



03 Talk about the directions in preparing moral and civil teaching materials

The People's Education Press was appointed by the Macao Education Youth Affairs Bureau to write the moral and civil teaching materials for use by secondary students in Macao. Below let us talk about some of the initial idea of these teaching materials after concluding our findings.

Student-oriented core concept

Our core concept in writing moral and civil teaching materials is that they are all students and for the development of students.

First, students being the "subject"- students are growing organism with personality, spirituality, energy, sentiments, dignity, thought and are people with unlimited future developments. They are the educational subjects and masters of teaching materials. Students' moral feelings, moral behavior and moral realm cannot be produced as we manufacture machines. Instead it is formed gradually through the processes of hatching life, character influencing character, personality influencing personality, emotion igniting emotion and mind communicating with soul. When kept far away from this subject of students, far away from their real situation, feeling in hearts and experiences, even the best moral law and code of conduct cannot be accepted by students nor can it changes their conduct consciously.

Second, to pay attention to students' resources, respect their feelings, living experiences and ability of moral choice and regard them as the moral conduct co-creators and rather than passive acceptors; make the teaching materials a platform for students to freely show their wisdom and emotions, to learn self-selections, self-judgment, self-improvement and makes them understand their own lives, livings, experiences and realization are inside the books. Designed situations, questions raised and unfolded process of explorations in the teaching materials are closely related to the emotional life and personal experiences

of students. Teaching materials are "reproduction" "enhancement" and "response" to students' living and are not "out-of-reach moral knowledge" and "supreme moral authority" by them.

Then, to respect the individual differences of students. Due to their genetics, living environment, cultural levels and other aspects, different students have different characters, hobbies and living habits. To know the differences of students, respect their differences, discover the potential insides these differences, regard the differences between individuals as wealth are the basic prerequisites to bring forth students' moral emotions and inspire their experiences for the formation of rational consciousness. The proposed questions, the development of exploration process and formation of ethics in teaching materials are all based on the individual differences of students.

Finally, take the comprehensive development of students as the "Fundamentals". Cai Yuen-pei said, "Education helps the person being educated to develop his ability, to complete his personality and complete his cultural duty as a member of human race and not to make the person being educated become a kind of special apparatus." In April 1996, the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century submitted to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation the article "Education – The Treasure Within" which stated that education should promote the overall development of each person, including physical body, mentality, intellectuality, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, personal responsibility, spiritual values and other aspects' development. We should make everyone, especially with the help of their education which were received in young age, form an autonomous and full-of-critical-spirit ideology, cultivate their own ability to judge, and determine their own life by doing things which they believe they should do.

The all-round developments of people are not simply equal to high scoring and going to prestigious schools. Good studying habits, the consciousness and ability to cooperate with others, the ability and quality of social adaptation, indomitable will power, good health, self-learning and self-development abilities are all essential qualities. The moral and civil teaching materials being the engines for promoting students' self-development and self-enhancement, are concerned about the interest, hobbies, body check of students. It focuses to cultivate their analysis, thinking, judgment, selection and implementation abilities and to promote different qualities of students' comprehensive development. The unity of knowledge and ability, process and methods, emotional attitude and values are based on students' life experience, focused on student individuality, problem awareness training, enhancement of innovation capabilities and especially the formation and development of good moral.





Life, interest, experiences, exploration and guidance

The fundamental position taken in preparing moral and civil teaching materials is to focus on student life and their personal experiences. It is our consistent pursuit to keep close contact with social life and actual thinking of student, to be concerned about the growth of student and their living experiences and to highly regard the connection of student life with social implementation.

Assuming real life as background, people's living world is the survival and development bases of man's emotion as well as the formation and development bases of man's understanding and the fundamental formation of man's moral world. Things that a person see and hear in his real life have a profound effect on his views to others, life, society, country and the world. Secondary school students are not dissociated from outside world. They are living with adults in the same perceptual world. They have different levels of experiences and have inextricable link with this emotional world. They use their own eyes to observe the world and use their own spirit to understand the world.

The emotional perpetual world is the "background" for the formation of good moral for students. The different feelings of students on living world and their understanding on relationship between textbooks knowledge and real life are all affected by this established "background". Both the design of content and presentation methods focus on the living scenes of students and the selected materials are closely related to their living and relevant to explorative activities. This teaching materials present questions closely related to their living and allow students to feel living in a real world and rather than leading a dissociated life in mirage.

To focus on how to inspire students' interests, students' ability to deal with schoolmates, teachers and parents, a general behavior to comply with law and a humble, prudent, honest, polite and patriotic character, all these are the good qualities for the basic moral requirements and internal requirements for moral education. In order to make these fundamental moral to be the standards for students' thinking and conduct consciously, a very important guide is to inspire students' interest on moral and guide them to identify the basic standard and change from "What must I do?" to "What should I

do?". We strive to design simulation of real situation, raise questions with rich analysis to guide students through such a variety of activities as collecting information, questionnaire survey, role plays, group discussion and idea exchange, so as to arouse students' learning interest, strengthen their moral experiences for creating correct emotional attitude of values.

To experience the process. Life has taught us: Only when students' learning in schools is linked up with the real social life will it be live; only when one has experienced personally and practically will the moral in books is rich, live and profound. That is the so-called truth – If learned only from books, the knowledge is shallow; beware that such a thing must be learned from experience.

Moral learning and moral education are target-oriented and real only when students have experienced some values from heart, creating identification, fear, trust emotions or creating rejection, disgusting and shameful emotions. Polanyi believed that moral knowledge was "tacit knowledge" which mainly depended on experienced intuition and insights. Noddings found that people's caring ability came from the experience of being cared. Gilligan, McPhail and others emphasized that values of moral education was to touch the emotions and focus on experiences. Only on the basis of personal experience, moral ideas, concepts and norms will it be memorized in people's brains and hearts and develop guidance, normative behavior and adjustments which affect people's growth consciously. In the implementation of moral experiences education, the most important thing is to organize moral practical activities effectively, through creation of real moral infectious situations to promote students moral experiences. Basically students' dignity, personality, value realization, or the judgment on right or wrong, desire for truth and consistency for pursuit of a better life depend on their life experiences.

Continuing on P. 16





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Exploration activities as boosters. The teaching materials focus on students' living experiences with open design, exploration and explorative activities with analysis to guide students in integrating moral scenes in life. Use dialogues around the topic of certain morals, to exchange, analyse and clearly define what is right and what is wrong, what we should advocate and what we should oppose with the purposes to achieve self-reflection, self-education, self-regulation and self-enhancement. At the same time, it inspires students to take initiative for constructing moral knowledge, to experience the generation process of moral knowledge rather than to be the passive recipients of moral knowledge. Explorative activities provide students with free imagination, independent thinking, space for common exploration and avoid defining interpretation simply. It strives on the base to jump-start the thinking of students, to encourage students to attempt for cooperating exploration boldly. In other words, in the context it shows the correct values clearly to give students some right, allowing them to choose; give opportunity to students, allowing them to experience; give students some difficulties, let them to solve; ask students some questions, allowing them to find the answers; give students a number of conditions, allowing them to practise; give students a space, allowing them to step forward.

Focus on guidance for correct values. The view of western relativism which is represented by "values clarification (neutral) school" believes that moral values are diversified. In the teaching of moral and values, schools and teachers only need to clarify to students "what is it", and need not clarify "what should it be". Thus it advocates the power of moral choice to students. Schools and teachers should not meddle. However, practice shows that this view is biased and harmful.

Moral and civil teaching materials emphasize respect for the living world of students and concern about students' own experiences. But "respect" is not equivalent to "follow blindly", "concern" is not "accommodating". In real life, beautiful and ugly, real and unreal, good and evil are often intertwined.

Following economic globalization and the continuous development of networks, a variety of heterogeneous ideology and culture globally interacted through modern means of communication. This is beneficial for students to broaden their views and understanding the ideology culture of different countries. It also allows various unhealthy ideology cultures to take advantage of this opportunity. Limited experiences of students and their impulsive ages and limited knowledge are disadvantageous for them to view with proper reasoning their own living experiences and social living. Different students often have different views when they face the same problem, the same situation and the same contradiction. Thus the situation is "Each says he is right". Therefore it needs proper guidance. Teaching materials need to focus on how to inspire students to think in different aspects, to have bold vision and diversified analysis. Moreover it needs to focus on proper guidance and always adhere to good moral to inspire, encourage and guide students.

The conclusion that follows

It is a totally a new topic for us to write the moral and civil teaching materials for Macao secondary students. This is not a theoretical problem. It is a matter of practice. Only when it is comprehensive, thorough, having systematic understanding of learning, living, practical thinking of Macao secondary students, and all based on the reality of Macao students, will it be possible for the compiling of necessary teaching materials to be appropriate for the development of Macao students.

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