

USING DESIGN
THINKING TO
HELP STUDENTS
BECOME BETTER
WRITERS.



THE MSS SEED PROJECT TEAM

Mrs. Kitty Leung

Panel Chair

Ms. Rebecca Martyn

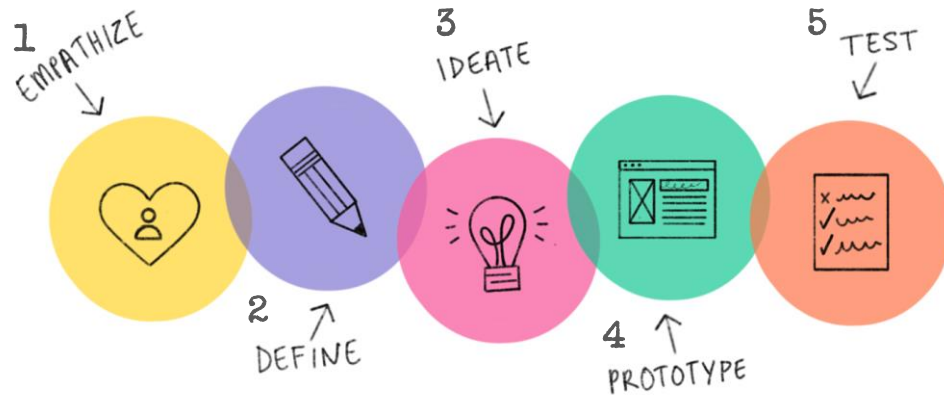
English Teacher

Ms. Lauren Minnie

NET Teacher



What is Design Thinking?



A series of steps that lead to a final product, designed to solve a problem.

The steps are a **systematic, solution-based, hands-on approach to creative and innovative problem solving.**



We use Design Thinking in Maker Education as a way to offer **structure and support** during the making process.

creativity

collaboration

How does this
relate to
English
Language
learning??

*critical
thinking*

reflection

*peer
feedback*

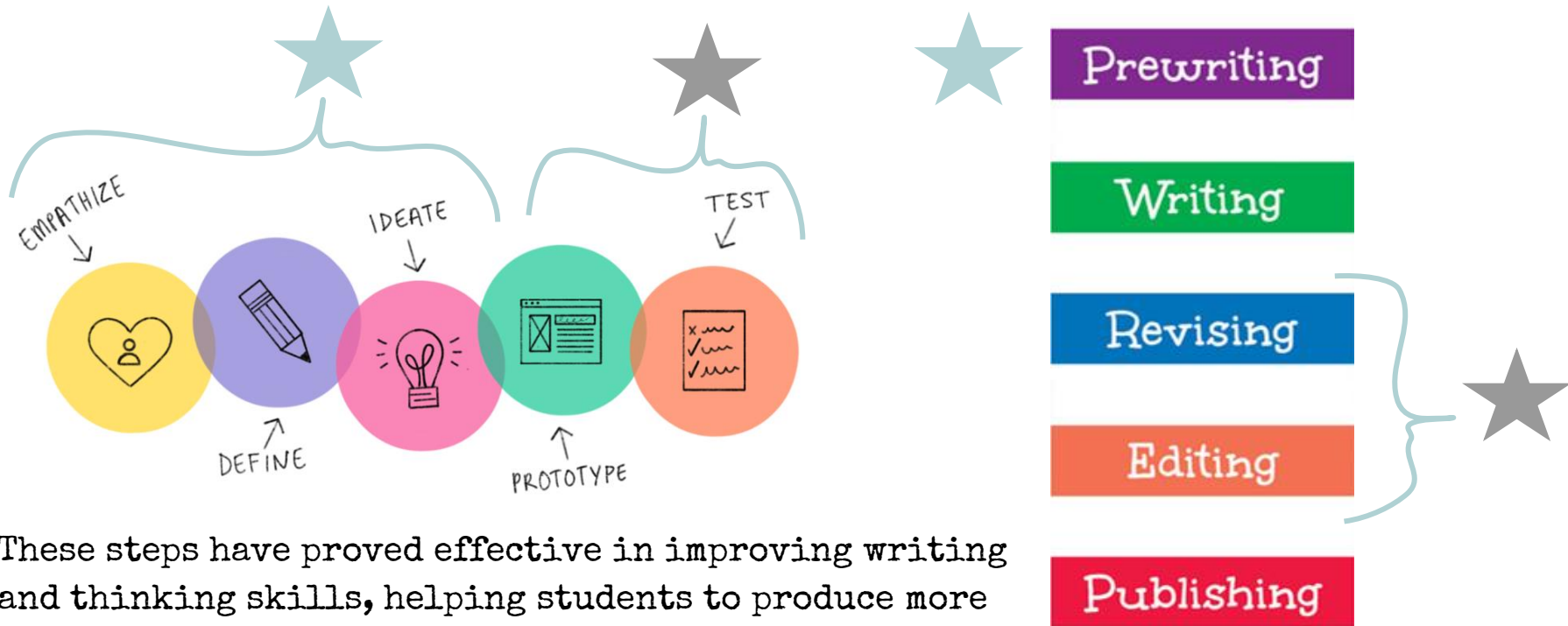
research



Design Thinking has students working on real problems, with real audiences- making their learning more authentic.

Students have more voice and choice in their work and more room for creativity and unique perspectives.

The Design Thinking steps serve as effective support for the writing process



These steps have proved effective in improving writing and thinking skills, helping students to produce more authentic, creative and meaningful writing products.

TRADITIONAL WRITING TASKS

Travel Writing

Design Thinking



As you all have different interests and preferences in travelling, you decided to have some travel agents design a travel package for all of you.

Before meeting your agents, compare your Task 1 answers with your group mates. Write a short summary of your travel preferences as a group. Write about 80-100 words.

You now have 15 minutes for discussion and writing the summary.



Travel Packages and Travel Writing in Form 2

Letter Writing in Form 1



Design Thinking and the Writing Process



Writing Halloween Narratives in Form 2

Step Inside Caroline's Experience

What does Caroline...

see?

think?

care about?

wonder?

Thinking Routine: I used to think... Now I think...

I used to think...

What did you used to think about being in Secondary School (before starting secondary school)?

Now I think...

What do you now think about being in Secondary School (after starting secondary school)?

SL English Language
2022-2023



Informal Letters of Advice to a Friend

MORE INNOVATIVE WRITING TASKS

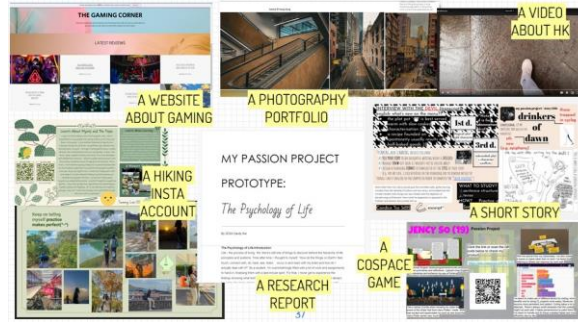
Social Action Campaigns in Form 3

Passion Projects



S3 ELAN 2021/22

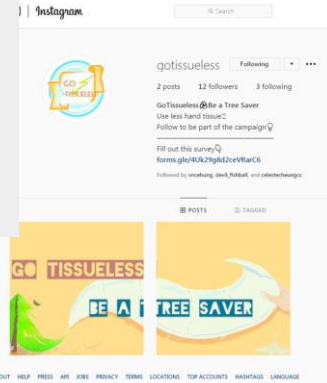
Passion Projects in Form 3



Over the next few weeks, you need to design and publish posts that make use of the following:



1. Zero conditional
2. First conditional
3. 2nd/3rd conditional
4. A gerund as the subject of a statement
5. A tag question
6. A past perfect statement
7. A future simple command
8. A present continuous statement
9. A present simple question
10. A relative clause



Apart from using the specified language skill, you can incorporate other techniques, such as visual symbolism, persuasive techniques etc

DESIGN THINKING AND THE WRITING PROCESS

1. Empathy is the first step in Design Thinking because it is a skill that allows us to understand what others feel. It's a helpful way to better understand your target audience

LANGUAGE SKILLS →

The empathise step requires students to ask questions and document answers and feedback. In this step, students will practice questioning techniques, question structures, and listening skills.

The **3. ideate** step promotes planning and encourages students to thoughtfully consider how their writing will address their audience and purpose.

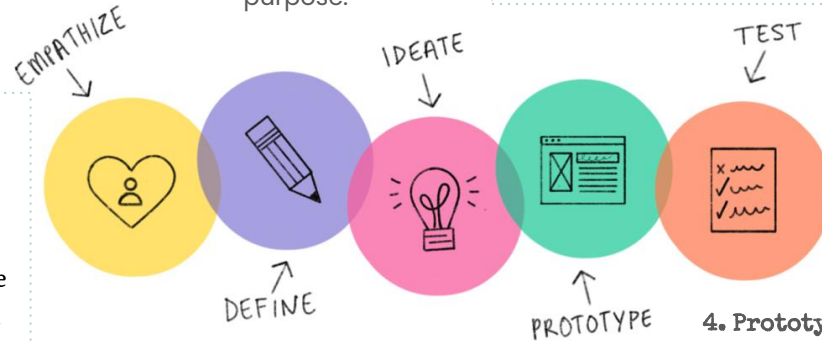
LANGUAGE SKILLS →

Ideating promotes creativity and critical thinking.

The **5. test** phase requires students to share their drafts with a real audience. Through peer feedback, they are encouraged to edit and revise their work multiple times.

LANGUAGE SKILLS →

Sharing their ideas with others encourages students to communicate and get some feedback to improve their writing. By engaging with other students' work, they are also exposed to new ideas and approaches.



The **2. define** step helps students better identify the purpose behind their writing.

LANGUAGE SKILLS →

Students learn how to identify audience and purpose, helping them to better fulfil the requirements of a writing task.

4. Prototyping is the students' first and subsequent drafts of their writing. Design Thinking encourages iteration and through prototyping, students understand that they will revise their work multiple times.

LANGUAGE SKILLS →

Students consider multiple language strategies and content that can be used to achieve their purpose for writing, gradually refining their writing.

HOW CAN I TRY
THIS OUT WITH MY
CLASSES?

1. Select a writing task that has the potential for an authentic audience- even if it's just their classmates.

Long Writing Task 1:

Write a Halloween story for your partner. Your story should be written in a way that captures your classmate's deepest fears and the protagonist overcomes her fears in the end.

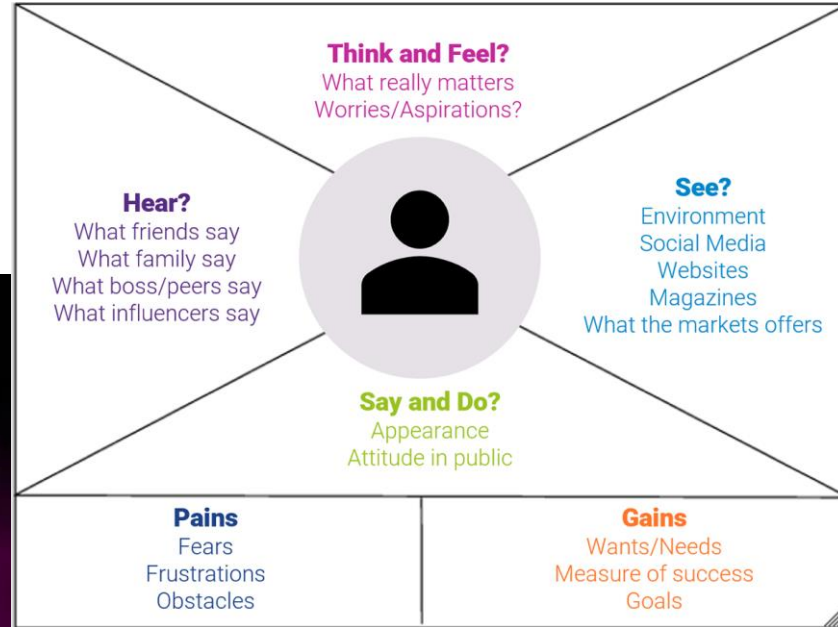
2. Build in time for students to conduct interviews with their audience as part of their planning.

THE "EMPATHIZE" STAGE

- Gain a deeper understanding of our classmate's fear(s)

Let's brainstorm some interview questions to get know and understand your partner's fears at a deeper level

1. What is your fear? (The obvious question)
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.



3. Before any draft writing, invest time in brainstorming! Here are some fun techniques for encourage students to come up with loads of ideas:

Visualise

Draw/sketch/doodle/stickman as many NEW ideas as you can come up with in 5 minutes.

Braindump

write down as many ideas as you can come up with in 5 minutes.

Worst Option

what is the worst way to fix the problem?

4-2-1

Form groups of 4. Each person has 1 minute to add 2 ideas to each ideation map.

4. After writing their first draft, they should engage with their real audience to get feedback. Use some fun, structured strategies for feedback so that students feel encouraged to revise their work multiple times.



APPRECIATE

What you appreciate, enjoy, or admire about your classmates' work?

WONDER

Ask questions or state puzzles you have about your classmates' work.

SUGGEST

Offer your classmates concrete suggestions or other advice.

- AWARD CEREMONY (LANGUAGE)

Students give their peers awards for best description/best detail/best sentence etc.

- WHAT IF (CONTENT)

Using sticky notes, students add a 'what if' comment.

- FIRST IMPRESSIONS (CLARITY)

They read only the opening sentence or paragraph and make a prediction about the rest of the text.

5. Find a way
to share their
work when it's
complete.



Prezi



padlet



POWTOON



YouTube

REFLECTIONS

- It is possible to teach strategies to improve complexity of thinking and ideas. If given the right tools (like Design Thinking), students can gradually improve their ideas and come up with more relevant, interesting and creative content.
- Students appreciate being given the skills to identify areas of improvement. Students are excited to revise and improve their work when the task feels interesting and engaging.
- We can make English writing tasks more personal and offer room for student voice and choice. Students are engaged and active when they have more agency in writing tasks.
- Marking student work became more stimulating for teachers and we were as invested in the final products as the students!
- Our project work has not only shown positive outcomes in the classroom, but also in our departmental planning, collaboration and the design of learning experiences.