

Teaching irregular verbs using game-based assessments and own-choice quizzes

Target:

P.5 English language classroom learning

Rationale:

Learning irregular verbs has been one of the biggest challenges for Hong Kong students. Traditionally, students are assigned to learn the verb tense table through rote-learning. Unmotivated learners and less able learners often have difficulties learning the verb tense table on their own. Teachers of SKH Fung Kei Millennium Primary School were concerned about how they could enhance students' interest in learning grammar, and more importantly, students' willingness to shoulder more responsibilities for their learning. Collaborating with QSIP, the teachers experimented in connecting students between learning and assessment using game-based self-assessment activities.

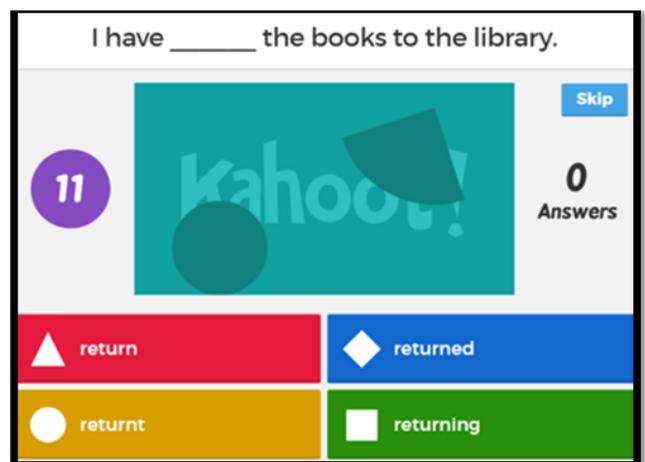
Strategies and Impacts:

i) Gamification for enhancing students' motivation to engage in their own learning

a. Kahoot online quiz

Playing online games has been one of the favourite individual iPad and letting them play online quiz game successfully boosted students' interest to learn. The teachers created a verb quiz on Kahoot (Fig. 1) and assigned their students to take it during the pre- and post- learning to check their knowledge of irregular verbs before and after taking part in a series of learning activities specially designed to brush up their irregular verb knowledge. Using a Kahoot game, the students obtained instant feedback which allowed them to see their own performance, and have it compared to their peers'. By retaking the same quiz after completing the learning tasks, the students had an opportunity to prove their ability to improve.

Fig. 1 Designing online quizzes with Kahoot



b. Teaching irregular verbs through rap

Instead of simply assigning students to memorize the verb tense table, the teachers taught with a rap titled The English Lessons, which was written with the target irregular verbs including given, heard, hurt, taught, read and slept. The teachers drew students' attention to the different patterns of irregular verbs and then taught them to rap and mime along to demonstrate their understanding of the lyrics. A class rap competition was organized for the students to display their learning. The students were encouraged to add actions and steps accordingly to show their creativity. They were also assigned to be the adjudicators to peer-assess their performance. The rapping activities allowed the students to say and listen to the irregular verbs repeatedly and purposefully. The lyrics-stuck-in-my-head phenomenon resulted from it aided the students in memorizing the irregular verbs.

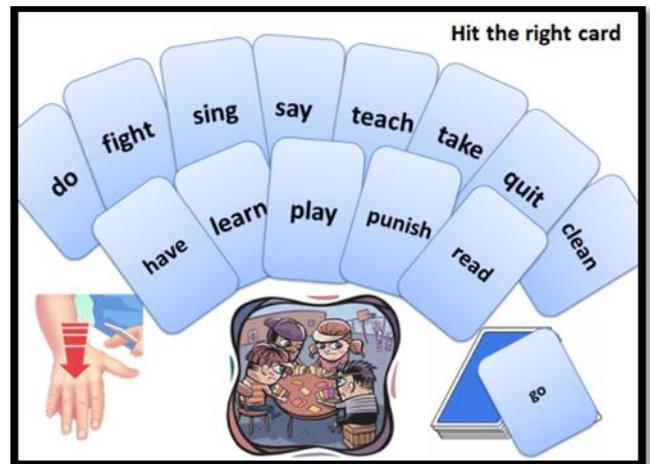


Fig. 2 Teaching with a rap that engages students in learning verbs repeatedly and purposefully

c. Using card game

A card game was designed to let the students practise and self-assess their learning in a more relaxed manner. The game was called 'Hit the right card!'. The students were given a number of cards, each written a verb. The students took turn to lay their cards, and all hit the one that showed a verb consisting of an irregular verb form. The last student who hit the card was required to say the different forms of the verb aloud. The teachers stated the rationale behind the game design and demonstrated how to play the game clearly. The game went smoothly among each group, and it enlivened the lesson!

Fig. 3 Using card game to encourage students' participation



ii) Taking own-choice quiz and evaluating learning outcome

Besides assigning students to re-take the Kahoot quiz, the teacher also arranged a pen-and-paper verb table quiz to assess students' learning performance. To facilitate the development of learner autonomy and to cater for learner diversity, the teachers allowed the students to take the quiz according to their will and ability (Fig. 4). The students filled out a learning contract (Fig. 5) to indicate their goals as well as the strategies they used for achieving their goals. The strategy options displayed on the learning contract served as tips to guide students through their revision.

Fig. 4 Students allowed to take the quiz according to their will and ability

| Quiz sheet A – (40 blanks) | | | |
|----------------------------|------|-----------------|--|
| Class: 2 () Name: | | | |
| Present | Past | Present Perfect | |
| 1 run | | | |
| 2 see | | | |
| 3 cut | | | |
| 4 finish | | | |
| 5 take | | | |
| 6 speak | | | |
| 7 swim | | | |
| 8 draw | | | |
| 9 buy | | | |
| 10 drink | | | |
| 11 have | | | |
| 12 carry | | | |
| 13 find | | | |
| 14 write | | | |
| 15 come | | | |
| 16 invite | | | |
| 17 throw | | | |
| 18 sleep | | | |
| 19 read | | | |
| 20 give | | | |

| Quiz sheet B – (30 blanks) | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------------|--|
| Class: 2 () Name: | | | |
| Present | Past | Present Perfect | |
| 1 run | | | |
| 2 see | | | |
| 3 cut | cut | | |
| 4 do | | | |
| 5 take | | | |
| 6 speak | spoke | | |
| 7 swim | | swum | |
| 8 draw | drew | | |
| 9 buy | | | |
| 10 drink | drank | | |
| 11 have | had | had | |
| 12 play | | | |
| 13 find | found | | |
| 14 write | | | |
| 15 come | | | |
| 16 invite | invited | | |
| 17 throw | | thrown | |
| 18 sleep | | | |
| 19 read | | | |
| 20 give | | | |

| Quiz sheet C – (20 blanks) | | | |
|----------------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| Class: 2 () Name: | | | |
| Present | Past | Present Perfect | |
| 1 run | run | | |
| 2 see | saw | | |
| 3 cut | cut | | |
| 4 do | | | |
| 5 take | took | | |
| 6 speak | spoke | | |
| 7 swim | swam | | swum |
| 8 draw | drew | | |
| 9 buy | | | |
| 10 drink | drank | | |
| 11 have | had | had | |
| 12 carry | | | carried |
| 13 find | found | | |
| 14 write | wrote | | written |
| 15 come | | | |
| 16 invite | invited | | invited |
| 17 throw | threw | | |
| 18 sleep | | | slept |
| 19 read | | | |
| 20 give | | | given |

Fig. 5 Learning contract indicating students' goals

My learning contract:

I decided to do Quiz C and get **20** out of **20** marks.

I decided to spend **10** minutes doing revision.

- I will
 - read aloud the verbs /rap lyrics
 - spell aloud the difficult words
 - copy each difficult word **3** time(s)
 - cover Columns B and C with a piece of paper and work out the answers without looking at them.

The own choice quiz design also aimed to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on the connection between the decision of their learning strategies and their learning outcomes. The teachers guided the students to go over the self-evaluation process using the form below (Fig. 6).

Fig. 6 Students engaged in self-evaluation process

| Self-Evaluation | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I did better than the goal I set. My quiz score is higher than I expected. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I accomplished my goal. I am satisfied with my quiz score. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I accomplished my goal. My quiz score is higher/lower than I expected. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I didn't accomplish my goal. My quiz score is higher/lower than I expected. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I didn't accomplish my goal. My quiz score is disappointing. |
| What boosted / hindered my performance? What else have I learnt from this experience? | |

The teachers encouraged students to keep revising and self-assessing their learning after school using the revision worksheets below. The student could choose to take the easier version, in which the target verbs were put in the same order as they appeared in the rap, or the more challenging level, which the verbs were arranged in alphabetical order. Spare worksheets were placed in the classroom so that the students could get sufficient practice according to their will and ability.

Fig. 7 Students challenge themselves with quizzes of their own choice

The irregular verbs quiz

The two versions

Version A

| | Present Tense ^o | Past Tense ^o | Past Participle ^o |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 ^o | teach ^o | | |
| 2 ^o | learn ^o | | |
| 3 ^o | spea ^o | | |
| 4 ^o | write ^o | | |
| 5 ^o | sleep ^o | | |
| 6 ^o | sing ^o | | |
| 7 ^o | do ^o | | |
| 8 ^o | | gave ^o | |
| 9 ^o | say ^o | | |
| 10 ^o | | | known ^o |
| 11 ^o | keep ^o | | |
| 12 ^o | fight ^o | | |
| 13 ^o | spit ^o | | |
| 14 ^o | sit ^o | | |
| 15 ^o | hear ^o | | |
| 16 ^o | beat ^o | | |
| 17 ^o | | | |
| 18 ^o | catch ^o | | |
| 19 ^o | | | |
| 20 ^o | read ^o | | |
| 21 ^o | quit ^o | | |
| 22 ^o | hurt ^o | | |
| 23 ^o | go ^o | | |
| 24 ^o | | | |
| 25 ^o | tell ^o | | |

The words are put in the same order as they are used in the rap.

Version B

| | Present Tense ^s | Past Tense ^s | Past Participle ^s |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 ^s | beat ^s | | |
| 2 ^s | catch ^s | | |
| 3 ^s | | came ^s | |
| 4 ^s | do ^s | | |
| 5 ^s | eat ^s | | |
| 6 ^s | fight ^s | | |
| 7 ^s | | gave ^s | |
| 8 ^s | go ^s | | |
| 9 ^s | hear ^s | | |
| 10 ^s | hurt ^s | | |
| 11 ^s | keep ^s | | |
| 12 ^s | | | knelt ^s |
| 13 ^s | know ^s | | |
| 14 ^s | learn ^s | | |
| 15 ^s | | met ^s | |
| 16 ^s | quit ^s | | |
| 17 ^s | read ^s | | |
| 18 ^s | say ^s | | |
| 19 ^s | sing ^s | | |
| 20 ^s | | | |
| 21 ^s | spea ^s | | |
| 22 ^s | spit ^s | | |
| 23 ^s | teach ^s | | |
| 24 ^s | tell ^s | | |
| 25 ^s | write ^s | | |

The words are put in alphabetical order

iii) Familiarizing students with the exam format and answering techniques

Finally, a grammar quiz written in the exam format was used to test students' knowledge of the target verbs, including meanings and verb forms. Teachers explained the task situation and instructions clearly and made sure the students knew the verbs choices provided were just hints; the students were required to complete the passage using the correct forms of verbs. (Please see appendix for the quiz paper)

Impacts on students:

1. Enhanced positive engagement and motivation

The students participated more actively and willingly during a grammar lesson. They demonstrated pleasing improvement in irregular verb knowledge, and they were able to see such improvement by carrying out the self-assessment tasks.

2. Being responsible and autonomous learners

The students were allowed to shoulder more responsibilities during the learning process. They played the role of active learners who set goals, select learning materials and strategies, and evaluate their learning performance.

Impacts on teachers:

1. Increased knowledge in the development of classroom assessment

The teachers have gained greater confidence and competence in designing a wider range of classroom assessment activities that served both teaching and assessment purposes. They realized the importance of stating the rationales of activity design as well as modeling the responsibilities the students are required to take to boost students' motivation and self-efficacy of learning when they are helping their students to become autonomous learners.

2. Enhanced professionalism through collaborative planning session and peer observation

The teachers benefited from their positive reaction to this school-university partnership collaboration project. They shared opinions and strategies for improvement and being very supportive during the implementation process. Their honest and open-mindedness, as well as the trust and communication within them, had created a high morale, which was a crucial element for implementing the new teaching ideas that fostered learner autonomy in the classroom successfully.

Acknowledgements:

SKH Fung Kei Millennium Primary School

Appendix:

A grammar quiz designed to familiarize students with the examination format

Grammar Quiz ↵

↵

*Sammy is drafting a blogpost about an English lesson. Help him to complete his draft. The verbs in the table below are given as hints. Make sure you **use the correct form** of them. You should underline the time references that tell you the answers.* ↵

↵

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---|
| dance↵ | enjoy↵ | fight↵ | have↵ | learn↵ | ↵ |
| play↵ | sing↵ | sleep↵ | speak↵ | write↵ | ↵ |

↵

English lessons have e.g. **become** more enjoyable lately! Sam and David used to fight a lot, but now they listen carefully to Miss Cheung. We don't just copy notes from the blackboard. We (1)_____ and (2)_____ more in English every day. ↵

↵

Yesterday, I (3)_____ a fun and exciting English lesson in the school hall. I (4)_____ how to use the different verb forms. We rapped and (5)_____ happily. We even (6)_____ card games. Everyone (7)_____ the lesson. Miss Cheung was so happy because no one (8)_____ and (9)_____ during the lesson. It was amazing no one was sleeping and fighting. ↵

↵

My English homework today is simple! All I need to do is to sing an English song for five times. I have already (10)_____ it for 10 times. Now I can sing the whole song without looking at the lyrics. ↵