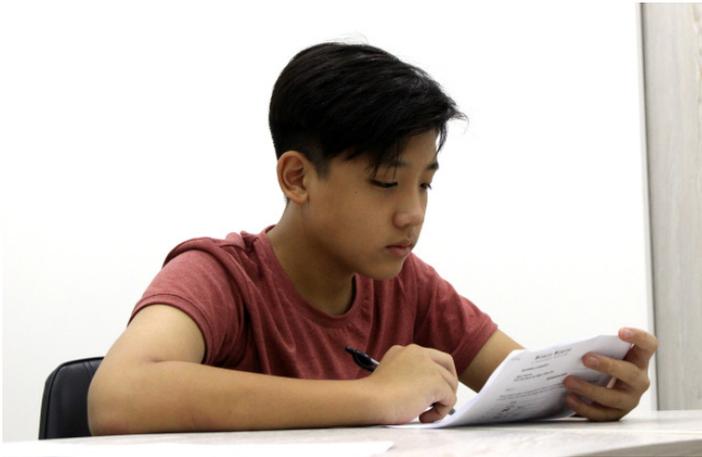


The Words Worth Times

KILL THE DRILL



A good education is not about force-feeding knowledge, but allowing children the artistic freedom to explore and experiment with their own thoughts and ideas.

Students in Singapore are given templates of ‘model answers and phrases’ that are regurgitated during tests or exams. This does not encourage critical or creative thinking. In fact, it encourages no thinking at all. Learning becomes an arduous process as students merely duplicate essays and answers that they barely understand.

Bobby Jayaraman, parent of a 9-year-old boy, wrote into The Straits Times about the ‘drill and kill’ culture in Singapore: “Instead of spending time devouring books and discussing them in class, children spend their time in school and tuition centres getting drilled on abstract grammar and vocabulary questions such as ‘I am really hungry. Can you hear my stomach _____? (choose one of the following: grumbling, rumbling, roaring, growling)’”.

By suggesting that vocabulary is one-dimensional – that there is only one right answer – children lose out on the wonders of the English Language; they are placed in restrictive boxes and controlled environments that discourage alternatives.

As educators, it is our duty to provide our students with the artistic freedom to explore, and then guide them towards developing concrete ideas of their own. Words Worth aims to raise the standards of English Language through dissecting the students’ experiences, and building contextual knowledge, hence, scaffolding their ability to articulate new

ideas. Through this, children will not only discover their passion for the English Language, but also speak grammatical English in their daily lives, which will then translate to paper.

Words Worth recognizes the importance of nurturing students through asking questions, providing personalised comments and then demonstrating how to do it. We encourage students to guide discussions and provide alternative views.

The reason our children are unable to produce multiplicities of words and ideas is because they are taught not to. Their creativity is repressed by a system that encourages prototype work replicated by the entire cohort.

At Words Worth, we provide experiences, which are unpacked and analysed in our classrooms. We cannot expect our students to write creative personal recounts when they have not been exposed to events that can be recounted. Similarly, our students are exposed to books and magazines that contain the necessary vocabulary to produce good authorship. In a bid to secure top rankings, schools have cordoned off the road less travelled, and students have lost their passion and love for the English Language – a phenomenon we aim to reverse.

Our children need to be permitted to think artistically and liberally. They need to be given the opportunity to reflect on their own ideas and emotions. They need to be constantly questioned in order for them to think deeply and more articulately. Only once they have experienced this cognitive ability, can they produce it on paper. ∞

ABOUT WORDS WORTH

We offer enrichment classes for English Language and Literature. We offer English Language Programmes for Primary, Secondary and Junior College students. We also offer IELTS, IGCSE and IB English classes. Other enrichment programmes include Reading and Early Literacy for Pre-School students, Speech and Drama, Public Speaking and Communication Skills.

For further enquiries or to sign up for a FREE trial class, call us at 6440 0374.