

# LEARNING STORIES

Learning stories share examples of effective practice from IB World Schools to promote inquiry, action and reflection by educators and school learning communities. School examples in this series represent a range of development and application of IB programme standards and practices.

## Integrating the CP core components to facilitate the reflective project

### Area of programme implementation: Story

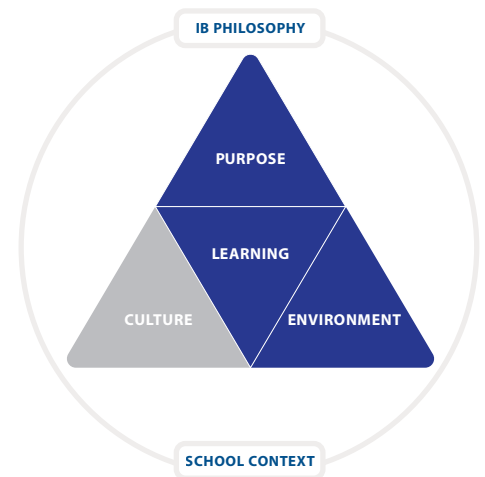
The reflective project (RP) is one of the four core components of the IB Career-related Programme (CP). It is an in-depth body of work produced over an extended period of time. Through this project, students identify, analyse, discuss and evaluate an ethical dilemma associated with an issue from their career-related studies (CRS).

Our programme is designed to give students the best possible experience by integrating all CP core components to facilitate the RP processes and to help students make connections with their Diploma Programme (DP) subjects and CRS. We recognize that each component of the CP core is not isolated, rather they interconnect to prepare students with transferable skills and lifelong learning habits.

With this goal in mind, we give our CP students an 11-month timeline to work on their RP from January of the first year of study to November of the second year. This timeline allows us to integrate the other core components—the personal and professional skills (PPS) component, service learning, and language development—to make the RP a product that pulls together knowledge, culture, skills and ethics. Our PPS curriculum is planned and designed to support the RP process by developing communication, technology and research skills as well as an understanding of ethics. Service learning provides the students with hands-on practice and is typically connected to their respective CRS. Language development offers insight into cultural understanding and consideration of implications when investigating various perspectives of the ethical dilemma of the RP.

### Why did the school implement the area of programme development? (Why)

Though small in numbers, our first cohort of CP students were the true risk-takers in the school community who signed up for the new



Renaissance College Hong Kong  
Ma On Shan, New Territory, Hong Kong

Type of school: Private independent school  
Size: ~2,100

Languages of instruction: English

Programmes: PYP, MYP, DP, CP

### Why

#### *Practice illustrated*

Student support 2: The school identifies and provides appropriate learning support. (0202-02)

#### *Developmental question considered*

How is learning and teaching connected to the issues of resourcing and support?

#### *Indicator that the practice is highly developed*

There are examples of the way in which the school has developed its systems in response to the needs of its students and community.

programme. We wanted to give these CP students the best possible experience from the outset, to ensure both student success and future programme growth.

We identified and prioritised the following needs for our cohort.

- A holistic learning experience for CP students with connections to each of the core components as well as students' DP subjects and CRS.
- Engagement of community expertise to enhance the student experience.
- Optimal utilization of school resources, scheduling and planning to support student learning and the development of transferable skills.

Having identified the needs to be addressed, one thing became quite clear—we wanted our students to take ownership of their learning and to use the RP to make connections between all of the core components, as well as their future career aspirations and interests. Taking that into consideration, we introduced and planned the following practices.

- The RP process was designed as a discovery journey for our students. This journey of exploring the ethical dilemma related to their CRS provides students with real-world applications of their career interests and leads them to be proud of their end product, giving them a sense of personal achievement.
- The core components were purposefully integrated to facilitate the RP process by building research skills and linking the practical element of students' CRS. The PPS curriculum design and implementation lays the foundation for a theoretical underpinning of the RP through the exploration of ethics. Service learning connects students with the reality of life and provides opportunities for ethical understanding of responsible engagement. Finally, language development adds a cultural dimension and lends the students different contexts and perspectives for their examination of the ethical dilemma.
- Engagement of school and community expertise was intentionally planned to maximize the students' learning experience. For example, we invite theory of knowledge teachers to give talks on ethics, while the school librarian delivers a session on research strategies and useful resources. We also have parents and community members provide presentations on ethical issues and solutions in their professional fields of work. Our "World of Work" work-experience programme explicitly enables students to gather in-depth data and perspectives on their research question, which in turn enhances their understanding of the nature of the issue in regards to context, culture and ideology.

## Conditions

### *Practice illustrated*

Coherent curriculum 3: The school develops, regularly reviews and shares its curriculum in ways that explicitly engage the school community. (0401-03)

### *Developmental question considered*

How does the school involve the wider community to design opportunities that benefit students?

### *Indicator that the practice is highly developed*

There are many examples of students engaging with the local community as part of their learning. Students learn from the community and apply their learning to enhance the community.

During my summer internship at a local branding design company, I was able to meet and work with designers, directors and managers to discuss graphic design projects, during which they discussed ethical issues when presenting to clients ... This research was valuable, as the responses to conversation were very candid.

Jasmine, class of 2018

## Who were the people largely responsible for creating and maintaining the school's area of programme development? (Who)

The CP team with the support of the school's senior leadership team (especially our former vice principal who is a strong advocate of the CP) was responsible for developing and implementing the plan. However, the entire school community (our faculty members, parents, students, community members and partner institutes who provide the CRS and work experience opportunities to our CP students) has supported implementation of the plan and made the ongoing development of the entire programme possible. It is a team effort, and everyone plays an important role to ensure the success of new practices.

## How did the school create activities and opportunities to fulfill the area of programme development? (How)

When we sat down to explore the different components of the CP and plan their integration, we mapped out the connections and designed the PPS curriculum with the view that it would be the thread that holds every part of the core together. We underpinned many aspects of the RP through the PPS lesson planning, for example, we introduced units on ethical thinking and applied ethics in the first year of the students' PPS prior to launching the RP. In the unit planner, we included a few case studies and introduced ethical thinking analysis using the McGaan Box tool to help students examine multiple perspectives associated with ethical dilemmas.

In the following unit of the PPS curriculum, we focused on personal development and career planning by engaging students in planning for summer internships and service learning opportunities. Students are strongly encouraged to immerse themselves with hands-on experience of the industries they are interested in and to utilize that opportunity to give their RP a real-world grounding. Many of the students walk away with a deepened understanding of the ethical dilemma as well as rich experiences and data for their RP. For example, a student whose RP is on gender objectification in media was able to gain first-hand experience from a graphic design company work placement. Another student, also engaged in a graphic design work placement, discovered the blurred lines between being inspired and plagiarizing other people's work through her interaction with her mentor.

Additionally, we planned out connections with language development by having students search for keywords of their RP in their target language. Often students discovered that the results they get from another language differs greatly from those of their English research.

### Who

#### *Practice illustrated*

Leadership 1: The school regularly reviews and follows all IB rules, regulations and guidelines to support programme implementation and ongoing development. (0201-01)

#### *Developmental question considered*

How can the school be innovative in developing programme quality and participation?

#### *Indicator that the practice is highly developed*

There is evidence to demonstrate the impact of efforts to improve programme quality and to increase programme participation.

### How

#### *Practice illustrated*

Coherent curriculum 1: The school plans and implements a coherent curriculum that organizes learning and teaching within and across the years of its IB programme(s). (0401-01)


#### *Developmental question considered*

How does my school use planning time and processes to create opportunities for students make connections across themes and disciplines?

#### *Indicator that the practice is highly developed*

The learning environment has been co-designed to support ways for students to build on their knowledge.

This prompts the students to delve deeper into the cultures associated with their target language and critically analyse how different cultural contexts can influence perspectives on ethical dilemmas. For example, one student's research on the freedom of expression as an artist revealed that the perspectives she found in Chinese-language media tend to be more cautious than those in English-language media, which are generally more lenient.



*I had a service learning experience in the summer whereby I helped a local personal trainer by designing a logo for his company. This experience provided me an opportunity to work as an artist and to apply my knowledge into practice ... This experience also inspired me to elaborate in my reflective project, from a first-person perspective, about how to compose a design and apply thinking processes in your design.*

Kelly, class of 2018