
Teaching for English literacy mastery framework

Foreword

Bismillah Hir Rahman Nir Rahim.

Assalamu 'Alaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh.

The Government of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah ibni Almarhum Sultan Haji Omar 'Ali Saifuddien, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam has been and is continuously supporting human capacity building. This is to further enhance the capacity of citizens and produce high quality human resource as aspired by the Wawasan Brunei 2035. We want our children to be highly numerate and literate, as the foundation to become well-educated and highly skilled Bruneians.

Alhamdulillah, the Ministry of Education through the Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme (LNCP) is able to publish the Teaching for Mastery (TfM) Framework as a guideline to enhance the quality of teaching and learning English literacy and Mathematics in our classrooms. It is a practical guide designed for use by all in the Bruneian Education system.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to the LNCP team and those involved in developing this framework. I now look forward to its implementation and impact in our classrooms.

Yang Berhormat

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Contents

Introduction	2
The purpose of the <i>Teaching for English literacy mastery framework</i>	
The Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme	
Teaching for <i>English literacy</i> mastery in Brunei	
Summary of expectations for teaching for <i>English literacy</i> mastery in Brunei	6
1. Structuring and organising lessons effectively	9
2. Teaching content dialogically	15
3. Designing effective learning tasks	26
4. Assessing learning continuously	36
References	53

Note:

Teaching for mastery frameworks have been produced for both English literacy and mathematics. Many of the expectations for teaching for English literacy and mathematics and much of the accompanying guidance and exemplification are relevant to both subjects. However, some of the expectations, guidance and exemplification are subject specific.

Throughout this *Teaching for mastery framework*, expectations, guidance and exemplification that are specific to English literacy are shown in coloured text.

Introduction

The purpose of the *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework*

Effective teaching of English literacy enables students to achieve high learning outcomes; it leads to continuous improvement in student attainment.

The purpose of the *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* is to clarify the expectations for effective teaching of English literacy in Brunei in relation to the pedagogical themes of:

- structuring and organising lessons;
- teaching content dialogically;
- designing effective learning tasks;
- assessing learning continuously.

In addition to providing clear pedagogic expectations for teaching English literacy, the *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* provides guidance on putting them into practice and examples of what effective practice may look like.

These four aspects of pedagogy are the means through which teachers should teach and students learn the content described in the English curriculum. The main focus of lessons should be on securing good learning of English, so teachers should teach students to speak, listen, read and write in English through meeting these expectations and following the guidance in this document.

The *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* sets out clearly the overall expectations for English teaching in Brunei schools. All English lessons should be lively, engaging and involve a carefully balanced blend of approaches that direct students' learning and enable them to make good progress.

The *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* is in two parts:

1. A summary of expectations for teaching for English literacy mastery in Brunei (pages 6–7);
2. More detailed guidance and exemplification of these expectations (pages 8–34).

All English teachers should use the *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* to ensure that they are meeting the expectations and embedding high quality English literacy teaching in their planning and classroom practice.

All School Leaders and cluster teams should use the *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* to ensure that they understand what is effective teaching of English literacy so that they are able to support and challenge their English teachers.

All International and Local Coaches should use the *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* to guide their work with individual Learning Partners and other English teachers across a department and a school.

Ministry of Education officials should use the *Teaching for English literacy mastery framework* as a key point of reference when developing and implementing policy, providing training and reviewing the quality of English teaching and learning.

The Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme

The overall objective of the Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme is to raise standards in English literacy and numeracy across all schools in Brunei. The goals are that:

- all students are highly numerate and literate in English;
- there is high quality English and mathematics teaching;
- the system is empowered to deliver sustained improvements in literacy and numeracy.

The Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme is a professional partnership between International Coaches, Local Coaches and local teachers. It promotes improvement in teachers' pedagogical practice through a process of collaborative goal setting, observation, feedback, professional enquiry and reflection. It is a new and innovative approach to professional development in Brunei that aims to transform the teaching of English literacy and mathematics across all schools.

The Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme has three phases. In phase 1 the pedagogic focus is on dialogic teaching and learning. Phase 2 focuses on task design and phase 3 focuses on assessing learning. In addition there is on-going support on structuring and organising lessons.

In addition to developing teachers' pedagogical knowledge, the programme develops teachers' content knowledge and their pedagogical content knowledge. The programme recognises that the key to raising standards is to ensure that teachers employ pedagogical best practices effectively when teaching specific English literacy and mathematics content.



Education Development Trust (known in Brunei as CfBT) and the Ministry of Education have developed the Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme collaboratively. It supports implementation of SPN21 and the Brunei Literacy and Numeracy Standards.

Teaching for **English literacy** mastery in Brunei

One of the goals of the *Literacy and Numeracy Coaching Programme* is that all students in Brunei are highly numerate and literate.

By being literate, we mean that students have mastery of English literacy. They:

- speak, listen, read and write with confidence, fluency and understanding;
- develop and use their oral language skills in a variety of contexts;
- are interested in books, read with enjoyment and evaluate and justify their preferences;
- understand and are able to use a range of non-fiction texts;
- can orchestrate a full range of reading cues (phonic, graphic, syntactic, contextual) to monitor and self-correct their own reading;
- plan draft revise and edit their own writing;
- have an interest in words and word meanings, and a growing vocabulary;
- understand the sound and spelling system and use this to read and spell accurately;
- have fluent and legible handwriting;
- use their literacy skills to learn effectively and make good progress.

Teaching for English literacy mastery is based on the belief that all students can learn to speak, listen, read and write in English, and that teachers will encourage all students to believe that they can succeed.

Summary of expectations for teaching for English literacy mastery in Brunei

Teachers should:

1. Structure and organise lessons effectively

- 1.1 Plan lessons as part of a coherent and structured sequence of learning that builds in progression as well as opportunities for consolidation.
- 1.2 Plan individual lessons thoroughly. Planning identifies the aspects of **literacy skills and knowledge** that are to be taught with clear learning objectives, the key ideas of the lesson, **key vocabulary and points of grammatical understanding and terminology**.
- 1.3 Plan structured lessons, which have a brisk starter, an episodic main activity and a final plenary. These phases within a lesson should support the overall learning objectives.

2. Teach content dialogically

- 2.1 Use a high proportion of whole class interactive teaching, where the focus is on all students working together on the same lesson content at the same time.
- 2.2 Use questions and statements to challenge students to think about the content, skills, processes and concepts they are learning: encourage students to explain, exemplify, compare, conjecture and generalise.
- 2.3 Target questions to students effectively using a range of strategies.
- 2.4 Use a range of types of question, not just testing questions: use focusing questions to help scaffold learning, but use predominantly genuine enquiry questions to encourage students to think and discuss their ideas and to assess what they understand and are thinking.
- 2.5 Acknowledge and incorporate students' answers and ideas, using a range of strategies to probe their thinking and facilitate student discussion.
- 2.6 Provide opportunities for students to discuss their ideas in pairs or small groups during whole class work.

- 2.7 Introduce and use correct terminology alongside the skills, processes and concepts being learned and develop students' vocabulary in a coherent and consistent sequence by providing students with many opportunities to encounter and discuss the meanings of words and phrases in different contexts.

3. Design effective learning tasks

- 3.1 Design tasks that give specific attention to the development of students' speaking and listening skills, widening the range of purposes and contexts as students' skills develop.
- 3.2 Give systematic attention to word and sentence level aspects of reading and writing within whole text activities which are both meaningful and explained clearly to students.
- 3.3 Ensure that tasks are appropriately challenging and do not oversimplify the skills, processes and concepts that are being learned.
- 3.4 Balance modelling and demonstrating 'how to' with opportunities for students to practice and apply what they are learning through shared and guided reading and writing.
- 3.5 Use textbooks and other resources thoughtfully, adapting them as appropriate according to the skills, processes and concepts being learned and the prior learning of students.
- 3.6 Design collaborative tasks that require students to explore, discuss and explain ideas in small groups and pairs as well as a whole class.

4. Assess learning continuously

- 4.1 Share learning objectives with students near the beginning of lessons and help students to know what they are aiming for.
- 4.2 Assess students during lessons through effective questioning, listening and observing.
- 4.3 Expose, discuss and address common mistakes and misconceptions.
- 4.4 Identify quickly if a student fails to master a key skill, understand a

concept or procedure and intervene early and effectively.

- 4.5 Use the final plenary as an opportunity to refer back to the learning objectives and assess the progress that students have made towards achieving them.
- 4.6 Assess students' written work for understanding, rather than just answers, identifying possible reasons behind any errors.
- 4.7 Provide oral and written feedback to students that helps them to know what they need to learn next and what they need to do to get there.
- 4.8 Encourage and support students to assess and review their own work and the work of their peers.
- 4.9 Identify and respond to the different needs and prior learning of students through effective targeting and types of questions during whole class discussions.
- 4.10 Adapt tasks to match the different needs and prior learning of students: provide increased challenge for higher-attaining students and more scaffolding and support for lower-attaining students.
- 4.11 Provide targeted support to students who are struggling through one-to-one and small group teaching during lessons and outside of lessons.

1. Structuring and organising lessons effectively

Successful lessons systematically develop students' knowledge and understanding. Students are clear about what it is they are learning and how this builds on what they have learned previously. This requires teachers to structure and organise lessons effectively and make the best use of available teaching time.

Successful lessons don't exist in isolation: they are usually part of a coherent and progressive well-timed sequence. Well-planned sequences of lessons are based on teachers having a good understanding of expected progress in learning the facts and skills that are going to be taught, and the connections between them. An effective sequence of lessons also promotes a sense of progress and achievement amongst students.

Each individual lesson has clear learning objectives that introduce new knowledge and skills or extend and develop existing knowledge and skills. Teachers make students aware of the purpose, key ideas and principles of what they are learning. They also help them to understand what success looks like. When students can 'see' the big picture of a lesson they are more likely to make connections between what they already know and can do, and any new learning. Identifying learning outcomes in advance helps teachers to plan a lesson more effectively so that all students can achieve the learning objectives.

Effective individual lessons are organised into a sequence of distinct 'episodes' including a brisk beginning and finishing with a final plenary. These episodes are predominantly dialogic and enable teachers to demonstrate, model, explain and illustrate, question, assess and evaluate. They provide opportunities for students to practise, discuss their ideas and ask questions, consolidate and apply their learning and receive feedback from the teacher and their peers. Structuring lessons into three or more flexible episodes keeps students engaged and focused. It ensures that time is used efficiently and effectively to move learning forwards and it enables students to work successfully towards challenging goals.

The expectations for teaching for English literacy mastery in Brunei are that teachers:

- 1.1 Plan lessons as part of a coherent and structured sequence of learning that builds in progression as well as opportunities for consolidation.

Teachers should plan sequences of lessons that build new learning on the foundations of knowledge and skills that students have already mastered.

The first lesson in a sequence of learning should be used as an opportunity to find out what students already know, understand and can do. It should also help students to recall previous work on related topics and make connections, as well as introduce new knowledge and skills. Subsequent lessons should build on this to extend existing knowledge and skills, introduce new knowledge and skills, reinforce connections and develop deeper conceptual understanding. They should provide opportunities for students to revisit previous learning, consolidate it and apply it in new contexts. They also should provide regular opportunities for review and feedback.

Example (Year 5):

Salwa planned a sequence of five lessons, which focused on writing a short story. This built on previous lessons in which the class were introduced to a range of myths, legends and traditional tales. The lessons used what the students already knew as readers so that they could transfer this knowledge into their own writing.

Lesson 1: The class revisited two of the traditional tales that they had read and enjoyed during the previous week. Salwa helped the class to analyse how each tale was structured. The students worked independently to draw up a story plan for each tale.

Lesson 2: Salwa modelled how to draw up a new story plan for an original story that followed the structure learned in the previous lesson. The students then worked independently in pairs to plan their own stories. Salwa then taught the class how to begin a story by re-reading two or three beginnings from the traditional tales read previously, asking the students to decide on the features of a good beginning. The students then started writing their own beginnings.

Lesson 3: Beginnings were shared and discussed. Salwa then taught the class how to create characters and move the story on, using their own plans for how the plot develops and ends.

Lessons 4 and 5: Two lessons mainly devoted to providing time for students to complete the writing of their own short stories.

- 1.2 Plan individual lessons thoroughly. Planning identifies the aspects of **literacy skills and knowledge** that are to be taught with clear learning objectives, the key ideas of the lesson, **key vocabulary and points of grammatical understanding and terminology**.

Teachers should plan each individual lesson and record their planning in writing. In addition to identifying what is to be taught in the lesson, planning should identify how the lesson will be taught. This includes identifying any tasks that students will work on, together with approximate timings. Teachers should identify how students will be grouped for each task: whether the tasks are for whole class, small group, pair or individuals. It is helpful to identify key questions to ask during whole class and small group discussion.

Teachers should identify the purpose of each lesson and clearly communicate the learning objective(s) to students. Learning objectives should focus on acquiring and applying new or existing knowledge (learning and using factual information such as names or notation); acquiring or practising new skills; exploring or developing understanding of a concept or idea (concept development will usually take place over a sequence of lessons). It is helpful to begin learning objectives with verbs that reflect the kind of learning that is aimed for, such as: 'know that...' (for learning facts); 'be able to...' (for learning skills); 'understand how/why...' (for learning concepts). Learning objectives will often be referred to several times during a lesson so that students can be reminded of the purpose of what they are doing.

Teachers should also have clear ideas of the expected learning outcomes of each lesson: what will be the evidence of learning? What will students have to demonstrate that they know and/or are able to do to show that they have achieved the learning objectives? Teachers should plan and identify these in advance: this will help them to assess achievement and progress during the lesson and adapt their teaching accordingly. Such expected learning outcomes may be written, oral or visual and could relate to the kind of questions you would expect them to be able to answer.

Teachers should discuss these expected learning outcomes with students during lessons. For example, 'What you should be able to do is...' 'What I am looking for...' 'To be successful...' This ensures that students are clear about the teacher's expectations and what successful learning looks like.

Example (Year 2, lesson based on the story of The Little Red Hen):

Learning Objective

- Be able to use the present tense correctly to retell a narrative, sequencing events with support

Expected Learning Outcome

- Students can retell the whole, or a part of a story orally, sequencing a set of story pictures correctly

Example (Year 6, lesson based on a typical PSR picture sequence task):

Learning Objectives

- Be able to use a range of descriptive language to describe in detail what you see in each picture
- Be able to use the past tense correctly to retell a complete story, based on the set of pictures

Expected Learning Outcomes

- Students can explain why the pictures should be sequenced in a particular order (i.e. express opinions and give reasons)
- Students can retell the story orally
- Students can produce a written version of the story for homework

- 1.3 Plan structured lessons, which have a brisk starter, an episodic main activity and a final plenary. These phases within a lesson should support the overall learning objectives.

Teachers should organise and structure their lessons so that the minimum amount of time is spent on management and administration. They should plan and pace their lessons to ensure that time for dialogic teaching and learning is maximised.

*Lessons should begin with a **short 'starter' activity**: a focused whole class activity that all students can access and actively take part in. This usually should be linked to a learning objective of the lesson, but rather than teaching anything new it should provide students with an opportunity to practise or apply previous learning. It should create an immediate sense of challenge and set expectations for engagement in the rest of the lesson.*

An effective starter activity:

- begins the lesson promptly and with pace, getting all students thinking immediately;
- ensures that all students are engaged and taking an active part in the lesson;
- has a clear purpose;
- is usually linked to the rest of the lesson;
- is quite short and simple to administer
- is accessible to all students but also provides an appropriate level of challenge for all students;
- provides an opportunity to practice and recall previously learned facts and skills (no new teaching).

The main part of the lesson should consist of a series of progressive learning episodes. It has been suggested that a student's average concentration span is approximately their chronological age plus one or two minutes, so teachers should take this into account when planning the length of each episode. In this part of the lesson there could be tasks for students to work on as a whole class, in small groups, pairs or as individuals. There should be a balance between teaching input, presentation and explanation (either by teacher or students), discussion, and opportunities for students to practise and apply what they have learned.

Teachers should ensure that this main part of the lesson does not over-run, so that there is enough time for a whole class final plenary, which brings the lesson to a clear conclusion. It should enable the teacher and students to reflect on and review their learning.

An effective final plenary provides an opportunity:

- for students to present and discuss what they have done during the main part of the lesson;
- for the teacher and students to draw together learning, summarise and reflect on the lesson;
- to assess and evaluate the progress that students have made during the lesson, including whether or not they have achieved the learning objectives;

- to discuss and address common mistakes and misconceptions;
- to use and apply the learning that has taken place in the lesson;
- to make links to previous learning and other subjects;
- to set any homework and discuss next steps.

Example (Year 8, starter activity for a lesson on descriptive writing):

Ali used a set of colour photographs of everyday life, e.g. a traffic scene, people shopping in a mall, children playing in a park.

- *Groups of three or four students were each given one of the photographs.*
- *Students looked carefully in silence at their photograph and memorised as many details as possible. (1 minute)*
- *The photographs were then turned over and students discussed in their groups everything that they had observed and could remember. Each group was asked to think of an appropriate title for their photograph. (2 minutes)*
- *The whole class were then brought together and individual students were invited to describe their photograph as accurately as possible, without seeing it. Ali revealed the photograph after each description. (6 minutes)*

This led into the main part of the lesson, which focused on using accurate descriptive language, firstly in an oral description, then in writing, to create a vivid picture of a scene.

2. Teaching content dialogically

The foundation of effective teaching is interaction with learners. The literature refers to this as *dialogic teaching and learning*. This can be described as teaching and learning that promotes student talk: particularly, how teachers ask questions, the kind of questions teachers ask and how teachers respond to students' answers and ideas. There is significant research that demonstrates the importance of dialogic teaching in improving student outcomes.

'Children, we now know, need to talk, and to experience a rich diet of spoken language, in order to think and learn... talk is arguably the true foundation of knowledge.'

(Alexander, 2008)

The act of talking leads to better learning and helps students to understand their thinking. When students are talking, this also helps teachers to understand their thinking.

There are three main functions of teacher questions:

- **Testing:** to assess the comprehension or memory of students by asking them to state or rehearse a prior-learned fact or next step in a procedure.
- **Focusing:** to draw students' attention to something; to support students to arrive at a particular answer.
- **Genuine enquiry:** to glean information from students, encourage them to think and learn what they are thinking.

When teachers ask testing and focusing questions, they already know the answers to their questions and students also know that the teacher knows the answers. Students' responses tend to be short, often only one or two words. Consequently, these types of questions are not very effective in promoting dialogue.

Teachers generally do not know the answers to genuine enquiry questions and they are therefore similar to the questions that are asked in everyday life. They require longer answers and explanations, encourage thinking and are effective in promoting discussion. Furthermore, they show students that the teacher is interested in what they think and know rather than just whether they can remember a fact or what the teacher has said previously.

Teaching content dialogically requires teachers to ask questions and make statements that encourage students to think, explain, reason and conjecture rather than just memorise and recall facts. Teachers then follow up students' answers and build on them, probing and encouraging students to explain their thinking as well as asking other students to comment. Teachers ask sequences of questions that promote authentic dialogue: students listen to each other and build on each other's answer and teachers listen carefully to students ideas.

Five principles of dialogic teaching

- **Reciprocal:** 'Teachers and children listen to each other, share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints'
- **Cumulative:** 'Teachers and children build on their own and each other's ideas and chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry'
- **Collective:** Classroom activities are worked on together by both teacher and children
- **Purposeful:** Teachers have educational goals in mind
- **Supportive:** Children speak freely and without fear of being ridiculed for giving 'wrong' answers

(Alexander, 2008)

An important aspect of dialogic teaching and learning is supporting students to develop their active English vocabulary. Vocabulary is an important factor in successful reading: student's reading comprehension is closely linked to their growing knowledge and understanding of English words, phrases and expressions. Having a narrow vocabulary can catch students in a cycle of underachievement: students who cannot read more advanced texts miss out on opportunities to extend their vocabulary and are also less effective in deploying strategies necessary for independent word learning.

How teachers organise their classrooms can either promote or limit effective dialogic teaching and learning. If classrooms are arranged with all desks in rows facing the front, then although this ensures that all students can see the teacher and the board, it means that discussion between students may be limited and it makes paired and small group discussion difficult. Arranging desks in groups is effective in enabling paired and small group discussion, but this arrangement may mean that some students have to turn their chairs

during whole class discussions to see the board and other students. Arranging desks into a circle or horseshoe is effective in enabling whole class and paired discussion, but is less effective in enabling small group discussions. Successful teachers use the most effective seating arrangement according to the learning objectives and the tasks that students will undertake.

The expectations for teaching for English literacy mastery in Brunei are that teachers:

- 2.1 Use a high proportion of whole-class interactive teaching, where the focus is on all students working together on the same lesson content at the same time.

Teachers should aim to spend as much time as possible in direct teaching and questioning of the whole class, group of students, or individuals. Teaching should be predominantly oral and interactive. Teachers should encourage students to play an active part in lessons by answering questions, contributing points to discussions, and explaining and demonstrating their ideas to each other. They should avoid lecturing, 'drill and practice', unnecessary repetition and encouraging students to 'chorus' out answers at the same time. They should use direct instruction and whole class teaching to introduce new ideas, key skills and essential knowledge. They should use whole class teaching to demonstrate or 'model' an approach to all students before any individual, paired work or small group work.

Teachers should teach interactively and dialogically whilst students are working in groups, pairs or as individuals as well as when they are working as a whole class. They should use a high proportion of whole class teaching to maximise the opportunity for more students to interact with them and with each other for longer periods. Whole class teaching is not enough however and teachers should use a combination of whole class teaching, small group, paired and individual activities.

Teachers should ensure that all students in the class are working on the same learning objective(s) in a lesson. Teachers should differentiate their teaching by targeting individual support and intervention where necessary. In this way, all students will learn from each other and progress through the curriculum content at a similar pace.

Example (Year 2):

Following a whole class starter activity, Pauline usually uses a 'Shared reading' or 'Shared writing' approach as a way of teaching the whole class. She plans a learning objective that all students can achieve. She encourages all students to take part in dialogue either by responding to a shared text (selected from a range of 'Big Books' that enable all students to see both the text and pictures), or by working with the whole class on a jointly constructed piece of writing. By choosing an accessible text, and directing questions at different students to support and challenge their learning, Pauline manages to keep the whole class actively engaged, before setting group and individual tasks that extend and consolidate what has already been taught to everyone.

- 2.2 Use questions and statements to challenge students to think about the content, skills, processes and concepts they are learning: encourage students to explain, exemplify, compare, conjecture and generalise.

Teachers should ask questions that encourage students to think rather than merely remember facts. They should use questions that stimulate higher-order thinking, encouraging students to:

- **Explain:** 'Why do you think that...?'; 'Can you give me a reason for...?'; 'Can you tell me what is wrong with...?'
- **Exemplify:** 'Can you give me an example of...?'; 'Can you give me a counter-example?'; 'Are there any special cases of...?'
- **Compare:** 'What is the same about... and...?'; 'In what ways are these different?'; 'Can you organise or sort these based on...?'
- **Conjecture:** 'What do you think will happen next?'; 'Do you think that this will always happen?'; 'What do you infer from this?'
- **Generalise:** 'Is this always true, sometimes true or never true?'; 'What happens in general?'; 'What can change and yet... is still true?'

Asking questions is not the only way of promoting dialogue and teachers should also use statements to encourage students to talk. These include statements that begin with, 'Tell me...': even though there is no question mark or raising of the voice tone at the end of the sentence they still require a response from students. However, teachers should also make statements that provoke a response from students, because they invite students to agree or disagree with the statement. For example, 'That's an unusual phrase for the writer to use', or 'I don't like the way this story ends'.

Example (Year 8):

Ahmad plans the main questions he will use in a lesson and also tries to develop a sequence of questions of increasing difficulty in order to challenge students' thinking. He also sometimes starts a lesson with a statement and invites students to discuss it in pairs before discussing their responses as a whole class. For example, to prompt students to read closely for information, he makes two statements about a short information text about the Moon ('Gateway to English 2', Workbook, Unit 9):

- 'Humans have been on the moon at least six times'.
- 'The moon is always hotter than the earth'.

Students are asked to talk in pairs to decide initially whether they agree or disagree, and then read the information text carefully to decide whether each statement is actually true or false. The use of statements sets a purposeful reading task and engages students to search for information, scanning for relevant sections of the text and then using close reading skills.

- 2.3 Target questions to students effectively using a range of strategies.

Teachers should neither ask untargeted questions that encourage students to shout out answers randomly nor ask questions of the whole class that encourage students to 'chorus' out answers in unison. Teachers should use the full range of strategies for targeting their questions:

- Ask a question of the whole class or small group and give the students time to think. The students don't shout out answers and the teacher invites an individual student to answer. Two

advantages of targeting questions in this way are that it encourages all students to think (as they don't know who will be invited to answer) and it enables the teacher to make a professional decision about which student to invite to answer.

- Ask a question of the whole class, students raise their hands and then the teacher chooses a volunteer. Two advantages of targeting questions in this way are that students feel less pressured to answer and it enables the teacher to make a professional decision about which student to ask for the answer.
- Ask a question of the whole class, give the students time to think and require all of them to use resources such as mini whiteboards to show their answers. When using resources such as mini whiteboards it is important that students all show their answers at the same time. Teachers should develop routines such as saying, 'One, two, three, show me!' to encourage all students to show their answers at the same time. Two advantages of targeting questions in this way are that it ensures all students are thinking and it enables the teacher to see and assess the answers of every student.
- Ask a question of a particular student. An advantage of targeting questions in this way is that it enables a teacher to ask a question of a particular student based on their knowledge of that student's prior achievements or their engagement in the lesson. Another advantage is that it can promote more authentic dialogue through the teacher acting as a facilitator.

Example (Year 2):

Fatma frequently uses 'Think, pair, and share'. The students are used to talking through an answer in pairs after she asks a question and before she invites students to share their ideas with the class. This way, every student talks through their ideas with someone, even if it is not the teacher. Once one student shares their idea, she either asks them to explain it, or invites other students to volunteer their ideas or comment on what the first student said. Fatma sometimes asks particular students to share their idea.

Example (Year 7):

Nadia realised that she often only had a few willing students answering questions in one of her classes. She therefore implemented a 'no-hands-up' rule. Instead, she invited particular students to answer. She noticed that it increased the number of students participating in lessons and removed the mixture of envy and relief that had characterised the mood of the group while the usual students had answered questions.

- 2.4 Use a range of types of question, not just testing questions: use focusing questions to help scaffold learning, but use predominantly genuine enquiry questions to encourage students to think and discuss their ideas and to assess what they understand and are thinking.

To promote dialogic learning, teachers should ask testing questions when necessary, focusing questions sparingly and carefully, and genuine enquiry questions as much as possible.

Teachers should ask **testing questions** to assess students' learning. For example: 'Is this piece of writing formal or informal?'. This might be near the start of lessons to assess previous learning, during the main part of lessons to assess whether students are ready to move on, or during the final plenary to assess and evaluate the progress that students have made during the lesson, including whether or not they have achieved the learning objectives.

Teachers should ask **focusing questions** to draw students' attention to something or support them to come to an answer. For example: 'What do you notice about all of the words that are marked in blue in the text?', or 'Find the word 'like' in the first verse. What is the sea compared to?'. Teachers should occasionally scaffold learning, particularly when students are having difficulties, by asking them a sequence of testing questions that guide them to come to a correct and complete explanation. It is important that such scaffolding is gradually removed, so that students become able to answer questions without support. Teachers should also avoid asking 'leading questions': these guide students to the answer by telling them significant pieces of information, often by tone of voice or by actions, that give major clues to the answer. These questions don't encourage students to think for themselves and in practice the teacher tells the students the answer.

Teachers should ask predominantly **genuine enquiry questions**,

as these are most effective in encouraging students to think and talk. For example, *'Can you explain how you worked out what (...) meant?'*, *'What do you think about that?'*, *'What do you notice?'* and *'Why do you think that this is different?'*. Questions that encourage students to explain, exemplify, compare, conjecture and generalise (see section 2.2) provide other examples of genuine enquiry questions.

Teachers should avoid asking 'Guess-what's-in-my-mind questions'. These are questions where the teacher has a specific answer in mind and because of this they tend to ignore or reject other equally valid answers.

2.5 Acknowledge and incorporate students' answers and ideas, using a range of strategies to probe their thinking and facilitate student discussion.

Teachers should not ignore students' answers. Although they may sometimes only acknowledge their answers by saying whether they are right or wrong, whether they agree or disagree, or by offering praise or criticism, teachers should predominantly build on students' answers by probing their thinking, encouraging them to explain their ideas, or inviting other students to comment. They should respond to student' answers in ways that encourage discussion. Teachers should use the following strategies:

- **Comparing:** asking students to compare their ideas and methods. For example, *'Do you agree or disagree with what Fatma just said and why?'*
- **Reasoning:** asking a student to explain why they think something, or why they have done something, or asking other students to try and explain. For example, *'Why do you think that...?'* or *'Ali, why do you think that Rosney has said that?'*
- **Adding to:** asking a student to say more. For example, *'Can you tell me a bit more Zahrah?'* or *'Can anyone add to what Zahrah has just said?'*
- **Revoicing** what a student said. For example, *'Hadija, so you think that... is that right?'*. Revoicing is not the same as merely echoing or repeating what a student has said. Teachers could revoice in order to make sure that they understand what the student has said, before they pass the idea back to the student to validate.

Teachers could also revoice in order to alter or clarify what the student and has said, then again pass it back to the student to validate. Teachers could also revoice in order to compare what different students have said.

- **Repeating:** asking a student to say what another student said in their own words. For example, *'Hana, Can you explain what Irene has just said?'*

In all cases, teachers should listen to students' answers rather than listen for a particular answer that was in their mind.

Teachers should use wait time (or think time) thoughtfully when asking questions and responding to students' answers and ideas. This includes: pausing for a few seconds after asking a question before taking a student's answer or idea; pausing after a student has answered to reflect on what they said before responding; and giving time for students to pause and think during their answers and explanations. The length of wait time should vary depending on the question being asked: testing questions generally require less wait time than genuine enquiry questions.

2.6 Provide opportunities for students to discuss their ideas in pairs or small groups during whole class work.

Teachers should use a range of strategies to ensure that all students are actively engaged in lessons. These include:

- **Providing students with thinking time** (see section 2.5). Teachers could explicitly say before asking a question that they just want students to think for 3–5 seconds before attempting to answer.
- **Differentiating questions.** Teachers may ask different questions of students who are working at different levels of attainment. More challenging questions could be used to provoke higher-attaining students to think more deeply; carefully constructed enquiry questions could support lower-attaining or less confident students to grasp a difficult idea.
- **'Phone a friend'.** If a student appears to be struggling or not able to answer a question they can ask a friend to help them.

- *Providing a preview of a question. Sometimes it is helpful to provide (some) students with a question in advance of when it will be asked, maybe written on the board or on paper, so that they can have longer to think about it and prepare their answers.*
- *Providing time for private talk. An example of this is, 'Think, pair and share' (see section 2.3). This can be planned or spontaneous if, for example, students are struggling to answer a question.*

The main part of a lesson provides the opportunity for teachers to plan activities that enable students to discuss their ideas in pairs or small groups.

Example (Year 9):

Roseli's class had been working on a short unit looking at the language of advertising. Following three lessons examining, analysing and talking about adverts, Roseli planned a group work activity designed to deepen the students' understanding of how adverts are designed to persuade the reader:

1. *Students were placed into mixed-attainment groups of 4/5.*
2. *Each group was given copies of one of several adverts taken from a recent glossy magazine and a set of investigative questions to explore, based on what they knew about the language of advertising. These included:*
 - *'Who is the advert aimed at?'*
 - *'Describe the different ways in which the advert appeals to the reader.'*
 - *'Choose an example of effective persuasive language and explain how it affects the reader.'*
3. *Groups discussed their ideas together, wrote their own set of notes and annotated their copy of the advert to show their thinking.*
4. *The students were then regrouped into new groups, each made up of representatives from the original groups. Students took it in turns to introduce their advert and explain their ideas about how the advert was designed and written to appeal to the reader*
5. *Finally, the whole class came together to discuss the question: 'Which is the most effective of the adverts we have been looking at and why?'*

- 2.7 *Introduce and use correct terminology alongside the skills, processes and concepts being learned and develop students' vocabulary in a coherent and consistent sequence by providing students with many opportunities to encounter and discuss the meanings of words and phrases in different contexts.*

Teachers should introduce new vocabulary explicitly and plan for a range of opportunities for students to encounter and start to use new words and phrases in their talk and writing. They should ensure that students have the opportunity to encounter a new word several times in different contexts so that it can be understood, learned and used. Teachers should also teach students the appropriate grammatical terminology that describes the aspects of language that they are learning. New (or recent) target vocabulary should be identified clearly in lesson planning.

Example (Year 4):

In order to help a class learn some key English vocabulary and to understand the key grammatical term 'adjective', Mohamad gave his students a short text in English that described a family's pets. The students worked in groups of four to underline all the adjectives. They were then asked to classify the adjectives in any way that they chose. They could do this by meaning or by the position of the adjective in relation to the noun, (for example 'They had a large black furry cat'). They had to write these in lists giving each list a heading that described what they had in common. Finally, each group was asked to explain the reasons for their classification and to work out some simple rules for how to order English adjectives.

3. Designing effective learning tasks

The purpose of a learning task is to initiate activity by students. The aim of student activity is learning: to change the ways that they see things or think about things or do things. Tasks become vehicles for learning when they provide opportunities for students to encounter and think about important ideas and themes in learning English.

Successful teachers are skilled in designing effective learning tasks that:

- promote appropriate student activity in relation to the content being taught;
- lead to students achieving the desired learning outcomes.

They are able to design and adapt effective learning tasks to match the age and needs of the students, what they can do and what they have already learned. They use a rich variety of stimulus materials and design learning tasks that complement any core textbook for the subject. They use any textbooks thoughtfully, selecting and adapting the material within them to match learning objectives and students' needs. They see textbooks as a teaching resource, needing interpretation and explanation.

Effective learning tasks:

- expose students to something new and/or extend students' experience of something that they are becoming familiar with;
- develop and involve higher-order thinking;
- are matched to the age, needs and prior learning of the students;
- encourage students to talk and explain.

Learning tasks are often classified as being either open or closed. Closed tasks can support students to remember facts and learn routines but they often develop procedural fluency rather than conceptual understanding. Open tasks can support the development of students' higher-order thinking and conceptual understanding. Successful teachers present students with an appropriate balance of open and closed tasks.

How teachers present a task to students, rather than the task itself, is the key factor in determining whether a task is open or closed. For example, a task may appear to be open but if the students know that the teacher is looking for specific answers, then the resulting student activity becomes closed. This can also occur if a teacher presents an open task in a very structured and

scaffolded way that allows the students no choice about how to work on it. Conversely, a closed task may be adapted and opened up by a teacher so that students are encouraged to find a range of different answers or are able to choose how they will work on it.

Successful teachers plan effective whole class, small group, paired and individual learning tasks. They explain the purpose and outcome(s) expected from a task clearly, checking periodically that students understand and know how to proceed.

The expectations for teaching for English literacy mastery in Brunei are that teachers:

3.1 Design tasks that give specific attention to the development of students' speaking and listening skills, widening the range of purposes and contexts as students' skills develop.

Teachers should design learning tasks that support students' progress in all three components in the Brunei Literacy Standards: speaking; listening; collaboration. Teachers should therefore provide opportunities for students to work in groups of different sizes – in pairs, small groups, large groups and as a whole class. Students should be taught how to take turns and when and how to participate constructively in conversations, discussions and debates.

Tasks in the early years of primary school should be designed to encourage students' participation, clarity and contribution to purposeful activities linked closely to their own experiences and to the reading and writing tasks they undertake. In Years 4, 5 and 6, tasks should be designed to promote more extended expression, exploration of ideas, and adaptation to context and audience. Through the secondary years, tasks should develop students' ability to use talk to extend their thinking, to respond constructively to others' ideas, and to adopt a wider range of roles, including speaking in more formal contexts.

Specific attention should be paid to increasing students' vocabulary, ranging from describing their immediate world and feelings to developing a broader, deeper and richer vocabulary to discuss abstract concepts and a wider range of topics, issues and ideas.

Example (Year 8):

Maureen taught explicitly the students in one of her classes how to engage in different types of talk for different purposes. These included: telling a story; arguing and persuading; explaining; giving instructions; working collaboratively in a group; speculating and hypothesising. For each purpose, she devised a set of posters that set out helpful words and phrases. For example, she identified the following helpful words and phrases for 'Hypothesising and Speculating':

- Words that leave options open as long as possible, e.g. maybe, perhaps, possibly...
- Conditional verbs that do not close down meaning, e.g. could, would, might, may...
- Prompts to think, e.g. What if...? Supposing... What would happen if...?
- Reflective questions, e.g. I wonder why...? Would it make sense if...? Who thinks that...?

- 3.2 Give systematic attention to word and sentence level aspects of reading and writing within whole text activities which are both meaningful and explained clearly to students.

Teachers should carefully explain meaningful reading and writing tasks to students so that they understand their purpose. They should ensure that students develop the key skills of word reading: working out the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and recognition of familiar printed words. In particular, phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading and writing.

Technical aspects of writing (e.g. spelling, sentence grammar, paragraphing) should not be taught not as an end in themselves but as a means to an end, so that students learn to write in order to communicate effectively. Teaching should ensure that students are provided with opportunities to articulate and communicate their ideas and then organise them coherently for a reader. This requires them to learn about clarity, awareness of the audience, purpose and context, and to develop an increasingly wide knowledge of vocabulary and grammar.

Teachers should ensure that students develop appropriate linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and

knowledge of the world in order to support their text comprehension. They should be provided with sufficient opportunities to experience high-quality conversation with the teacher as well as significant experience of reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction texts in order to develop their comprehension skills.

Teachers should actively encourage students to read widely as this often increases their understanding and use of vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech.

Writing should be taught by being closely linked to good examples of written texts so that students understand the different purposes of texts and learn to use appropriate vocabulary, sentence structures and ways of structuring and organising whole texts.

Example (Year 7):

Aliyana taught her Year 7 students about prepositions and prepositional phrases of place by showing them how to begin a story by using the technique of 'zooming in' to describe the setting. She modelled how to compose an opening:

'Along the deserted street, down the dark passageway between shops and through the gap in the fence he crept: a hungry cat searching for food.'

Aliyana then explained how she chose carefully a series of three prepositional phrases to take the reader closer and closer to the scene before revealing who or what was being described.

Students were then set the task of composing their own opening to a story, working in pairs, selecting a different setting and character but imitating the same structure. They were provided with a list of possible prepositions:

Opposite; Along; Against; Down; On; Beneath; Through; Across

The task engaged all the students and students of differing ability were able to work on it successfully. It was also successful in that they learned about a key aspect of English grammar.

3.3 Ensure that tasks are appropriately challenging and do not oversimplify the skills, processes and concepts that are being learned.

Teachers should provide challenge in literacy tasks through adjusting the:

- level of reading difficulty;
- length of reading required;
- extent of open-ended probing questions used in dialogue;
- purpose, audience and type of text set for writing;
- nature and purpose of speaking and listening activities.

They should ensure that whole class and guided group literacy teaching enables all students to tackle tasks that are pitched at a level that is just beyond what they can do independently.

Higher-attaining students should be challenged to work independently on tasks that are open-ended and require them to apply what they know and can do to new situations rather than repeat more examples of routine tasks. Lower-attaining students need differentiated tasks that offer the right level of support so that they can make progress and achieve success (see section 4.10)

Example (Year 9):

Amir creates differentiated tasks to support all learners to achieve the objectives for the lesson.

For example, when studying the structure of magazine articles he created a template for the construction of a news page. He identified the areas for photographs, headline and the text. For some students the activity involved creating the full article and headline, while others made bulleted notes for the full text and also chose from three different headlines. Amir was able to engage all the learners with the same objective and clearly differentiate the task by providing scaffolding and support.

3.4 Balance modelling and demonstrating 'how to' with opportunities for students to practice and apply what they are learning through shared and guided reading and writing.

Teachers should provide a range of models and examples of effective literacy practices. For example, teachers themselves could demonstrate writing, including revision and drafting, or they could provide displays of successful literacy outcomes and skill use, either from students' own work or from published materials.

When students are learning a skill, it can be helpful if they see another person actually going through the process first. Teachers should therefore 'model' practice, particularly when introducing a new skill, by: demonstrating, 'thinking aloud', inviting student contributions, and then setting students a similar task. The students learn by watching the teacher demonstrate the specific skill and listening to the teacher simultaneously describe and explain what is being done. Hearing the teacher describe the process is extremely helpful. Teachers should articulate their thinking and the steps needed for the process to be carried out effectively. They make clear to students the problems and decisions which otherwise might remain hidden. Teachers should therefore make 'visible' to students the skills and processes used by speakers, readers and writers. The students learn through observing the teacher as well as listening to them explain how they make language choices or why they are using a particular strategy to make sense of a text.

During 'shared' reading and writing sessions, the teacher should not only model, but also elicit contributions from students: the students participate as a class in developing a shared understanding of how to go about a specific literacy task.

3.5 Use textbooks and other resources thoughtfully, adapting them as appropriate according to the skills, processes and concepts being learned and the prior learning of students.

Teachers should not be completely reliant on a textbook and should plan activities using a range of resources. Teachers should choose when it is appropriate to use the tasks in the textbook and when it is better to either adapt the textbook tasks or design alternative tasks.

Teachers should choose a range of different resources to use in lessons, as this will generate a variety of student activity. This is likely to motivate and engage students much more than just using a textbook.

Some topics are taught more effectively through practical activity rather than working through exercises from a textbook. Teachers

should think carefully about the skills, processes and concepts being taught and decide on the kind of activity that is likely to support deeper understanding.

Teachers should adapt textbook tasks when appropriate to match the prior learning of students. They should also adapt them when appropriate to introduce greater variety of activity into lessons, or to make them pedagogically more effective. For example:

- a textbook task could be simplified for lower-attaining students or made more difficult for higher-attaining students;
- some lower-attaining students could be provided with additional resources to help them access a textbook task;
- textbook tasks designed for individual students to work on could be adapted to use with the whole class or by a small group;
- a teacher (or the students) could choose which they think is the most difficult or most interesting question to answer and work on that, rather than working through all the questions in a textbook exercise;
- a teacher could give a random selection of answers to questions from a textbook exercise and students choose which answer goes with which question;
- some textbook tasks could be omitted entirely;
- some routine problems or questions in textbooks could be adapted so that they become non-routine;
- a closed textbook task could be opened up.

Teachers should avoid:

- encouraging students to read long extracts from a book out loud, as this does not lead to understanding of any difficult ideas contained in the text;
- asking students to copy from the textbook, as this does not require students to think about the ideas and does

not provide them with an opportunity to demonstrate their understanding;

- going through a whole textbook exercise with the whole class, after the students have been working on it individually, as this is ineffective use of available teaching time.

3.6 Design collaborative tasks that require students to explore, discuss and explain ideas in small groups and pairs as well as a whole class.

Teachers should plan collaborative tasks that require all students to contribute. Collaborative tasks need to have clear instructions and a purposeful outcome. They could take the form of games, problem-solving activities or creative activities.

Collaborative tasks should provide opportunities for students to:

- conjecture and hypothesise;
- ask questions;
- share, explore and explain ideas;
- learn from and with each other;
- take on a range of group roles;
- develop their skills of collaboration.

Teachers should engage students in establishing group goals where necessary and discussing 'ground rules' for collaborative work, including turn-taking, making contributions, listening and responding to each other, building on each others' ideas, etc. They could create group roles for more complex tasks, such as group leader, researcher, presenter/reporter, etc.

Teachers should establish flexible approaches to grouping students based on the task, such as groups of similar prior attainment, groups of mixed prior attainment, groups where members possess different skills, friendship groups, etc. Research suggests that mixed groups tend to learn more from each other and these increase achievement of lower-attaining students. Teachers should rotate groups so that students have more opportunities to learn from each other.

Teachers should use a variety of different collaborative strategies, for example:

- **Jigsaw.** A topic is broken down into different subtopics. This could be decided by the teacher or discussed and agreed by the class. 'Expert' groups are formed who develop expertise on a specific subtopic by exploring, discussing and researching. New groups are then formed which contain experts on all the different topics. Students then take turns sharing their expertise with the other group members, thus generating a group who has 'complete' knowledge about the topic being studied.
- **Snowball.** Students first work individually on a task then come together to work in pairs on the task. These pairs then come together to form groups of four who work on the task, and so on. In most cases, after working in fours, all students come together for a plenary session in which the ideas of all the groups are shared and discussed.
- **Fishbowl.** One group observes another group. One group discusses an issue or problem, works on a problem, plays a game or carries out a role-play. The second group observes the first group and depending on the task may be given something specific to observe. At the end of the group activity, the second group feeds back on what they observed and both groups then discuss.
- **Envoy.** Groups work on the same task. At a convenient point, once ideas have been formed, solutions developed, or conclusions reached, one student from each group moves to another group. Their role is to be an 'envoy': to explain the thinking of their group to the new group, who must listen and then provide the envoy with additional ideas. The envoy then carries these back to the original group. This challenges the envoy to explain ideas clearly, and others to listen carefully and contribute. As a result, learning is applied and consolidated.

Example (Year 7):

Rosney's class had finished reading a short story based on the Greek legend of Odysseus and Cyclops ('Gateway to English 1', Unit 10). In order to deepen their understanding of key features of a narrative, Rosney devised a task that required students to work in groups of four. Groups were deliberately formed to contain a mix of abilities. Each group was given a different aspect of the story and asked to work collaboratively to find information from the text, and to discuss their own responses and ideas:

- Describe the two main **characters**. What do we learn about them?
- Describe the **setting**. What do we learn about the places where the story happens?
- What **problems** do the characters have in the story?
- What **solutions** to the problems occur?

Following this they were re-grouped into new groups of four, each group containing a representative of the original groups (the Jigsaw strategy). Each student in turn reported on their 'findings' to the new group, so that an overall picture was built up. These groups were then set an additional task: to devise some questions they would like to ask each character. In the next lesson, some students took on the role of either Odysseus or Cyclops, sat in the 'hot seat' and responded to these prepared questions.

4. Assessing learning continuously

Assessment is a critical element of teaching. Effective assessment supports and informs learning and is useful to teachers, students, parents and others.

Assessment of learning provides a 'snapshot' of a student's attainment at a particular point in time, most usually the end of a year. Their attainment is measured against pre-defined standards and usually takes the form of exams and tests.

The information obtained from summative assessments can be used to:

- evaluate how individual students are achieving against expectations;
- inform students and their parents about their levels of attainment;
- compare relative performance of groups of students, classes and schools.

Assessment for learning is a continuous and informal part of everyday classroom practice. Teachers and students use evidence to decide:

- where the students are in their learning, the progress they are making and the difficulties that they are having;
- where they need to go next;
- how best to get there.

Assessing learning continuously can have a significant impact on students' attainment, behaviour, motivation and engagement with lessons, and their ability to work independently. Students' achievements improve when teachers use assessment effectively to set high expectations, provide constructive feedback and match their teaching to the varying needs of students.

In particular, when assessing learning continuously, teachers:

- promote confidence that every student can improve as this can have a profound influence on students' motivation and self-esteem;
- share learning objectives with students and help them to know what they are aiming for;
- review and reflect on assessment information with students;

- involve students in peer and self-assessment;
- provide feedback that helps students to identify their next steps and how to take them;
- adjust their teaching in response to the assessed needs of students.

In classrooms where assessment for learning is an effective part of normal classroom practice, what is to be learned is made clear to students, as well as the related expected learning outcomes.

Successful teachers assess students' achievements and progress in a variety of ways including analysing their written work, observing them as they work, questioning them and discussing their ideas with them. Assessment happens every time a teacher marks a book, asks a question to check understanding or comments on a student's work. When assessing learning continuously, teachers engage students in dialogue about how well they are doing, and what they need to do next to improve further as part of everyday teaching and learning.

An important aspect of assessing learning continuously is identifying, analysing and understanding students' mistakes and misconceptions. Students give 'wrong' answers for many different reasons. Sometimes they make mistakes due to carelessness or poor concentration. Sometimes it is because they make wrong decisions, fail to identify important information or reason incorrectly. Sometimes it is due to poor memory. However, sometimes students get things wrong due to misconceptions: they over-generalise and develop alternative interpretations of ideas. It is not possible to teach in a way that ensures students do not develop misconceptions: generalising is a critical part of constructing meaning and learning. It is inevitable that students will sometimes make generalisations that are not always correct. Successful teachers design tasks and ask questions that expose possible misconceptions so that their teaching can address them. They assess continuously students' learning to understand the reasons for 'wrong' answers and they address misconceptions through discussion and feedback.

Peer- and self-assessment are more than students marking their own or each other's work. Effective peer- and self-assessment encourage students to think about the quality of their work and reflect on how to improve it. When students are involved in reviewing and evaluating their own work, they make faster progress, are better motivated and engaged in their work and behave more responsibly. Successful teachers are skilled at involving students in assessing their own work so that they understand what they must do to improve. Using tasks that encourage students to assess their own learning at the start of a

new topic can encourage them to think about where they are 'now' in their learning.

The nature of the oral and written feedback that teachers give to students is another important aspect of assessing learning. Research (e.g. Butler, 1988) shows that teacher feedback that focuses on what a student needs to do to improve and, in particular, how to go about this, has a positive impact on student achievement. Conversely, teacher feedback that focuses solely on praise or compares students' answers or efforts is rarely effective and can have a negative impact on student achievement. This includes when students are given grades without any feedback. Effective feedback to students tells them how well they have done and what else they need to do. This can take the form of informal spoken comments and discussion, or may be written comments in students' books, which they can reflect on in order to make any necessary improvements. Successful teachers make time available within classroom routines for discussion about how well work meets expected outcomes. This discussion is not only between teachers and students, but also between the students themselves.

Assessing learning continuously is based on teachers having good subject knowledge and knowing how to interpret the outcomes of student activity. This requires teachers to be able to design tasks that reveal the depth of students' understanding and expose any misconceptions.

Assessing students' understanding and progress through how well they answer questions, explain their ideas, or 'show their working', also provides teachers with feedback on their teaching. This information supports successful teachers to adjust their teaching to take account of:

- what students need to spend longer on or need to have explained differently within a lesson;
- what students need to learn next, adapting future lessons so that important ideas, concepts or skills can be fully secured.

The expectations for teaching for **English literacy** mastery in Brunei are that teachers:

- 4.1 Share learning objectives with students near the beginning of lessons and help students to know what they are aiming for.

As described in section 1.2, teachers should clearly communicate the learning objective(s) of lessons to students. This will encourage a climate of reflection and support student self-assessment. Objectives should be shared at the beginning of lessons using vocabulary that students understand and then referred to appropriately during the lesson. Teachers should use these learning objectives to shape the questions that they ask during the lesson, and students should be encouraged to use them as the basis for self-assessment. Teachers should also use these learning objectives in the final plenary of lessons (see section 1.3).

Teachers should ensure that students understand the expected learning outcomes; the specific features which will make their work 'good' and what they have to do to achieve these standards. Teachers could do this by modelling an activity in front of the class and then discussing it with students. Alternatively, teachers could use an existing piece of work to explain why it is of a good or poor quality and how it could be improved. Teachers could help students to understand what 'good' quality looks like by using phrases such as:

- 'What I am looking for is...'
- 'What I expect from everyone is...'
- 'To be successful, you will need to...'
- 'To get high marks you will need to...'

They can also encourage students to think about what 'good' quality looks like by asking questions such as:

- 'What do you think you will need to do to...?'
- 'How can you make sure that you have achieved...?'
- 'What do you think I mean by saying...?'

Example (Year 2):

At the start of every lesson, Noraini writes on the whiteboard: the learning objective(s), what she is looking for in the students' work and what they will do to achieve the learning objective(s). This is a way of sharing and clarifying the learning objectives, identifying what is expected of the students and also describing what that looks like within the activities of the lesson. It also signals clearly how Noraini will be assessing the students. For example, in one lesson:

1. *Noraini identified the following learning objective:*

'To hear and say the initial sound in words and know which letters represent some of the sounds'.

2. *Noraini translated that into what the students would be learning:*

'We are learning to hear and say sounds at the beginning of words'.

3. *Noraini then broke that down into the stages of learning and activities that would take place in order to achieve the objective:*

- *'We will listen to the sound at the beginning of a word.*
- *We will say the sound out loud.*
- *We will say the sound to a partner.*
- *We will think of other words with the same sound at the beginning.*
- *We will write the letter of the sound'.*

By having this routine clearly established within all of her lessons, Noraini is able to involve the students in the learning process from the start of each lesson, ensuring they are clear about what they will learn and also the way in which they will know they have been successful.

- 4.2 **Assess students during lessons through effective questioning, listening and observing.**

Teachers should use effective questioning techniques (see sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4) to assess students' knowledge and understanding.

This includes targeting specific questions to individual students and using resources such as mini whiteboards to assess all the students in the class during whole class work. When students are working independently in small groups, pairs or individually, teachers should move around the class assessing them through observing them work, listening to them discuss their answers and ideas and questioning them individually.

Teachers should not only ask testing questions to assess students' learning, but should use genuine enquiry questions to challenge and probe their thinking and assess their conceptual understanding.

Example (Year 5):

Irene always walks around the class when they are working in small groups, pairs or individually.

She targets a few students to spend time with during this part of the lesson. She begins by asking the student to explain what they are doing and she then asks a sequence of questions to probe their understanding and assess their learning. Sometimes she asks questions to assess whether the student has understood and made links to previous work. Over a few lessons she manages to have individual discussions with all the students and assessed their learning.

She also spends some time sitting with groups, observing and listening to their discussions. This helps her to identify what she needs to focus on in the whole class episode that follows, thus adapting her lesson plan and matching her teaching to the needs of the students.

4.3 Expose, discuss and address common mistakes and misconceptions.

It is not sufficient to merely identify and acknowledge whether a student provides a correct or incorrect answer. Teachers should analyse and understand the reasons for students' answers and in particular assess whether incorrect answers are due to mistakes or misconceptions.

Teachers should use effective questioning (see sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5) to probe and discuss students' answers. They should encourage students to explain their ideas and thinking as a way of exposing possible misconceptions. Teachers should use the discussion that follows to redefine and deepen students' understanding and address any misconceptions. Teachers should probe correct answers as well as incorrect answers, to assess whether students really understand or have given the correct answer through chance.

Teachers should know about common misconceptions that may develop and target discussion sometimes on these.

4.4 Identify quickly if a student fails to master a key skill, understand a concept or procedure and intervene early and effectively.

Teachers should identify any students who are having difficulties, making mistakes or developing misconceptions (see section 4.3) and respond rapidly. Intervention could take the form of targeted individual or small group support within the lesson itself, in the next lesson, or outside the lesson but during the same day (see section 4.11). Intervention should usually involve additional direct teaching and questioning of these students but could also involve providing additional support resources. It is important that any scaffolding is gradually withdrawn so that these students reach a similar level of mastery and understanding as their peers.

If a significant number of students are struggling with the same concept or skill, then teachers should adapt their lesson plan and re-teach with the whole class. They should not re-teach using the same approach and examples, but adopt a different approach based on their assessment evidence, which addresses the particular reasons why the students are not mastering the skill or understanding the concept. They should draw on those students who have already mastered the skill or understood the concept

to support their teaching by encouraging them to demonstrate their learning to the other students and help their peers. Teachers should also challenge those students who have already mastered the skill or understood the concept by asking them more demanding questions that deepen their knowledge of the same content.

4.5 Use the final plenary as an opportunity to refer back to the learning objectives and assess the progress that students have made towards achieving them.

Teachers should use the final plenary as an opportunity to reflect on and review the learning that has taken place during the lesson (see section 1.3).

In particular, they should:

- discuss and address common mistakes and misconceptions;*
- enable students to reflect on what they have learned by explaining ideas to each other and/or identifying things that they are still unsure about;*
- refer back to the learning objectives and expected learning outcomes and explicitly assess and discuss whether they have been achieved;*
- provide feedback that helps students to identify their next steps and how to take them.*

Whilst the use of a plenary session should become routine, its style and format should not

Examples of final plenary activities:

- **Hot seat.** A student is asked to sit in the 'hot seat' at the front as an expert and the other students are invited to ask them questions based on what they have been learning in the lesson. Alternatively the student can be asked to summarise what they have learned in the lesson.
- **Lucky dip.** The teacher and/or the students write down some questions based on what they have been learning in the lesson and put them in a box. Individual students then take out a question, without looking at it first, and have to answer it.
- **Traffic lights.** The teacher refers to the lesson objectives and then asks students: what they understand or can do well (students hold up green cards or show thumbs up); what they are not 100 per cent sure of (students hold up orange cards or show thumbs to the side); what needs further explanation or attention (students hold up red cards or show thumbs down). Students are asked to give and explain their reasons.
- **True or False.** The teacher shows a statement on a card based on what the students have been learning in the lesson. Small groups of students are given 30 seconds to decide whether the statement is true or false. They are then asked to raise cards saying either 'true' or 'false' and have to justify their reasons. This is repeated for other statements. Alternatively, students could be asked to decide whether the statements are 'ALWAYS true', 'SOMETIMES true' or 'NEVER true'.
- **Key ideas.** Students are asked individually to write down three 'key ideas' that they have learned during the lesson. They then come together as pairs to put their 'key ideas' together and then agree on only three. They then come together as a group of four and if time allows a group of eight. Finally, each group feedbacks to the whole class in turn.
- **Key words.** Students work in small groups to make a set of key word cards, drawing on the vocabulary used in the lesson, putting each word on one card and the definition on the back. These are then put on the wall for the whole class to see and discuss before being entered into a class subject dictionary.
- **Writing/talking frames.** Students complete sentences such as: 'What I found difficult/easy was...'; 'The most important part was...'; 'I need to improve on...'

- 4.6 Assess students' written work for understanding, rather than just answers, identifying possible reasons behind any errors.

When marking students' books, teachers should not only identify and acknowledge whether a student provides a correct or incorrect answer. Teachers should analyse and understand the reasons for students' answers and in particular assess whether incorrect answers are due to mistakes or misconceptions.

Having marked the written work of all the students' in a class, teachers should reflect on what they have learned by asking themselves:

- *Did the majority of students in the class succeed and demonstrate understanding?*
- *Were there some skills or concepts that most students found difficult? What interventions are needed?*
- *Were there any common mistakes and misconceptions? What are possible reasons for these?*
- *Which students failed to master a particular skill or understand a particular concept? Who were these students and what interventions are needed?*
- *Was the task that they completed too difficult or too easy?*
- *How could the task be adapted in the future?*
- *How could the approach to teaching the topic be adapted in the so that all students develop appropriate procedural fluency and conceptual understanding?*

- 4.7 Provide oral and written feedback to students that helps them to know what they need to learn next and what they need to do to get there.

Teachers should ensure that they create a supportive classroom environment so that feedback to students can be most effective.

All oral and written feedback to students should:

- *acknowledge what they have learned;*

- help them to recognise their next steps in learning and how to take them;
- scaffold or support their next steps;
- encourage the correction of errors or improvement of a piece of work;
- avoid comparisons with other students;
- provide students with the opportunity to respond.

Effective feedback causes students to think and reflect rather than react emotionally. It helps them move forward and gives them confidence to move forward.

Teachers should begin any feedback by recognising the effort a student has made, identifying good aspects of their work and being clear about what makes it good, before discussing how they can improve it.

Teachers should use the opportunities created by students working in small groups, pairs and individually to give feedback to individual students and small groups. This should be the most frequent and regular form of oral feedback as it is direct and immediate. Teachers should also use opportunities that arise during whole class teaching to provide effective feedback to students.

Written feedback ('marking') should always indicate how the work can be improved. Written comments should aim to focus on whether the student has mastered the learning objectives associated with the task.

Example (Year 5):

Hana recognised that her students responded better to written comments on their writing if she gave them a specific 'prompt' to make a change or improvement. She then provided time in lessons for students to make these changes.

For example:

Hana marked the story that Fatma had written. Fatma's story ended quite abruptly. Previously, Hana might have commented: 'Your story has a good plot and storyline. However, it ends very suddenly'. Instead, she wrote: 'Your story has a good plot and storyline. However, it ends very suddenly. You can improve your story by writing a longer ending showing how the child was reunited with her family. Write about how the parents felt at the end'.

As a result Fatma knew what she needed to do to improve the work and was able to write a more satisfying ending.

4.8 Encourage and support students to assess and review their own work and the work of their peers.

Teachers should plan self- and peer-assessment opportunities into lessons once they are sure that students understand what they are aiming for.

Teachers should begin to develop students' skills in self- and peer-assessment by modelling how to assess a task. This can be done with the whole class using previous examples of students' work. Teachers should then support students to become better at assessing their own work and that of their peers through providing them with assessment criteria for tasks. They should support students to start by identifying where criteria have been met and then where things are missing. They should then help them to suggest what could be done in order to meet the criteria.

Teachers can then provide opportunities in lessons for students to:

- explain to the whole class or a small group or a partner what they did well and what could be improved in a recently completed task;

- write their own evaluative comments at the end of piece of work describing how far they think that they have achieved the learning objectives and whether there are any ways they could have improved the work further;
- discussing with another student or the teacher how far they think that they (or the other student) have achieved the learning objectives and whether there are any ways they could improve the work further;
- discussing and agreeing targets for improvement with the teacher.

Example:

Aidah uses a prompt sheet to help her students engage in peer-assessment. The prompt sheet supports them to use positive and helpful language and to make evaluative comments based on evidence. Examples of prompts include:

- *What I really like about this is...*
- *This is your best sentence because...*
- *You have met the criteria here by...*
- *This section isn't clear because...*
- *You could make this even better by...*
- *To reach the next stage you need to...*

- 4.9 Identify and respond to the different needs and prior learning of students through effective targeting and types of questions during whole class discussions.

Teachers should differentiate their questioning to meet the needs of individual students, not differentiate the topics taught or the learning objectives that they are working towards.

They should make effective use of assessment evidence gleaned from questioning, listening to and observing students (see section 4.2) to adapt their questioning to meet the needs of different students.

In particular, they should use their knowledge of students' prior learning to target questions at specific individuals during whole class discussions. Teachers should use such targeted questioning to assess further the level of their understanding and any support that they may need (see section 2.3).

Teachers should also use their knowledge of students' prior learning to choose the appropriate types of questions to ask specific individuals during whole class discussions (see section 2.4). They should differentiate their questioning to scaffold and support lower-attaining student's thinking and to provide further challenge to higher-attaining students.

- 4.10 Adapt tasks to match the different needs and prior learning of students; provide increased challenge for higher-attaining students and more scaffolding and support for lower-attaining students.

Teachers should differentiate the tasks that they design to meet the different needs of individual students, not differentiate the topics taught or the learning objectives that they are working towards.

They should make effective use of assessment evidence gleaned from questioning, listening to and observing students (see section 4.2) to ensure that tasks are appropriately challenging for all students (see section 3.3).

When planning, teachers should adapt tasks so that they offer greater challenge to higher-attaining students and deepen their understanding of the same subject content. Students who find an aspect of the work difficult should be provided with greater scaffolding and support. For example, a task could be: broken down into smaller steps; be supported by additional prompts; modified to provide an easier level of challenge.

Example (Year 9 Functional English):

Gilbert planned a short unit of work focusing on writing an effective instructional text. The unit lasted for two weeks. Previously, students had studied a range of instructional texts, including carrying out both effective and ineffective instructions, (for example: how to get from A to B on a map; how to make an egg sandwich) and built up their knowledge as readers. This follow-on unit started with a lesson that drew on what students already knew as readers so that they could transfer this knowledge into their own writing. In the opening lesson:

- 1. The class revisited two carefully selected instructional texts that had been studied in previous lessons. Through whole class teaching, Gilbert showed the students how to analyse the structure of each and how to choose effective vocabulary. Through effective questioning he drew out their prior learning.*
- 2. Together they drew up a set of agreed criteria for writing an effective instructional text.*
- 3. Gilbert then used shared writing, in which he modelled how to plan and compose the beginning of a new piece of instructional writing.*
- 4. After this, the students worked independently (either individually or in pairs) to plan their own text. Some students worked with a pre-prepared planning sheet that included a flow chart to help them to structure their plan. They were also given a set of prompt questions so that they could check that their work met the learning objectives.*
- 5. In the final plenary, students worked in small groups to compare their plans; one student from each group talked through their plan to the whole class.*

Gilbert listened carefully to the presentations in the final plenary and realised that a number of students did not yet have a clear understanding of how to organise their ideas into a clear sequence. Others were still struggling with using the correct imperative verb form at the start of each instructional step. He used this assessment information to modify his plan for the next lesson in the sequence. He decided to focus more time with these two groups of students to re-consider the structure and vocabulary of an instructional text. Whilst he was working with this group, the other students who had made good plans would work independently.

- 4.11 Provide targeted support to students who are struggling through one-to-one and small group teaching during lessons and outside of lessons.

When assessment indicates that an individual or small group of students have failed to grasp a key idea, concept or have difficulty mastering a specific skill, teachers should take immediate action to support their learning (see section 4.4).

Teachers should ensure that they understand the reasons why particular students are struggling. For example: a language/literacy problem; lack of understanding of a key concept; lack of prior experience; or the result of a specific learning difficulty. Following this, teachers should group together students who have a common need so that they can provide appropriate targeted support in a manageable way.

Research evidence (e.g. Muijs & Reynolds, 2001) supports the use of very direct, structured teaching and learning for students who make slow progress. This may take the form of short additional lessons (e.g. 20/30 minutes) that are focused on one key aspect of language (e.g. vocabulary), concept, or skill. These additional or 'extra' lessons should proceed at a brisk pace, teaching students in small sequential steps, accompanied by detailed explanations and concrete examples.

Example (Year 6):

Through continuously assessing learning, Munah identified a group of students who were not meeting expectations for writing. She planned some targeted intervention lessons for these students outside of their main lessons. She planned a structured approach to each lesson that followed a pattern of:

- **Remember.** *Munah reviewed previous learning and activated prior knowledge.*
- **Model.** *Munah identified a key learning objective and showed students how to achieve it through demonstrating and engaging them in the thinking required.*
- **Try.** *Munah set students a short task that they could achieve success in with her support.*
- **Apply.** *Students worked independently on a similar task (e.g. same problem, different content; same reading skill, different text). Munah focused on providing support and feedback to individuals.*
- **Review.** *Final plenary to secure the learning.*

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