Is the Current Self-access Learning Scheme Effective?

Recently, a few junior form students have expressed their concern over the effectiveness of the self-access learning scheme – SEEK. This article will discuss the pros and cons of the self-access learning scheme.

One advantage of the self-access learning scheme is that students are motivated to access the English learning materials themselves. They can learn English through newspaper articles and books and gain credit through this learning scheme. The point of the scheme is to let students learn English on their own. These resources can be accessed by students thus fostering a proactive learning attitude.

Another advantage is that students can learn English not only during lessons but also in their spare time and in their own pace. Students can surf the net and gain knowledge such as reading a piece of news or listening to the radio. Not only will these activities help the students learn English, they also keep the students up to date with the news around the world. It inspires them to learn English whenever and wherever they want.

Although there are advantages, it is not without a few drawbacks. The school has suggested finishing a certain number of activities under this self-access learning scheme within each term. For example, the school currently requires students to complete at least two activities each month. It is a bit too much considering the daily workload of students, especially for Form three students, who are currently taking eleven elective subjects. They often do not have time to handle minimum requirement from all these subjects let alone tackling the activities suggested by the scheme.

Another disadvantage for the scheme is that the scores you get from the SEEK activities will be counted as part of your English grand total mark on students' academic report. I think it is a bad idea. Some students who are not actually willing to learn honestly on their own might hand in some poorly done SEEK assignments in order to get marks easily and to make their report card look a bit more appealing. And this is not fair to the students who are actually keen on learning with the right attitude.

There are always two sides on an issue, just like a coin, and it is either going to be head or tail. In this case, I think the benefits that the self-access learning scheme brings

outweigh the drawbacks. Those drawbacks can be overcome with slight amendments to the scheme, such as allowing students to hand in their work in their own time and not allowing SEEK points to be credited on the report card. I believe by these means the scheme can better encourage students to really learn more but not doing the activities solely for marks.

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