

Practicing Thinking and Explaining Logically: Part 1: Secrets of Food

Tech Tool

3-4 students per tablet

Kouhei Kato, The Japanese School, Singapore, used a research task on food to help his students develop their expository or explanatory writing skills.

Outline of the Class

After confirming that students understood the “beginning - middle - end” writing structure for explanatory texts, they were asked to create a text in which the “middle” explained how their chosen staple food such as wheat, potatoes, rice, fish, milk, sugar cane, etc. is transformed or processed to make other food products.

The “middle” had to be composed of multiple paragraphs with students required to make a new Card for each new paragraph. Students were tasked to connect their paragraphs with **appropriate use of conjunctions and connectives** in order to create an overall **coherent, structured text**. Each student had to write about three different examples and as much as possible each example was supposed to use a different cooking method.

Next, students worked together in a group to create one final **group presentation**. They were allowed to use pictures and photographs to make the text more accessible and some groups even brought in actual photographs of their meals at home. Finally, they added **audio voice recordings** to the Cards of the final version of their explanation.



Benefits for Students

Mr. Kato’s task piqued students’ interest in food and contributed to cultivating their **spirit of inquiry and investigation**. Through thinking about and researching the transformations and diffusion of their chosen food, students were able to hone their **data gathering and research skills** as well as **judgement and analytical skills**.

The ability to use a variety of other multimedia tools such as drawings, photographs and voice in addition to text also benefited students in several ways. Firstly, it helped them to understand the **value of using visual aids** to make explanations to a target audience more easily understandable. It also allowed them to exhibit their **powers of expression** by giving free rein to their **creativity and artistry**.

