

HCT-Pearson Mobile Digital Content Collaboration Project 2013-14

Project Description

The HCT-Pearson Mobile Digital Content Collaboration Project for our Foundation Year English Language programme began in February 2013 with the aim of creating interactive and engaging content for HCT's mobile learning initiative.

Content

The content has been written by a team of HCT subject matter experts (SMEs) supported by various HCT stakeholders. Pearson, the world's leading learning company, edited the materials and, through extensive consultation with the SMEs, developed and produced the content using over 40 custom-built templates.

The SMEs used the **HCT Foundations Learning Outcomes** (January 2013) to write the Scope and Sequence for two courses: Levels 2 and 3, with each course comprising 16 topic-based units.

The units are thematically integrated, with the Language Focus and Vocabulary sections following on from the skills sections (Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing). The reading and listening texts draw on the **HCT Vocabulary Lists** and **Oxford 3000 Word List** and are matched up to the **CEFR scales**. The skills focus activities are similar to the kind of tasks students will eventually encounter in the IELTS exams. Each unit culminates in a '**Learning by Doing**' mini-project which is tied to the **HCT Graduate Outcomes** and requires students to use some of the target language presented in the unit and produce a concrete object (such as an iMovie, a Keynote presentation, an eBook etc.) related to the theme of the unit.

The content has been written with Emirati students in mind, with topics, texts, images and examples drawn from the local context. Furthermore, the learning activities cater to the strengths and weaknesses of Emirati students, combining lively and engaging communicative tasks with exercises that focus on spelling, numeracy and reading quickly.

Currently there are **32 units available** (16 for Level 2, 16 for Level 3) totaling **360 hours** of classroom material. Comprehensive teacher notes accompanies each unit. Additional units are scheduled for release regularly throughout the semester.



The materials are the primary instructional resource for **1206 Level 2 students** and **1618 Level 3 students** of our Foundation English Language Programme.

Instructional Design

The **40 templates** used to deliver the course content were chosen after discussion between the Pearson Instructional Design Team, the HCT SMEs and members of the mLearning FFAC Unit. The templates range from standard multiple choice and true/false templates to more tablet-specific 'hold-to-highlight' and 'scrollable timed-reading' templates. Now that units have been deployed in the classroom, the Pearson team is continually tweaking these templates in response to feedback from HCT faculty and the SMEs.

Collaboration

After the Pearson and HCT teams decided which 40 templates should be custom built for the course, Pearson provided some intensive training and guidance on writing learning materials, which the SMEs found extremely useful. The SMEs then began writing and submitting units to the Pearson editors for review. The process of drafting and reviewing involved a steep learning curve for both teams, but after a few units the expectations and requirements of both Pearson and HCT became clear. The complex process behind the delivery of a unit is best summed up in this diagram with each unit taking approximately 60 days from start to finish:



The collaboration finally bore fruit in May 2013, when the first unit was piloted at various colleges in the system. The pilot unit was even demonstrated to **His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum** at the official opening on 20 May 2013 of the new RAK Women's campus. The content received overwhelmingly positive feedback from faculty throughout the system, and many useful suggestions were made regarding template functionality. The Pearson responded to faculty comments very promptly and made appropriate changes to both content and design. The pilot was very instructive for the deployment of further units in September 2013.

