

Borneo Bulletin

THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM, SABAH AND SARAWAK

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THE Ministry of Education is in the process of driving educational transformation through the use of technology in its effort to achieve its strategic vision, which is quality education towards a developed, peaceful and prosperous nation. The e-Hijrah is one of the Ministry of Education's seven Grand Initiatives. The Whole School ICT Development (WSID) Project is part of e-Hijrah ICT Strategic Framework and blueprint towards transformation in education through the use of technology. The WSID project is a design project used in 20 representative schools across Brunei to support the Ministry's vision and mission.

Since January, the 20 representative schools have been using a 'whole school approach' to implement and develop a culture of ICT within the school. The ICT Strategic Planning is used to develop a set of strategic goals and associated action plans to enhance the use of ICT. The schools also use Integrated Framework and new approaches to design the learning activities. The key outcome of this project will be a developed set of processes and supporting resources that can be used to produce a "culture of ICT" for all schools in Brunei.

The purpose of publishing the WSID series is to share with parents and the Bruneian community how these 20 schools have used ICT to develop inspiring and innovative approaches to learning activities that are equal to those of other countries around the world. These new approaches create an educational experience which are both engaging for students and teachers as well as developing students Digital Literacies and their subject knowledge.

Raja Isteri Girls High School (STPRI) is one of the 20 representative schools that have been using a 'whole school approach' to implement and develop a culture of ICT within the school. The school implements the different teaching and learning approaches introduced by the WSID in promoting innovation through the use of ICT. Each department in the school uses different approaches that suit their requirement.



Azyan Syuaidah Mohd Zaini using ICT in her History class. – COURTESY OF MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Students taking the Islamic Religious Knowledge present the findings of their project work using a power point and a lapel microphone. Noorexmahmaisuriani Suhaili is a strong supporter of the use of ICT in her subject because it allows her students to access a wider range of resources without relying too much on textbooks. This also encourages peer teaching whereby students can give presentation to their peers. Noorexmahmaisuriani also strongly believes that delivering materials that they have created themselves from their own research will increase the students' confidence in communication and producing a quality work.

Dk Nur Zirwatul Amal Binti Pg Hj Mohamad, also uses ICT in her Social Studies classes. One of the topics in her lesson is on the impact of the residency system on Brunei's political and social development. She shows her students a range of images and videos to provide a visual understanding on some of the changes that have occurred. Her students are given research questions, and they are divided into three groups to find answers using the internet and other sources. Each student is given a specific role to play and in this process they become the class 'experts' on the specific topic. Each team then produces a summary and share their findings with the rest of the class.

It is evident that ICT is now becoming very important in providing society with a vast array of new communication capabilities. Dk Nur Zirwatul realise the important role of ICT in leading the current shift of pedagogy from a teacher centred to a more student centred learning. She also added that it is important for educators to realise the important role of ICT in helping students to increase their confidence, which will result in improved learning.

For the History lesson, Azyan Syuaidah Mohd Zaini uses ICT to improve her students' review of their understanding of nationalism in Brunei as well as providing opportunities for collaboration. Using student's own smart phones per group, students are given instruction to log into a web site that collected their answers to a series of summarised questions that had been developed by the teacher based on the topic. Students are very confident in using mobile phones because it requires special skills to operate, hence the technology became 'transparent' in the lesson and focus was more on collaborating and doing assessment, ie completing the quiz.

By deliberately identifying collaboration in the design of the lesson activities Azyan had a good structure that helped to ensure success. All the classes were able to see in real time their answers and how well they are doing.

Azyan commented that reviewing the main ideas at the end of a topic, which was often seen as repetitive and boring by students but has now become interesting and helped to reinforce the important things to remember through the use of ICT.

The students also felt the information they found online was detailed and more than what they could find in the worksheet. They are more engaged and are pleased to learn how smartphones can provide instant feedback.

In the Year 7 Drama class, Joanna Kwan divided her students into two groups with the purpose of developing their oral skills. One group of Students are given collaborative project on reading a prepared script.

While the second group of students record their performance. This recorded audio file is then loaded up into Audacity on their ICT device at home for the students to edit and then used as a feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their performance.

Joanna believes that ICT helps to create a sharing culture among the students and taking pride in their own work, which leads to a quality performance.

Fairuz binti Haji Zolkipli, a Biology teacher of Year 11 class teaches some core concepts of inheritance. She introduces the topic with a series of photos that provided examples of different inherited characteristics like curly hair and ways of folding arms. Using varieties of scientific diagrams and images available on the Internet saves a lot of time in planning and preparation for this topic. To increase students' curiosity on the background knowledge of genetics, Fairuz divided her class students into groups to develop models of inherited characteristics of different organisms.

The students photographed the development of each stage of the model on their personally owned iPad which will be shared with the other groups. And students are given instruction to observe and find reasons for the changes by looking at examples of inherited characteristics. This learning process helps to reinforce students' understanding as well as providing students with a wider range of contexts, something that would have been different without ICT. - ***Ministry of Education***