

Divya Ajit

Cambridge and IB Practitioner |
English and Literacy Educator

Portfolio of Teaching Practice | 2025



Inspiring readers, thinkers and empathetic learners

My Teaching Philosophy

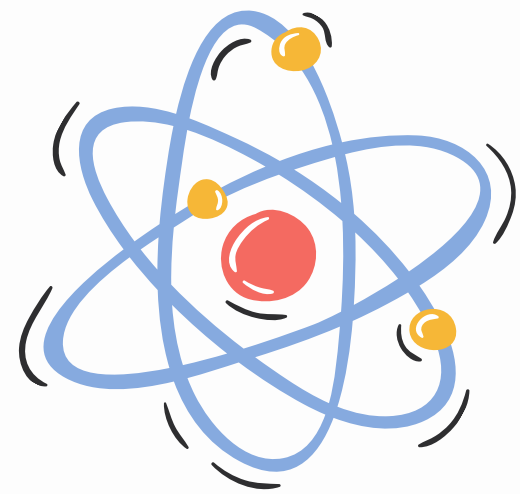
I believe learning begins with curiosity and grows through connection. It's a shared journey in which teachers, too, keep learning and discovering about themselves and about each child as they grow and evolve.

I am deeply passionate about literacy development and believe that reading and writing deepen learning by helping children engage meaningfully with the world around them. Through inquiry-based learning, I guide students to question, discover, and express their thinking, building both academic confidence and open-mindedness. As a Literature lover, I believe storytelling can be used as a powerful tool in teaching and Literature can nurture self-awareness and empathy. I also enjoy creating initiatives that expand children's access to books and stories and inspire lifelong reading habits.



- B.A. in English Language and Literature
- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PgCE)
- Certified Jolly Phonics Trainer
- IB PYP Category 1 Training
- Child Protection and Safeguarding certified

Inquiry-based Learning Approach



Unit Planning and Engagements



Assessment



Continuous Feedback



Student Agency

Unit Planning

Grade/Year level:	2 A, B, C and D	Collaborative teaching team:	Ms.Vanita, Ms.Chitra, Ms.Shruthi, Ms.Arthi, Ms.Divya, Ms.Smita, Ms.Neha, Ms. Janaki
Date:		Timeline: (continued investigation, revisiting once, or numerous times, discrete beginning and ending, investigating in parallel with others)	7 weeks



Transdisciplinary theme

Sharing the Planet

Which parts of the transdisciplinary theme will the unit of inquiry focus on?

An inquiry into rights and responsibilities in the struggle to share finite resources with other people and with other living things;



Central idea (Does the central idea invite inquiry and support students' conceptual understandings of the transdisciplinary theme?)

The needs of living things cause them to adapt to their environment.

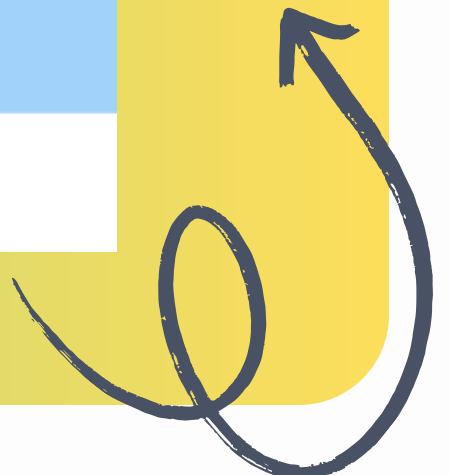


Lines of inquiry (What teacher questions and provocations will inform the lines of inquiry?)






Do the lines of inquiry:

- clarify and develop an understanding of the central idea?
- define the scope of the inquiry and help to focus learning and teaching?

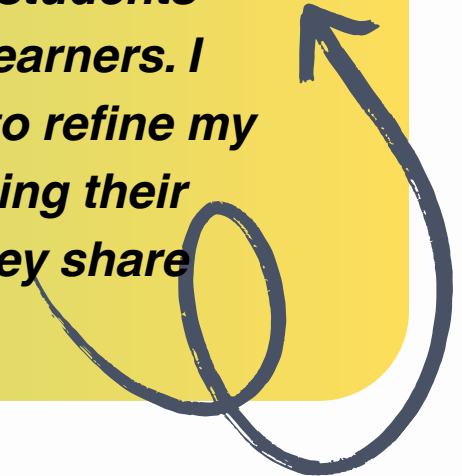
- How living things are connected to and depend on their environment
- The reasons why living things adapt to survive
- Our responsibility in protecting living things and shared resources



Unit Planning

<p> Key concepts (Do the key concepts focus the direction of the inquiry and provide opportunities to make connections across, between and beyond subjects?)</p>	<p> Related concepts (Do the related concepts provide a lens for conceptual understandings within a specific subject?)</p>	<p> Learner profile attributes (What opportunities will there be to develop, demonstrate and reinforce the learner profile?)</p>
<p>Causation: To explore <i>why</i> living things adapt and what causes these adaptations. Connection: To examine relationships between living things, environments, and resources.</p>	<p>Habitat: Living things have needs that connect them to their environment. Adaptation: Change and adaptation help living things survive. Responsibility: Our responsibility in protecting living things and shared resources.</p>	<p>Thinker: Learners use critical and creative thinking to analyze <i>causes</i> (why adaptations happen) and <i>connections</i> (how habitats support life). Caring: Learners develop empathy for living things and understand the importance of protecting habitats responsibly.</p>
<p> Approaches to learning (link to ATLS here) (What authentic opportunities are there for students to develop and demonstrate approaches to learning?)</p>		
<p>Research Skills: Formulating Questions Students will be explicitly taught how to do research by asking questions, gathering and organising necessary data through various sources such as books, videos and field trips. Curiosity built through provocations, expert talks, will make students question what they see, and teachers will help students take forward those questions by building on research skills to find their answers.</p> <p>Communication: Presenting Students will be given voice and choice to share findings through oral and written reports, posters and creative writing. Language will be integrated to teach report writing skills; art skills can be integrated to make models and posters.</p>		
<p> Action (What opportunities are there for building on prior learning to support potential student-initiated action?) (Potential opportunities for <i>Participation, Advocacy, Social Justice, Social Entrepreneurship, and Lifestyle Choices</i>)</p>		

This unit plan was developed collaboratively with my Grade 2 team. My approach to inquiry-based learning focused on providing students with meaningful resources that included books, simple articles, and hands-on materials that supported the different interests of learners. I encouraged students to explore their curiosities, ask deeper questions, and build new knowledge. I also made a conscious effort to refine my own questioning techniques to promote higher-order thinking. Supporting students in improving their questioning skills, organizing their ideas through visible thinking routines, differentiating engagements for diverse learners, and offering voice and choice in how they share their understanding were key elements of my classroom practice.



Engagements

Week 3 (9/9 to 13/9)

Date	Learning Goals from Toddle	Learning Outcome	Learning Engagements	Resources															
11/09/24-12/09/24	<p>Research skills</p> <p>Formulating and planning - Ask or design relevant questions of interest that can be researched.</p> <p>Data gathering and recording - Record observations by drawing, note taking, charting, tallying, writing statements, annotating images</p> <p>Data gathering and recording - Use all senses to find and notice relevant details</p>	<p>LOI 2: The reasons why living things adapt to survive.</p> <p>Different adaptations help animals and plants survive by responding to needs or challenges in their habitats (e.g., finding food, keeping warm, staying safe).</p>	<p>Day 1 – Why do animals adapt?</p> <p>Hook (5 mins)</p> <p>Show short, engaging images or clips (or a slide) of animals in different habitats – polar bear, camel, frog, and bird.</p> <p>Ask guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What do you notice about their bodies?</i> • <i>Why do you think they look different?</i> • <i>How might those differences help them live in their homes?</i> <p>Let students wonder before introducing the word adaptation. The word ‘adaptation’ can also be discussed after the exploration.</p> <p>Exploration Stations (25 mins)</p> <p>Set up 4 animal stations (rotate groups every 5–6 mins):(Encourage students to test and compare, not just observe)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Station</th> <th>Concept Focus</th> <th>Guiding Question (for recording sheet)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Webbed Feet</td> <td>Movement</td> <td><i>Why would some animals need feet like this?</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Beaks</td> <td>Food access</td> <td><i>How do different beaks help birds eat different foods?</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Blubber</td> <td>Warmth</td> <td><i>How does this help animals in cold places?</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feathers</td> <td>Protection</td> <td><i>What might all feathers do for birds living in...</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Station	Concept Focus	Guiding Question (for recording sheet)	Webbed Feet	Movement	<i>Why would some animals need feet like this?</i>	Beaks	Food access	<i>How do different beaks help birds eat different foods?</i>	Blubber	Warmth	<i>How does this help animals in cold places?</i>	Feathers	Protection	<i>What might all feathers do for birds living in...</i>	<p>Video</p> <p>Physical adaptation reflection</p> <p>Getepic Resources :</p> <p>Plants</p> <p>Animal Adaptations: Extreme Environments</p> <p>Who can live in a lake</p> <p>Webbed Feet - popsicle sticks with and without webbing</p> <p>Beaks -</p> <p>Encourage children to test and compare, not just observe. Students record “What I noticed” and “How it helps the animal” in simple drawings or words.</p> <p>Discussion & Reflection (10 mins)</p> <p>Bring everyone together:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What did you notice about these body features?</i> • <i>Why do you think these changes happen?</i> <p>Guide them to articulate cause and effect.</p>
Station	Concept Focus	Guiding Question (for recording sheet)																	
Webbed Feet	Movement	<i>Why would some animals need feet like this?</i>																	
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Engagements

		<p>LOI 2: The reasons why living things adapt to survive.</p> <p>Different adaptations help animals and plants survive by responding to needs or challenges in their habitats (e.g., finding food, keeping warm, staying safe).</p>	<p>Day 2 – Why do plants adapt? (40 mins)</p> <p>Recap (5 mins)</p> <p>Briefly revisit yesterday’s key idea:</p> <p>“Animals have body parts that help them survive. Do plants also have special features to survive?”</p> <p>Exploration Stations (25 mins)</p> <p>Plant Station (Station 5):</p> <p>Cactus: Water storage, thorns for protection Climber/Creeper: Support and sunlight Money plant: Adaptation to low light</p> <p>Wondering Questions:</p> <p><i>What problem does this plant face? (heat, dryness, lack of light)</i> <i>How does it solve that problem?</i></p> <p>Students record “What I noticed” and “How it helps the Plant” in simple draw or words, adding to their previous observations.</p> <p>Whole-class Connection (5–7 mins)</p> <p>Show quick visuals of other plant habitats (rainforest vs. desert). Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How are the plants different? Why do you think that is?</i> <p>Reflection (5–7 mins)</p> <p>“Which adaptation did you find most interesting, and why do you think the animal or plant needs it to survive?”</p>	<p>Getopic Resource: Plants Adaptations Animal Adaptations: Extreme Environments</p> <p>Read Aloud: What would you do if someone wants to eat you?</p>	<p>Whole-class Connection (5–7 mins)</p> <p>Show quick visuals of other plant habitats (rainforest vs. desert). Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How are the plants different? Why do you think that is?</i> <p>Reflection (5–7 mins)</p> <p>“Which adaptation did you find most interesting, and why do you think the animal or plant needs it to survive?”</p> <p>Encourage responses using “because...” to strengthen the cause and effect understanding.</p> <p>Students will begin adding ideas to their Big Learning class chart, “We Think They Adapt Because...”.</p>
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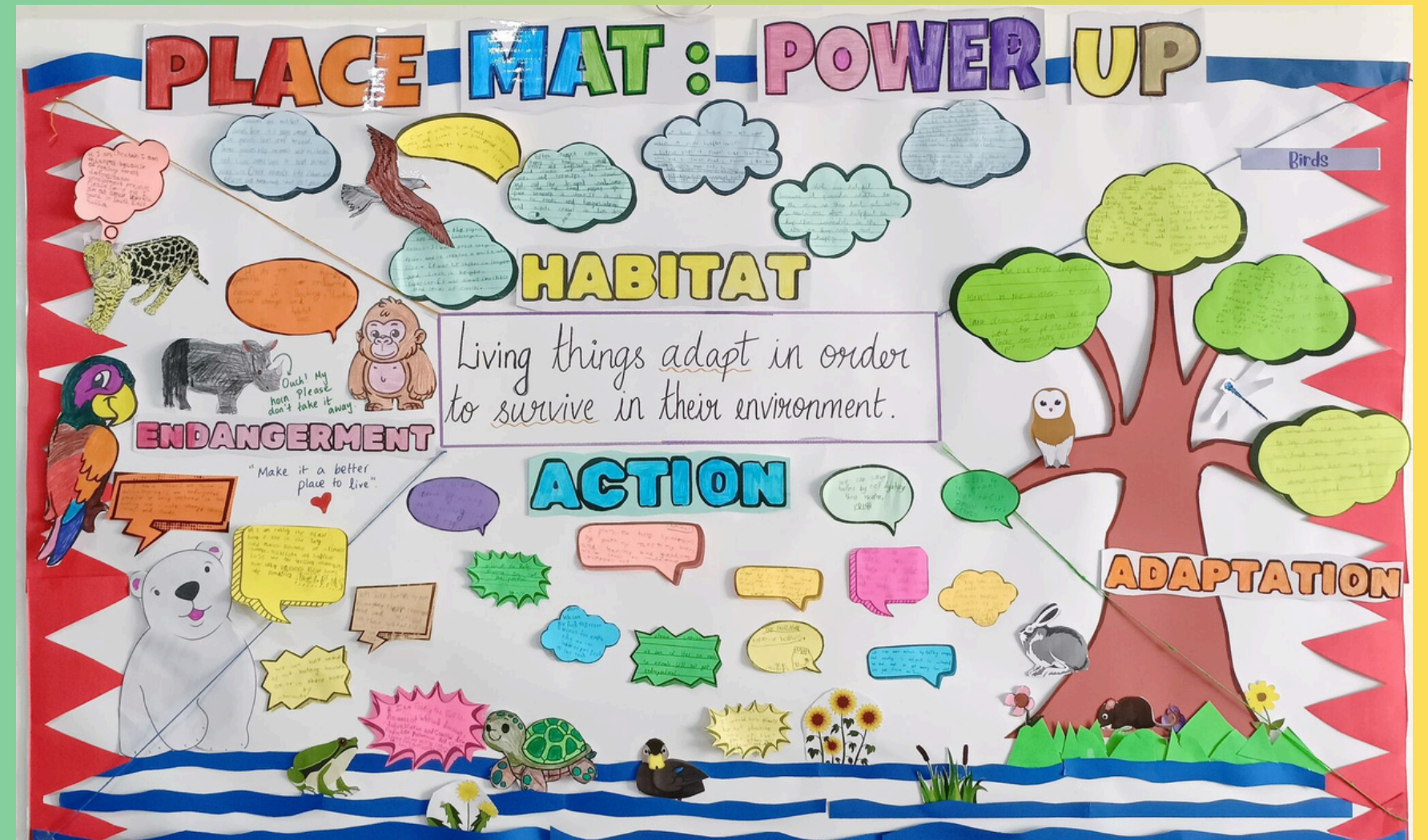
These two engagements were planned and implemented as part of the unit shown in the previous slide. The learning design prioritised exploration, allowing students ample time to investigate and record their ideas through notes, charts, or drawings. Students were given choice in how they organised and represented their thinking. During the final reflection, the teacher guided learners through different thinking routines to make sense of their observations and discussions, helping them build deeper understanding.



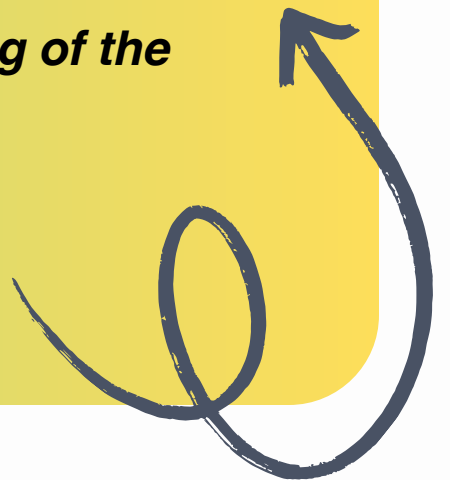
Engagements



Students exploring types of animal and plant adaptations. Animal adaptations such as beaks, feet were explored through tongs, sieve, fork, straws, feathers.



As students explored new concepts, they added their reflections and key learnings to this board, building their understanding of the central idea throughout the unit.



Engagements

Week 6 (30/9 to 4/10)				
Date	Learning Goals from Toddle	Learning Outcome	Learning Engagements	Resources
30/9/24	<p>Math Integration</p> <p>Research skills</p> <p>Information literacy</p> <p>Data gathering and recording - Use all senses to find and notice relevant details</p> <p>Formulating and planning - Ask or design relevant questions of interest that can be researched</p>	<p>LOI 3: Our responsibility in protecting living things and shared resources</p> <p>Math Concept: Data handling – Representing and interpreting information using bar graphs.</p> <p>Math Objective: Collect and represent data on causes of animal endangerment using a bar graph.</p> <p>Conceptual Objective: Identify and analyze human-caused threats that affect the survival of living things.</p> <p>Key Concept: Causation (What causes endangerment?)</p> <p>Related Concepts: Data, Pattern, Responsibility</p>	<p>Learners will learn to represent data about why animals become endangered and interpret the results to understand the biggest causes.</p> <p>Hook: (5-7 min)</p> <p>Show pictures of endangered animals (e.g., tiger, orangutan, sea turtle, elephant).</p> <p>Ask:</p> <p>“Why do you think some animals are becoming endangered?” “What are some things that humans might be doing that make it hard for animals to survive?”</p> <p>List student ideas, then introduce the 4 criteria (causes). - teacher can sort children’s ideas together as a class under the 4 criteria.</p> <p>Sorting Activity (10–12 mins)</p> <p>Divide students into small groups and give each group a set of “Endangered Animal Cards.” Each card lists one <i>main cause of endangerment</i> (the first threat).</p> <p>Task: Sort the cards into the 4 categories based on the <i>first threat</i> only.</p> <p>Once sorted, have groups count how many cards fall under each cause. They record these totals on the given tally chart sheet.</p> <p>Bar Graph Construction:</p> <p>Students use their data to create a bar graph.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X-axis: <i>Causes of Endangerment</i> • Y-axis: <i>Number of Animals</i> • Title: <i>Causes of Animal Endangerment</i> 	<p>Endangered species fact cards</p> <p>Graph</p> <p>Sorting trays labelled with 4 criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hunting/Poaching - Deforestation - Habitat Loss - Commercial/Residential Development

This engagement was a Math integration plan. Students were being introduced to Data Interpretation concepts in Math. Students explored the concepts of adaptation and habitat by studying data, graphs and charts.



Engagements

Support with sentence stems:

- “The tallest bar shows that...”
- “The smallest bar means...”

Analysis & Reflection: (10 mins)

Whole-class discussion:

- “Which threat was the biggest according to your data?”
- “Why do you think this threat affects so many animals?”
- “How do these causes connect to our central idea about survival and adaptation?”

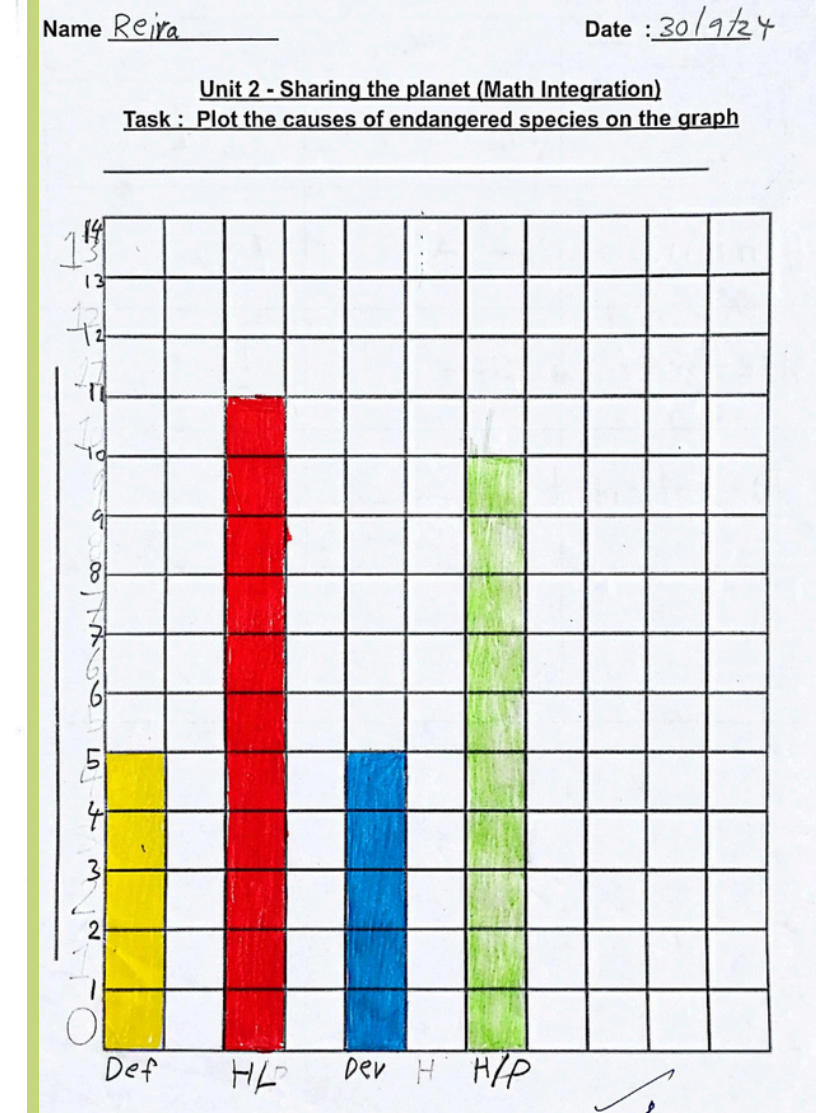
Individual Reflection (In UOI journal):

- Which is the biggest threat from your graph?
- Sort the threats from smallest to biggest.
- Why do you think this cause affects animals the most?

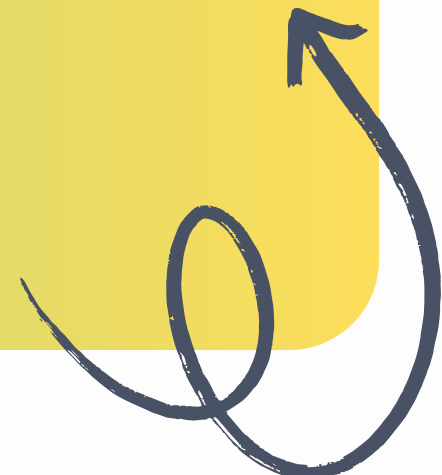
Extension / Differentiation:

For support: Provide partially completed graphs or pictographs instead of bar graphs.

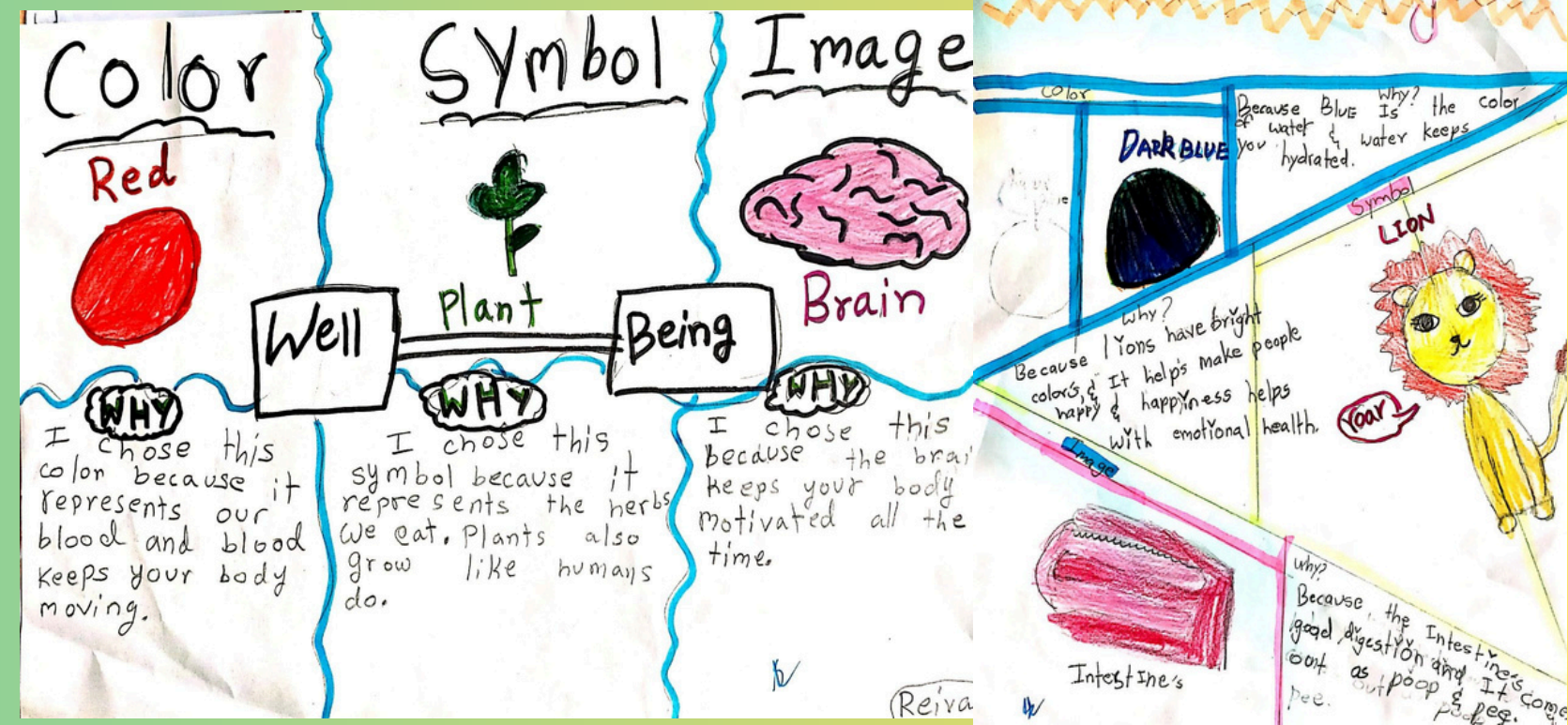
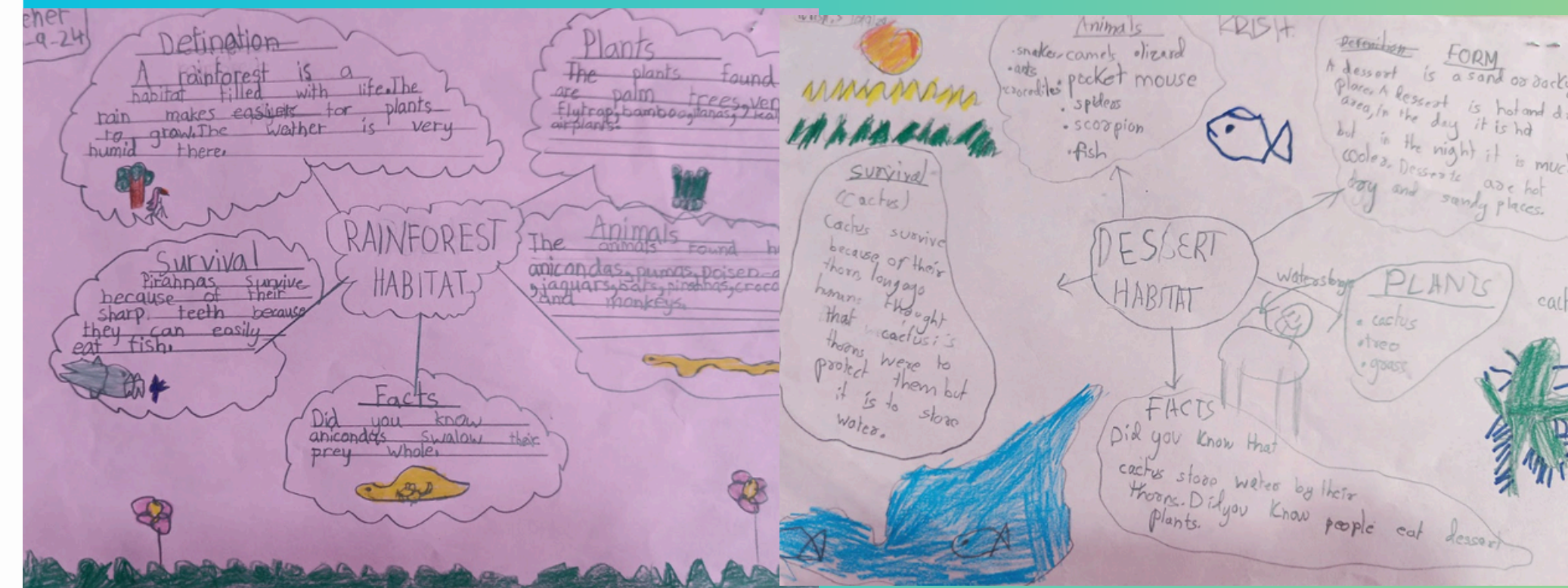
For challenge: Ask stronger students to compare *two groups' graphs* and discuss similarities/differences.



Students reflected how Math helps them make sense of Science and the world around them. Some students also reflected how Math is not just about calculations and how numbers have can represent different things.



Assessments



As part of our inquiry into habitats, students used the Frayer Model to explore how living things depend on their environment. They described features of different habitats, gave examples and non-examples, and explained their thinking using cause-and-effect language — “Because the desert is dry, camels store water.”

This formative assessment was designed for the Unit Who We Are. The central idea, Our well-being depends on maintaining balance in different aspects of our lives, guided students to inquire into the Line of Inquiry, Balancing all aspects of our life for well-being, with the related concepts being Balance and Well-being. Students created a visual representation of their understanding using the Colour-Symbol-Image thinking routine, where each element reflected a personal or conceptual understanding of balance in well-being. This particular task is special because it encouraged students to explore the concept from multiple perspectives and develop critical thinking skills through creative expression.

Continuous Feedback

Unit 2: Sharing the Plant

Living things adapt in order to survive in their

Formative Assessment Feedback Sheet – Why Do Living Things Live Here?

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Habitat Chosen: _____

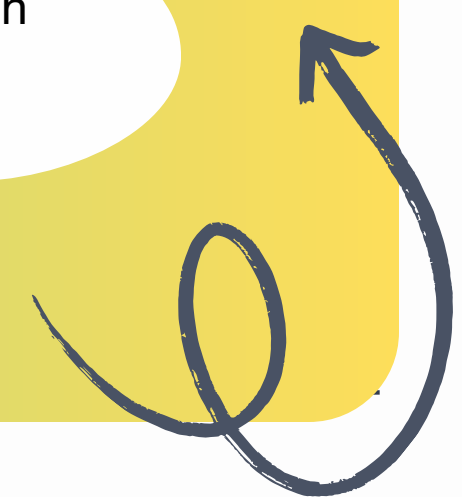
Teacher Feedback

Criteria	Emerging	Developing	Proficient
I can describe the main features of my habitat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can explain why living things can survive in this habitat.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can connect the needs of living things to their environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can use cause-and-effect language (e.g., because, so that, helps to).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My Frayer Model is complete and organized clearly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teacher Comments	Student Reflection
(What you did well) * <input type="checkbox"/> _____ * <input type="checkbox"/> _____	1. One thing I learned about habitats: _____ 2. One thing I can do better next time: _____ 3. I think my work shows understanding of why living things depend on their environment : <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> A little <input type="checkbox"/> Not yet
(Next steps / Feed forward) <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	

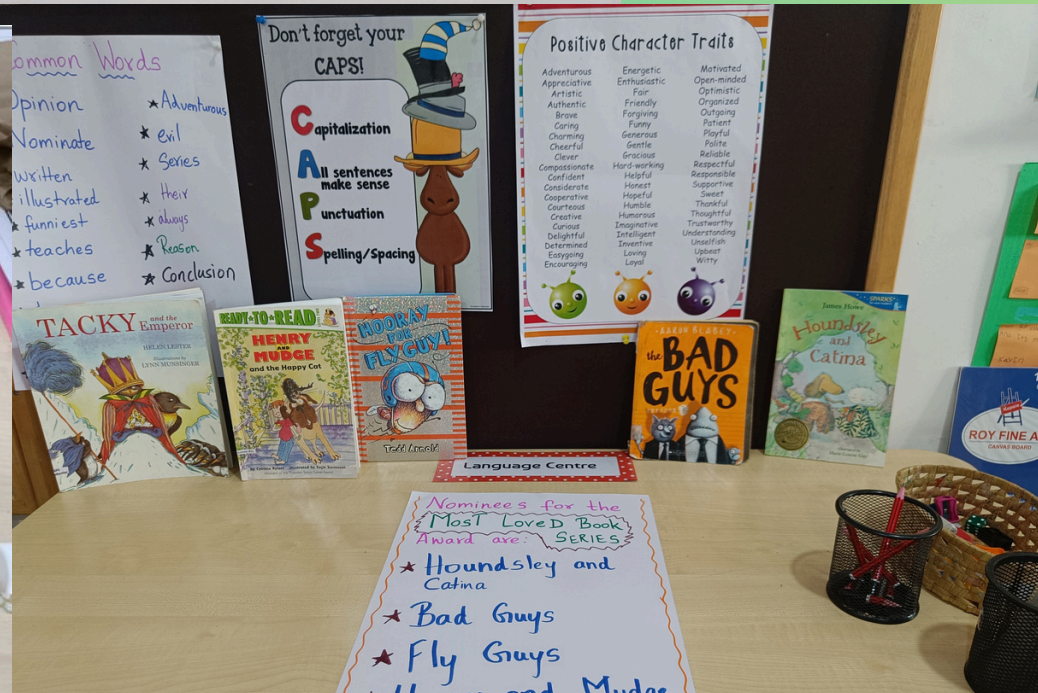
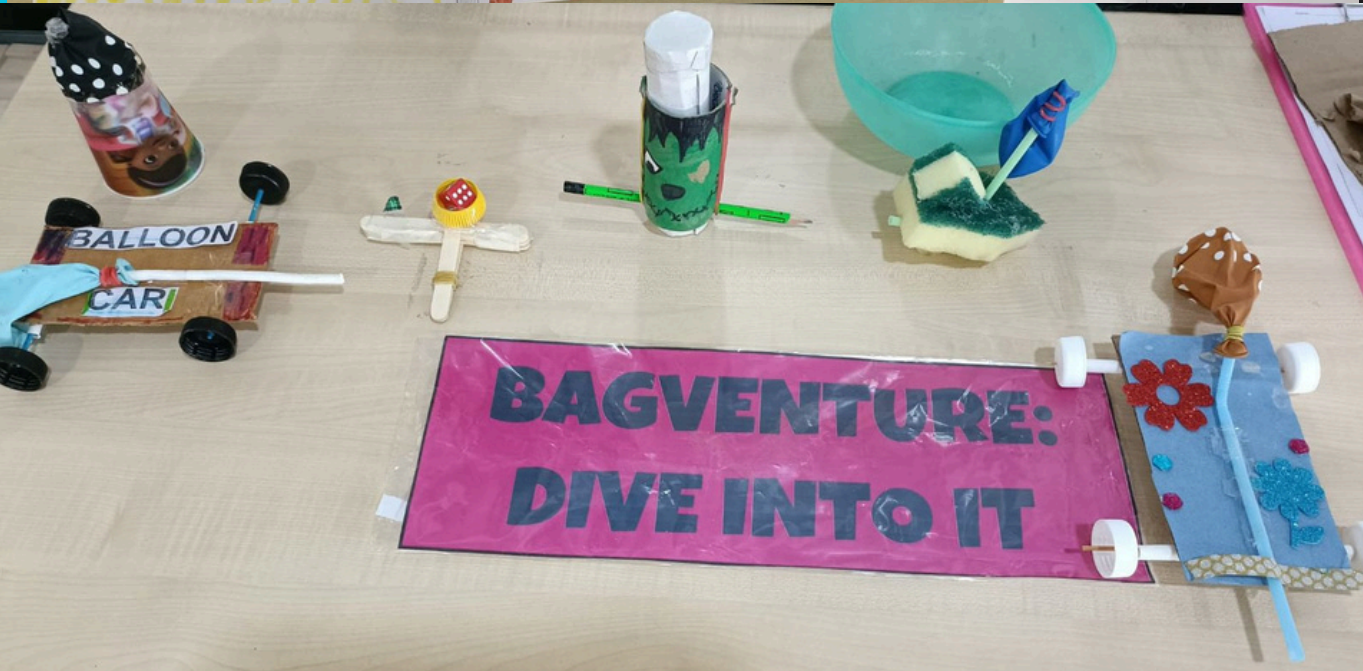
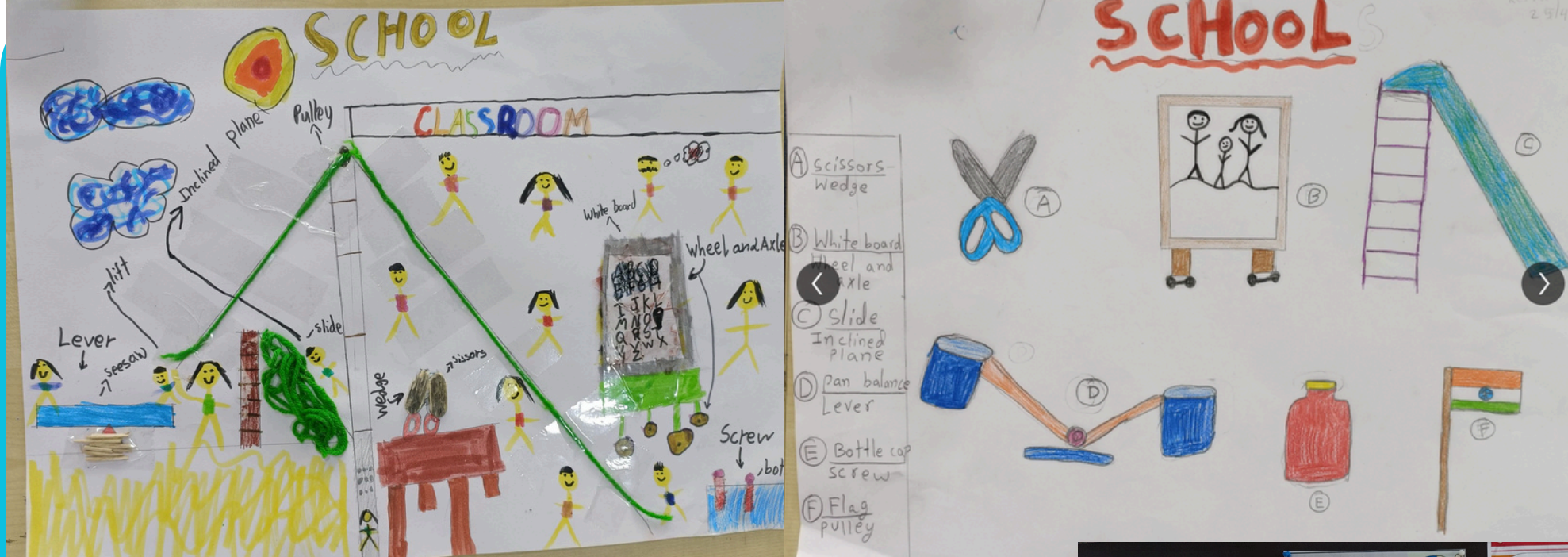
Continuous feedback was an important aspect of my teaching practice. It supports student growth, alongside feedforward to address any areas of misconception. Success criteria of assessments were co-created with students, ensuring clarity of expectations and fostering the transfer of knowledge. Regular student reflections were incorporated into each assessment, guiding adjustments and informing future learning engagements.

"In my teaching experience, learning often deepened when misconceptions were actively discussed and addressed. Feedforward was a crucial marker in each assessment, helping to identify and clarify any misconception students had about a concept."



Student Agency

One of the most important things I have learned is to involve students as active participants in their own learning. This helps them become more independent and take true ownership of their growth. In my classroom, this meant co-creating activity corners, setting up learning centres across subjects, and inviting students' ideas and recommendations for lesson engagements and resources.



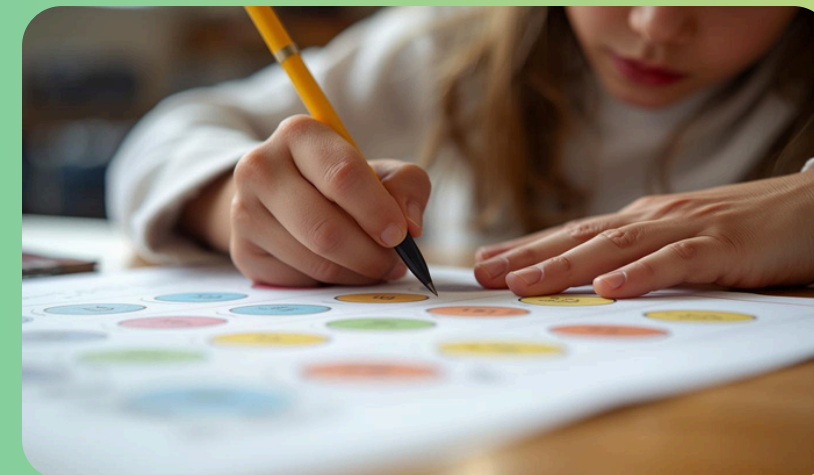
English Language and Literacy



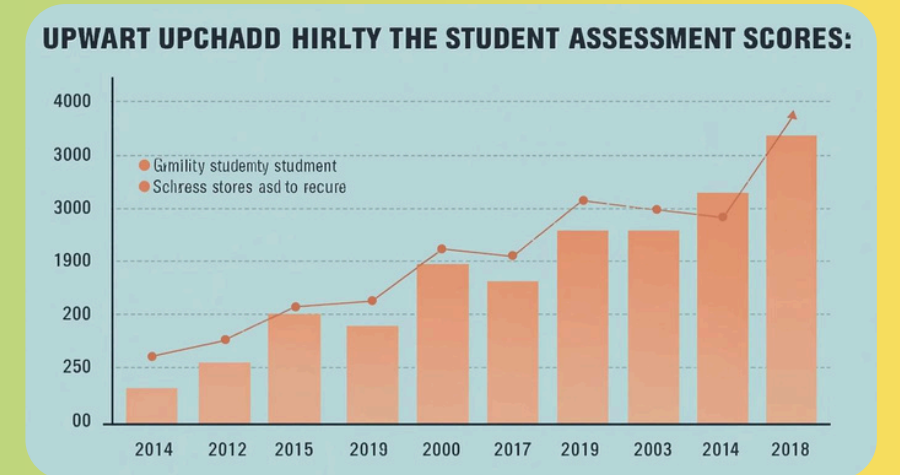
Approach and
Framework



Strategies



Resources



Impact

Approach and Framework

[Sample reading lesson](#)

[Sample writing lesson](#)

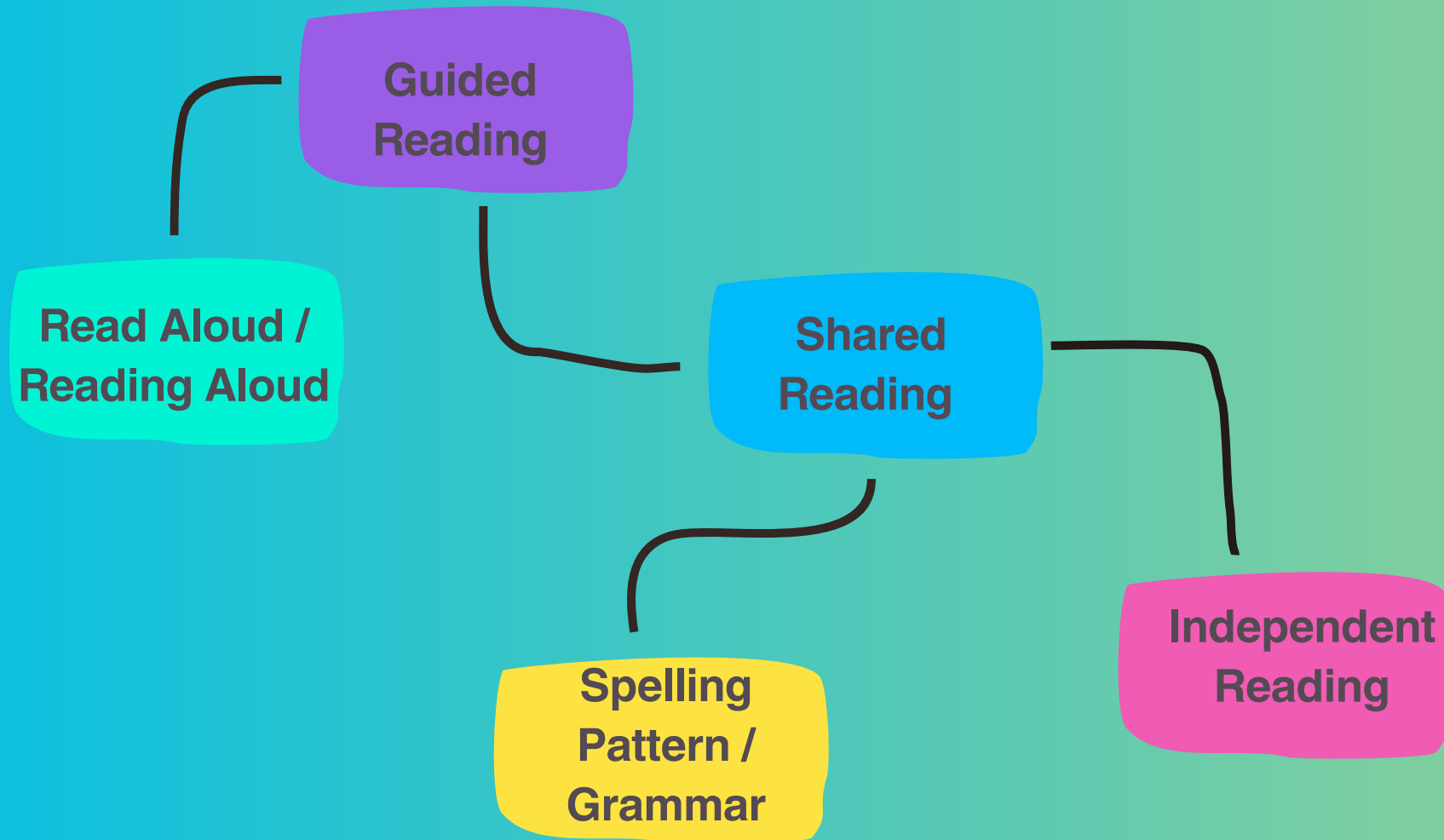
[Thin slicing SOP](#)

These sample lessons were designed for Grade 2. The approach focused on explicitly teaching and modeling a specific literacy skill, which students then applied and practiced within their current Unit of Study. In Reading, learners applied fluency or comprehension strategies to their fiction or nonfiction texts, while in Writing, they developed skills aligned with the genre of study that consisted of Narrative, Opinion, or Information writing. The Thin Slicing strategy was widely used in my teaching practice, and this document is an SOP I developed after extensive reading and research, with guidance from the Language Coordinator.

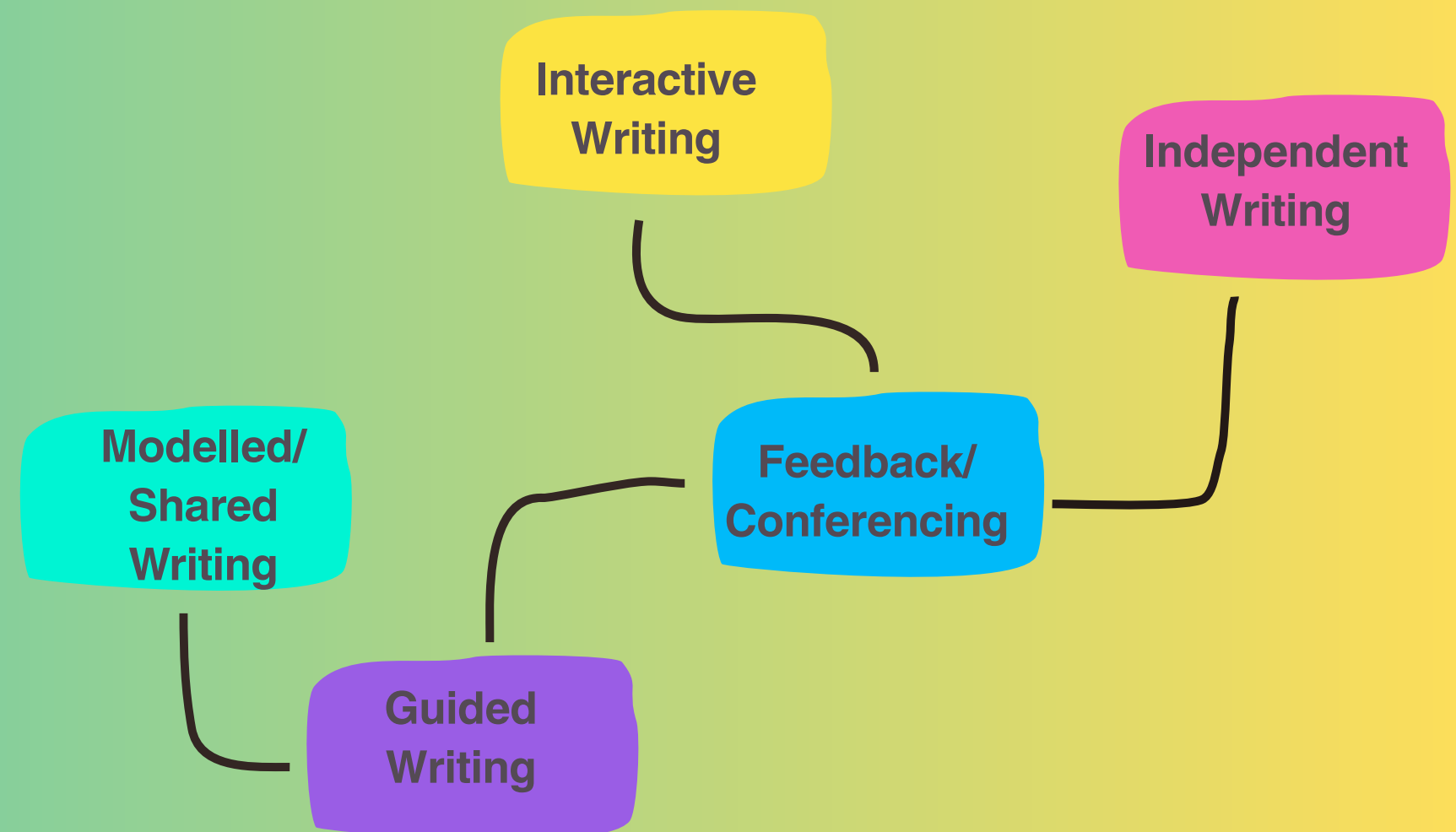
I have gained experience in a range of approaches to English language teaching and literacy development. My practice includes the Balanced Literacy approach and, more recently, the Structured Literacy approach, which emphasizes explicit instruction in spelling, grammar, and language comprehension. I have also taught fiction and nonfiction text types as outlined in the Cambridge Scheme of Work, and I am trained in the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP), where I use the workshop model to build reading and writing skills.

Strategies

READING



WRITING



These are some reading and writing strategies that I have gained experience in. They were part of a balanced literacy approach, but more importantly, they were used to differentiate and individualize learning. I used these strategies flexibly and in sequence to support diverse learners, ensuring that each child's needs were addressed.

Resources

To Get Ideas For a Small Moment...

- ★ Look at tiny topics notepad
- ★ Think about
 - in class
 - a day
 - a weekend
- ★ Use books to get inspired

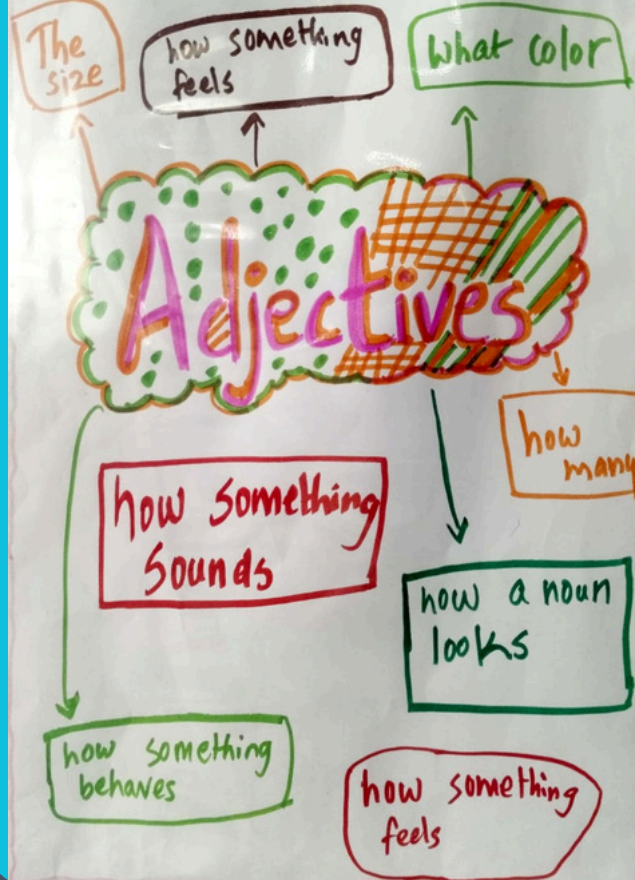


Good Information Writers

- ★ Think of a topic.
- ★ Plan the information across fingers.
- ★ Sketch or jot notes on each section.

LOOK FOR PROBLEMS Using Story Elements

- Is there a problem a character has?
- Any issue because of the setting? (war, shelter)
- The character wants it, but it is not easy to get it.



The Language board displayed support charts for reading, writing, grammar, and spelling. These acted as teaching aids that students could turn to whenever they were unsure or stuck. Gradually, they became comfortable using these resources independently, helping them build confidence without always needing teacher assistance.

The happiest flight of my life



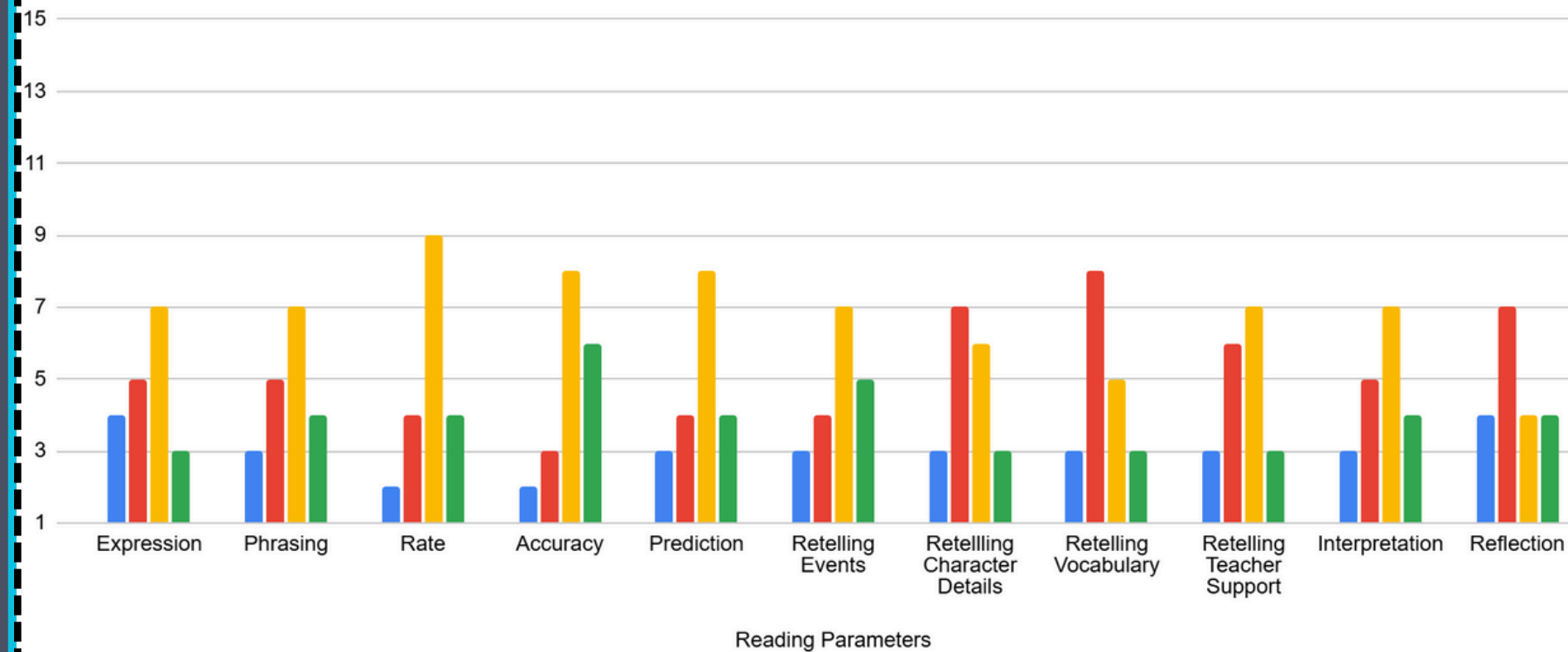
It was a bright, sunny morning when I arrived at the Kempegowda International Airport. My heart was fluttering with excitement as I prepared to board my flight. I had my backpack, my favorite book, and a cozy sweater. I found my seat by the window and settled in, ready for the adventure ahead. The humming sounds

This is a demonstration text written in front of students to model a narrative writing skill and show the thinking and decision-making behind the writing process.

Impact - Reading

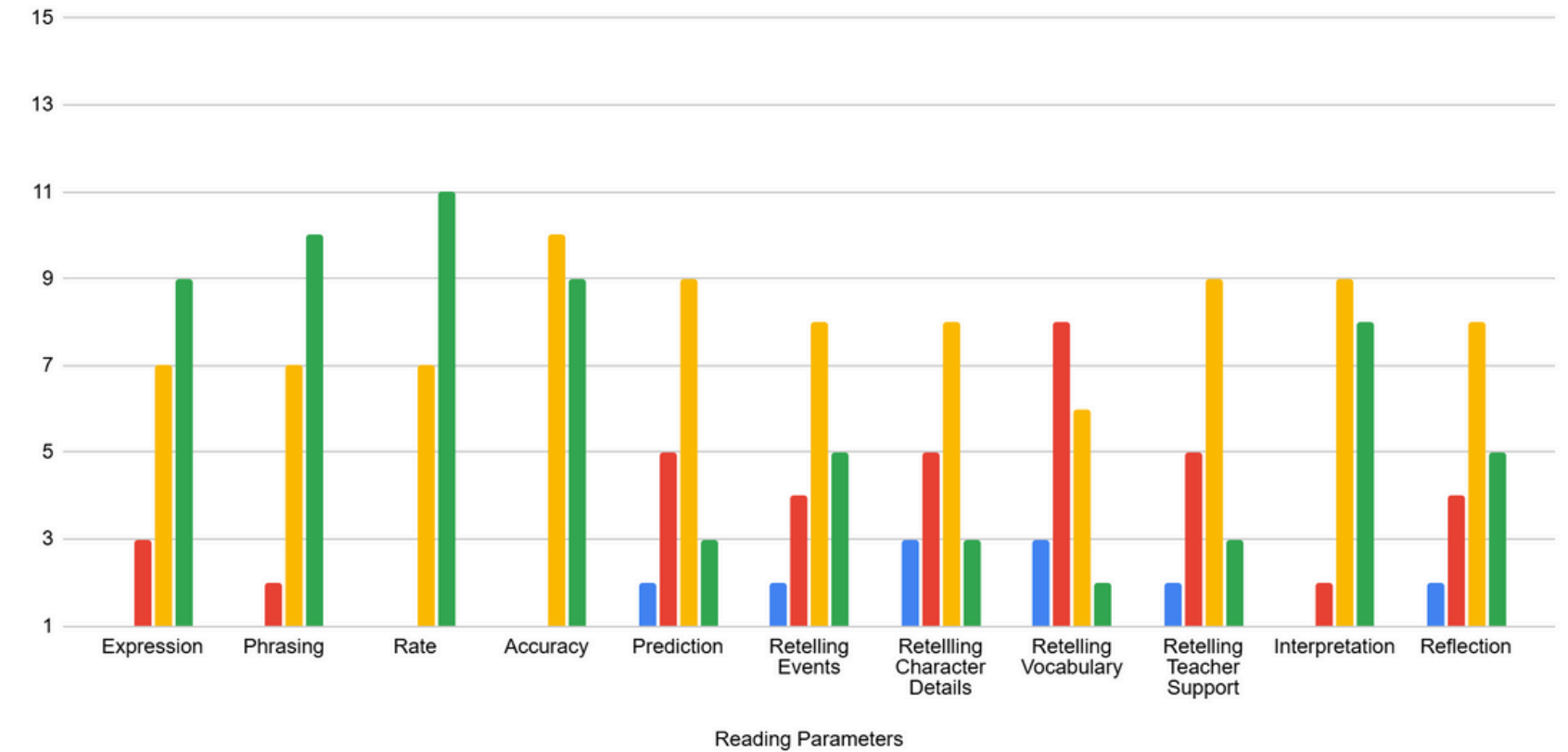
Reading Baseline Data

Intervention Instructional Independent Advanced



Reading Term 1

Intervention Instructional Independent Advanced



My passion for literacy and reading development has helped me make a measurable impact over the years. For three consecutive years, I have supported significant growth in students' reading comprehension. The graphs show the reading data from last year, assessed using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). At the beginning of Grade 2, a few students were at the 'intervention' level in fluency skills when assessed for the expected grade entry level (Level 18). Through differentiated instruction and targeted strategies, all learners reached the independent benchmark of the grade level by the end of Term 1 except for reading with expression. By the end of Term 1, all students were reading with more speed and accuracy. Advanced readers were also assessed for higher DRA levels in order to differentiate instruction.

Impact - Writing

My Learning Ladder

Name: Aran

What to work on?	What I did well?
Editing for spelling	I structured it well

My Learning Ladder

Name: Shrinika

What to work on?	What I did well?
→ Organization → Adding details	I added details to catch the reader's attention.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Narrative Writing Checklist

	Grade 2			Grade 3		
	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!	NOT YET	STARTING TO	YES!
Overall	Structure			Structure		
Overall	I wrote about <i>one time</i> when I did something.			I told the story bit by bit.		
Lead	I thought about how to write a good beginning and chose a way to start my story. I chose the action, talk, or setting that would make a good beginning.			I wrote a beginning in which I helped readers know who the characters were and what the setting was in my story.		
Transitions	I told the story in order by using words such as <i>when, then, and after</i> .			I told my story in order by using phrases such as <i>a little later and after that</i> .		
Ending	I chose the action, talk, or feeling that would make a good ending.			I chose the action, talk, or feeling that would make a good ending and worked to write it well.		
Organization	I wrote a lot of lines on a page and wrote across a lot of pages.			I used paragraphs and skipped lines to separate what happened first from what happened later (and finally) in my story.		
	Development			Development		

have a badminton or basket ball match in 5 min you would be super stressed but not for tacky he would go on and on having fun

One Life Lesson I have learnt from this book is that everyone is only focusing on the result and nobody is focusing on the present.

Final words: I really hoped you enjoyed this book, I recommend you to read the others in the series and remember what I told you Bye for now

3

adventurous. → He is adventurous because when his companions - goody, lovely, ranger, neatly and perfect gracefully and carefully dive. Tacky jumps in with a cannon ball and when he reaches the water a gigantic "splash" his companions were wet and they didn't seem very happy either.

The last reason is being authentic to your self → My learning is that you shouldn't do things just because other people are doing it, you should do things that you want to do. I am my unique self.

The book is light-hearted and funny I hope you think it should win the most loved series award.

Date: 3-3-25

The TCRWP writing units include genre-specific rubrics that are used to assess students before and after each unit to monitor progress. Students were introduced to the criteria at the start of the unit, and these were reinforced through ongoing feedback and conferencing. One of the most meaningful outcomes was seeing students confidently reflect on their own writing, identifying strengths, areas for improvement, and demonstrating a strong understanding of the rubric. This increased their confidence and ownership as writers.

I was especially proud of the way my students grew as reflective readers and writers. In our Opinion Writing unit, they recommended books they loved and supported their opinions with personal reflections and big takeaways from the story, adding authenticity and heart to their writing. This showed growth and confidence as writers.

Collaboration



Conceptual Lens	Geography
Teacher's questions (Conceptual Questions)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do the landforms in an area make it different from other places?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. What influences the lifestyle of people in a place? 3. What are the consequences of not adapting to our environment? 4. What would happen if people don't make lifestyle changes based on their geographical location? 5. What are some ways people have adapted to the place where they live?
Teacher's questions (Factual Questions)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is geography? 2. What are the two types of geography and their components? 3. What are landforms? What are the different landforms and its features?
Rationale	
Significant - Of interest and relevance to the learners? Does it connect to their world?	<p>The conceptual understanding connects to the learner's world since we are building context and connection by looking at the local (Bangalore) Geography</p> <p>Relevance to Everyday Life: Local Understanding: Learners often start by learning about their immediate surroundings. Understanding what makes their local place unique</p>

I consider collaboration as one of my top strengths. One key collaboration involved re-designing the Grade 2 Unit of Inquiry plan after a whole-school PYP IB workshop, where our team revised outcomes and assessments to make them more conceptually driven rather than fact-based. I also collaborated with teams across departments to coordinate students and parents for our Language Day community event. One of my most meaningful collaborations was working with external educators and a literacy specialist to plan and lead a "Literary Circles" workshop for a Children's Literature Festival.



Growth and Reflection



This is me at my happiest doing what I love most - being among children and using the power of storytelling to make learning enjoyable. Over my five years of teaching, I have seen how a well-told story can open minds, spark curiosity, and create lasting connections across any subject. Children naturally respond to stories, and this has inspired me to deepen my practice in reading instruction and Literature, which has always been my first love.

Working across the Cambridge and IB curricula has strengthened my practice in student-centered learning. Each child learns differently, and it is our responsibility to provide opportunities where they have choice, develop independence, and have opportunities to reflect and grow. When learners understand how they learn and feel empowered to explore their interests, they naturally take ownership of their learning.

The Cambridge curriculum supports this through clear outcomes and well-structured skills, giving educators the freedom to make learning contextual and meaningful. The IB curriculum, with its broad transdisciplinary themes, allows children to see the interconnectedness of ideas rather than viewing subjects in isolation. Both approaches have supported my teaching philosophy and have taught me to create classrooms where curiosity, reflection, and independent thinking can flourish.