

Name: _____ Class: _____ ()

Tuesday English News Report: Broadcast Date: 9th May, 2017

Hong Kong schools ready for boycotts as pupils sit revamped tests

Member of committee reviewing **controversial** exam reveals she **quit** after her suggestions to solve the problem of overdrilling were **ignored**

The first pupils sat rebranded tests on Thursday, with schools prepared for anyone **boycotting** the exams. On the same day, it emerged that a member of a committee tasked with reviewing the controversial assessments of Primary Three pupils had quit three months ago, citing health reasons and complaints that her ideas were ignored.

The BCA replaces the Territory-wide System Assessment, which was designed to **enhance** learning and teaching but became synonymous with the city's high-pressure drilling methods. Some educators claimed the test was used as a basis to determine school closures, but the Education Bureau repeatedly **denied** such claims. The bureau said the revised test had **eliminated** the **incentive** to overdrill, adding that all government-subsidised schools would have to take part in the rebranded exercise this year.

Parents said overdrilling was still present in schools and called for a boycott of the tests.

Principal Lee of Grantham College of Education Past Students' Association Whampoa Primary School, which let parents choose if they wanted their child to take part, said the school was prepared if any pupil did not want to be tested as they had earmarked reserves.

“Out of our 141 Primary Three students, the parents of 20 chose not to take part,” the principal said.

Three other schools told the *Post* they would let parents decide if their children should take part.

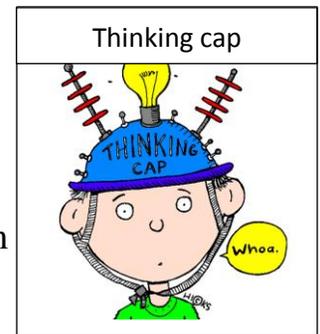
Separately, Professor Magdalena Mok from Education University said she had quit the government-tasks committee because of poor health, but she also felt her views had not been heard. She had suggested the tests be conducted without naming the school, which she believed would eliminate the incentive for drilling.

Another committee member, who spoke **anonymously**, said other members had views accepted and rejected. The member also believed that the committee decided on keeping the names of schools to ensure they could get data on their students' performance to improve learning and teaching.

The written assessments for Chinese, English and mathematics, taken by all Primary Three pupils at the schools, take place on June 13 and 14.

Questions to think about:

- Do you think the new test will make any difference in the way students are taught in primary schools? Do you think drilling is common in the Hong Kong education system?
- What are some issues for you with the Hong Kong education system and teaching and learning in Hong Kong schools? What changes would you like to see?
- How do you learn best?
- Would you be able to describe your ideal school?



1. I: Vocabulary and understanding meaning

Match the meaning and/or synonym to the words which have been highlighted in bold in the article.

Column A: Word from text	Letter	Column B: Meaning or synonym
1. revamp (v/n)		A: resign from a job, give up on something
2. controversial (adj)		B: refuse to cooperate with or participate in (a policy or event)
3. quit (v)		C: state that one refuses to admit the truth or existence of/to state something is not true
4. ignore(d) (v)		D: new and improved version, a new look
5. boycott(ing) (v)		E: a thing that motivates or encourages someone to do something
6. enhance (v)		F: (of a person) not identified by name; of unknown name/in a way that prevents someone being identified by name
7. deny (ied) (v)		G: an issue, for example, which raises very different opinions, or sparks a debate
8. eliminate(d) (v)		H: improve
9. incentive (n)		I: completely remove or get rid of something
10. anonymous(ly) (adj/adv)		J: not pay attention to deliberately/refuse to take notice of intentionally

II: Usage of vocabulary: Fill in the missing words of the sentences below using the vocabulary (1-10) from column A. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct. Remember you may have to change the part of speech from the one given in Part I.

- In an effort to (a) _____ the teaching and learning at the school, in other words, to make it better, the curriculum (b) _____. It was completely changed.
- Some countries are worried about the low birth rates and are providing couples with monetary _____ to have more children.
- To voice their protest, the students (a) _____ classes. In other words, they did not attend and staged a rally to change the system. One of the teachers (b) _____ his position in protest as he also did not agree with the authorities.
- When there is a _____ issue, it often leads to disagreement.
- The athlete (a) _____ from the event because he was caught for using performance enhancing drugs, but he (b) _____ using any.
- The caller chose to be _____ and did not give his name.
- Some people _____ the warning from the weather bureau and went outside during the typhoon, and were injured as a result.

ENGLISH CORNER CAFÉ IS ALWAYS OPEN ON A TUESDAY FOR DRINKS, SNACKS, CONVERSATION & GAMES