







In a rapidly changing society, students need to be equipped with a broad base of knowledge, high adaptability, independent thinking skills and an ability to engage in life-long learning. Liberal Studies enables students to prepare themselves for various challenges in the future.

The proposed Liberal Studies is not a new subject, but a modification and extension of the existing ASL Liberal Studies. The ASL Liberal Studies implemented in 1992 as well as Integrated Humanities (S4-5) and Science and Technology (S4-5) introduced recently into our school curriculum have enriched the resources and pedagogical knowledge relevant to the implementation of Liberal Studies in the new senior secondary curriculum. The widely adopted practice of project learning in primary and secondary schools in the past few years has also helped students learn and analyse problems actively. Such learning experiences provide long-term benefits for students' whole-person development, cultivation of values, further learning and future employment.

The ABC of Liberal Studies

There are three aims for including Liberal Studies as a core subject in the New Senior Secondary School Curriculum:

Enhancing students' Awareness of contemporary issues;

Broadening the knowledge base and expanding the perspectives of students;

Strengthening students' Critical thinking skills.

Areas of Study

Liberal Studies provides students with a balanced knowledge base. Its three main Areas of Study represent broad areas of concerns about the human condition and important issues of the contemporary world.

Self & Personal Development

The three Areas of Study should not be taken as independent fields of knowledge or self-contained disciplines; rather, they are interconnected. Students can apply the perspectives developed in one area in the study of the others.

Science. Technology & the Environment

> Society & Culture

The learning and teaching approach for Liberal Studies is structured around enquiry into a range of life and social issues. Teachers will guide students to appreciate the changing, complex and controversial nature of the issues and encourage them to ask questions and find answers actively.

Enquiry into issues requires students to analyse things from multiperspectives before making any judgments.

Students need to develop a range of thinking skills and information-handling skills so as to make informed choices and sound decisions.

Learning

and
Teaching

Teaching Exemplars of Liberal Studies

Discussing the relationship between sports and various other domains in class helps students think from different perspectives.

The word "sports" is most likely associated with health, but "sports" also relates closely to other domains such as modes of living, community, culture, economy, politics and science and technology. Through multi-perspective thinking, students will have a better and deeper understanding of "sports".

Teachers

Take "sports" as the theme. Let students raise questions they would like to explore, then discuss which of the questions are worth further enquiry. During the process, let students deliberate over the criteria for evaluating the worth of the suggestions.

Organise students to collect and collate relevant information on the selected topic; inspire discussion and interflow of ideas; analyse and process the information.

Help students think about the theme of "sports" in different domains and from different perspectives. Encourage students to apply the knowledge of different academic subjects to study the questions in order to develop multi-perspective thinking skills.



Students

Participate in class discussion and think about questions relating to "sports", such as:

- 1 How and why do Hong Kong people participate in physical activities?
- 2 How do sports reflect the characteristics of social culture and economic development of some countries/regions?
- 3 Why do many countries/regions strive to organise the Olympic Games and various major sports events?
- 4 What is the relationship between a country's technological development and its sports achievement?

Collect, collate and analyse relevant information; discuss and listen to the opinions of others; express ideas and construct personal knowledge.

Learn to understand that "sports" can involve personal, social, national and international domains. Learn to analyse social phenomena, including economy, culture, politics, science and technology, from different perspectives.



Teaching Exemplars of Liberal Studies

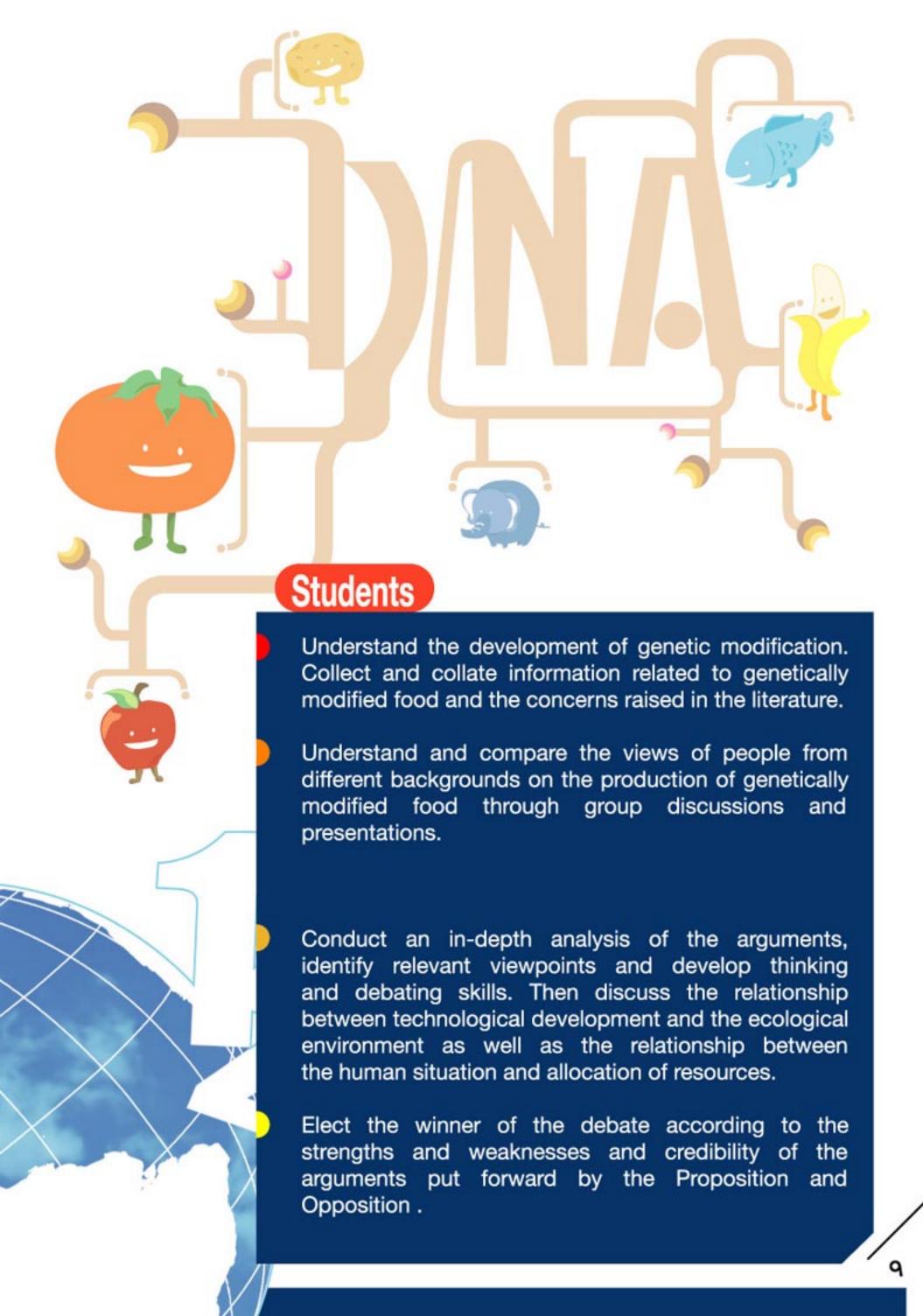
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Discussing genetically modified food in class helps students to develop critical thinking skills.

Genetically modified food is a modern technological product. Through discussion and analysis, students can understand the technological development, and the pros and cons, of genetically modified food. They can then discuss how to strike a balance between technology and nature.

Teachers

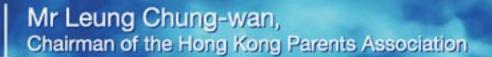
- Briefly introduce the technique of genetic modification and its development to enable students to collect related information.
- Guide students to conduct group discussions on the information collected. Each group needs to report on the pros and cons of producing genetically modified food. Teachers then conclude by establishing the various criteria for evaluating whether genetically modified food should be produced.
 - Help students elect representatives to debate on topics such as "Mankind need to produce genetically modified food to solve the problem of food shortage". Other students can act as adjudicators and floor speakers in the debate.
- Analyse students' performance in the debate and comment on the voting results. Finally point out that one of the main points in critical thinking is to make use of evidence to support one's own viewpoint.



Internal Assessment

Assessment During the three years of senior secondary education, schools will assess students formatively in order to collect information on learning processes, what students have learned and where they need to improve. Internal assessment should take into account factors such as learning objectives, student abilities, school contexts as well as teaching and learning processes etc. Project assignments are assessed on various aspects such as content, presentation, creativity and initiative. Students are required to demonstrate their analytical and critical power and their ability to use relevant information to substantiate their arguments.

Public Assessment The public assessment of Liberal Studies will adopt the standards-referenced approach to grading and reporting student performance. The purpose is to recognize the achievement of each student in Liberal Studies at the end of the three-year new senior secondary education. The public assessment will comprise two parts: External Written Examination and School-based Assessment (SBA). SBA may include Independent Enquiry Study, coursework, performance in class activities, and internal tests and examinations. As some of the learning outcomes may not be readily assessed by means of the written examination, diversified modes of assessment are necessary.



"In facing the rapidly developing society, it is important for parents to develop the all-round ability of their children. Our younger generation should actively acquire knowledge in different areas or academic subjects, and master such skills as adaptability, analytical power, creativity, and problem-solving and self-learning abilities. Liberal Studies develops the all-round ability of our next generation for the future of our society."



Ms Yuen Kit-yan, A secondary teacher of Liberal Studies

"Teachers play the role of a stimulator in Liberal Studies, Teachers motivate students to think by asking questions, observe their responses and provide guidelines for analysis.

They help students analyse current issues from different perspectives and give relevant comments to students' viewpoints.

Mr Vincent Cheng Hoi-chuen Vice-Chairman and Chief Executive of Hang Seng Bank

"As the Chief Executive of the bank, I would like to see my staff adopt an international outlook and have a creative mind. Liberal Studies allows students to keep an eye on the world and see things from different perspectives, and to think more and analyse more so as to make their own judgments."

Inclusion of Liberal Studies in the university admission criteria

Globally, Liberal Studies has been gaining increasing importance. Universities have advocated for years to avoid premature streaming in secondary education in order not to narrow the knowledge base of students. Under the new academic structure, the duration of undergraduate programmes will extend from three to four years and students can decide their field of specialization after entering universities. Apart from a broad knowledge base, universities also expect secondary students to possess a self-learning attitude and critical thinking abilities. In addition to the introduction of Liberal Studies in their own curriculum, universities fully support the inclusion of Liberal Studies as a core subject in the secondary school curriculum. They will include the subject as one of their admission criteria.



Liberal Studies It benefits you for life

A number of surveys have indicated that local employers expect their employees to possess the following qualities: communication abilities, adaptability, team spirit, sense of commitment, problemsolving abilities, analytical power, critical thinking, creativity etc. The curriculum of Liberal Studies will enable students to learn how to learn. Students can thus prepare themselves for further studies or future employment.

Proposed Curriculum and Assessment Guide:
Liberal Studies (for Consultation)
can be downloaded from the Education and
Manpower Bureau website at
http://emb.gov.hk