



Cambridge

Outlook

THE MAGAZINE FOR CAMBRIDGE SCHOOLS WORLDWIDE

Issue 35, October 2020

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Developing new curricula
The story behind the changes



Wellbeing
Putting student and teacher wellness in the spotlight



The Great Teaching Toolkit
Professor Rob Coe on what makes a great teacher

In Focus

Reaching higher

Get ready for exciting changes to our programmes for 5 to 14-year-olds



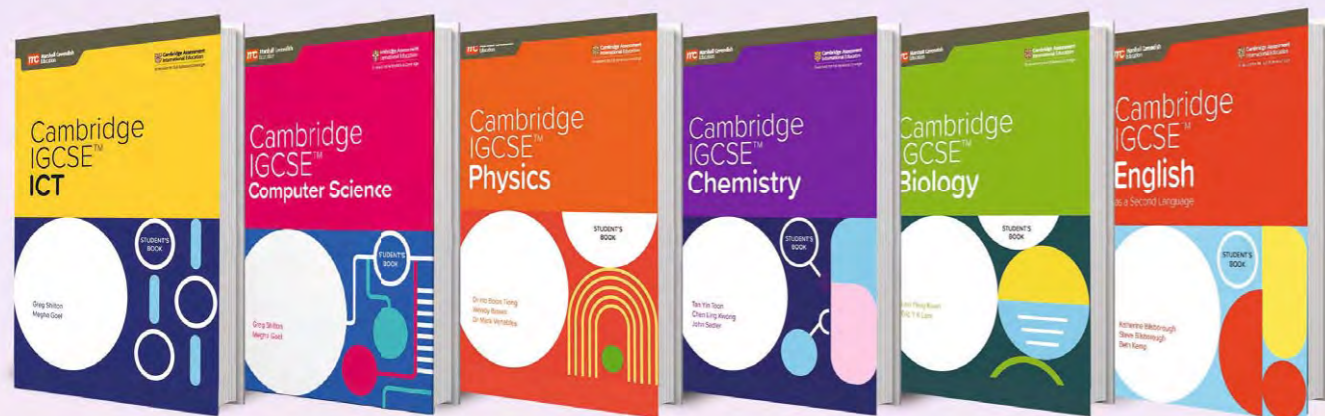
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Welcome

ISSUE 35, OCTOBER 2020

“ Whether you’re returning to classrooms, teaching remotely or still unsure how things are going to work over the next few months, 2020 continues to be one of the most challenging years for everyone in education.

Cambridge International has been working closely with schools during this difficult time and I wanted to thank you again for your continued help and assistance.

As ever, we are making sure that we offer as much support to schools as we can to help you move forward. You can find a selection of key resources on page 14, along with useful information on Cambridge CEM assessments and gap analysis on page 15. We also focus on the importance of student and teacher wellbeing, with a feature on page 16 examining how the pandemic offers an opportunity for positive change.

At Cambridge International, we continue to look at how we can enhance our offering to schools, and we’re delighted to share some details of improvements to the Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary programmes.

We have been listening to your feedback and working hard over the past few years to redevelop a major new framework for our core subjects that speaks to everything that you’ve been asking for.

Along with extensive improvements to the curricula we’re also introducing key changes to our assessments to make sure the learning pathway is more closely tracked than ever before. You can read about all the changes from page 6, and see a timeline of what’s planned on page 9.

At this time of year, we would normally launch our new Cambridge Schools Conference series. We are looking at how we can move the conference online, and will bring you more news as soon as we can.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue. We hope you enjoy reading it.



Christine Özden
Chief Executive,
Cambridge Assessment
International Education

About us

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Any feedback on this issue? Anything you would like to read about in the next issue? Contact us at:

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IN FOCUS



Strengthening the foundations for learning



Abbi Barnett, Deputy Director, Curriculum Programmes, and Dan Bray, Deputy Director, Projects, introduce the improvements to our Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary programmes

We're really excited to focus on Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary in this edition of *Cambridge Outlook*, and highlight some of the improvements that we have made to these programmes.

Back in 2016, we started a major global consultation and the results have been enlightening. They helped to set our strategy of continual improvements over the past few years: introducing Cambridge Global Perspectives™, adding four new subjects last year, and now, redeveloped curricula for our core subjects and annually refreshed Cambridge Progression Tests.

We think that our changes and improvements are helping to define Cambridge Primary as the best foundation for learning and Cambridge Lower Secondary as the clear path forward to the next phase of education.

During the consultation, teachers told us that they were very happy with the quality of our curricula and assessments, and would welcome us broadening our curriculum offer. That was the cue we needed to start work on applying the latest research and design principles to a range of new subjects (Art & Design, Music, Physical Education and Digital Literacy). We also wanted to reinvigorate our existing core subjects too, with some fresh thinking and themes important to our customers around the globe.

“We wanted to reinvigorate our existing subjects with some fresh thinking”



ILLUSTRATION: KIKI LJUNG



You can learn more about the changes we are making to English, Mathematics and Science on pages 6 to 9. These include making sure that the transitions between stages are as smooth as possible. In some cases, we have made changes to the way we've structured the curriculum for a subject to achieve a better and more balanced coverage of knowledge, skills and understanding. It's been fascinating and satisfying to see the improved curricula take shape and to oversee the development process from start to finish.

Teachers also wanted the Cambridge Progression Tests to be refreshed more often. We're really pleased to announce that from 2022, we will be issuing a new set of progression tests each year. Jay Surti, Group Manager, Assessment Projects Group, talks in more detail about the improvements to our assessments on page 7.

On page 13, Dr Alison Borthwick takes a closer look at the new approaches in the Maths curriculum and how that will better prepare learners for the next stage of their education.

And on page 10, teachers from Spain and Indonesia describe how they have benefited from Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary in recent years, and the importance of having a consistent path to Cambridge Upper Secondary and Advanced.

There is now an opportunity for schools to identify the potential of students as well as their



“It's been fascinating to see the curricula take shape and to oversee the process from start to finish”

performance at the end of the school year by using Cambridge CEM tests. They are an excellent complement to the progression tests and Cambridge Checkpoint as part of a back-to-school strategy (see page 15).

There are many colleagues who have worked hard to get ready for the introduction of our new Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary offer. We also want to thank all the schools that engaged with us and shared their experiences. We hope you like the programmes as much as we do. 🍀

In this section

- 6 Members of the Cambridge team explain the story behind the redevelopment
- 9 A guide to what's changing and when in Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary
- 10 Two schools share their experiences of Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary
- 13 International maths consultant Dr Alison Borthwick highlights some of the most exciting changes to the curriculum

Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary:

THE STORY BEHIND THE IMPROVEMENTS

DR FIONA JACKSON, LAUREN HARRIS, MARC NEESAM AND SARAH NELSON FROM CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL EXPLAIN THE WORK THAT WENT INTO DEVELOPING THE NEW CURRICULA

“Ultimately, we hope that the changes we’ve made will make it easier

for teachers to access our curriculum and support materials, and easier for learners to achieve their potential,” says Dr Fiona Jackson, Head of Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary, and one of the people who has spent the past few years working hard to redevelop the two programmes.

The curricula for English, English as a Second Language, Mathematics and Science have been carefully revisited by a team of curriculum developers at Cambridge International along with a wide range of specialists from multiple subject areas. “We decided right from the very beginning to concentrate on progression,” says Jackson, “identifying gaps, looking for

repetition or anything out of sequence. The whole exercise was designed to enhance what was currently there.”

Leading with extensive research to help identify any areas for improvement, the team took a unique approach for each subject.

“For Maths and Science, we decided to make more fundamental changes in the approach to the design of the curriculum,” explains Curriculum Programmes Manager Lauren Harris, “whereas teachers may find the content of the new English and English as a Second Language (E2L) curricula much more familiar.”

For Science, the team looked closely at progression, as well as international research. “We focused on bringing the curriculum up to date and making it as international

“

Our curricula are accessible, regardless of where you’re teaching them”

as possible,” says Curriculum Programmes Manager Marc Neesam. “For example, we have a whole new strand of content in Science on Earth and Space, which is a common area of science education in many countries.”

Where areas of the curriculum were already well received, the challenge became strengthening and updating the existing foundations. “With the English curriculum, we wanted to maintain familiarity while still trying to solve issues where we found them,” says Curriculum Programmes Manager Sarah Nelson. “We wanted to emphasise the links between the different strands – Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening – while ensuring that we had a rationale for introducing any new concepts and content.”



Dr Fiona Jackson



Lauren Harris



Marc Neesam



Sarah Nelson

Dr Fiona Jackson, Lauren Harris, Marc Neesam and Sarah Nelson work in Cambridge International’s Curriculum & Qualifications division.

They are part of a large team working on the redevelopment of Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary curricula.



Focusing on progression

“As Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary are at the beginning of the Cambridge Pathway, we wanted to ensure that they aligned with our Cambridge Upper Secondary subjects,” says Jackson. “So we started with the Cambridge IGCSE™/O Level syllabuses and looked at each knowledge area, concept or skill, and then worked backwards to see what a learner would need to know to move up to the next stage of the Pathway.”

“One of the new things that we’re introducing is progression grids. These show how learning objectives progress from one stage to the next,” adds Nelson.

Strengthening the coherence between curriculum, assessment and teaching materials was key to the redevelopment, as was flexibility. “Our curricula are accessible, regardless of where you’re teaching them,” says Nelson. “Schools have the freedom to teach every subject or just one of them.” As well as the core subjects, schools can choose from four new

subjects added last year (Art & Design, Music, Digital Literacy, Physical Education), Cambridge ICT Starters and Cambridge Global Perspectives.

“The other thing that we’ve tried to do is to make sure that we work towards schools using minimum resources,” says Jackson. “We are aware that many of our schools are highly resourced while others find resources harder to obtain. So in the teaching activities in our schemes of work, we suggest alternatives.”

Everyone involved is keen to stress that their work is far from finished, with the changes staggered over the next few years and plenty of resources on hand to help schools manage the transition period. “Some of our assessments won’t be available until 2023, so some schools will stay on the current curriculum until then,” says Jackson. “Schools that do not wish to take our Cambridge Checkpoint assessments will transition earlier. We want schools to know that we will be supporting them through this process to help make it as smooth as possible.”



Jay Surti

Group Manager, Assessment Projects Group

“The redevelopment of the curriculum was a great opportunity for us to review our Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary assessments and look for ways to improve them. On the current curriculum framework, we have been producing progression tests every three years and Cambridge Checkpoint tests every year. Having listened to feedback, we will be moving to producing progression tests on a yearly basis for the new curriculum framework. That’s a huge undertaking, as there are seven stages (Stages 3 to 9), four subjects and at least two assessments in each, but we know it’s what schools want. Cambridge Checkpoint is also changing – from 2023, the tests will only assess content from the final stages of each programme.

The Primary and Lower Secondary assessment managers worked closely with our colleagues in Assessment Standards & Quality, Cambridge Mathematics and Cambridge Assessment English, as well as with our Curriculum Development team. That close collaboration was really crucial. It’s been very carefully thought out.

As ever, we need to ensure that all of our tests are fair, valid and reliable – that’s always at the heart of what we strive to achieve in assessment.

The advantage of having more frequently refreshed progression tests is that teachers will have the opportunity to assess their students using tests that are less exposed.

The first set of new progression tests for English, English as a Second Language, Science and Maths will be available in 2022 (with first teaching starting in September 2021). We’ve produced a set of sample tests already to help teachers to understand the structure and format before they use them for the first time.

There’s a lot of support available for teachers and schools in terms of what we can offer, including baseline assessments from Cambridge CEM. I feel really confident that the changes in assessment are going to be welcomed by everyone.”

Ensure full coverage of the new Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary frameworks.



We are working with Cambridge International to gain endorsement for these forthcoming titles.

Cambridge Primary:

English as a Second Language, English, Maths and Science



Cambridge Lower Secondary:

English as a Second Language, English, Maths and Science



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Get ready, get set...!

WE ARE INTRODUCING EXCITING CHANGES TO OUR CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY PROGRAMMES



What's CHANGING

- Updated curricula for the core subjects – English, English as a Second Language, Mathematics and Science.
- Improvements to Cambridge Progression Tests and Checkpoint assessments.

2020 Prepare!

- New curricula and support resources are now available in advance of first teaching.
- Download curriculum frameworks and other resources from our Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary support sites.

2021 First new teaching!

- We recommend you start teaching the new curricula from September 2021 onwards.
- The exact date will depend on which stage or year group you are teaching, whether you use progression tests or Checkpoint, and when your academic year starts.

2023 New Cambridge Checkpoint tests

- First Cambridge Checkpoint tests to assess learners' knowledge and understanding of the new curricula.
- From 2023, Cambridge Checkpoint tests will only assess the final stage of Cambridge Primary (Stage 6) or Lower Secondary (Stage 9).

2022 New Cambridge Progression Tests

- From 2022, new Cambridge Progression Tests will be available every year instead of every three years.
- Use progression tests to check learners' progress for Stages 3 through to 9.

- **Curriculum frameworks** – updated to ensure smooth progression through the Cambridge Pathway.
- **Progression grids** – easier to see how each learning objective progresses from stage to stage.
- **Schemes of work** – more engaging teaching activities for you and your learners to enjoy. Also include key vocabulary and phrases.
- **Teacher guides** – more examples showing our planning, teaching and learning approaches, as well as an overview of the types of assessment we provide.
- **Mapping documents** – guidance on how to map your local curriculum to the Cambridge learning objectives.
- **Sample tests** – show you the type of assessment questions we will ask in live tests.
- **Training** – introductory and extension training available from February 2021.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/primary-lower-secondary-changes

A clear path for learners

WE ASKED TWO SCHOOLS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES OF TEACHING CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY



Rachel Evans, Principal at Novaschool Sunland International in Spain

Can you tell us about yourself and your school?

I have been the Principal of Novaschool Sunland International for six years and am also a NABSS Inspector (National Association of British Schools in Spain). Novaschool Sunland International is a British school located in Malaga, and caters for students aged 3 to 18 years. Having taught at the school for 19 years as a Secondary English and Drama teacher, I have seen it grow from fewer than 100 students to more than 600. When our school was looking for an examination board to affiliate with, we chose Cambridge International primarily because the curriculum is international in philosophy and approach but can be tailored to local contexts. At our school, we have successfully combined the Cambridge International curriculum (Lower Secondary, IGCSE, International AS & A Level) with the national curricula. In doing so, our students have the best opportunities to access both Spanish and international universities.

Why did you decide to introduce the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme?

Before we introduced the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme in 2014, we felt that there was a lack of consistency with our curriculum. It was hard to track students' progress and the assessments that were taking place in this section of the school were not being used effectively in the next stage of their education (Cambridge IGCSE). It was almost as if one stage finished and another new one began, but there was no thread or link between the two stages. With the Cambridge Lower Secondary



programme, the key learning objectives taught at Cambridge IGCSE are already being introduced in Stage 7 and built on in subsequent years. Therefore, by the time students begin their Cambridge IGCSEs, they are already familiar with the key objectives, the assessment criteria and the Cambridge learner attributes.



“Teachers can tailor the Cambridge International curriculum to their culture and ethos, and to their students' and school's needs”

How have teachers responded to the programme?

The Cambridge Lower Secondary support site has everything you need to ensure your teachers feel fully prepared to teach the curriculum, and there are regular professional development courses that staff can sign up for. Understandably, teachers may interpret 'change' in a school as extra work. However, the curriculum has been designed to allow for a flexible approach. Teachers can tailor the Cambridge International curriculum to their culture and ethos, and to their students' and school's needs.

How do you use the assessments to improve standards at your school?

We use the progression tests at the end of each stage. These are very useful in tracking students' progress and we use the results in our reporting to parents. They are easy to administer and cover all the objectives taught during each stage in the programme.

At the end of Stage 9, our students take the Checkpoint tests. For me, these are the icing on the cake. They are externally marked and must be administered under Cambridge examination regulations, giving students a real sense of what to expect during their IGCSEs. You may think this causes unnecessary stress for students at this age, but the school has a window of dates to run tests so they can ensure students are not overwhelmed.

How do the curriculum and assessments support learners' educational journeys?

The biggest benefit for students is the consistency between the Lower to Upper Secondary programme. It gives students confidence and allows them to measure their own progression. If students understand their educational journey, they are far more likely to be motivated and engaged.

Assessment is a key aspect of any curriculum, but the difficulty comes with finding the balance between teaching and assessing. The opportunities for assessment are integrated into the schemes of work, but allow for a flexible approach so teachers can adapt the type and frequency of assessments to suit the needs of their class and school.

How has introducing the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme improved performance higher up the school?

You need to be patient and persevere. When we first introduced the Cambridge Lower Secondary programme, the impact was not immediate. However, after running the programme for three years, I began to see the improvements in attainment, and this has been consistent year after year.



Rutdiana Anggodo

Curriculum Coordinator at Saint Peter's Catholic School in Indonesia



They can relate to the topics because they are relevant to the world our students are living in.

Do you use English as a first- or a second-language curriculum?

We teach English both as a First (EFL) and Second Language (ESL). We can't ignore the reality that children are exposed to the English language from a young age, even though English is not a mother language in our country. Through EFL, we are providing a platform for such children. On the other hand, we understand that not every student in our school has high exposure to the English language, so we provide ESL subjects to give equal opportunities to all students.

How does Cambridge Primary give students a strong foundation for their education?

The Cambridge Primary programme is well worth running in schools with international standards. The new subjects really equip students to face future challenges where the demands go beyond the grades they achieved in school. Cambridge International has helped us to help our students develop soft skills, broader knowledge and to understand the value of collaboration.

Can you tell us more about your role and your school?

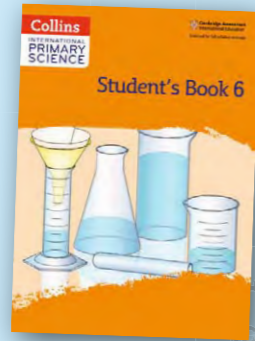
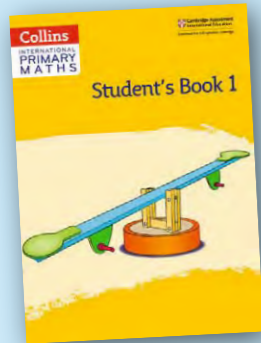
I am the Cambridge Coordinator in my school. This means I am responsible for the implementation of the Cambridge curriculum: the syllabus, lesson planning, teachers' evaluation, exam results and resources. At SPK Saint Peter's School in Jakarta, the Cambridge International curriculum is the main curriculum in place in primary, secondary and junior college, alongside three national curricula that are required by the government. The curricula complement each other and the skills learned by students in the Cambridge curriculum can also help them to excel in local subjects.

Which subjects do you offer at Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary?

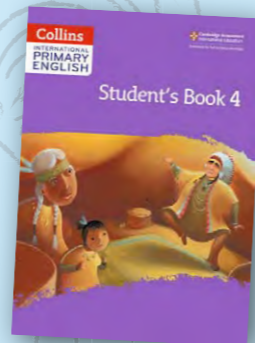
We offer English, Mathematics, Science, Global Perspectives and the new subjects – Art & Design, Digital Literacy, Music and Physical Education. For younger generations, the new Cambridge subjects really broaden their knowledge.



Introducing new Collins endorsed resources for Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary

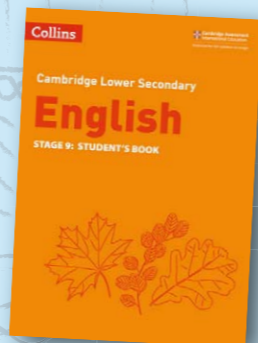
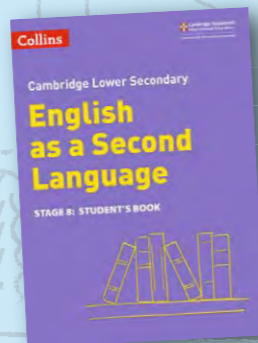
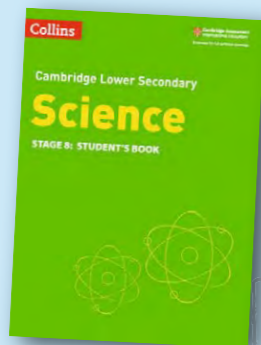
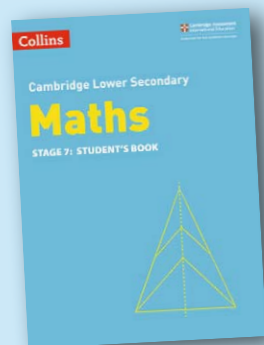


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Getting excited about maths



DR ALISON BORTHWICK, AN INTERNATIONAL MATHS CONSULTANT, HAS BEEN HELPING TO DEVELOP THE CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY CURRICULA



“One of the reasons I love the Cambridge curriculum is that it’s all so well thought out.

I’ve always been impressed with the wealth of research and higher-level thinking that goes into it, but one of the exciting things about education is that it is continually changing, hence the need to review, revisit and adapt.

The Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary curricula are broad and balanced, strengthened by the addition of four new subjects last year. I think this is really important and is also something schools have been asking for.

Perhaps the biggest change in the Mathematics curriculum is the focus on getting our learners to think, and think harder – really developing metacognition so they become independent, reflective and creative learners. This emphasis was there in the previous Mathematics curriculum, but now we’ve pulled it out a little bit more. We realised that in order to be a global learner you do need that broader outlook, you need to be able to think and reason and explain.

‘Thinking and Working Mathematically’ is a key part of the new Mathematics curriculum, and one of the most exciting developments. It’s designed to help learners think about the processes involved in solving problems. In the previous curriculum, we had a strand called ‘Problem solving’, and that’s actually one of those areas that is potentially hard



“Learners are now going to be even better prepared for the next stage, wherever they are”

to interpret on an international level. Problem solving has evolved to have several different meanings, often being associated with harder questions or used as an additional strand to mathematical content. However, Problem solving is central to learning Mathematics and something that all learners should be engaged with on a daily basis. The Thinking and Working Mathematically characteristics have helped to build on and strengthen the previous ‘Problem solving’ strand.

The four pairs of Thinking and Working Mathematically characteristics support learners in developing a toolkit of strategies to enable them to solve problems effectively. They’re a really powerful set of skills and they’re integral to all the subjects, not just Mathematics. You can’t just schedule in a ‘problem-solving lesson’ for a Friday – it’s something you should do all the time, in every Mathematics lesson. Learners are going to be so much more able to think and reason and solve problems because they’ve got these characteristics to draw on. It’s a bit like when you start painting a picture – you don’t always start with the red paint, you have to think about the best way to approach it.

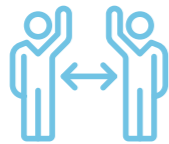
The new curriculum also has a much stronger focus on progression – really making sure that Cambridge Primary and Lower Secondary track all the way through to Cambridge Upper Secondary. Again, this was already a part of the previous programmes, but learners are now going to be even better prepared for the next stage, wherever they are.”

Teaching and learning WHEN SCHOOL RETURNS

We understand that Covid-19 has had a huge impact on teaching across the world, with some schools now returning to the classroom or adopting a blended teaching approach. Together with our colleagues in the Cambridge family – Cambridge University Press and Cambridge CEM – we have provided a range of support and guidance to help with the return to school.

You can find all the resources below on our website at www.cambridgeinternational.org/teaching-when-school-returns

Identifying gaps



You can find resources and tools to help you assess your learners' current level of understanding.

Resources include: confidence checkers that you can use with your learners to find out how they are feeling about the syllabuses they are studying (see opposite), baseline assessments from Cambridge CEM (also see opposite), subject quizzes from Cambridge University Press, and Test Maker – our tool for creating test papers.



Measuring progress



After you have identified any gaps and started to address them, there are tools and resources available to help you measure students' progress and then use as evidence to show school leaders, students and their parents.

Resources include: Test Maker, past papers, progression tests and baseline assessments from Cambridge CEM.



Addressing gaps

You can browse a range of print and digital resources that will help you address gaps in your learners' knowledge.

Resources include: lesson plans, videos, course books, worksheets and presentations. We are also offering Resource Plus free of charge on our website until December 2020. This gives access to high-quality videos, ready-made lesson plans and teaching materials.



Adapting your teaching

You may now be teaching in a new environment – in school, remotely, or using a blended learning approach. We have put together tools and resources to help you adjust.

Resources include: webinars, guides, blogs, podcasts and community forums where teachers can share ideas with their peers and discuss challenges and experiences.



GETTING LEARNING *back on track*

Mark Frazer, Teaching and Learning lead at Cambridge CEM (Centre for Evaluation & Monitoring), has more than 20 years' experience as a teacher and school leader. Here, he explains how Cambridge CEM assessments can be used to support students' return to school

The Covid-19 crisis has caused widespread school closures in 188 countries and affected 1.7 billion children. Many children will be returning to school after being out of the classroom for 22 weeks or more, and in some cases, teaching will continue online. The disparities between children's educational and social experiences during the school closures will potentially exacerbate learning gaps – magnifying disadvantages and allowing some children to slip further behind.

Starting on the right track

As students return to the classroom, or even if they are following a fully online or blended schedule, it will be invaluable to know precisely what level they are starting from. Cambridge CEM assessments can give you a way to evaluate your students' needs quickly so that you can act to address potential issues.

Cambridge CEM assessments give you:

- baseline data – to identify learning needs.
- predictive data – to help you set goals and plan next steps.
- value-added data – to review how much progress a student has made.



“Cambridge CEM assessments can give you a way to evaluate your students' needs quickly”

Shaping your teaching

For classroom teachers, access to Cambridge CEM assessment data helps to shape teaching to students' strengths, and to target support where required. Teachers also find the data useful to understand how much work students need to put in to achieve their goals. Crucially, it also provides objective information to support goal setting and forms a useful benchmark from which to help measure future progress.

Leading school improvement

For school leaders, the assessment data enables you to understand potential future attainment for students entering their Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level years, and identify where to target resources in the future. Leaders can use the data to recalibrate expected results for year groups with objective information, helping to inform discussions.

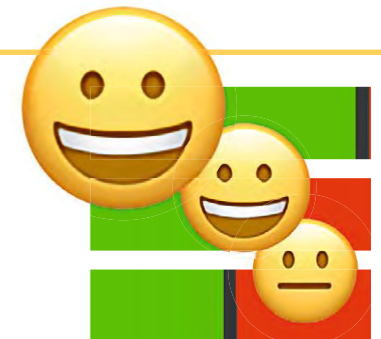
Find out more

If you would like to know more about how the assessments can support the return to school, please talk to your local Cambridge representative or go to www.cambridgeinternational.org/cem-school-returns

CONFIDENCE CHECKERS

A confidence checker is a useful tool for helping to evaluate progress, allowing students to indicate how confident they feel about the syllabus and to highlight any gaps in learning. These tools will be particularly helpful for students returning to school and will help to encourage self-evaluation and guide teaching.

Confidence checkers are available for 21 Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge International AS & A Level syllabuses, and all can be found online at www.cambridgeinternational.org/confidence-checker



The road to wellbeing

AS TEACHERS AND STUDENTS CONTINUE TO FACE ANXIETY AT HOME AND AT SCHOOL, AMY BURKE AND KEVIN HAWKINS FROM MINDWELL EDUCATION EXPLAIN HOW THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC PRESENTS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR REAL, POSITIVE CHANGE



“You can’t learn if you’re not well,” says Amy Burke. “Part of a school’s job

is to teach students how to deal with life, and this year has highlighted just how important that really is.”

A former teacher, Burke started Mindwell Education in 2012 alongside former headteacher Kevin Hawkins, helping schools around the world to integrate mindfulness and emotional learning into their curricula. As the coronavirus pandemic continues to disrupt the lives of so many teachers and students, Burke and Hawkins have been reflecting on the new challenges that schools are facing as they return to classroom-based learning.

“It’s been such a rollercoaster,” says Hawkins. “When we come back into school, it’s important to be aware that it’s been a professional and a personal crisis for teachers – they’re dealing with school as well as their own families and concerns – but it has been the same for students. There’s a fear of the virus, but the uncertainty around the return to school adds another layer of anxiety.”

For Hawkins, the key is creating an environment where open communication is encouraged. “I think back to when I was nine or 10 years old during the Cold War,” he says. “We never discussed it at home and we never discussed it at school, and I had years of being extremely frightened about the world and what was going to happen on an existential level.”

“The challenge for a teacher is to manage their own anxiety at the same time as trying to facilitate and create a safe space for young people,” adds



Burke. “One of the challenges for us all is to equip teachers with the tools to do this, without them feeling overwhelmed by the responsibility. Taking time to acknowledge what’s been happening is not outside of the curriculum. It’s an integral part of teaching. We need to make sure there is not a big difference between talking about feelings and talking about schoolwork.”

Offering a range of resources from their first book, *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School*, as well as from a host of other studies and programmes (see right), Burke and Hawkins are keen to point out that there is plenty of help available – and that the steps needed to incorporate wellness into schools should never feel overwhelming.

“The antidote to uncertainty is safety,” says Hawkins. “We can’t solve the coronavirus crisis or fix all the world’s

“The antidote to uncertainty is safety”



economic issues, but we can provide an environment that feels safe. Safety really comes down to physical safety – all those new rules that I think kids will adjust to pretty quickly – and emotional safety, which comes down to relationships. The opportunity for students to reconnect with teachers and other students is vital. Part of that will be talking to them about what’s been going on, and about how they’re feeling. But it’s important that teachers don’t try and do it all on the first day. I recently heard one student complaining, ‘If another person asks me about my emotional health, I’m going to freak out!’ It’s all about tone and pace.”

For many, a return to the routines of school life will be an important first step, although teachers should be careful to avoid simply carrying on as if nothing has happened. “If you’re in a difficult situation, routine actually helps – we all know that from personal experience,” says Hawkins. “But the qualifier for that is that it’s not business as usual. We’re not trying to overcompensate for lost time. We have to rebuild trust, and that won’t happen overnight.”

Longer term, the opportunity for lasting change is something that schools should also now be thinking about, according to Hawkins, who sees the events of 2020 as a chance for us all to re-evaluate the relationship between education and wellbeing.

“I think we have an open door here,” he says. “Emotional health was getting more attention before Covid-19, but now we have to keep that door open. Academic achievement will continue to be important, but equally important is the wellbeing of the whole school community. Let’s not lose sight of that as we start to move away from the shock of the trauma, and let’s make plans to really leverage that.”

Optimistic that schools are ready to embrace this change, Burke and Hawkins are both confident about the future. They also feel that the greater sense of global community that has arisen during 2020 will continue to drive the wellbeing trends that started before the pandemic.

“When Covid-19 happened, some schools changed overnight,” explains Burke. “It came as the result of a crisis, but if you take that initiative and intention, we can see how quickly schools around the world were able to shift – that means we can absolutely do that again, and we can do it now. This year has really highlighted what matters most and we can’t lose that momentum.”

Wellbeing resources

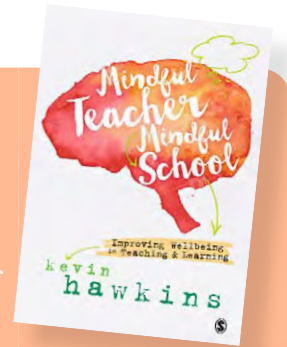
Amy Burke and Kevin Hawkins

update a regular list of resources for schools at www.mindwell-education.com. They have written the book *Mindful Teacher, Mindful School* (SAGE/Corwin, also available as an eBook) to help facilitate structured dialogue within school communities, as well as to explain how mindful awareness training can support social and emotional learning (SEL) and wellbeing.

Burke and Hawkins have curated the following list of additional resources to help schools learn more about what help is available:

- The website of the influential Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning in the US, www.casel.org, is a great source of free information and guidance. In particular, the Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Roadmap for Reopening School contains great advice on teacher wellbeing and building connection in the school community, as well as examples of practical activities.
- For free training in trauma-sensitive teaching, see the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments and its free online package for training trauma-sensitive schools at <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/building-trauma-sensitive-schools>
- The EdSurge article ‘Teachers Are Anxious And Overwhelmed’ has information and instructions on creating an Emotional Intelligence Charter for schools: www.edsurge.com/news/2020-04-07-teachers-are-anxious-and-overwhelmed-they-need-sel-now-more-than-ever
- For teacher wellbeing training, visit CREATE, which also has an online training resource to help rebuild community in schools: www.createforeducation.org/sel-consulting/rebuilding-community

Burke and Hawkins are currently writing their second book, *The Mindful Teachers Toolkit: Teaching Mindfulness and Wellbeing in Schools*, which will be published by SAGE/Corwin in 2021. Watch their webinars for Cambridge schools at www.cambridgeinternational.org/support-for-schools-covid-19





Support for schools



What's new...

Cambridge Primary

We have revised English as a First or Second Language, Mathematics and Science curricula. Support is now available, with new assessments to follow. See page 6 for more information.

Cambridge Lower Secondary

Cambridge IGCSE and O Level

18 revised syllabuses including biology, chemistry, physics and computer science.

Cambridge International AS & A Level

Six revised syllabuses including accounting, business, economics and Cambridge Global Perspectives.

To find out what's changed, go to www.cambridgeinternational.org/new

What's new from September 2020

We have updated a number of syllabuses for examination from 2023. We redevelop our syllabuses based on feedback from schools and universities around the world. Syllabuses are published a year before first teaching.

Spotlight on...

Cambridge IGCSE science syllabuses

Cambridge IGCSE Biology (0610/0970), Chemistry (0620/0971) and Physics (0625/0972) are among the updated syllabuses. We have made them clearer and more consistent across the three sciences. This will be particularly helpful if you teach more than one science. Your students will also benefit from a more coherent experience across the three subjects. The changes include updated learning objectives, clearly linked topic structures and sub-topics, a review of the balance between core and supplement, and new topics such as space physics.

More guides to support learners

We are adding to our range of learner guides, all of which can be downloaded from the School Support Hub. The syllabus-specific guides will help learners to understand what skills they should develop and how they will be assessed, and help them plan their revision programmes. The latest guides include:

- Cambridge IGCSE
 - First Language Chinese (0509)
 - Chinese (Mandarin) as a Foreign Language (0547)
- Cambridge O Level
 - Islamiyat (2058)
 - Literature in English (2010)
- Cambridge International AS & A Level
 - Biology (9700)
 - Chemistry (9701)
 - Physics (9702)
 - Information Technology (9626)



Monthly support webinars for exams officers

To help our exams officers keep up to date with the administrative changes to the June and November 2020 series, we have introduced monthly support webinars. The webinars answer the common questions exams officers are asking our Customer Services team, and give advice on administering exams as well as providing an opportunity to ask any additional questions. Exams officers can sign up for the webinars via our monthly newsletter, *Cambridge Exams Officer eNews*, which is also available at www.cambridgeinternational.org/exams-officer-enevs



Resource Plus - open access to schools

We've made Resource Plus, normally only available by subscription, open to all Cambridge International Schools during the coronavirus pandemic. If you are interested in trying this online tool, don't miss out on this opportunity. Resource Plus gives you access to videos, ready-made lesson plans and teaching materials to support selected Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge O Level and Cambridge International AS & A Level subjects. For more details, go to www.cambridgeinternational.org/resourceplus



Endorsed resources

We work with publishers to endorse resources to support your teaching. Our subject experts thoroughly evaluate each of these titles to make sure that they are highly appropriate for Cambridge programmes.



COLLINS CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL AS & A LEVEL GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES AND RESEARCH SERIES

RESOURCE: Student's Book, Workbook, Teacher's Guide and eBooks
PUBLISHED BY: Collins
Encourage critical thinking, self-reflection and independent thought, and provide students with the opportunity to engage with key global issues. This series comprises a Student's Book, Workbook and Teacher's Guide.

- Website: www.collins.co.uk/cambridge
- Email: collins.international@harpercollins.co.uk



CAMBRIDGE INTERNATIONAL A LEVEL BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY AND PHYSICS

RESOURCE: Student Books, eBooks
PUBLISHED BY: Hodder Education
Confidently navigate the syllabuses with a structured approach, ensuring that the link between theory and practice is consolidated, scientific skills are applied and analytical skills developed.

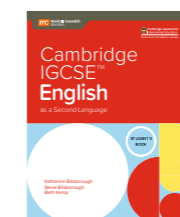
- Website: www.hoddereducation.com/cambridge-a-level-science
- Email: International.sales@hoddereducation.co.uk



CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SERIES (NEW EDITIONS) – ENGLISH, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, MATHS AND SCIENCE

RESOURCE: Learner's Book with Digital Access, Workbook with Digital Access, Teacher's Resource with Digital Access
PUBLISHED BY: Cambridge University Press
We've revised our series to offer full support for the new Cambridge International curriculum frameworks so you can be confident you're covering what you need. You'll find an active learning approach, along with projects that develop learners' critical thinking, communication and collaboration skills to help them thrive at school and beyond.

- Website: www.cambridge.org/education/primary-lower-secondary



CAMBRIDGE IGCSE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

RESOURCE: Student's Book, Workbook, Teacher's Guide with Digital Resources
PUBLISHED BY: Marshall Cavendish Education
A well-structured and thorough language study of 18 units covering various functions we use language for, with listening, speaking, reading and writing components, to boost the attainment of 21st-century skills and values. This series offers full coverage of Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language (0510/0511) syllabuses.

- Website: www.mceducation.com/mce-cambridge-igcse-series/english-esl

Great teaching

PROFESSOR ROB COE OF EVIDENCE BASED EDUCATION EXPLAINS THE VALUE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS HE INTRODUCES THE 'GREAT TEACHING TOOLKIT: EVIDENCE REVIEW'



What makes a great teacher? Cambridge International has partnered with UK research group Evidence Based Education to try and answer this question, resulting in the *Great Teaching Toolkit: Evidence Review*. Professor Rob Coe led the project to analyse, collate and distil more than a hundred individual pieces of global research on the links between teacher performance and student outcomes. Here, he explains what the toolkit is and how it can make a difference.

What is the *Great Teaching Toolkit*?

It's a lifetime's work! The question we started out with was: 'If you wanted to make a list of things that actually make a difference, or that indicate real quality in teaching, what should be on it?'. There's a lot of research out there already, but I think there's still a bit of confusion among teachers about what matters most. So we decided to simplify the evidence and make it accessible in a single report. It's meant to be a bag of tools to help teachers learn to be better. We're giving them clear guidance about what's worth learning and what's worth working to be better at.

How much of a challenge was it to collate all the research?

It was very challenging because there's a massive amount of literature out there. Some of it is

entirely relevant and some of it much less so. It was a process of filtering and sorting the research to find the work of the highest quality, as well as of pushing aside any personal biases.

What surprised you the most as you read through the findings of the evidence review?

The conclusions weren't what we were expecting. For example, I think there's a lot of enthusiasm for cognitive science, and a lot of teachers get quite excited about things such as cognitive-load theory, but we had a big debate about how necessary that was. Do teachers really need to know those kinds of theories? Is that what makes a great teacher? The interesting thing is that there isn't really much evidence that teachers who have that knowledge are any more effective than teachers who don't. It's possible for a teacher to apply these theories in practice even if they've never heard of them.



"I think that if we are invested in education at all then professional development really is key"



How difficult was it to come up with a toolkit that could be used by teachers across different countries, departments and year groups?

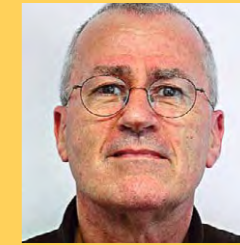
That was another big challenge. My background is in secondary schools as a UK maths teacher, so I found myself thinking of this through the same lens, but this has to equally apply to early-years teachers, as well as to schools all over the world. Obviously, there are going to be a huge number of differences, as well as there being some similarities. Context is very important, but broadly speaking, great teaching is pretty much universal.

With so many other challenges facing schools this year, how important is it for teachers not to overlook professional development?

I think that if we are invested in education at all then professional development really is key. When it's done well, it really does have a huge effect on educational improvement – it obviously benefits students, but it also really benefits teachers in terms of their identity, their satisfaction and their likelihood of staying in the job. Part of the challenge is that good professional development is actually pretty rare. If you ask a lot of teachers about their experience of professional development, they'll just roll their eyes and tell you horror stories. That's a real shame because the potential is there for something really powerful.

What are the next steps for the *Toolkit*?

This is the first stage, which is the literature review, and that sets out a starting point for teacher learning – things that teachers should focus on if they want to get better at what they do. The next stage is for us to try and create a suite of key indicators so a teacher can look at their own practice and get really robust, insightful, actionable feedback about what they're doing well, and to see whether they're improving.



Paul Beedle, Interim Deputy Director, Professional Development, explains how Cambridge International is being guided by the *Toolkit*

"We are improving how we design, develop and organise our professional development resources, courses and programmes. The *Toolkit* is guiding us not only to reflect on content and approach but also to focus our energies. We are very aware that the time and resource available for professional learning is limited, so we want to make sure that what we offer is as relevant, accessible and useful as possible.

It is encouraging to see how far we are aligned to the evidence-based model put forward in the *Toolkit*, both in spirit and substance. For example, in our courses and programmes, teachers can engage with key aspects of pedagogy, and apply new approaches in their own reflective practice, with formative feedback and the support of their peers and mentors. Learning from the *Toolkit*, we can see elements that we can address more clearly, e.g. pedagogic content knowledge. It will also help us to streamline our Teacher Standards and self-evaluation grids.

The *Toolkit* summarises the elements of teaching practices that have most impact on student learning. It provides a model for discussion, not a rule book to be obeyed. I think it will itself become a core learning resource for our Cambridge Professional Development Qualification Programme Leaders as they guide their teachers in critically engaging with evidence of what makes for great teaching.

We are really looking forward to what comes next. The Evidence Based Education team intends to develop a toolkit of evaluation tools to support professional learning in collaboration with a worldwide network of teachers, sharing their experience as they apply elements of the *Great Teaching Toolkit*. We will be sure to develop close connections with this initiative, co-creating and curating tools and resources, and helping Cambridge teachers make the most of the teaching community."



The *Great Teaching Toolkit: Evidence Review* is now available to download or read online at www.cambridgeinternational.org/great-teaching-toolkit

Top tips: Developing learner skills

Keely Laycock, author of several books on Cambridge Global Perspectives, looks at how to develop skills in the classroom to prepare students for the future



1. People look at things from different perspectives, often due to their life experiences.

Encouraging students to listen to other

perspectives not only enables them to understand things more clearly, it also helps them to develop feelings of empathy and compassion.

2. When doing internet research, encourage students to type in between three and six words to narrow their search.

They should read the information on the website first and then read each paragraph again, making notes on its content in their own words.

3. When analysing something, students need to break it down into the important parts.

Analysis can mean looking at the causes for an issue or event, but it can also relate to the consequences.

4. Effective teamwork relies on the combination of individual strengths.

Working as a team is different from working in a team. To work as a team, students need to work with others to achieve a shared goal or outcome in an effective way.

5. Encourage students to evaluate their own contribution to a group.

It's important each member of the team knows what they are doing to contribute, evaluating their strengths as well as their weaknesses.

6. When writing a report, students should always include a list of their sources.

To reference correctly, they need to include the author, the title of the article, the date it was published, the website address and the date they looked at the article.

7. Active listening skills enable students to understand what someone says rather than just hearing the words.

Students can show that they are listening actively by giving verbal and non-verbal feedback including nodding, eye contact and leaning forward. When presenting, students can support active listening by using short sentences, speaking clearly and slowly, and giving as many details as they can.



8. Reflection is an important skill for all subjects and needs to be carefully developed.

Reflective learners encourage feedback and respond positively to praise and criticism. They think about how they are learning. When completing learning activities, they can identify areas they need to work on and they can explain how they are going to do it.



Keely Laycock is author of *Cambridge IGCSE Global Perspectives*, *Approaches to Learning and Teaching Global Perspectives* and the new *Lower Secondary Stages 7 to 9 Global Perspectives Skills Books*, published by Cambridge University Press.

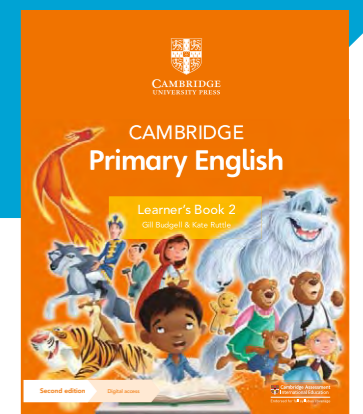
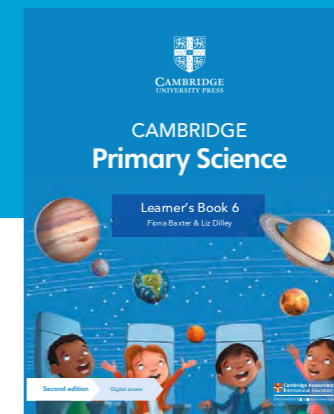


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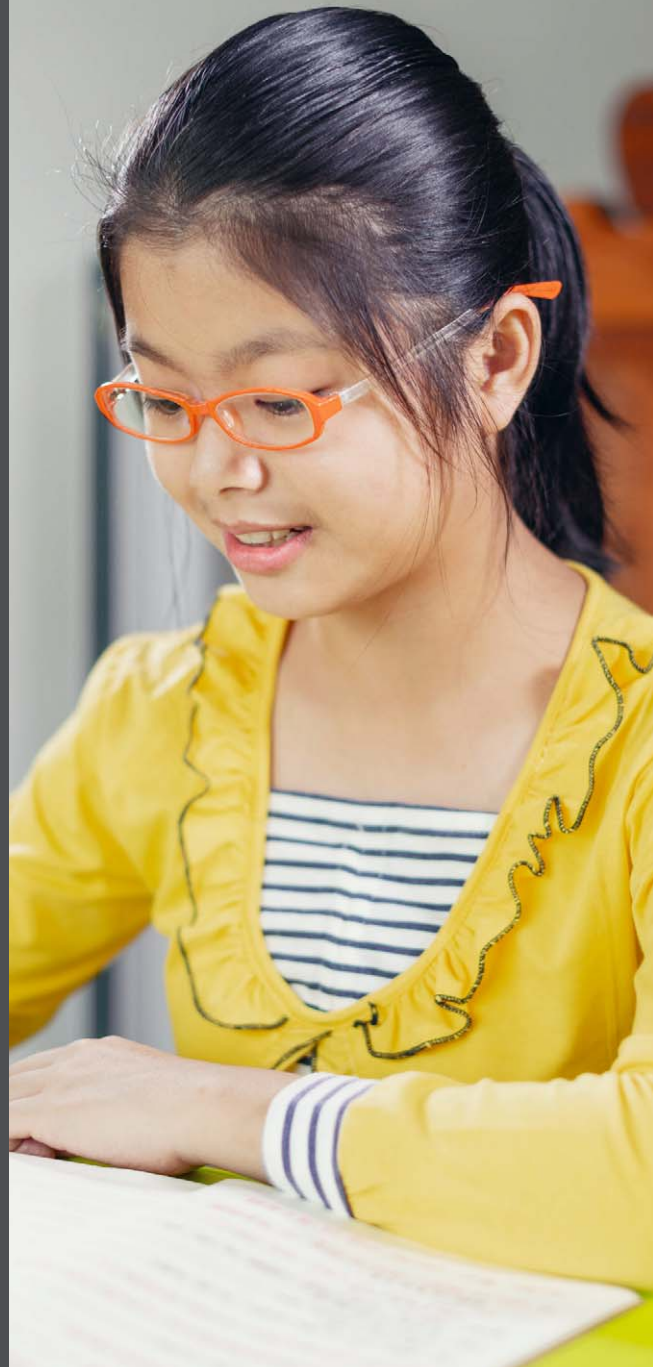
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