Students as Partners: Supporting and Engaging First-Year Students in Active Learning

Dr. Elizabeth Barrett

Senior Lecturer, Assistant Dean (L&T)

Faculty of Education, HKU

barrett1@hku.hk

Overview

First-year undergraduate students may need to transition from a more passive learning style in secondary school to an active, collaborative learning style in university.

The aim of this project was to support first-year students in this transition, as well as engage them as co-'teachers' in the classroom.

This project: 1) engaged a few senior students to co-create curriculum materials and 2) developed a collaborative group assessment that required first-year students to take the responsibility of teaching their peers and initiating small group discussions.

In this sharing, I will describe the collaborative role of students and course instructors in this project, as well as reflect on the outcomes of the educational activities in the classroom.

The Challenge

Year 1, First Semester Course: BSc(SHS) "Human Development for Speech & Hearing Sciences"

Students perform academically well in the course

Some challenges adjusting to university expectations
--Expected to participate in class activities and class discussions (compared to passive learning style in secondary school)
--Keeping up with learning?

Image Source:
Image by pikisuperstar on Freepik

Image by felicities on Freepik <a href="https://www.freepik.com/free-vector/excellent-student-with-good-grade-test-asian-student-uniform_20075952.htm#query=grades&position=21&from_view=search&track=sph">

Image by storyset on Freepik

Students as Partners: Solution?

Aim	Support Year 1 students to self-directed learning & active engagement in class
Create Learning Resources	Project 1: Engage a few senior students to co-create learning materials
Engage Students in "**Teaching**" via Grp Assessment	Project 2: Develop a collaborative group assessment that required first-year students to take the responsibility of teaching their peers and initiating small group discussions.

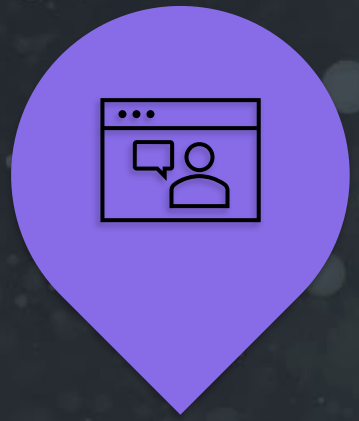
SaP: Co-Create Learning Resources

Co-Create Learning Resources

- Developed two sets of materials for students to use as additional learning resources
  - Optional resources
  - Self-directed learning materials

1. A set of "Mini-Quiz" questions and answers for each age-group.
   - Emphasis on most important concepts for SHS.
2. Short, simple videos that review either theory or developmental milestones for specific age groups

SaP: Self-directed Learning Resources

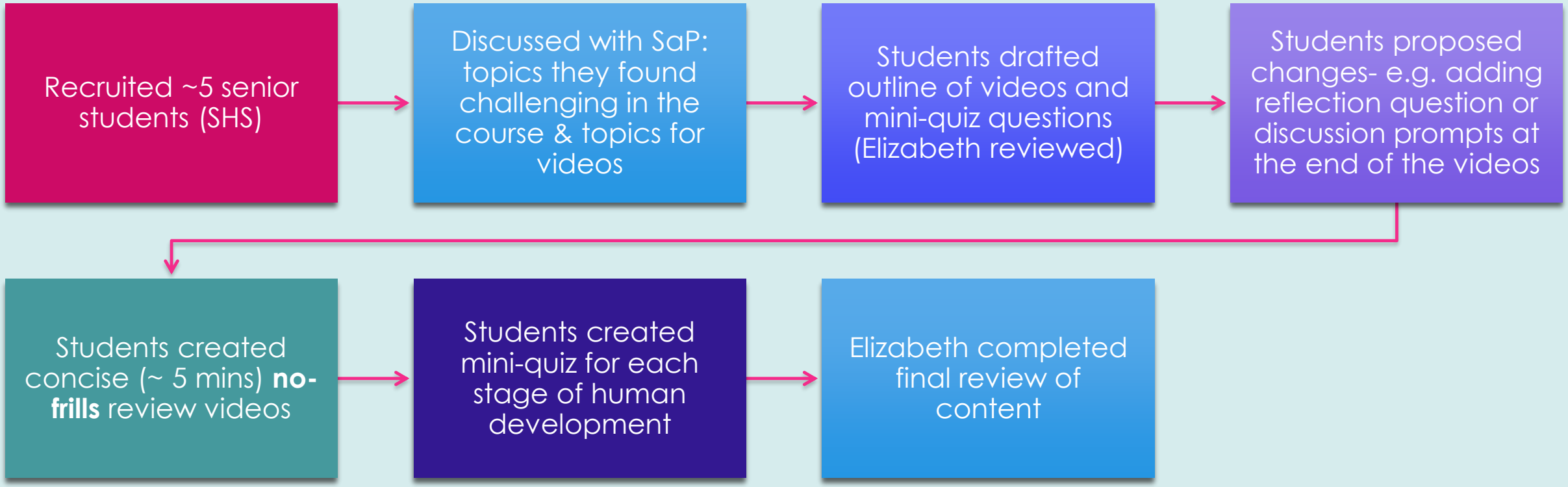


THEORY VIDEOS

MILESTONE VIDEOS

MINI-QUIZZES

Process of Working with SaP Students



Feedback from Students in the Course

Analytics: Over 1000 views across the theory and milestone videos (primarily before assessment)

Mini-Quiz: Fewer students used mini-quiz compared to videos. The students who use the mini-quiz use consistently across the semester

SFTL: Qualitative comments were positive.

SFTL: Student Feedback

- There are extra materials for **consolidation of knowledge**.
- The teacher provided practice quiz and video after class to **review what we have learnt**. They can no doubt help **consolidate the knowledge** we have learnt.
- She provides a lot of **useful resources** ie I did the **practice quiz** for few times and it can help me what things I should **focus to revise** in the book. Listing out the learning outcomes and highlight the important points in red really helps me to identify what are important.
- Practice quizzes that are open in the beginning of the course and we can complete them according to our **own pace of learning**. The topic expert forums are also very effective in learning and studying the course.
- Lots of material apart form the textbook are provided to us to **facilitate learning**

SFTL Comments from: 2021-22; 2022-23

Cost & Support

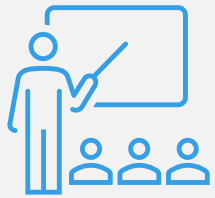
- SaP were paid as hourly student helpers via Uni- ECTA fund
- Faculty Support: Use of equipment (e.g. microphones) from e-learning
- Sustainable (use materials for years to come)

Engage Students in “Teaching” via Group Assessment

Students as Topic Experts

AIM: ENGAGE STUDENTS IN THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS (IN A SMALL WAY) **ACROSS THE SEMESTER**

DEVELOPED A COLLABORATIVE **GROUP ASSESSMENT** THAT REQUIRED FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF **TEACHING THEIR PEERS AND INITIATING SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS.**



RESULT: ASSESSMENT CALLED "TOPIC EXPERT"

Topic Expert Assignment

- Group Assigned Topic
- Create a **5-Minute Video** to "teach" the class
- **Create 3 discussion questions** to facilitate small group discussion in class:
  - 1) Related to everyday life/HK context
  - 2) Related to the profession of speech therapy
  - 3) Prompt for deeper understanding
- Share two additional resources (infographic, image, video, website, relevant articles) to deepen understanding of topic

Assignment Description: Topic Expert

"If you want to learn something, teach it!" In this assignment, students will take the role of 'teacher' to self-study and teach a specific topic related to human development to the class. This will allow students to learn from their peers, dive deeper into interesting topics, and learn beyond what is presented in the textbook. Topic Expert projects will be conducted in groups in order for students to practice important collaboration and time-management skills. The weekly reflection on questions related to these topics will allow students to practice applying concepts/theories to the Hong Kong context and our own experiences. Finally, the discussion around Topic Expert will also emphasize their application to the role of speech therapists, which provide a professional anchor to these discussions.

Group Projects:

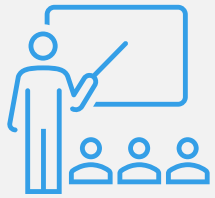
These projects will be conducted in groups of ~three to four students. At the start of the semester, **the course instructor will assign students to each group and assign each group a specific topic** related to human development across the lifespan. The group will become the 'expert' of the topic and teach this topic to the class via an online sharing and discussion on Moodle forums. The groups will complete three components as Topic Expert Presenters:

1) Each group will be required to make a short video (maximum of 5 minutes) to post to the forum for the class to watch and learn more about the assigned topic.
2) Each group will also be required to post three questions related to the topic to the forum, to prompt classmates to discuss the topic and its relevance to the profession of speech therapy. The questions should cover the following areas:
   - One question that requires the class to relate the topic or concept to **everyday life or the Hong Kong context**.
   - One question that requires the class to consider the topic or concept to the **professional of speech-language therapy**.
   - One question that the group thinks the class should discuss in order to better understand the concept or topic.
3) Topic Experts will also share two additional resources (e.g. images, videos, websites, or relevant research) on the forum, in addition to their video, to facilitate discussion and enhance understanding of the topic.

Lesson Schedule

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

INTERACTIVE LECTURE



2 GROUPS

PRESENT TOPIC EXPERT VIDEOS TO CLASS

2 GROUPS

FACILITATE SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

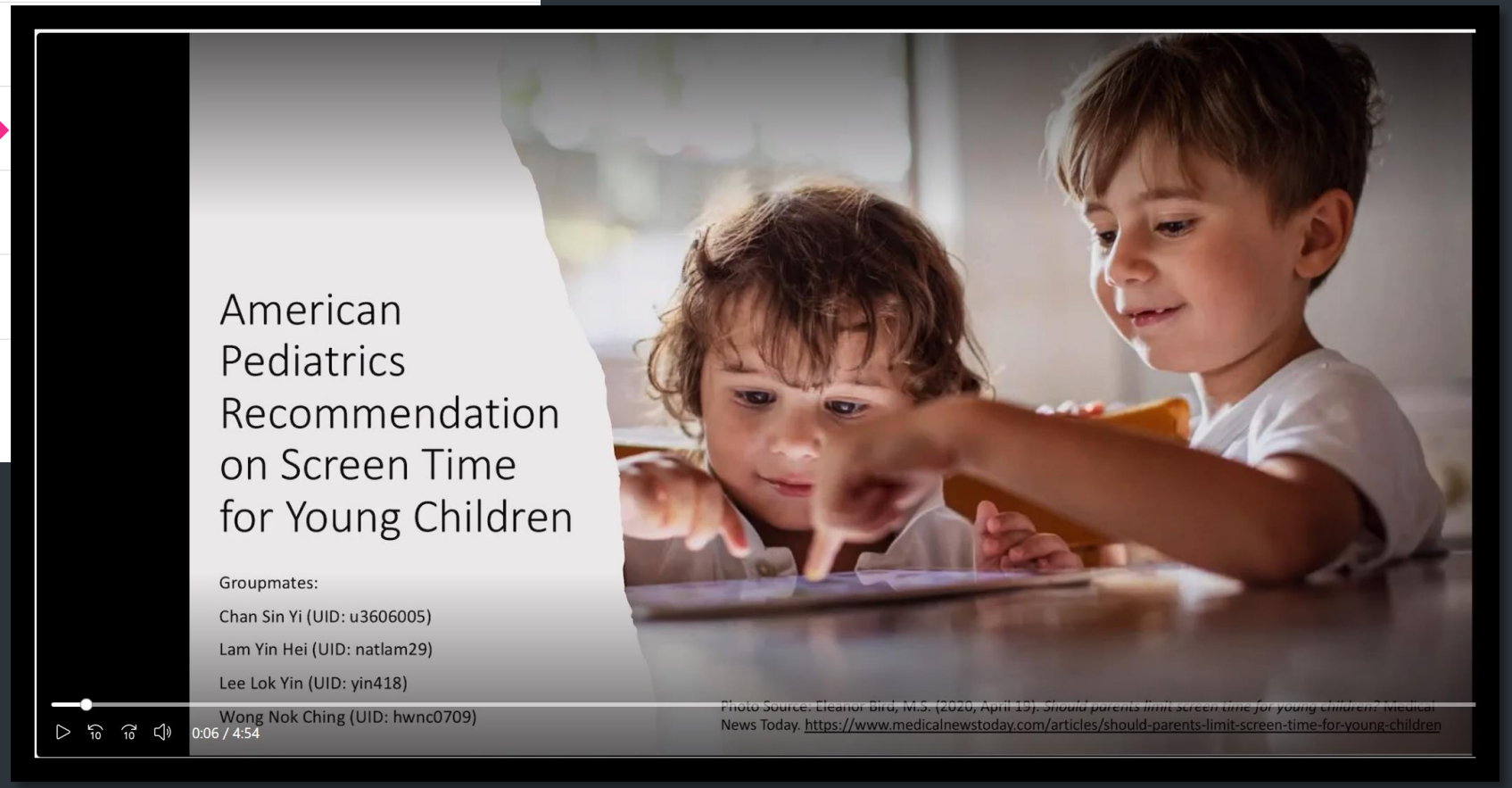
Topic Expert: 3 "APA Recommendation: Screen Time for Young

Mark as done

Add a new discussion topic

Discussion	Started by	Last post
Question 3	Chan Sin Yi 25 Sep 2022	Tom Wai Yi Christie 18 Oct 2022
Question 1	Chan Sin Yi 25 Sep 2022	
video	Lam Yin Hei 26 Sep 2022	
Resource #2	Chan Sin Yi 25 Sep 2022	
Resource #1	Chan Sin Yi 25 Sep 2022	
Question 2	Chan Sin Yi 25 Sep 2022	

"Teach" the Class: 5-minute Video



Thank you to Group 3 for sharing their project for this presentation: Chan Sin Yi, Lam Yin Hei, Lee Lok Yin, Wong Nok Ching

Facilitate Discussion: 3 Questions

Topic Expert: 3 "APA Recommendation: Screen Time for Young

Mark as done

Add a new discussion topic

Discussion	Started by	Last post
☆ Question 3	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	Tom Wai Yi Christie
☆ Question 1	Chan Sin Yi	
☆ video	Lam Yin Hei, 26 Sep 2022	
☆ Resource #2	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	
☆ Resource #1	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	
☆ Question 2	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	

Question 1

by Chan Sin Yi - Sunday, 25 September 2022, 2:31 PM

Is legislation essential for Hong Kong to regulate the screen time of young children in order to minimize the effect of excessive screen time of young children?

27 words

Permalink Edit Delete Reply Export to portfolio

Question 3

by Chan Sin Yi - Sunday, 25 September 2022, 2:32 PM

Is there any other impact of excessive screen time that may inhibit the development of young children?

17 words

Permalink Edit Delete Reply Export to portfolio

Re: Question 3

by [redacted] - Tuesday, 18 October 2022, 5:03 PM

[redacted]

Excessive screen time will also lead to delay in children's physical development and negative impacts on health. Screen time is associated with obesity since there is less time available for physical activity such as playing in the park. It will also cause deleterious effects in irritability, low mood and cognitive development, which means children will be more prone to various behaviour problems and mental illnesses in the future. The long screen time will also lead to shorter attention span and focus, which will bring troubles to them to concentrate in class and worsen academic performance.

102 words

Permalink Show parent Edit Split Delete Reply Export to portfolio

Encourage Further Learning: 2 Additional Resources

Topic Expert: 3 "APA Recommendation: Screen

Mark as done

Add a new discussion topic

Discussion	Started by	Last
Question 3	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	
Question 1	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	
video	Lam Yin Hei, 26 Sep 2022	
Resource #2	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	
Resource #1	Chan Sin Yi	
Question 2	Chan Sin Yi, 25 Sep 2022	

Topic Expert: 3 "APA Recommend

Resource #1

Settings

◄ Question 2

File download | Export whole discussion to portfolio | Display replies in nested form

Move this discussion to ... | Move

Resource #1
by Chan Sin Yi - Sunday, 25 September 2022, 2:36 PM

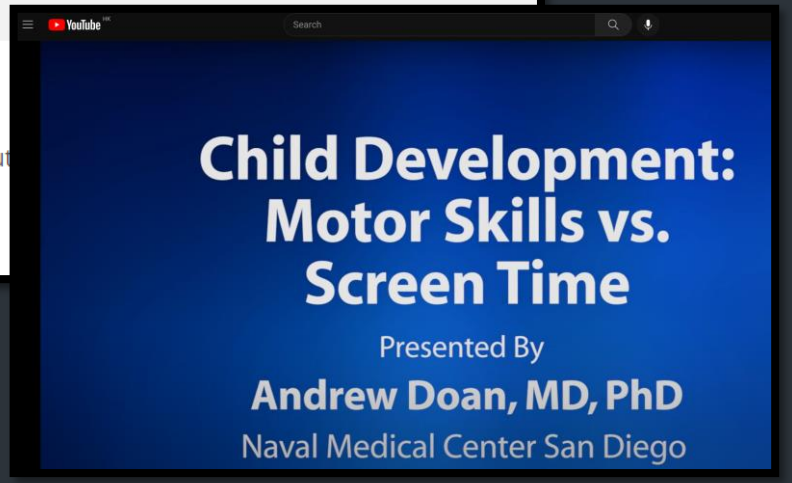
https://www.proquest.com/docview/2164525756?accountid=14548

Stiglic, N., & Viner, R. M. (2019). Effects of screentime on the health and well-being of children and adolescents: a systematic review of reviews. BMJ Open, 9(1). https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2018-023191

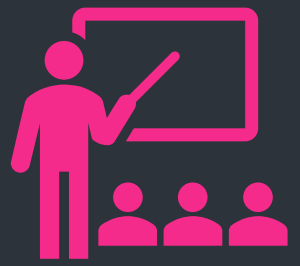
Resource #2
by Chan Sin Yi - Sunday, 25 September 2022, 2:37 PM

Child Development: Motor Skills versus Screen Time

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aN2NK8MC_F4&feature=you



Students as Topic Experts



Students as “Teachers”:

Two Groups Present their Video each lesson after Instructor’s lecture

Students as Facilitators:

Small group discussions based on 3 Questions → Class post answer to the question on Moodle forum

SFTL: Student Feedback

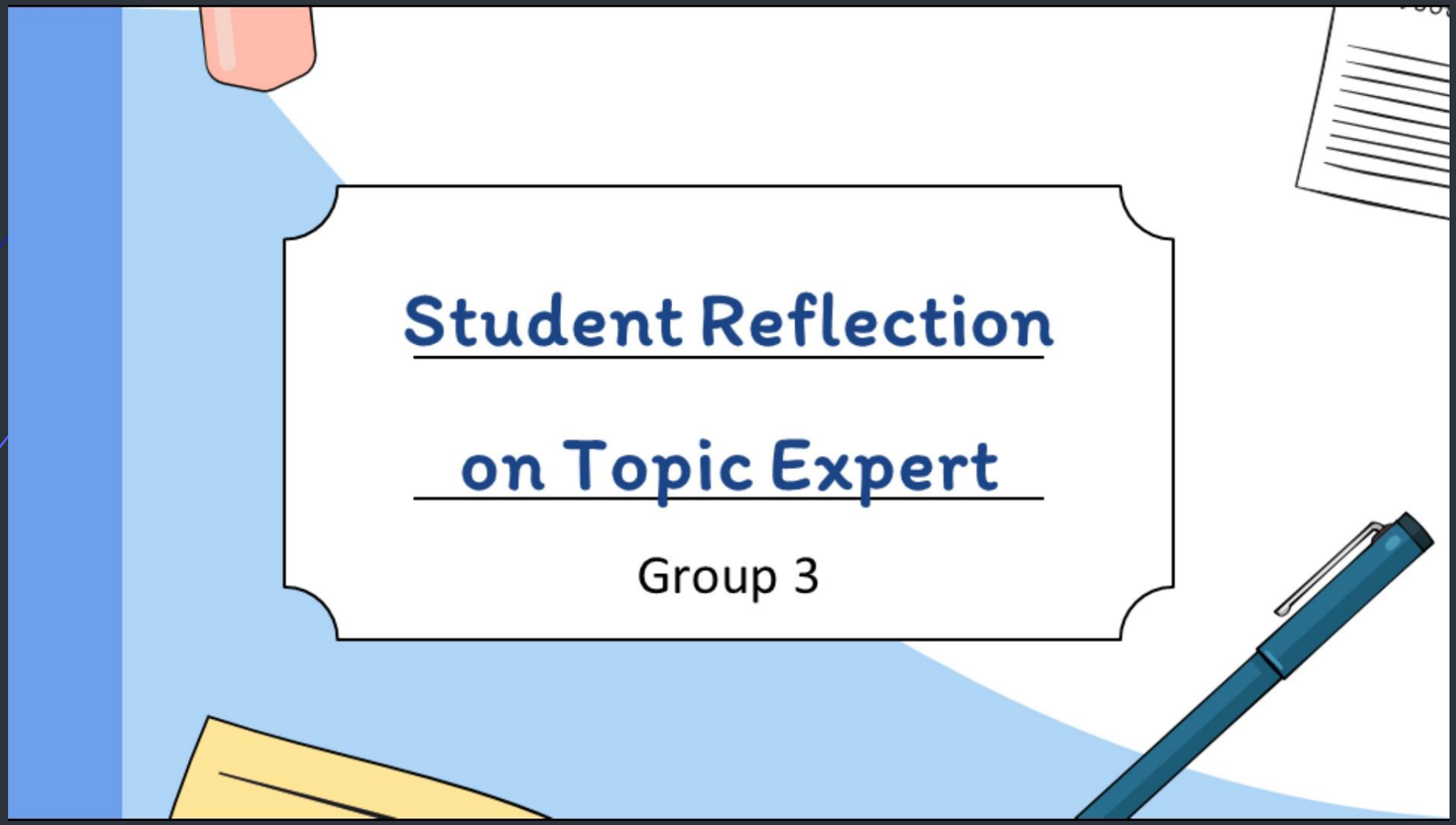
- Many chances for us to respond to topic expert so we not only listen for lectures but **also participate**.
- She can lead us to a wider range of discussion topics and we can **think from different perspectives**.
- I enjoyed the course a lot:) allow us to learn more about human development doing {Topic Expert} videos
- The teacher created a lot of interactions during class which encouraged my to **actively participate during the lessons** and aided my learning.

SFTL Comments from: 2021-22; 2022-23

Support

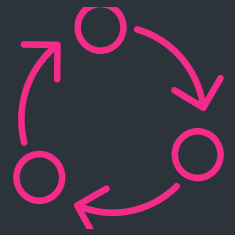
- No financial cost; required ~30 minutes of class time each lesson
- Not a traditional SaP project, as part of class assignment.
- Students as “contributors” of proposed SaP Levels Framework
- Maps onto UEA 5: Communication & Collaboration

Student Reflection



Thank you to Group 3 for sharing their reflection for this presentation: Chan Sin Yi, Lam Yin Hei, Lee Lok Yin, Wong Nok Ching

Overall: SaP Reflection & Evaluation



SaP Process

-- Discussion with SaP Students insightful into students learning process & struggles

-- Review of student-drafted materials time consuming

SaP Evaluation

-- Build culture of ‘contributors’ through class-based work may promote more engagement or possible SaP in the future?

Thank you

barrett1@hku.hk