New teachers, new tools

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Muhammad Anwar

NEWSPAPERS need to be part of a teacher's arsenal, as they contain a plethora of information, phrases and pictures.

These contents, said Muhammad Anwar Mohd Kamal, have a significant impact on students in terms of vocabulary and essay writing.

"Not only that, they also keep students up to date with all sorts of current issues, globally and nationally," he said.

Muhammad Anwar is among the 35 English language teachers – all fresh graduates – who took part in The Star's Newspaper-in-Education (Star-NiE) teachers' workshop held at SMK Gombak Setia in Selangor on June 12.

Having acquired "tips and tricks" for incorporating newspapers in the English language classroom, the SMK Seri Garing, Rawang, teacher said the Star-NiE workshop needs to be conducted more often.

"It is beneficial for teachers to become better at mixing their teaching methods. There is always something new to learn every day," he said.

He added that he looks forward to carrying out newspaper activities, especially for reading and speaking lessons.

“I would ask my students to voice what they have read or what they would like to share as their end product.

Shahnaaz Mehtab “They could cut out their favourite pictures and create a simple story based on them too.
“They will be learning and having fun at the same time – killing two birds with one stone,” he said.

Language School Improvement Specialist Coach Plus Shahnaaz Mehtab Akhtar Ali from the Gombak District Education Office said the workshop provided teachers with new ideas of using newspapers in the classroom to make their lessons more interesting, authentic and meaningful for students.

Newspapers can help to nurture the interest of reading among students, enable them to explore a variety of reading materials ranging from comics to advertisements, and bring the outside world to the classroom, she added.

She expressed hope that the teachers would implement the knowledge gained from the workshop.

“Explore the materials to the fullest because there are tons of ideas that can be pulled out from newspapers,” she said.

The workshop was conducted by Star-NiE freelance trainer Chang Siew Juen, a retired English language teacher.

Since its inception in 1997, the Star-NiE programme has supported English language teaching and learning in primary and secondary schools nationwide.

Star-NiE activities are available in StarEdu on Sundays, and in StarLifestyle on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

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