The Star

Active learning spurs teachers on

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Knowledge sharing: Shyamala (in green shirt, standing) and Poonkuzhali (to Shyamala's left) posing for a group photo with the participants. — THOMAS YONG/The Star

WHILE students need to be nurtured to fulfil their utmost potential, teachers too require support to sharpen their skillsets and produce better teaching and learning outcomes.

Recently, some 50 English language teachers from the Johor Baru district had the opportunity for such continuous professional development at The Star's Newspaper-in-Education (Star-NiE) teachers' workshop.

Held in a hotel in Johor Baru on June 30, the workshop was facilitated by Star-NiE freelance trainer Shyamala Sankaran, who exposed the participants to various methods of incorporating newspapers into their classroom instruction.



Ling

Describing newspapers as a “useful and powerful educational tool”, SJK(C) Kuo Kuang 2 teacher Adrian Ling Hing Leong said he learnt that the material can be used in a fun way.

“For example, my group was given a task to create a story based on a picture in the newspaper. We had fun creating a funny story and had a good laugh.

“Another task that caught my attention was ‘Jingle Away’. The assigned group had to come up with a musical chant or jingle based on an advertisement in the newspaper. Some of the teachers were very talented indeed,” he shared.

Looking ahead, Ling expressed eagerness to carry out newspaper activities with his

pupils.

“Pupils will have the opportunity to engage in more hands-on activities in an entertaining way. They will also be exposed to current issues as they skim and scan newspapers for information,” he said.

Language School Improvement Specialist Coach Plus Poonkuzhali Palaniandy from the Johor Baru District Education Office said through active learning at the workshop, teachers could directly experience and practise carrying out interactive and collaborative activities.

“Through these activities, they gained practical skills and deepened their understanding of utilising newspapers in the classroom, such as including real-world examples, diverse

vocabulary and current events," she said, adding that such sharing of ideas would enhance the participants' teaching practices.

She also said the workshop served to expose younger teachers to the benefits of rejuvenating and continuing the use of newspapers as materials for enhancing language teaching and learning in schools.

"Newspaper articles can be used for listening, speaking, reading and writing practices.

"Teachers are encouraged to adopt, adapt and implement the ideas gained at the workshop according to their students' needs," she said.

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.

For Star-NiE enquiries, email starnie@thestar.com.my. — By ROWENA CHUA