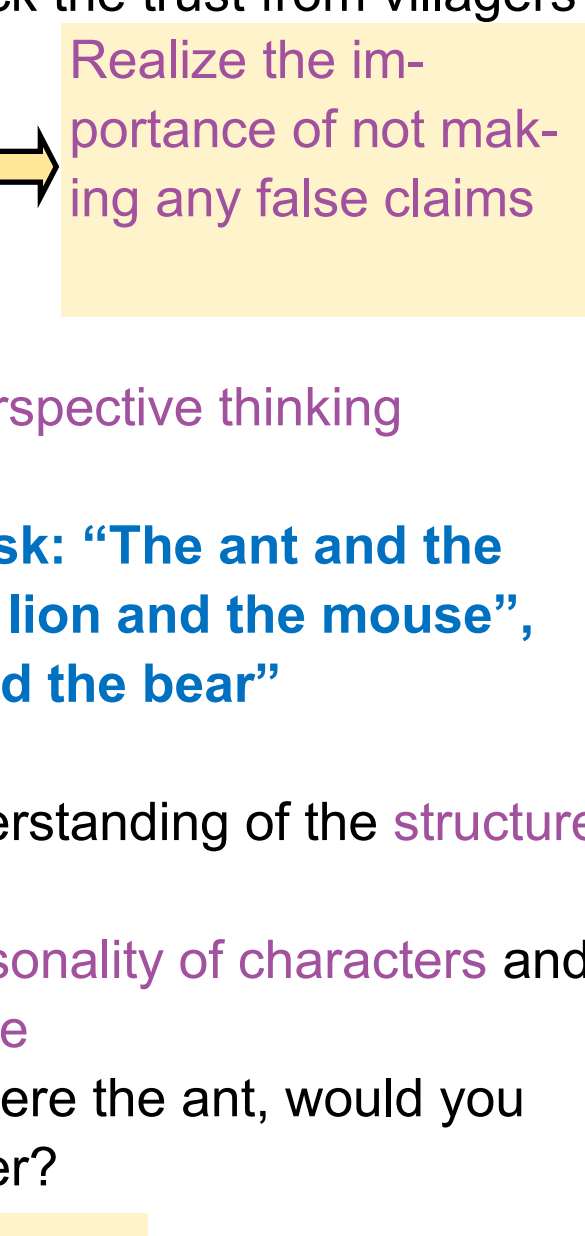
#### First lesson

- During Lesson: "The Little Bear Who Get Stuck in the Sunroof"**
- Learning objectives:**
  - Become familiar with the 4-step writing structure: introduction, development, transition and conclusion
  - Understand the characters' personality
  - Understand the moral of the fable
- Learning strategies:**
  - Group differentiation: students were divided into groups of four with heterogeneous learning ability
  - Guided by questions set by teachers
- Post-lesson assignment: "The boy Who Cried Wolf"**
- Learning objectives:**
  - Strengthen the understanding of the structure of a story
  - Understand the personality of characters and the moral of the fable
- Learning strategies:** Tiersed worksheets catering for the diverse learning needs of students

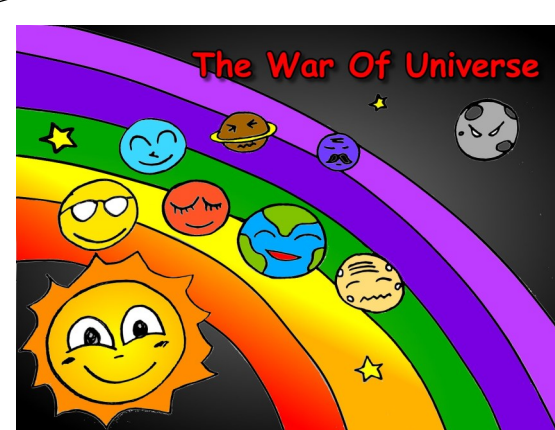


#### Second lesson

- Learning task: "The boy Who Cried Wolf"**
- Learning objectives:**
  - Creativity — If you were the boy, could you think of any ways that you could relieve boredom while looking after the flock of sheep?
  - Affection — The boy repents his mistakes, but how can he gain back the trust from villagers?
- Let students understand that it is not easy to gain back trust from others
- Learning strategies:** Role play — multi-perspective thinking
- Extended learning task: "The ant and the grasshopper", "The lion and the mouse", and "Two friends and the bear"**
- Learning objectives:**
  - Strengthen the understanding of the structure of a story
  - Understand the personality of characters and the moral of the fable
  - Affection — If you were the ant, would you help the grasshopper?
- Some students initially thought the grasshopper deserved to be hungry as the ant had reminded him already
- Teacher guided students to rethink about if they had ever become conscious of their faults and hoped for forgiveness after making mistakes repeatedly
- Students were then able to stand in the shoes of the grasshopper, and were willing to forgive and give help
- Learning strategies:** Reflection — Students could choose one or more stories that they were interested in to read. After reflection, they may change their mindset and become more willing to solve problems from a fresh aspect.



### Student's creative writing



Under the leadership of the justice Sun, the universe had been peaceful for a long time. However, the evil Moon wanted to replace the Sun and become the new universe leader, so he secretly prepared to rebel. The eight planets in the universe vaguely noticed the ambition of the Moon and were all worried that the peace of the universe would be destroyed. One day, the Moon finally started the rebellion and launched an offensive against the Sun. The eight planets got injured when trying to stop the Moon. Just when the eight planets were at a loss, the Sun asked them to calm down and try to think about the weakness of the Moon. Finally, they came up with the weakness of the Moon. The eight planets joined forces to attack the weakness of the Moon. The evil Moon was defeated and the universe returned to peace.

### Example of students' work - Greedy Cinderella

Greedy Cinderella stole lots of jewellery when she attended the ball at the castle. When she was leaving, she saw there were some horse-drawn carriages outside the castle, and she decided to steal one of them. When the other horses saw their friend got abducted, they started making noises and woke the Prince. The Prince found that someone was stealing the carriage, he then rode on a horse to chase her. As Greedy Cinderella lived in a small village, the carriage was too huge to be parked in the alley. The Prince found Cinderella and the carriage easily, and she was jailed in prison. It is now too late for greedy Cinderella to feel regret of what she did.

### Student's creative writing

The planet Naomi relied on the planet Pandora for water supply. All citizens including the mayor of the planet Naomi were used to waste much water, because the planet Pandora supplied water to them stably all the time. One day, the water pipe was hit and damaged by a meteorite, so the planet Naomi could not get water from the planet Pandora anymore. The mayor of the planet Naomi sent people to repair the water pipe in order to solve the problem. Unexpectedly, a water monster went out from the fracture of the water pipe. To punish the Naomi citizens who had wasted tons of water, the monster stopped them from repairing the water pipe and used magic to make all remaining water inside the water pipe vanish. As a result, Naomi citizens no longer have enough water to wash vegetables, and they have to bathe with dirty water.



### Student's creative writing

A bunch of stationaries live in a stationary bag. They all live happily and harmoniously in the bag except the colour pencil. Colour pencil is conceited and arrogant, and always look down on others. One day, these stationaries went to school with their master and did their duty well as usual. The ruler and pencil helped in the Mathematics lesson, and the pencil and eraser helped during dictation. The Art lesson finally came. The arrogant colour pencil couldn't wait to show off its talent. Unfortunately, it hit and hurt its head. The pencil sharpener rushed to treat its wound so it could continue its duty. The colour pencil then learnt that one should always help each other, as everyone has his own strength.



One should never be arrogant and look down on others. After that, the colour pencil changes its attitude and lives happily with other stationaries.

### "The Young Thief and His Mother"

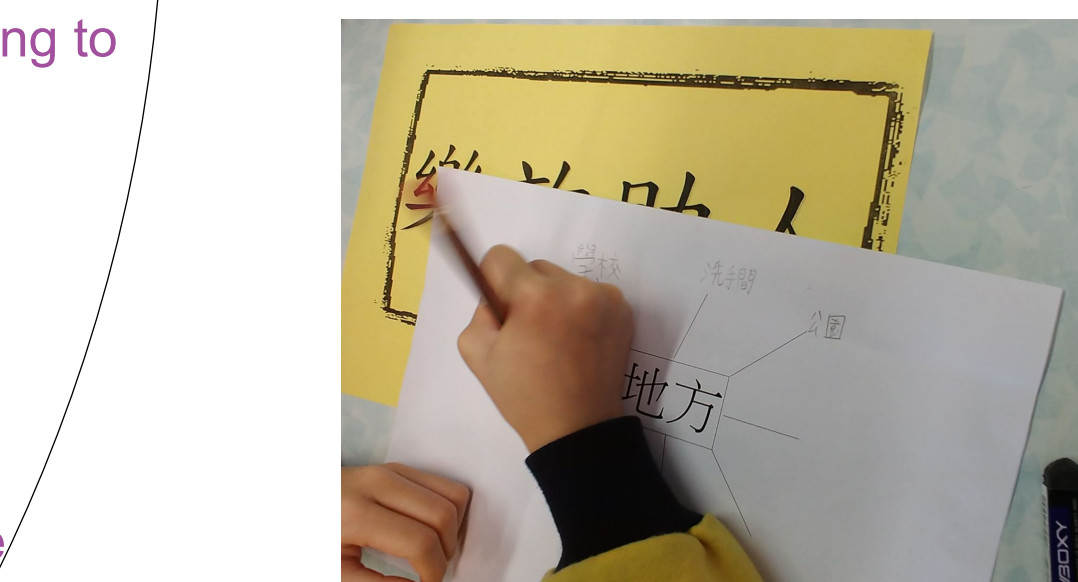
A young man was caught stealing, and sentenced to death three days later. He wanted to speak with his mother before the execution. Of course this was granted. When his mother came to him, he said, "I want to tell you something. He said something but she could not hear. He whispered again, and when she came close to him, she put her ear to his mouth. He nearly bit off her ear. All the bystanders were horrified. "It is to punish her," he said. "When I was young I began stealing small things, and brought them home to mother. Instead of punishing me, she laughed and said, 'It will not be noticed.' It is because of her that I am here today."

### Example of students' work

One day, a boy stole a chicken from the neighbour's henhouse. His mother said angrily "We should never steal no matter how poor we are. You have to return the chicken to them now!" The boy returned the chicken to his neighbour and said "Sorry." The neighbour accepted his apology and forgave him. A few days later, the neighbour said, "I cooked some chicken, come and eat with us!" The boy and his mother felt happy and learnt that good things happen if you are willing to learn from your mistakes.

### Example of students' work

The young thief is going to be executed. Permitted by the guards, his mother brings him some food as the last meal. She whispers, "I should have punished you when you first stole a chicken, then you won't end up like this." The son finishes his food and said, "Mum, I regret now. Please take good care of yourself..."



## Analysis

## + Affection

## + Critical Thinking

## + Creativity

## Results

### Through class observation

- Teachers' roles had changed
  - Teacher-centred → Student-centred
  - Teacher as the leader → Teacher as the scaffolder
- Ways of teaching & learning were different from before
  - Direct teaching → Interacted teaching
  - Teacher comment → Group discussion and students' interaction
- More engaged learning process and better learning outcomes

### Review of students' writing tasks

- Gifted education elements + Skill of using the 4-step writing structure
- Write up a story which has ups and downs

- Students' creativity skill were enhanced. Some students could add in a variety of characters or unexpected plots in the "transition" part, creating a climax and tense atmosphere for the story.
- Some students could give foreshadowing of upcoming events. When students created their own fables, the structures of their writings were more well-planned and not as disorganized as before.

### Questionnaire survey

No. of students : 159	Po Leung Kuk Grandmont Primary School					Mean (SD)
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
1. I like group discussion.	10 (6.3)	43 (27.0)	61 (38.4)	44 (27.7)		2.9 (.89)
2. I like the practice of adding videos or other reading materials for us.	1 (0.6)	8 (5.0)	32 (20.1)	117 (73.6)		3.7 (.60)
3. I like creative activity.	5 (3.1)	31 (19.5)	58 (36.5)	62 (39.0)		3.1 (.84)
4. I enjoy the challenging assignments.	16 (10.1)	37 (23.3)	43 (27.0)	59 (37.1)		2.9 (1.0)
5. I like the presence of choices in learning tasks.	8 (5.0)	24 (15.1)	42 (26.4)	85 (53.5)		3.3 (.30)
6. I am now more willing to express my opinions.	15 (9.4)	46 (28.9)	50 (31.4)	48 (30.2)		2.8 (.97)
7. I am now more confident in writing.	10 (6.3)	31 (19.5)	49 (30.8)	68 (42.8)		3.1 (.94)

### Post-unit interview



**3B Ka Wai YUNG**  
"This year, I think I have become more confident in writing, and I have been more engaged in lesson."



**3C Tsz Yu SO**  
"I think that Chinese language lesson is very interesting. I can read many Fables, and write my own story."



**3D Yi Nga SO**  
"I like the Chinese language lesson this year, because there is a variety of activities."



**3E Cheuk Him LI**  
"This year, I think that both my writing skill and creativity have been greatly improved."

### Teachers' reflection

- Interesting fables were introduced as examples to arouse students' learning interest. They then actively sought to read more fable stories. Students with lower ability started to have interest in writing, some of them were even willing to create new fables. Their improvement were really inspiring.

"Before joining this project, to me, teaching was just about catching up curriculum and dealing with examinations. We centred on teaching knowledge and achieving lots of teaching objectives. With such a tight and intense lesson schedule, sometimes we missed the chances for moral education during lessons. This project reminds me that as a teacher, I should never overlook the moral education for students while delivering knowledge to students."

### Third lesson

- During Lesson: "The Young Thief and His Mother"**
- Learning objectives:**
  - Creativity
  - Affection
- Learning strategies:**
  - Group discussion
  - Critical thinking — Rewrite unfavourable part and to generate their own story endings.



### Fourth and Fifth lesson

- During Lesson: "Cinderella"**
- Learning objectives:**
  - Creativity (Fluency) — List out all the things Cinderella saw in the castle (useful for later task of story writing)
  - Affection
  - Story writing — try to write according to the 4-step writing structure
- Learning strategies:** Differentiated strategy — grouping 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.



## Discussion

- Provided an example of how to enrich and extend the learning activities, and immersion of creativity and affective education into a 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.
- It also helped students develop their moral values and creative writing with their own feelings from heart.

## Reference

- Education Department (2000). *The development of gifted education in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government.