

### **Be Courageous – Planning transdisciplinary assessment and learning tasks.**

Don't be afraid of doing things differently. Using backwards design as guidance, focus first on skill development instead of content knowledge. Think of specific students or classes and imagine them being engaged in these tasks. Are they all saying, thinking and creating the same thing? If so, revisit your plans again to refine and improve. A recent year 6 class wrote and performed fables in Mandarin using Hanyu Pinyin. Students used, and were assessed on, Mandarin knowledge and skills as well as social, communication and self-management skills.

### **Be a Thinker and Communicator – Prioritize Collaborative Planning.**

Collaboration has always been the key for teaching and learning in a PYP classroom. Designing transdisciplinary tasks is best achieved through collaborative effort. Single subject teachers and homeroom teachers can assist each other in design, planning, delivery and assessment of such tasks. Teamwork between teachers and with students will help ensure success in students' approaches to learning development as there is greater opportunity for more teachers and students to self-assess and peer assess.

Recently, the Mandarin programme integrated with a year 2 unit of inquiry. Mandarin teachers and homeroom teachers collaboratively designed and planned a transdisciplinary task as the summative assessment task. A variety of on-going formative assessments on approaches to learning skills were effectively conducted during both Mandarin classes and homeroom unit of inquiry time. Students self-reflected and peer assessed PYP learner profile attributes and IB attitudes at the end of the unit.

### **Be Open Minded – Be open to try new ideas and new ways of thinking.**

A teacher's philosophical belief regarding skill and knowledge acquisition has a dramatic impact on students learning. Talk to a colleague or a mentor that you admire or who has a different perspective than yours. Imagine yourself teaching in a different way or delivering a different curriculum. Thinking out of the box and taking other suggestions can be a good starting point. Bring your students on board, acknowledging their ideas and appreciating their efforts in actively contributing in the creation of authentic assessment tasks.

### **Be an Inquirer and become Knowledgeable – Seek out appropriate professional development.**

As educators, we want to model the PYP learner profile and attitudes to be life-long learners. Professional development not only equips us with theory that allows us to make connections with practices but also enables us to further challenge our way of thinking, practicing and seeking different ways to achieve better results. This might be in the form of a current book, video clip, conference speaker or school visit. Joining local PYP school networks, meeting teachers from other PYP schools, using local resources or interviewing experts from school community could also provide opportunities of gaining different perspectives and accumulating subject knowledge.

### **Be Reflective and Balanced – Critically review weekly and unit planning documentation.**

Reflection informs further teaching and learning. Keep some key questions in mind: Does this task address all the essential elements? What specific skills and knowledge are being developed during this week or month? What aspects need to be enhanced? Are we still focused on our objectives while giving students freedom to inquire and be responsible learners? Have we catered to students' interests and different learning styles? Students, especially junior year students can actively participate in the reflection process. Work with your students and receive some constructive feedback.

### **Show Commitment – Make these skills clear and then continue to observe and monitor.**

Share the objectives of transdisciplinary tasks with students and parents. Clearly explain the focus doesn't only place on content knowledge but also skills and understanding. Assessment criteria need to be shared at the beginning and it is even better making an assessment rubric with your students. It helps students understand what the expectations are and to stay on task. Bear in mind, understanding and skills cannot be developed overnight. Teachers should provide guidance and constructive feedback in a timely manner to improve students' development. In long run, all your time in planning and monitoring will pay off.

### **Be Confident – Be confident in your plans, focusing on the process not the product.**

No one is perfect and teaching is a learning journey as well. Teachers and students need to understand that making mistakes and finding tasks challenging are important parts of learning. Skill development occurs when the focus switches from the product to the process, from memorizing to applying, from copying to creating, from following to evaluating. Be confident when there are doubts about these slightly time consuming and students directing tasks. Share your skills and knowledge confidently. Believe the way we supporting our students are the best practice to develop skilful global citizens.