“Seed” Project and “Week of Hope” Experience-sharing Session:
A Design for Life: Values Education in English Language Education

Reading Across the Curriculum (RaC) in the English Language Classroom -
Reading for Breadth and Depth

How to Start a School-based RaC Project in the English Language Classroom

Newman Catholic College

Presenters:
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Ms Ophelia Cheung and Ms Carrie Peng

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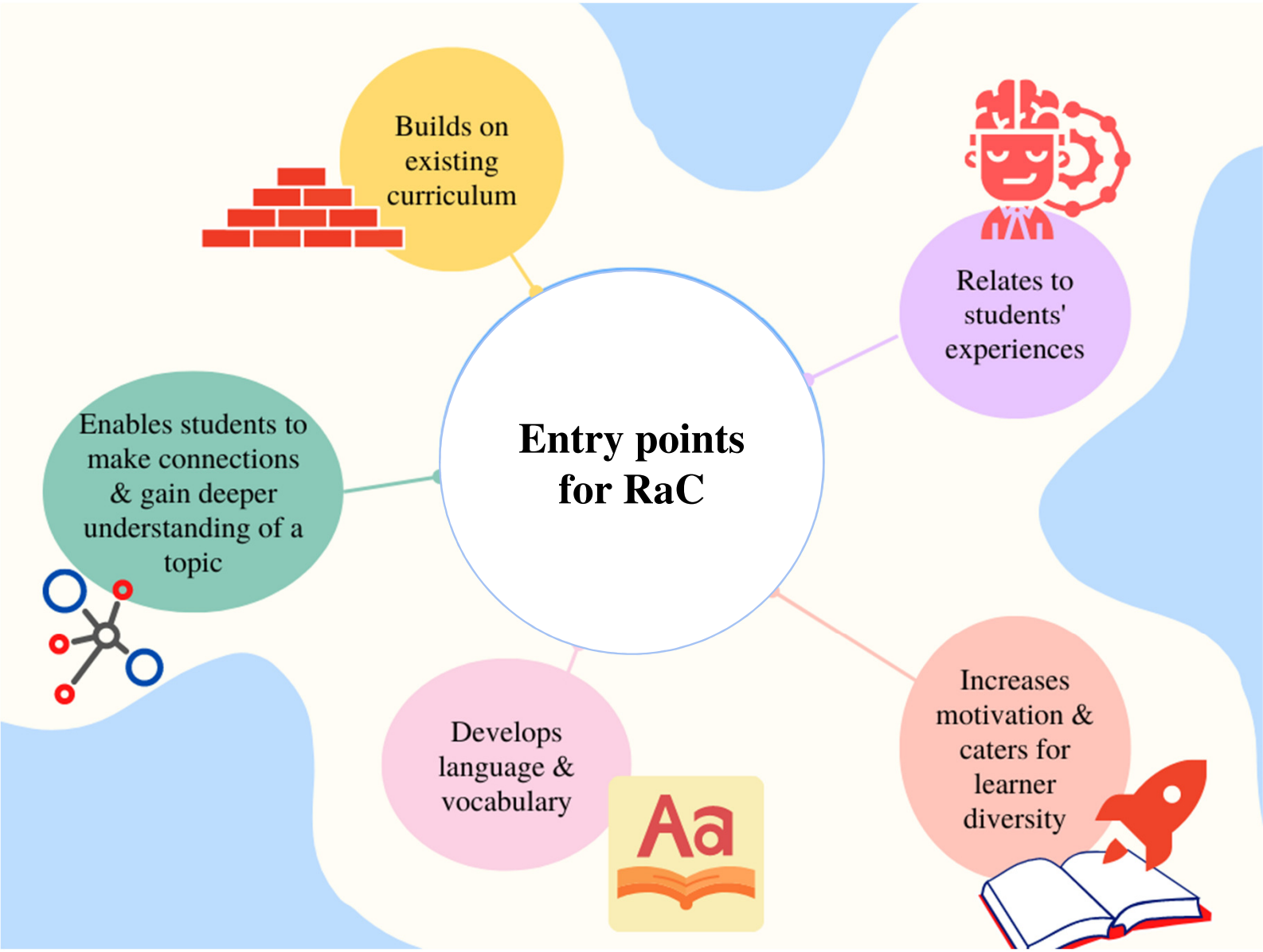
School context

Location	Yau Ma Tei
Non-language subjects taught in EMI in S1-3	Maths & Science
Motivation behind joining the RaC project	• To enhance panel members' professional capacity in implementing RaC • To foster collaboration within the English Department through co-planning RaC lessons
Students' learning needs in terms of RaC	• To build students' understanding of a topic • To develop their reading skills • To make connections between reading input in English and their learning experiences / everyday life

Entry point for RaC

Textbook unit	S1 “Fun with Food’ Unit
Topic	Food and Cultures around the World
Connections with students’ other learning experiences and daily lives	• “Food” *(Technology & Living)* • “Heritage and Culture” (*Integrated Humanities*) • Topic-related vocabulary (food items, vocabulary related to history/cultures/traditions) • Language functions (to present facts, to make suggestions, to explain)


Entry points for RaC
Builds on existing curriculum
Relates to students' experiences
Enables students to make connections & gain deeper understanding of a topic
Develops language & vocabulary
Increases motivation & caters for learner diversity
Aa

Texts selected for the unit

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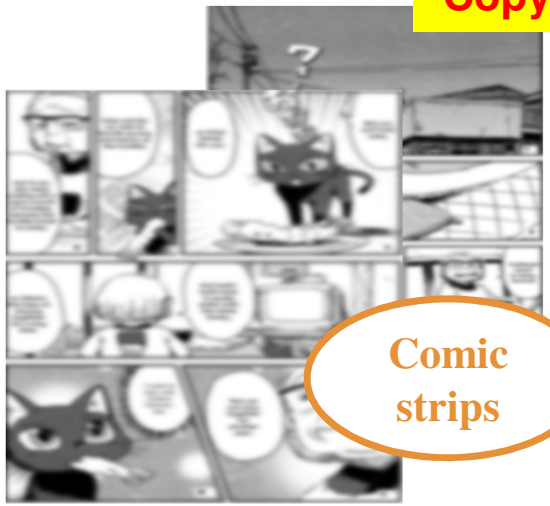
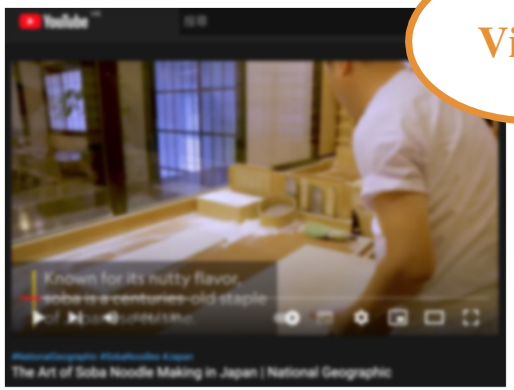
Online article



Comic strips

- Thematically/Topically **linked**
- Multimodal
- Multi-genre
- Authentic
- **Multiple perspectives** of a theme/topic
- **Sequenced** to build better understanding of the topic



Video

Magazine article

Text set

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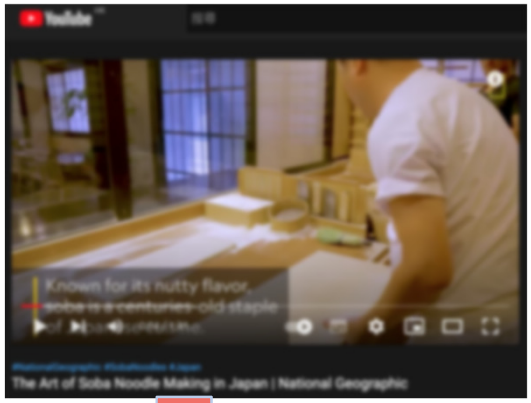
Text Set on New Year's Food: Authentic informational texts

Focus question: What can we learn about cultures around the world from different New Year dishes?

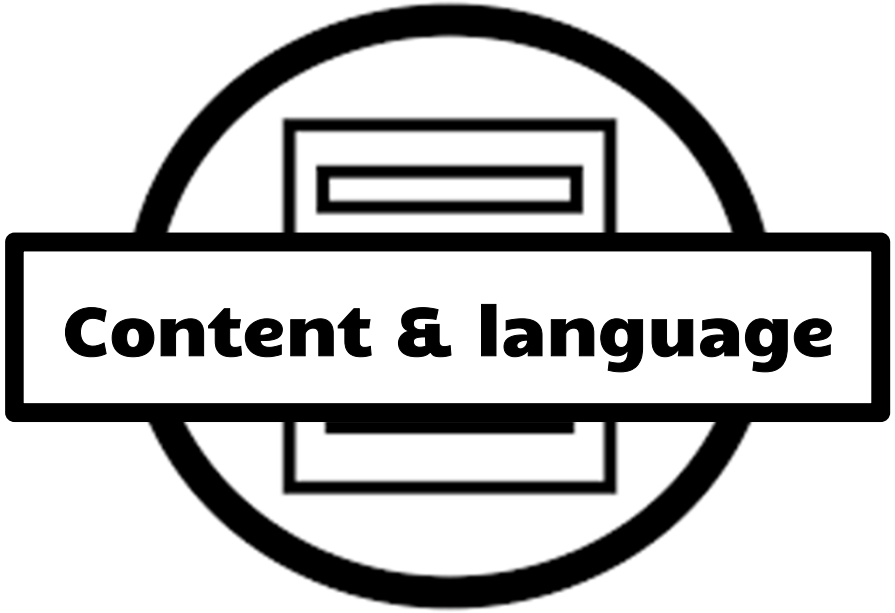


- Main ingredients
- Cooking method
- Significance/ Symbol of the food + Why
- Ways of eating/serving the food
- Time to eat the food
- When the tradition started

How we used the reading texts

Example 1 – Adapting the texts

e.g. add additional details, use manageable technical terms



e.g. unpack concepts, sentence structures or use simpler vocabulary

Original

~~While there are no hard and fast rules~~ as to how to prepare toshikoshi soba, it's often served quite simply: in a kombu noodle broth, topped with a few chopped leeks, and perhaps a bit of Japanese parsley or yuzu peel to garnish. ~~It's not a dish that's particularly colourful or hearty, and is perhaps one of the more plain foods there is to Japanese cuisine.~~

Adapted

Toshikoshi soba is often served in a kombu broth, with a few chopped leeks on top and a bit of Japanese parsley or yuzu peel to add colours. This is a traditional New Year's dish in Japan.

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Original

When the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve, many countries have a tradition of loud fireworks, big confetti, and lots of flashing lights.

KEEP

+

SCAFFOLD

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Original

Adapted

Example 2 – Developing students' reading skills/strategies

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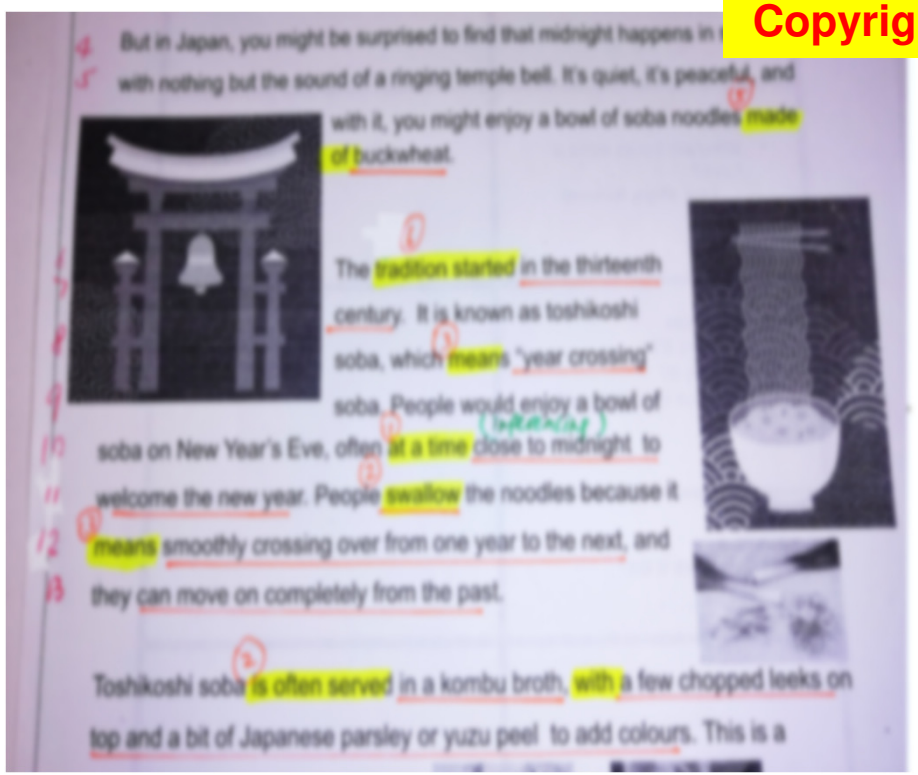

But in Japan, you might be surprised to find that midnight happens in
with nothing but the sound of a ringing temple bell. It's quiet, it's peaceful, and
with it, you might enjoy a bowl of soba noodles made
of buckwheat.

The tradition started in the thirteenth
century. It is known as toshikoshi
soba, which means "year crossing"
soba. People would enjoy a bowl of
soba on New Year's Eve, often at a time close to midnight to
welcome the new year. People swallow the noodles because it
means smoothly crossing over from one year to the next, and
they can move on completely from the past.

Toshikoshi soba is often served in a kombu broth, with a few chopped leeks on
top and a bit of Japanese parsley or yuzu peel to add colours. This is a

Developing students' **reading skills/strategies** (e.g. scanning, inferring ideas, following ideas by recognising simple text structures)

Jigsaw reading in RaC lessons

How we used the text - Example 2

①	②	③	④	⑤	⑥
When to eat the food	**How is the food eaten / served**	**What does the food signify / symbolise AND why?**	**Cooking method**	**Main ingredients**	**When the tradition started**
On New Year's Eve before midnight (L10-11: at a time close to midnight to welcome the new year) (inferencing)	**How it is served:** in a kombu noodle broth, with a few chopped leeks on top and a bit of Japanese parsley or yuzu peel to add colours (L14-15: is often served in… to add colours) **How it is eaten:** swallow (L11) (scanning, vocab)	smoothly crossing over from one year to the next + move completely from the past (L12-13) (scanning)	N/A (scanning)	Buckwheat (L11: made of buckwheat) (scanning)	13th century (L6: the tradition started in the thirteenth century) (scanning)

Example 3 – Providing C and L input for subsequent task(s)

Final task:

As 21st May is the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, your school is inviting students to submit articles for the upcoming issue of the school newsletter on the theme of 'New Year's Dishes'.

Each group has to write about a kind of New Year's food. You may use you ideas or choose from the options below:

1. **12 Grapes**
2. **Sausage and lentil stew**
3. **Oil balls**
4. Chaku
5. Golden cornbread
6. Hoppin' John
7. Tamales (Mexican)
8. Marzipanschwein (Austria and Germany)
9. Suckling pigs (Around the World)
10. Mochitsuki (Japanese)
11. King Cake (Greek, Mexican)
12. Pickled herring (Poland and Scandinavia)
13. Kransekage (Denmark and Norway)
14. Your own choice of New Year's Dishes/ Food

You are going **to write an article** in about 150 words for th chosen food and the culture.

Things you should include.

- History and story of the dish
- Description of the dish, e.g. appearance and taste,
- Ingredients and cooking steps
- Anything else you can think of (you can refer to the

1. Where can we find this kind of food in Hong Kon	
2. Is it good for our health?	
3. Is it expensive to buy these ingredients?	
4. How do you feel about the dish?	
5. Will you try it with your family on New Year's Eve? Why or why not?	
6. Can you see any similarities between this celebration and the Lunar Chinese New New Year?	

Characteristics:

- Engaging students in **text response**
- **Connecting reading and writing** for assessment
- **Consolidating reading** outcome

As 21st May is **the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development,** your school is inviting students to submit articles for the upcoming issue of the school newsletter on the theme of 'New Year's Dishes'. Each group has to **write about a kind of New Year's food**…

Characteristics of the final task (cont'd):

- Connecting student's **life experiences**
- Encouraging further **research**

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You are going **to write an article** in about 150 words for the school newspaper to introduce the chosen food and the culture.

Things you should include.

- History and story of the dish
- Description of the dish, e.g. appearance and taste, how the food is served/eaten
- Ingredients and cooking steps
- Anything else you can think of (you can refer to the ideas below)

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Characteristics of the final task (cont'd):

- Catering for **learner diversity**

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14. Your own choice of New Year's Dishes/ Food

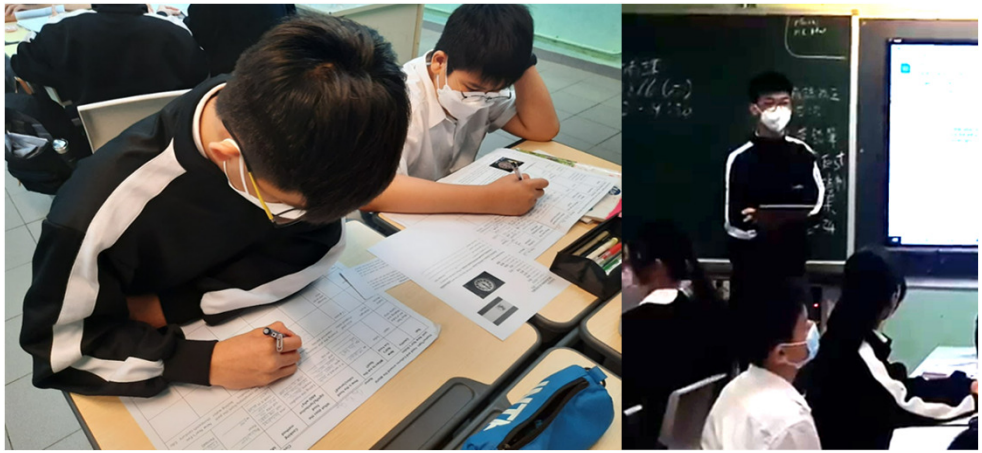
Previous reading texts

Teacher-provided clues / pointers

Scaffolding writing

simple present tense to present facts	(b) Sentence Structure: **It** (The tradition) **is known as** _____(name of the tradition). **(E.g.) It** (The tradition) **is known as** toshikoshi soba, which means "year crossing" soba. Your sentence : _____ **is known as** _____ _____ _____

modal verbs to make suggestions	(c) Sentence Structure: **People can enjoy** _____(noun) **on New Year's Eve.** **(E.g.) People can enjoy** a bowl of soba **on New Year's Eve.** Your sentence : **People can enjoy** _____ **on New Year's Eve.**



1. Japanese / Italians / Spanish / Dutch celebrate New Year's Eve with soba noodles / 12 grapes / sausage and lentil stew/ oil balls . (Please circle your answers.)
2. It is a tradition started in _____ to welcome the New Year.
3. To cook the dish, ... (briefly describe the cooking steps and ingredients)
4. The food is served _____.
5. The dish means _____.

Teaching **communicative functions and the related language items** through sentence-making practice and mini oral presentations

Writing model

Structure	The writing	Content	Language functions
Title	The New Year's Eve Noodles -Soba	- Point out the feature of the dish in the title	
Introduction	Ramen, udon, soba, probably these are the Japanese noodles that you can name. Among them, I like soba the best! It represents the food culture of the Japanese.	- Introduce the food and relate the culture to the reader's experience	(a) To introduce:-to talk about, aim to, purpose (b) To present facts and opinions: Simple present tense
Body	Soba was originated in the Edo period, from 1603 to 1868. At that time, families mainly had white rice and suffered from Vitamin B deficiency (not having enough of it) . People discovered that this disease could be prevented by regularly eating Vitamin B-rich soba, then this kind of thin noodles suddenly became a hit in the country. Many restaurants served soba as a casual meal for the Japanese.	- History and origin of the food - How the dish became popular	(c) To present past events: past tense (d) To explain cause and effect (then)
	Soba is a kind of thin Japanese noodles made from buckwheat. Japanese often serve the noodles either hot or chilled. To serve it chilled, people put them on a sieve-like bamboo tray called a zaru. Also, they can also be served in hot kombu broth, with toppings that reflect the seasons and balance with other ingredients, such as chopped leeks and yuzu peel.	- Description of the dish, how it is served	(e) To define (is/am/are) (f) To exemplify (such as) (g) To suggest possibility (can)
Conclusion	To conclude, Soba noodles are especially important to the Japanese. Japanese traditionally eat soba noodles on New Year's Eve because having this dish means saying goodbye to all the bad luck in the last year. Tangyuan is a traditional New Year's dish for Chinese. People believe the round shape represents family reunion and it is also the shape of completeness and perfection in Chinese culture. Besides having tangyuan, I believe we can have soba before New Year too because noodles also mean longevity in Chinese culture.	- The importance of the dish in Japanese culture (and compare it to the Chinese tradition if applicable)	(h) To draw conclusions (to conclude) (i) To explain reasons (because) (j) To explain ideas (mean, represents) (k) To introduce beliefs and thoughts (believe)

	Content	Language Items	Language Functions
What is *Soba*? It **is** a noodle dish made from buckwheat. Usually *Soba* is served hot or chilled. To make *Soba* more delicious, you **can** add different toppings **such as** *Yuzu* peel, Japanese parsley and seaweed. Eating *Soba* symbolises crossing over from one year to the new year smoothly. Like us, Japanese people wish for good luck and a happy life as long as the noodles. Eating *Soba* together with the whole family **can** also **mean** that you and your family will stay together happily for another year.	- Description of the dish, how it is served - Meaning/so mething interesting about the dish Topical vocabulary	**Modal verbs** **Such as** **Mean**	**Make suggestions** **Exemplify** **Define**

Sample student work

Applying reading input in the final task:

- Topical vocabulary
- New knowledge related to cultures

12 Grapes **symbolises good luck** in the Spanish **tradition**. To ensure good luck for the next year, people eat one green grape when each **clock strikes** an hour after midnight. Each clock strike represents one upcoming month in the coming year. It is interesting that **someone called Alicantese vine Grover spread this custom to better sell huge numbers of grapes** after an excellent harvest.

When the clock **strikes midnight** on New Year's Eve, many countries have a **tradition** of **serving** different New year's food. In Italy, their New Year's food is called Sausage and Lentil Stew, they eat it on New Year's Eve with happiness and the new year's atmosphere. So now, let's see **how the food is served** and eaten and why this is so popular. It is served hot on a plate,this can be served with rice or mashed potatoes. Why is this food so popular at New Year? Italians believe this food can bring **good fortune because lentil and sausages have the shape of coins**. **What does the food signify**? Luck. People believe that **rich and fatty meat bring prosperity**.

Sample student work

Making connections between knowledge and life experiences in the final task

Pan-fried dumplings is a **traditional New Year's dish for Chinese people**. We believe if you eat dumplings **you will live longer**. Besides having dumplings, I believe we can have lentil stew too!

We can find oil balls in cafes, supermarkets and bakeries in Hong Kong. However, this food is **not healthy because it contains a lot of sugar**. We can find **similar food like sweet dumplings** when it is Chinese New Year. They are sweet and yummy but they are not healthy. I would like to try the oil balls with my family because **it gives us good luck**.

Grapes are good for our health. The difference between the Lunar New Year's food in China and the New Year dish in Spain is that **Lunar New Year's food requires flour to make , like sesame balls, deep-fried dumplings and rice cake; however, Spanish people celebrate it with fruit**. Most of the Lunar New Year's food is different from that in Spain.

Takeaways

Start small. Find an entry point to start within the English Department.

Selection and use of the texts. Create a text set on a theme/topic and use it well to advocate reading for breadth and depth.

Provide opportunities for application and consolidation. Design tasks that promote students' engagement with the texts and foster connections between learning experiences.

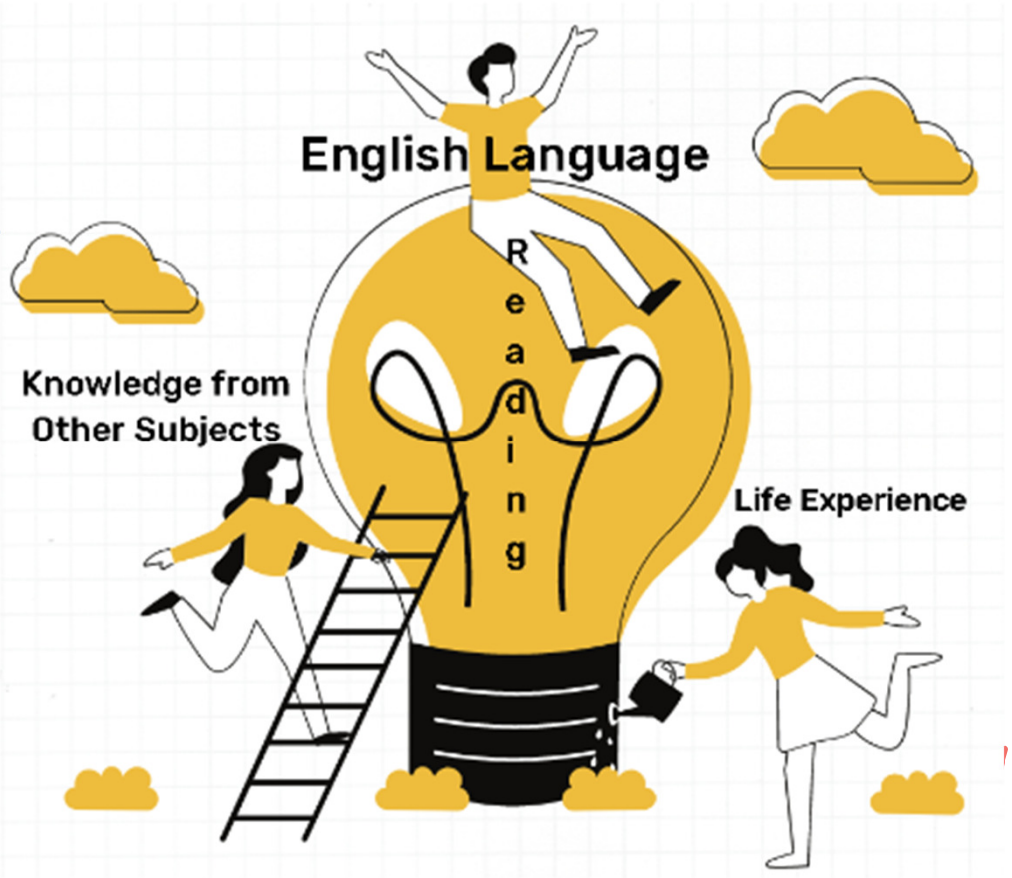
Way forward

Refining the RaC unit **materials** (e.g. the scaffolding for the final task)

Practising **re-reading a text** with a specific purpose each time to strengthen students' ability to read for depth

Fostering more **collaboration** through promoting RaC in another year level with a different unit

Thank you!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