MALAYSIA MINISTRY OF EDUCATION'S SELECTION OF POEMS FOR THE FORM FOUR AND FORM FIVE NEW LITERATURE COMPONENT

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Abstract:

The introduction of English as a second language has been eleven years down the road in Malaysia. This study attempts to investigate the level of acceptability or suitability of the new set of poems for the Form Four and Form Five literature component in order to know the effectiveness of these selected poems. Pertinent issues like factors that affect students’ comprehension and suitable activities to aid the learning of the poems are also being highlighted in this paper. The findings of this study are contributed by 360 of Form Four students who are currently studying the new selected poems. The overall findings show that the Ministry of Education’s selection of poems in suitable for the new Form Four and Form Five literature component and although students face a few difficulties in comprehending the poems, there are suitable activities in the classroom as a solution to these problems.

Keywords: literature component, poem, Malaysia, Form Four and Form Five

Introduction:

For a few years, the plunged in the English language proficiency has been the concern for many Malaysians. The ways to improve the standards of English has long been debated and making English as a must-pass subject too, has met with a dead end (Teo, 2009). One of the workable ways is the introduction of literature to the English language syllabus where the aims coincide with the Personal Growth Model suggested by Carter and Long that is to engage students with pleasurable reading (Talib & Mukundan, 1994). The stimulus from the pleasurable reading will realize the aim of the English Language syllabus that is to enable secondary school students to “listen to, view, read and respond to different texts and express ideas, opinions, thoughts and feelings imaginatively and creatively in spoken and written form” (Ministry of Education, 2003).

Literature Component in English Language:

The effort to keep up the standard of English has been on the move since 1979 with the introduction of the English Language Reading Program (ELRP) (Pandian, 2002). Under this