Critical Reading and Viewing: Developing Students' Visual Literacy in the English Language Classroom

English Language Education Section
Curriculum Development Institute
Education Bureau
(July 2024)

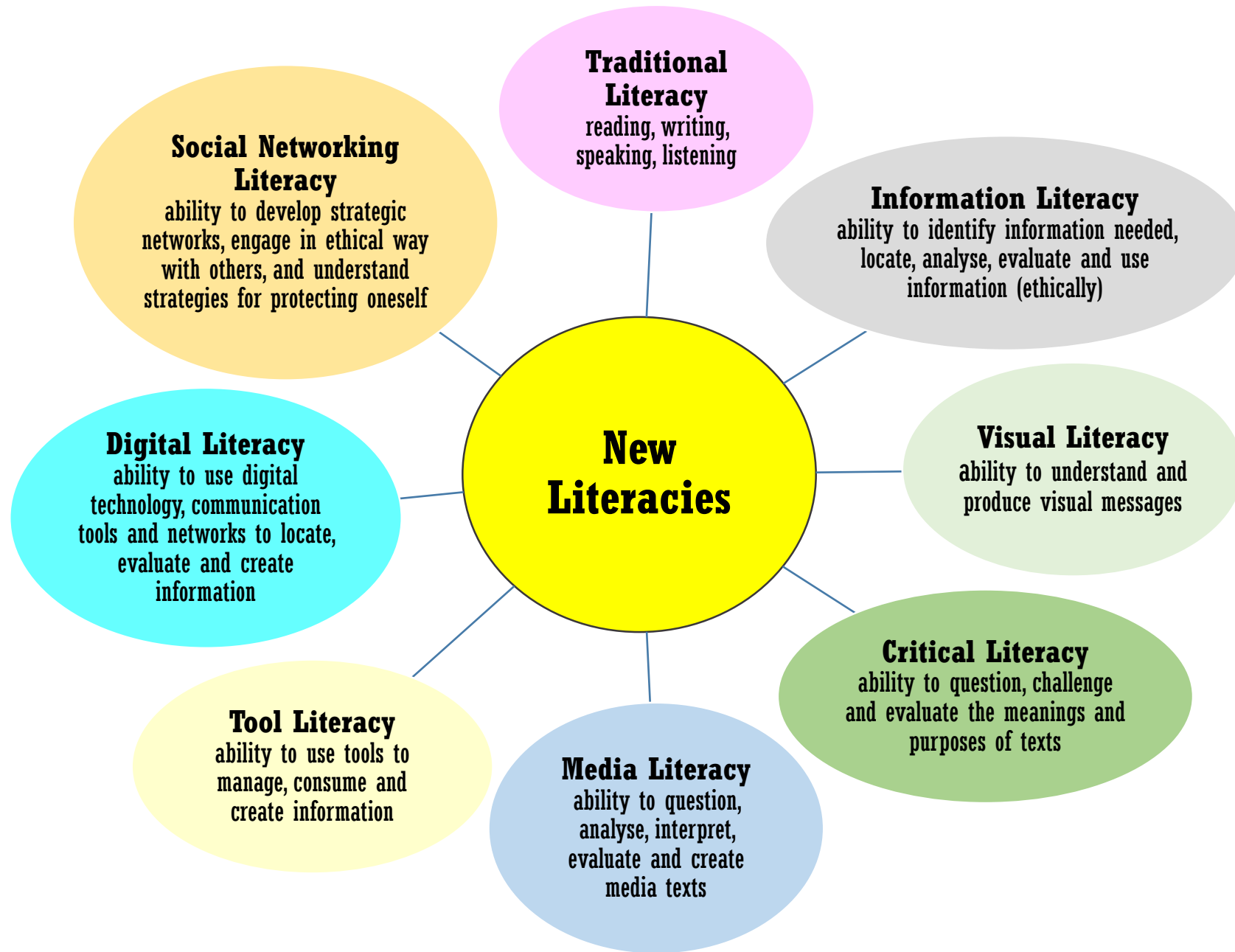| Course ID:	CDI020240382
Course Title:	Critical Reading and Viewing: Developing Students' Visual Literacy in the English Language Classroom (Refreshed)
Dates:	Start date: 22 July 2024 (Mon) End date: 30 August 2024 (Fri)
Course Structure:	There are four parts in this programme: 1. Introduction 2. Analysing 2D visual texts 3. Analysing audio-visual texts 4. Introducing visual literacy in the secondary English Language curriculum

Assignments and CPD hours to be awarded:

Part	Task	Link	CPD hours to be awarded
2	Coursework on Analysing 2D visual texts	https://forms.office.com/r/kD9emZ5fvf?origin=lprLink	**1 CPD hour** will be awarded upon completion and submission of the coursework before the deadline.
3	Coursework on Analysing audio-visual texts	https://forms.office.com/r/iUAsXv8VjA	**1 CPD hour** will be awarded upon completion and submission of the coursework before the deadline.
4	Devise a lesson plan to introduce visual literacy in your English Language classroom using the template provided	(Please use the lesson plan template sent to you via email)	**1 CPD hour** will be awarded upon completion and submission of the lesson plan before the deadline. The lesson plan should demonstrate understanding of the course content and knowledge gained from the course.

A total of 3 CPD hours will be awarded upon submission of satisfactory work by 30 August 2024 (Fri).

Traditional Literacy
reading, writing, speaking, listening

Social Networking Literacy
ability to develop strategic networks, engage in ethical way with others, and understand strategies for protecting oneself

Information Literacy
ability to identify information needed, locate, analyse, evaluate and use information (ethically)

Digital Literacy
ability to use digital technology, communication tools and networks to locate, evaluate and create information

New Literacies

Visual Literacy
ability to understand and produce visual messages

Tool Literacy
ability to use tools to manage, consume and create information

Media Literacy
ability to question, analyse, interpret, evaluate and create media texts

Critical Literacy
ability to question, challenge and evaluate the meanings and purposes of texts

Source: Daniel Churchill "New Literacy in the Digital World: Implications for Higher Education"
https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/61010522.pdf

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Visual Literacy is a Life Skill

Reading and viewing are increasingly inseparable with the rise of new media and abundance of multimodal texts
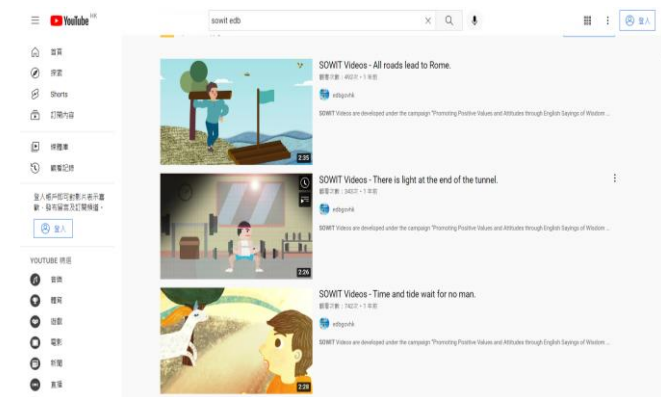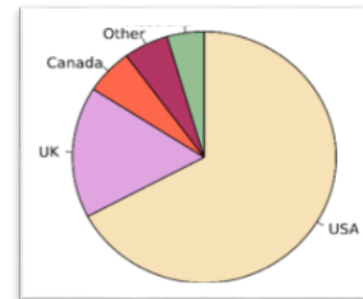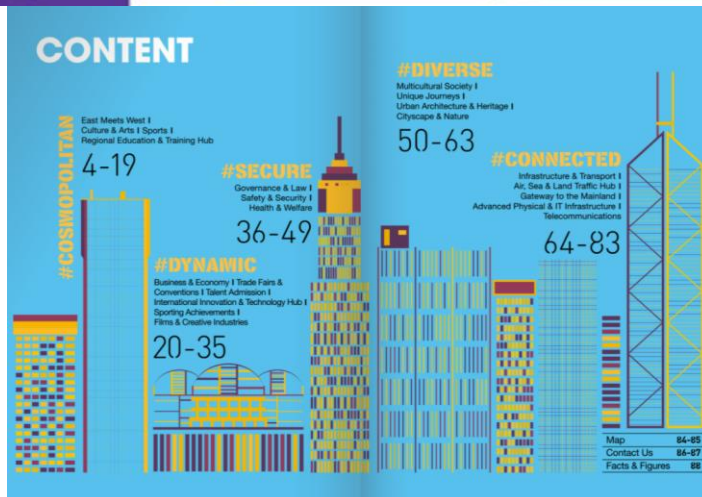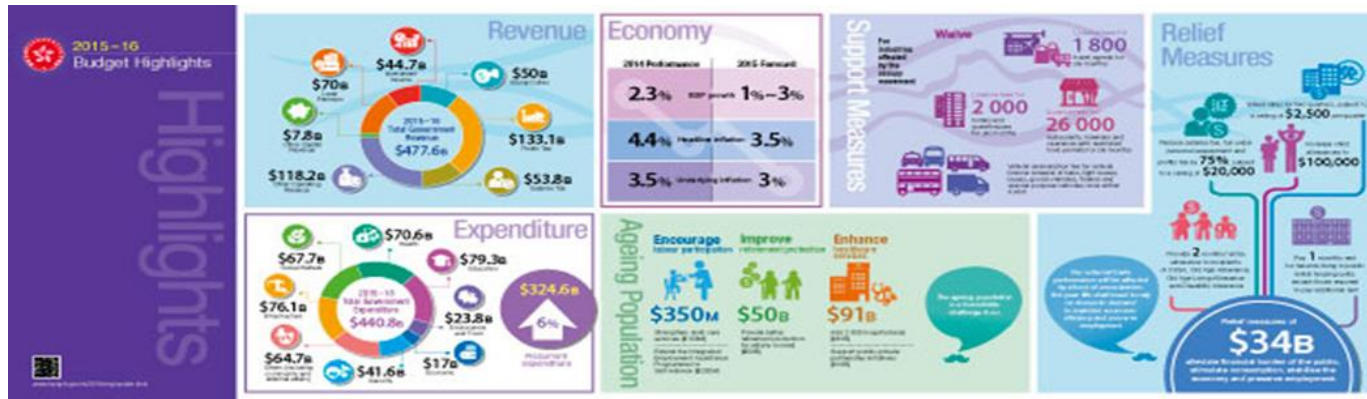
e.g. maps and signs, comics and graphic books, images and photographs, tables and graphs, infographics posters, websites, TV commercials, films, videos

The Power of Visuals

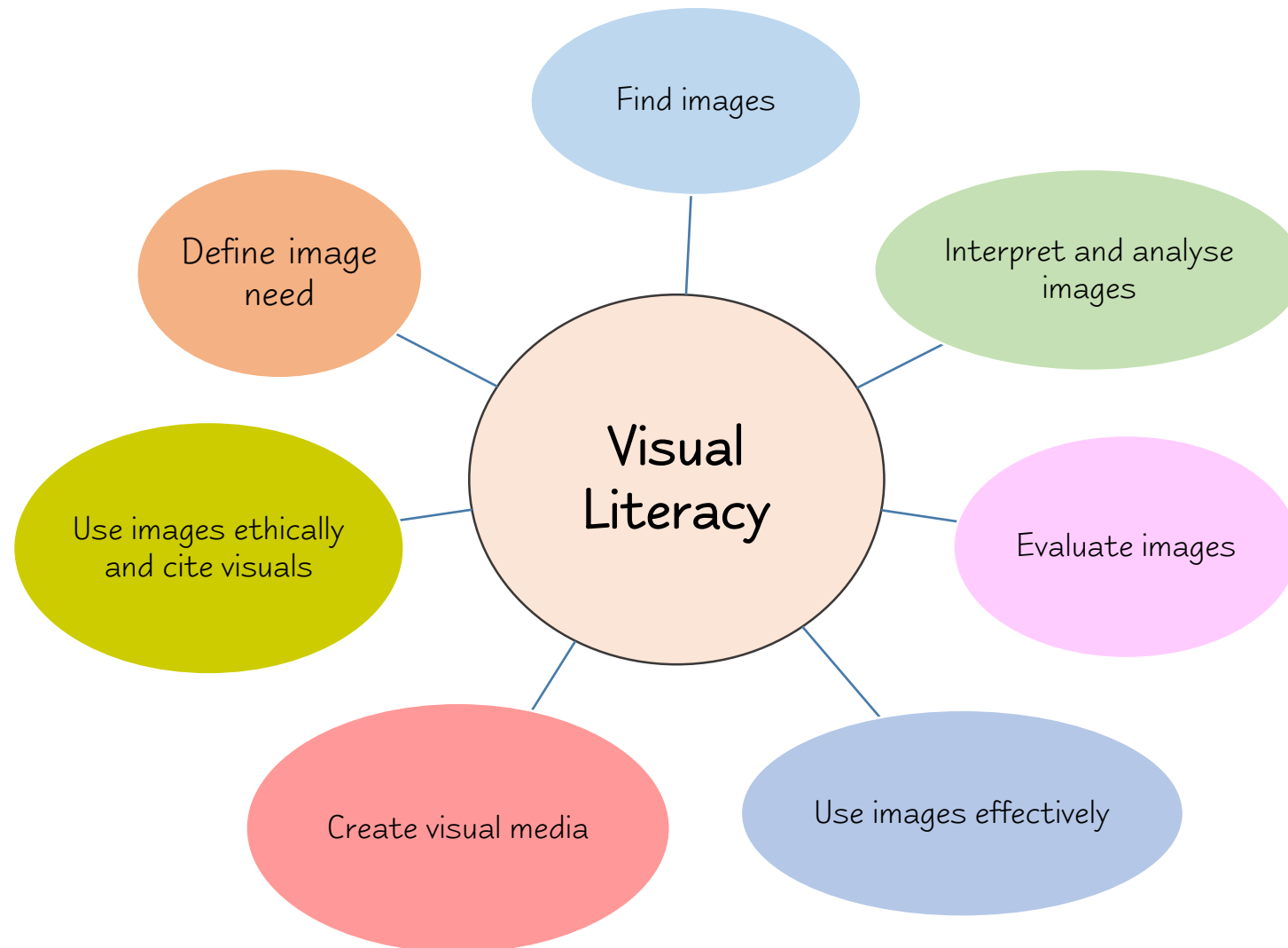|	
ILLUSTRATIVE	• to illustrate something
AFFECTIVE	• to enhance interest and/or motivation
ATTENTIVE	• to attract and direct attention
DIDACTIC	• to show something difficult to convey in words
SUPPORTIVE	• to help less able learners
RETENTIVE	• to facilitate memory

What does it mean to be a visual literate?

Interpreting & Evaluating Visuals

Four components of the "rhetorical situation" :

- ❑ Sender/Author/Creator
- ❑ Receiver/Audience/Viewer
- ❑ Intention/Purpose/Goal
- ❑ Message/Content

Paradigms/Frameworks to Help Students Analyse Visual Texts

Jon Callow (2005)	Frank Serafini (2014)	Focus of the dimension
affective	perceptual	➢ viewer's feelings ➢ emotional response to the text
compositional	structural	➢ how the text is constructed and presented
critical	ideological	➢ hidden messages ➢ embedded values ➢ social-cultural impact

References:

Goldstein, B. (2016). Visual literacy in English language teaching: Part of the Cambridge Papers in ELT series. [pdf] Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Serafini, F. (2014). Reading the visual: An introduction to teaching multimodal literacy. New York: Teachers College Press.

ANALYSING 2D VISUAL TEXTS

READING AN IMAGE

(An image)

Be mindful:

- How do you "read" the image?

- Where do your eyes land first?

- Where do they go next?

- Why do they move in such a way?

- How does the image make you feel?

- What makes you feel this way?

- What message is the image getting across?

APPLYING CALLOW'S THREE-DIMENSION FRAMEWORK

Dimension	Focus(es)
Affective	- Viewers' feelings and emotional responses to the text - Personal interpretation where viewers bring their own experiences and preferences to an image
Compositional	- How the text is constructed and its presentation - Concepts such as symbols, shot length, angles, gaze, colour, layout, salience, lines and vectors
Critical	- Hidden messages and embedded values of the text and its social-cultural impacts - How an image positions the viewer to think or feel a particular way

AFFECTIVE

Suggested questions:

- What catches your attention first?

- How do your eyes move across the image?

- How does the image make you feel?

- Can you relate to anyone or anything in the text in any way?

- Which part is particularly striking / weak?

COMPOSITIONAL

Suggested questions:

- What do you see? What is happening?
  - Action
  - Event
  - Setting
- What is the most salient?
- What make(s) it salient?
  - Colour
  - Shape
  - Size / volume
  - Contrast
  - Gaze / vector
  - Shot distance
  - Angle
- Any symbolic objects?
- Why?

CRITICAL

Suggested questions:

- How do the images support / stereotype certain group of people?
- Is / are there any implication(s) behind the choice of images?

SYMBOLISM

- What do you see?
- What do they symbolise?
- Does the context change your interpretation?

DSE PAPER 2 LISTENING

Examples:

- 2022 DSE Paper 3 (B2) (DATA FILE)
- 2023 DSE Paper 3 (B2) (DATA FILE)

DSE PAPER 2 WRITING TOPICS

Examples:

- 2017 DSE Paper 2 (Q.3)
- 2019 DSE Paper 2 (Q.6)
- 2022 DSE Paper 2 (Q.8)
- 2023 DSE Paper 2 (Q.4 & 5)

HOW ANALYSING 2D TEXTS RELATES TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Paper 2 of the 2020 HKDSE

English Language Examination (Q. 8)

Affective
Compositional
Critical

HOW ANALYSING 2D TEXTS RELATES TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

Paper 2 of the 2024 HKDSE

English Language Examination (Q. 1)

Affective
Compositional
Critical

COURSEWORK

- Please analyse the 2D visual text (i.e. poster). Scan the QR code or visit the following link to complete this classwork.

https://forms.office.com/r/kD9emZ5fvf?origin=lprLink

堅守**核心價值**
維護**廉潔香港**
Uphold the core value of Hong Kong
Stand firm against corruption

舉報貪污熱線
Report corruption hotline
25 266 366

ICAC 香港 一直勝在有你同ICAC
Hong Kong Our advantage is always you and the ICAC

HOW TO SUPPORT STUDENTS TO ARTICULATE THOUGHTS AND IDEAS

Salience
- The point of salience within the image is …
- … catches / attracts my immediate attention.
- My gaze is / eyes are fixed on …

Salience (reasons)
- … is placed in the central foreground.
- The … contrasts in colour against …, which makes it stand out.
- The size of … makes it the point of salience.

Message / Implication
- … symbolises …
- The use of … suggests / shows / implies (that) …
- … creates a sense that …
- … conveys the message that …

↑

When you are making a suggestion / guess, use hedging words.

Vector / Eye contact
- The pointing finger leads my eyes to shift from … to ….
- My eyes follow the lines of …
- The character looks directly into the viewer's eyes, establishing a connection with the viewer.
- The character looks away / invites the viewer to look at what the character is looking at.

Analysing audio-visual texts

Examples of audio-visual texts

- Films
- TV programmes
- YouTube clips
- TV commercials

Key aspects of analysing audio-visual texts

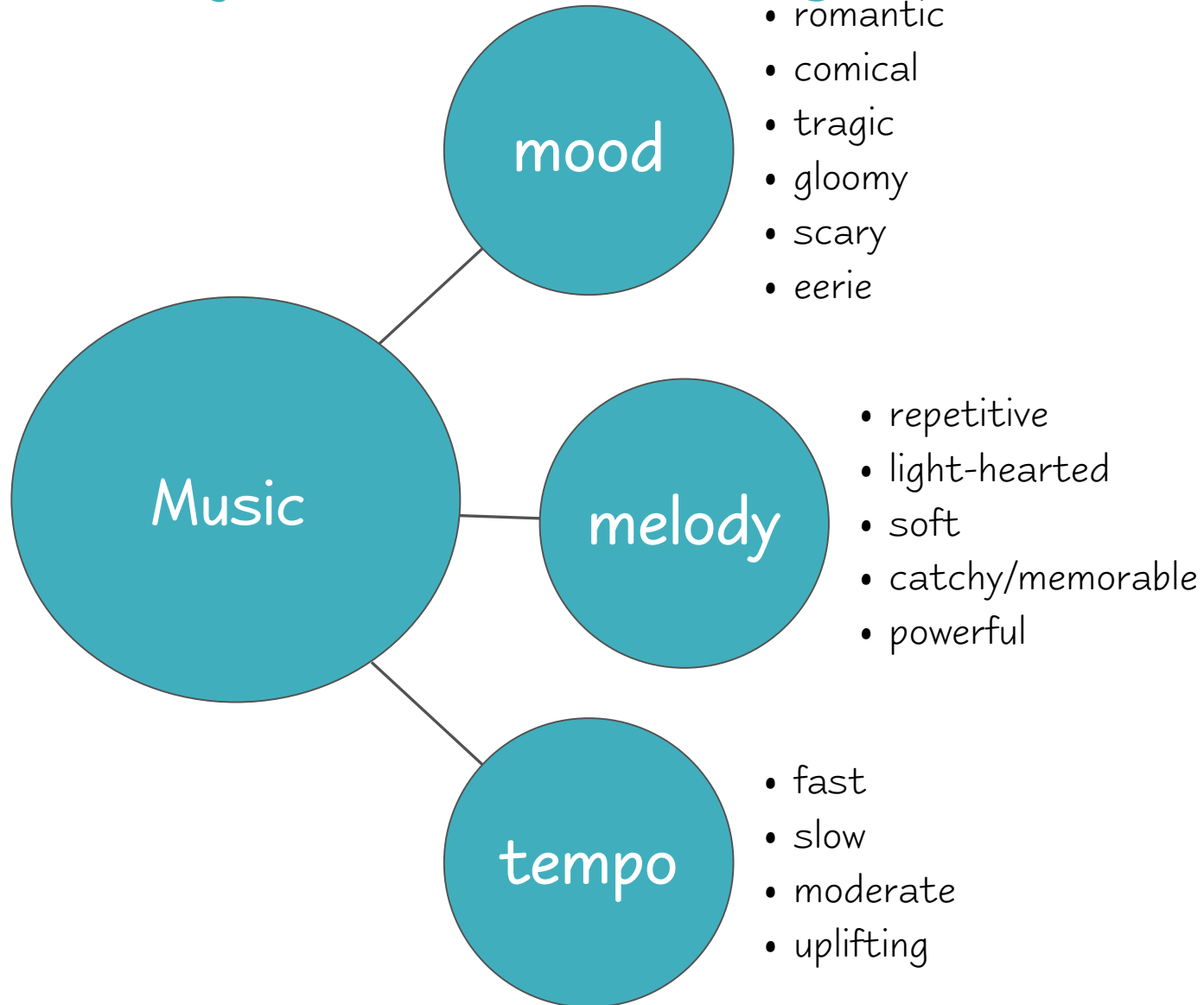| Literary	Dramatic	Cinematic

• Characters
• Setting
• Plot
• Theme
	• Appearance
	• Costumes
	• Acting
	   • Facial expressions
	   • Body movements
	   • Speeches and dialogue
		• Use of music and sound effects
		• Camera shots
		• Editing

Vocabulary for describing music

mood
- romantic
- comical
- tragic
- gloomy
- scary
- eerie

Music

melody
- repetitive
- light-hearted
- soft
- catchy/memorable
- powerful

tempo
- fast
- slow
- moderate
- uplifting

Applying the Three-dimension framework (Callow, 2005)

Affective

- Viewer's feelings and emotional response to texts

Compositional

- How texts are constructed and presented

Critical

- Hidden messages
- Embedded values
- Social-cultural impact

Introducing Visual Literacy in the English Language Curriculum
Planning and implementation

Possible Modes of Implementation

1) **Designing units / modules of work** using the **Task-based Approach**

2) **Incorporating multimodal / audio-visual texts** into theme-based units / modules

3) Addressing elements of visual literacy through **school-based / cross-curricular / lesson activities**

1. Designing Units / Modules Using the Task-based Approach – A School Example

Designing Units / Modules Using the Task-based Approach –

A School Example

| TASK 1 | • Appreciating an award-winning short film to explore its message and analyse how ideas are presented |

| TASK 2 | • Designing a storyboard |

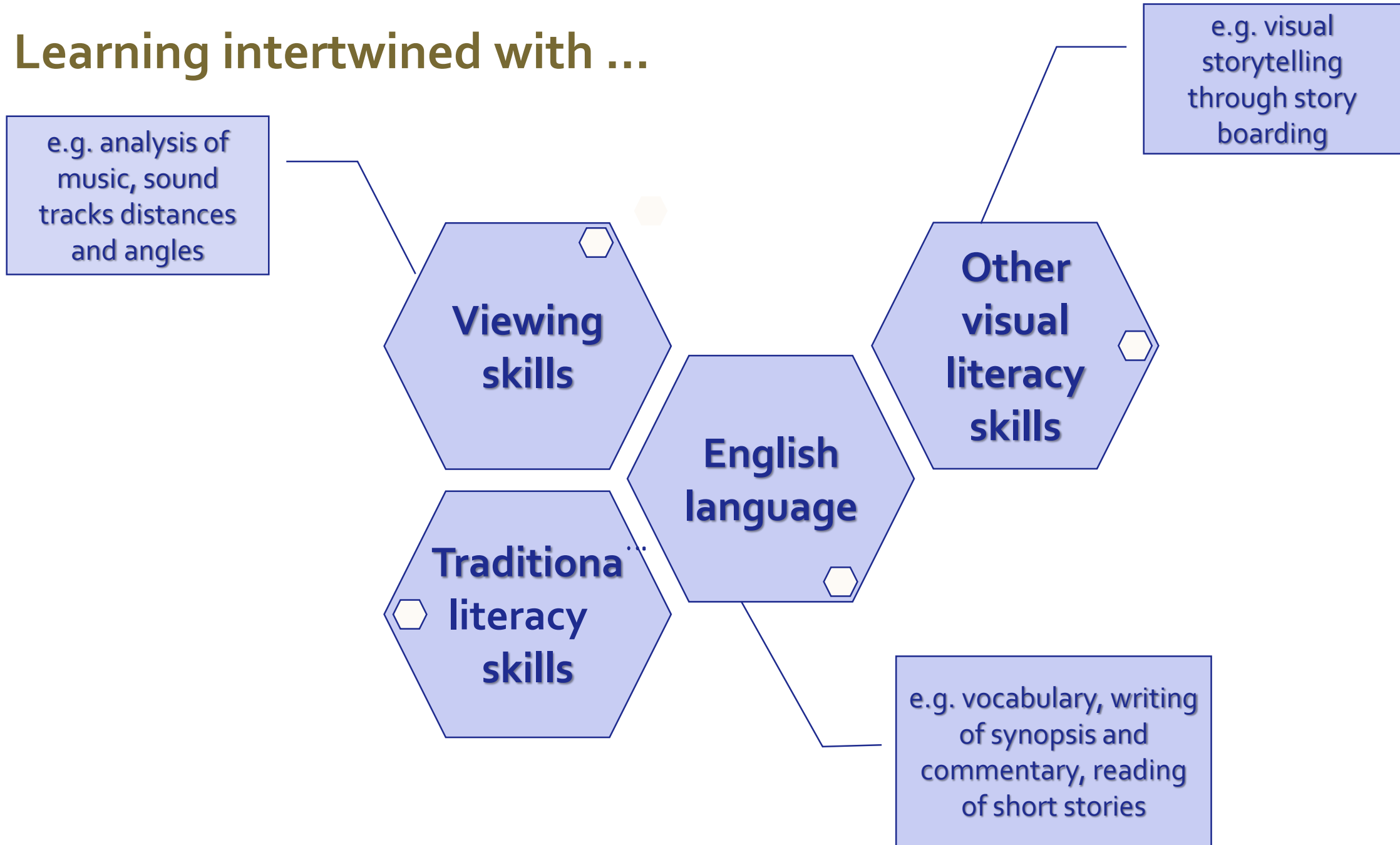| TASK 3 | • Reading film synopses and commentary |

| TASK 4 | • Producing a 3-minute short film and uploading it onto a competition page with 100-word synopsis |

Level: S3
Module: Leisure & Entertainment

Unit: Film Festival

• Students view and comment on the films submitted by other entrants and vote for the Audience Award.

Learning intertwined with …

e.g. analysis of music, sound tracks distances and angles

e.g. visual storytelling through story boarding

Viewing skills

Other visual literacy skills

English language

Traditional literacy skills

e.g. vocabulary, writing of synopsis and commentary, reading of short stories

2. Incorporating multimodal / audio-visual Texts into Theme-based Units / Modules

Incorporating Multimodal / Audio-visual Texts into Theme-based Units / Modules

Purposes:

➢ to **deepen exploration** of topics

➢ to facilitate the development of **literacy skills** (e.g. **listening**, **speaking**, **reading**, **writing**, **viewing**) in a **holistic** and **integrative** manner

➢ to inspire **creative thinking** and **expression**

Getting along with Others
- Friendship and Dating
- Sharing, Co-operation, Rivalry

Study, School Life and Work
- Study and Related Pleasure/Problems
- Experiments and Projects
- Occupations, Careers and Prospects

Cultures of the World
- Travelling and Visiting
- Customs, Clothing and Food of Different Places

Wonderful Things
- Successful People and Amazing Deeds
- Great Stories
- Precious Things

Nature and Environment
- Protecting the Environment
- Resources and Energy Conservation
- Biodiversity
- Animal Protection

The Individual and Society
- Crime
- Human Rights (personal rights, civic rights, respect)

Communicating
- The Media and Publications
- The Internet

Technology
- Changes Brought about by Technology

Leisure and Entertainment
- The World of Sports
- "Showbiz"

Example 1:
Module: Nature and Environment
Unit: Animal Protection

Analysing posters and comics

Discussion questions:

- What **message** is expressed?
- How do choices of **colour**, **font** and **font size** help draw our attention?
- What **effects** are created by the combination of **words**, **images** and **sounds** (e.g. shock, mismatch, humour)?

Example 2:
Module: Nature and Environment
Unit: Protecting the environment

Selecting powerful images to design an e-book to present an environmental problem:

- Identify the **salient and prominent message** highlighted in each image
- Compare the **emotional appeal** of different images
- Discuss how **elements of visual communication** (e.g. colour, typography/ font, size, angle, space, contrast) are used to achieve effects

Example 3:
Module: Communicating
Unit: The Internet

Reading satirical comics/ illustrations

- Unpacking visual metaphors
- Inferring attitudes and views

3. Addressing elements of visual literacy through school-based / cross-curricular / lesson activities

Lesson Activities:
Picture Writing / Story-telling

Interplay of words, frames & gutter

- build **the characters**

- shows **transformation/development**

Lesson Activities:
Writing (based on visual input)

1. Photos and images

2013 HKDSE English Language Writing Paper (Short Task)

- Symbolism
- Theme / message
- Camera angle and distance

2019 HKDSE English Language Writing Paper (Long Task)

Font, style of illustrations, composition	Plot → **Story board**
Posture, action, facial expressions, symbols	Characterisation → **sentence/paragraph writing**
Critical perspective	Message for the audience

2022 HKDSE English Language Writing Paper (Part A - Short Task)
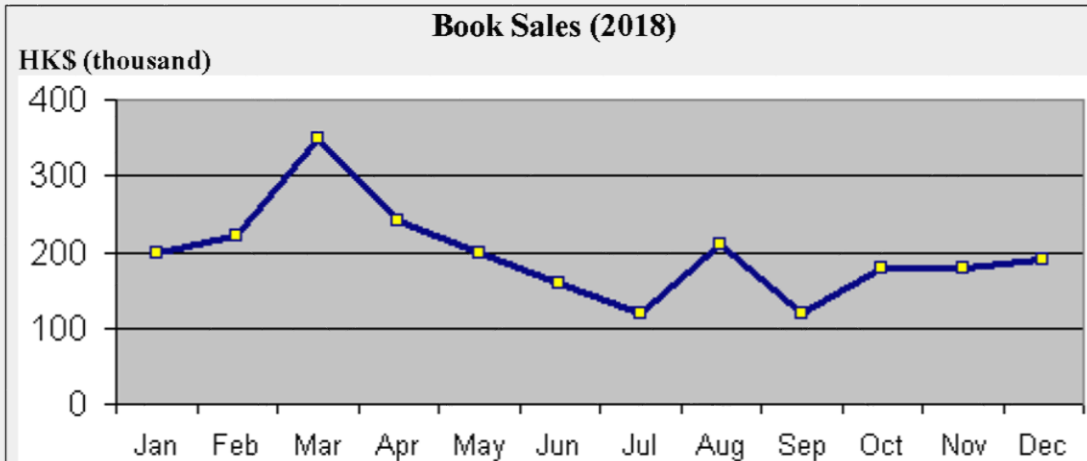
Content:
- icons → activities, areas
- shading → geographical features
- labels
  - Names of stations: activities / attractions
 - Location & year of establishment□

Organisation:
- the railway

Lesson Activities:
Writing (based on visual input)

2. Tables and graphs

Book Sales (2018)

HK$ (thousand)

In January, the book sales were about $200,000. In February, they (1) **increased slightly** to $220,000 and (2) **climbed further / rose sharply** to the peak of $350,000 in March. Over the next four months, there was a (3) **steady decline**, reaching a low point of HK$120,000 in July. Sales picked up in August and there was a (4) **rebound** to HK$210,000, but this was followed by another (5) **drop / fall** to HK$120,000 in September. Sales recovered in October and rose to HK$180,000. Sales (6) **stablised / remained steady** in November and December.

Body Fat Percentage Categories of 4D Boys and Girls
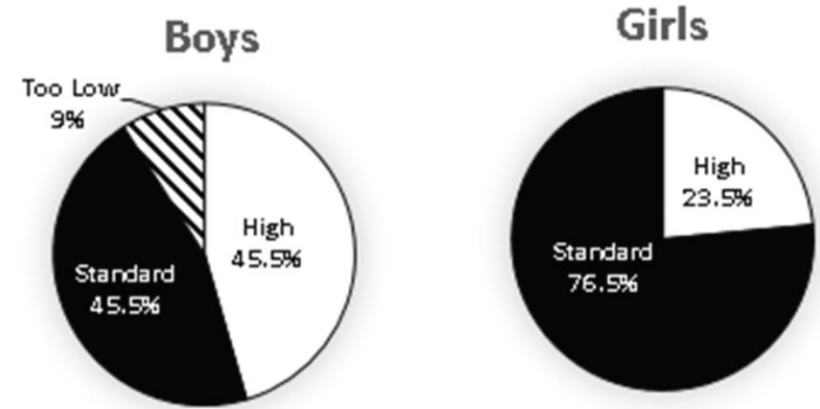
The two pie charts show the distribution of body fat percentage (BFP) categories of the boys and girls in S4D.

Based on the data from the pie charts, 4D girls seemed to have more satisfactory body fat percentages overall. Compared to the girls, 4D boys had a more diverse range of BFP distributions.

As shown in the pie charts, the percentage of girls within the standard BFP range was 76.5, which was significantly higher than that of the boys, with a difference of over 30%. While only 23.5% of 4D girls fell within the high BFP range, the percentage almost doubled for boys within that range. 9% of the boys were in the low BFP category, whereas no girls were found to be under the standard BFP range. (128 words)

- Reporting statistics
- Identifying trends and patterns

Lesson Activities:
Deciphering/creating visual representations of both fiction and non-fiction texts

- mind-maps / concept maps with iconography
- stories with special use of fonts, colours and shapes (calligrams)

Lesson Activities:
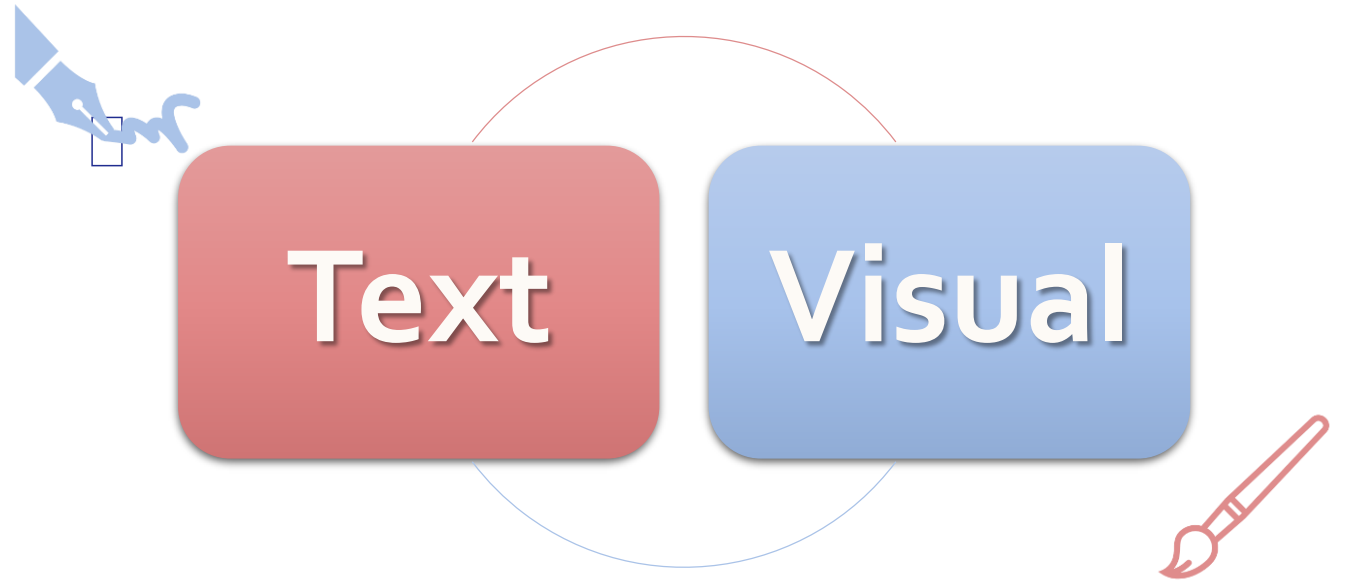## Deciphering/creating visual representations of sayings/quotes

- infographic with simple illustrations and texts
- sayings / quotes with positive values

E-books
Leaflets

Text Transformation Activities

- **Interplay** of **text** and **visual**

Text

Visual

Text Transformation Activities

From visual to text – 5 second video haiku

Glowing red lanterns

honouring great traditions

with respect and pride.

Text Transformation Activities – Poetry Remake Competition

From text to visual – turn a poem into a picture (Cross-curricular – VA)

modern concrete

i try for colour
but the city's concrete does not allow me

concrete is modern as airports
bridges pavements and the river still
5 a river and functional

the cars gleam silver like fishes

i try for colour
but the city's concrete does not allow me

the new hermit
10 a snail of a shell is modern and not seen
like wi fi

he lives within a mountain
of pigeon flats
holes in an economy of a few million snails
15 by the bank of pale water
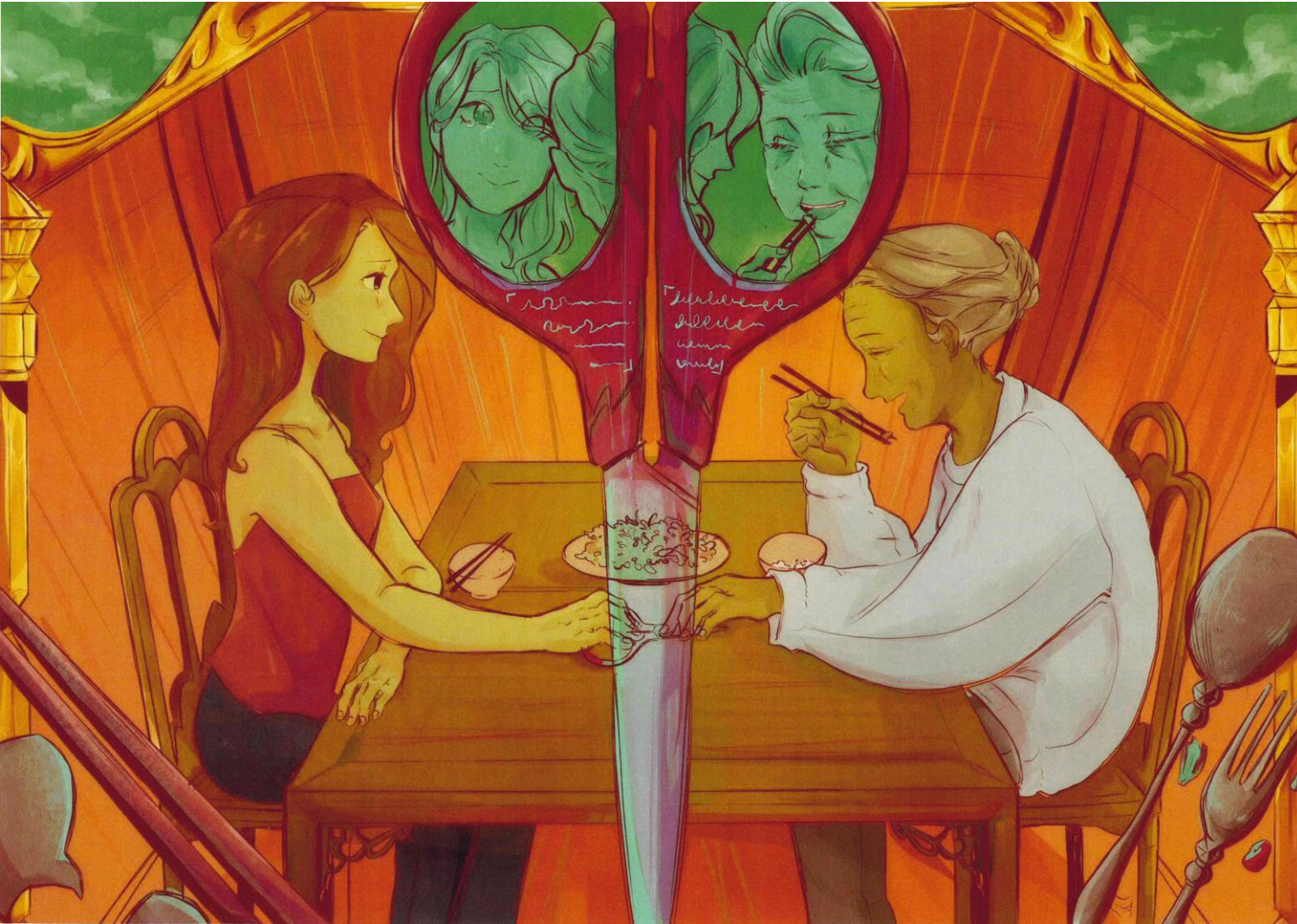
the cars gleam silver like fishes

i try for colour
but the city's concrete does not allow me

so here's the housing project in chunks
20 with mended words

the cars gleam silver like fishes

Text Transformation Activities –
Poetry Remake Competition

From text to visual – turn a poem into a picture (Cross-curricular – VA)

Tiny scissors   **Tammy Ho**

Her tiny scissors, sharpened in the morning,
were dull again by the time
she acted hostess and set two mahjong tables,
side by side, in her cramped living room.

5   Like her mother before her, she used
the scissors to cut food into small pieces.
Toothless, gums eroded like seaside rocks,
eating was not enjoyed, only endured.

She never learnt Cantonese, despite
10   living in Hong Kong most her life.
She held the belief that Hakka, if uttered slowly,
would be universally understood.

Her eldest granddaughter, I was the one
for whom nothing was misunderstood.
15   In the last week, she gave me her scissors,
and reminded me that I'd too one day be toothless.

Resources and References

Developing Students' Multimodal Literacy in the Secondary English Language Classroom

English Language Education Section
Curriculum Development Institute
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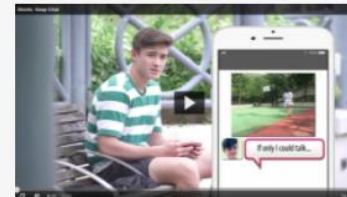## English Language Education – References and Resources (Secondary Level)

Educational Multimedia (EMM) Resources	Title
	SOWIT Videos Resource Kit (Part 2) **2021 (Online)**
	Short Film Appreciation (II): Snap Chat **2021 (Online)** ○ Teacher Version ○ Student Version