

High School English Reading Instructional Design based on the Activity-Based Approach to English Learning

-- A case study of *The Age of Majority*

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Abstract: With the implementation of the English Curriculum Standards for General High Schools (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision), cultivating students' English core competency has become a key objective in high school English teaching. The Activity-Based Approach (ABA) to English learning, as a pivotal pathway to achieving this goal, provides a new theoretical framework and practical direction for reading instruction. This paper explores the design of high school English reading instruction based on ABA, using the text *The Age of Majority* from Unit 1 of Book 5 in the Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press (2019 Edition) Selective Compulsory textbook as a case study. The study first elucidates the essence of ABA and its guiding significance in high school English reading instruction. Subsequently, it proposes the following teaching strategies in conjunction with the specific lesson: 1) Shifting teaching philosophies to design activities oriented toward core competency development; 2) Optimizing instructional design to enhance student engagement through multi-tiered activities; 3) Conducting in-depth text analysis to explore deeper meanings and cultural connotations; 4) Refining assessment mechanisms to implement the integration of "teaching, learning, and evaluation." These interconnected strategies aim to improve students' language ability, cultural awareness, thinking capacity, and learning ability through activity-based reading instruction. Additionally, this paper presents a practical instructional design case to provide high school English teachers with actionable references.

Keywords: Activity-Based Approach to English Learning, High School English, Reading Instruction, Instructional Design Case.

1. Introduction

With the full implementation of the English Curriculum Standards for General High Schools (2017 Edition, 2020 Revision), fostering students' core competency in English has become the central mission of high school English teaching. A critical challenge in English education at this stage lies in cultivating students' language ability, cultural awareness, thinking capacity, and learning ability through reading instruction. The Activity-Based Approach (hereinafter referred to as ABA) to English learning, as a key pathway to achieving core competency, emphasizes the design of hierarchical, structured, and contextualized learning activities that guide students through thematic exploration and facilitate a complete cognitive process from language input to output. This process encompasses learning and understanding through perceiving and noticing, acquiring and organizing; applying and practicing via describing and interpreting, internalizing and applying; and transferring and creating by inferring and demonstrating, critiquing and evaluating[1]. Such an approach not only promotes deeper language acquisition but also cultivates cross-cultural cognitive strategies and higher-order thinking skills.

Within the high school English curriculum framework, reading instruction assumes a dual role as both the primary channel for developing linguistic proficiency and a crucial vehicle for nurturing core competencies[2]. The reading materials at this level are characterized by thematic diversity, distinctive textual features, and profound ideological depth, which demand more sophisticated reading strategies from students, including discourse structure analysis, authorial perspective evaluation, and cross-cultural comparison[3]. Thematic extended reading in high school English has been

shown to significantly enhance students' learning ability while simultaneously strengthening their thinking capacity and language proficiency, thereby making substantial contributions to the development of English core competencies [4]. This form of in-depth reading serves to broaden students' international perspectives while systematically developing their logical, innovative, and critical thinking abilities.

Given these considerations, the reconstruction of high school reading instruction guided by the Activity-Based Approach emerges as an imperative for realizing the subject's educational value. This paper examines the integration of reading instruction with core competency development through activity-based instructional design, using the text *The Age of Majority* from Unit 1 of Book 5 (FLTRP 2019 Edition) as a representative case study. The investigation focuses on how carefully designed learning activities can facilitate the organic combination of reading skill development and core competency cultivation in the high school English classroom context.

2. The Connotation of the Activity-Based Approach to English Learning

The new curriculum standards propose an Activity-Based Approach (ABA) to English learning, which integrates six key elements, thematic context, discourse types, linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge, language skills, and learning strategies---all directed toward the development of disciplinary core competencies. As an innovative pedagogical concept, ABA places activities at the heart of English instruction. Under the guidance of thematic meaning and through engagement with authentic texts, students

systematically acquire both linguistic and cultural knowledge. Through a series of carefully designed activities, they actively, collaboratively, and inquiry-basedly employ language skills and strategies to obtain cultural knowledge, comprehend cultural connotations, compare cultural differences, and extract cultural essence. This process effectively enhances students' logical, critical, and innovative thinking.

The activities within ABA framework are organized into three progressive levels: Learning and Understanding, Applying and Practicing, and Transferring and Creating, with each level comprising nine specific activity types. The first level focuses on knowledge acquisition activities grounded in textual analysis. This foundational stage, encompassing “perceiving and noticing,” “acquiring and organizing,” and “summarizing and integrating” activities, represents a critical period for students' linguistic knowledge acquisition. During this phase, students require abundant language input and contextual support to develop a comprehensive understanding of the learning content. For instance, through perceiving and noticing activities, students initially encounter and become aware of linguistic elements within texts, establishing preliminary comprehension. Acquiring and organizing activities further guide students to systematically structure linguistic knowledge from texts, transforming fragmented information into organized knowledge systems. Summarizing and integrating activities require students to refine and synthesize acquired knowledge into personalized linguistic frameworks. These activities not only provide opportunities for language learning but also cultivate students' language sensitivity and information processing capabilities. Only with solid mastery of linguistic knowledge at this stage can students successfully progress to subsequent learning phases where knowledge transforms into practical application skills. Thus, first-level activities serve as the essential foundation for students' English learning journey.

The second level involves competency transformation activities that delve deeper into textual analysis, including “describing and interpreting,” “analyzing and judging,” and “internalizing and applying,” with emphasis on developing practical application and problem-solving skills. Describing and interpreting activities require students to accurately and vividly portray textual content while providing explanations and elaborations, thereby enhancing both their expressive abilities and textual comprehension skills. Analyzing and judging activities demand that students apply acquired linguistic and cultural knowledge to evaluate and assess textual information, fostering critical thinking and discernment capabilities. Internalizing and applying activities represent the crucial transition where knowledge converts into practical competence through simulated real-life scenarios and role-playing exercises. This level's activities collectively emphasize knowledge application and practice, aiming to cultivate students' practical skills and problem-solving abilities, ultimately better preparing them for real-world challenges and enhancing overall competence.

The third level comprises competency formation activities that transcend textual boundaries, such as “inferring and demonstrating,” “critiquing and evaluating,” and “imagining and creating,” primarily targeting the development of innovative and critical thinking. Inferring and demonstrating activities encourage students to employ logical reasoning and argumentation methods to deeply analyze textual information, uncovering inherent connections and patterns, thereby strengthening logical reasoning and analytical skills.

Critiquing and evaluating activities require students to examine and assess textual viewpoints through their own value systems and judgment, cultivating critical thinking and independent reasoning abilities. Imagining and creating activities stimulate students' creativity to expand and reinvent textual content, fostering innovative thinking and imaginative expression. These advanced-level activities not only deepen textual understanding but also elevate students' cognitive qualities and innovation capabilities, providing significant benefits for personal development and future social participation.

These three interconnected and progressively advancing activity levels constitute a comprehensive ABA framework. Such systematic design facilitates students' structured acquisition of linguistic and cultural knowledge while enhancing their language skills and cognitive abilities, thereby promoting holistic development. The introduction of ABA provides fresh perspectives and directions for high school English teaching, driving pedagogical reform and innovation to improve instructional quality and effectiveness. Simultaneously, it cultivates students' cross-cultural communication awareness and practical application skills, laying a solid foundation for their future growth.

3. High School Reading Instructional Design based on the Activity-Based Approach

The implementation of the Activity-Based Approach (ABA) is of great significance for improving high school English reading instruction and enhancing teaching quality. To propose effective teaching strategies, we must thoroughly analyze the current implementation status of ABA in high school reading classrooms. By reviewing relevant literature published on the authoritative academic database “CNKI” after the introduction of the new curriculum standards, the author has analyzed and summarized the current state of ABA application in high school reading instruction and proposes corresponding teaching strategies based on practical considerations.

3.1. Current Implementation Situation of ABA in High School Reading Instruction

Since the introduction of the new curriculum standards, many scholars have investigated the implementation of ABA in high school reading instruction. “Reading classroom teaching in practice exhibits characteristics such as fragmentation and test-oriented approaches, and the integration of ABA into regular reading instruction still faces obstacles, lacking effective pathways and strategies”[5]. In reading classes, teachers tend to focus excessively on superficial textual information while neglecting deeper exploration of the text's background, the author's intentions, and the protagonist's thoughts and emotions. The teaching model overemphasizes one-way transmission of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, lacking activities such as critical thinking and debates that stimulate students' thinking capacity, thereby failing to meet students' needs for higher-order thinking.

Jiang (2021) points out that many teachers have spontaneously conducted teaching practices and explorations under the guidance of ABA and achieved certain results. However, several prominent issues remain, including inadequate text analysis and failure to implement evaluation

components[6]. In summary, under the new curriculum standards, the implementation of ABA in high school reading instruction still faces certain challenges.

After analyzing these issues, the following current implementation statuses of ABA in high school reading instruction have been identified:

The implementation of ABA is challenging in the fragmented and test-oriented environment of high school English reading instruction. Teachers fail to closely integrate theory with practice, resulting in limited opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and hindering the improvement of their language ability. English teachers' teaching philosophies remain relatively outdated, and their teaching models are monotonous, negatively impacting students' learning outcomes and restricting their learning quality. Teachers overly focus on superficial text content, neglecting deeper exploration of background, authorial intent, and emotional dimensions. The reading model emphasizes one-way knowledge transmission, lacking activities such as critical thinking and debates that stimulate students' thinking capacity, thereby failing to meet their higher-order thinking needs.

Text analysis is insufficient, and the integration of "teaching, learning, and evaluation" is not fully implemented. To address these issues, we propose the following reading instruction strategies.

3.2. High School Reading Teaching Strategies Based on ABA

Having explored the connotation of ABA and its current implementation status in high school reading instruction, we recognize its importance in reading classrooms. However, to address existing problems, teachers must adopt a series of measures to optimize reading instruction and enhance students' core competency. Below, we elaborate on high school reading teaching strategies based on ABA.

3.2.1. Transforming Teaching Philosophy: Focusing on Competency Development

The new curriculum standards emphasize the educational function of English courses, which involves not only teaching English knowledge but also cultivating students' overall development through English learning. ABA serves as the theoretical foundation for developing students' core competency, and high school reading instruction is a crucial practical component for achieving this goal. Reading instruction guided by ABA will help improve students' English proficiency and comprehensive qualities, better serving their growth and development.

Under ABA, teachers must shift from traditional teaching philosophies to focus on students' competency development. ABA emphasizes student-centeredness and practicality, prioritizing the reading process and the cultivation of thinking capacity[7]. Therefore, teachers must reconsider the objectives and methods of reading instruction, transitioning from knowledge transmission to holistic development and from knowledge-based to competency-based approaches.

Notably, "ABA is a learner-centered educational philosophy." Teachers must focus on developing students' reading and thinking abilities. ABA highlights students' initiative and creativity, so when designing reading activities, teachers should emphasize cultivating students' reading and thinking skills. By guiding students through deep reading, critical reading, and other activities, teachers can enhance their reading comprehension and analytical abilities.

Additionally, teachers should pay attention to students' emotional and value development, fostering cross-cultural awareness and humanistic qualities by guiding them to appreciate cultural and value elements in texts. Under ABA, teachers must align teaching activities with students' actual needs. Scholars note that while thematic contexts provide situational and informational backgrounds for learning activities, effective learning remains challenging if tasks are not closely connected to students' real lives. Tasks detached from reality fail to ignite students' enthusiasm and intrinsic motivation, leading to passive learning devoid of critical thinking and emotional engagement. In such cases, students struggle to internalize content and develop lasting knowledge and abilities.

To address this, teachers can take the following steps:

Understand students' reading levels and interests: Through communication, classroom observation, and reading assignments, teachers can gauge students' reading abilities and preferences, enabling them to design more suitable reading activities.

Address individualized needs: Students have diverse learning needs and reading abilities, so teachers should develop personalized teaching plans. For example, advanced readers can be challenged with more complex materials, while struggling readers can receive leveled texts with appropriate guidance.

Support emotional needs: High school students face new challenges in English learning compared to elementary school. Teachers should monitor students' emotional states, providing timely encouragement and support to help them overcome difficulties and build confidence. A relaxed and engaging classroom atmosphere can also boost students' interest and motivation.

Promote holistic development: ABA emphasizes students' comprehensive growth, so teachers should focus on cultivating language skills, thinking capacity, and cultural awareness. Diverse activities such as discussions, debates, and role-playing can enhance students' expressive abilities, critical thinking, and cross-cultural competence. Additionally, fostering independent learning and collaboration skills can improve students' overall competitiveness.

Teachers must also pay attention to students' learning processes and methods. ABA emphasizes practicality and participation, so teachers should guide students in self-directed and collaborative learning to cultivate autonomy and teamwork. Furthermore, diversified evaluation methods and timely feedback can help students understand their progress and adjust their learning strategies.

Finally, teachers must continuously improve their own competencies. Under ABA, teachers need to learn how to effectively integrate teaching philosophies into their practices, enabling students to consciously engage in ABA-oriented reading instruction. Through training and experience-sharing, teachers can acquire new teaching concepts and methods, enhancing their instructional skills. Staying updated with the latest trends and technologies in English education will also better equip them to guide students in reading development.

3.2.2. Enriching Teaching Models: Increasing Student Engagement

To effectively implement ABA, frontline teachers have proposed reading instruction strategies such as the "Reading Circle and Jigsaw Model." This model consists of seven stages: pre-class self-study, classroom introduction, collaborative learning, student presentations, summary and

elevation, cultural and emotional integration, and homework assignment. Each stage involves specific teaching steps with varied activities that are interconnected, progressively advancing students' thinking throughout the process. Unlike traditional teacher-centered reading instruction, this model fully respects students' initiative and ensures high engagement, embodying ABA's progressive thinking framework.

Additionally, the following methods can be employed for reading instruction:

Diversified teaching models: Teachers can adopt different approaches such as intensive reading, extensive reading, cooperative learning, and inquiry-based learning based on text types and teaching objectives. Varied models can stimulate students' interest and improve learning outcomes.

Interactive activities: Designing interactive activities like group discussions, role-playing, and debates can boost engagement. These activities allow students to learn and use English in a relaxed atmosphere, improving their communicative competence while fostering collaboration and communication skills.

Multimedia and online resources: Incorporating multimedia resources (e.g., images, videos, audio) can enrich reading instruction. Diverse tools help students better comprehend texts and increase their interest. Teachers can also guide students to use online resources for autonomous learning.

In conclusion, under ABA, high school reading instruction should focus on enriching teaching models and increasing student engagement. Teachers must flexibly employ various strategies to guide students in deeply understanding texts and cultivating independent thinking and problem-solving skills. These measures will help students master reading techniques and improve their English reading literacy and overall competencies.

3.2.3. Scientific Text Analysis: Exploring Discourse Connotations

Text analysis is crucial for implementing ABA, and scientific methods can make reading instruction more effective.

"ABA emphasizes theme-led instruction. Teaching based on ABA is not traditional fragmented vocabulary or grammar instruction but a process of students exploring thematic meaning." Under ABA, text analysis can follow the "WWH" model: **What:** The text's theme and content. Identify the thematic category (e.g., people and society, nature, self) and focus on the described subjects, events, or phenomena. **Why:** The thematic significance conveyed by the text. Guide students to explore the author's purpose and viewpoints, understanding the text's impact and meaning. **How:** The text's expressive and linguistic features. Students should analyze language, structure, and rhetorical devices to understand how the author conveys themes and meanings. For example, in *The Age of Majority* (FLTRP 2019, Book 5 Unit 1 DI):

What: The text explores the meaning of turning 18 through first-person narratives of three teenagers (Bethany, Lin Ning, Morgan) from Australia, China, and the U.S., covering legal rights (e.g., voting, driving), gaps between ideals and reality (e.g., financial pressures, rules), and reflections on responsibility (e.g., safe driving, social participation).

Why: The author aims to show that "adulthood" is not just a legal age but maturity in responsibility, while comparing cross-cultural perspectives on "independence and responsibility."

How: The text uses a "general-to-specific" structure, first-person narration for immersion, contrast to highlight ideal-reality conflicts, and a three-part framework ("understanding-reality-reflection"). The language resonates with teenagers, facilitating engagement.

Under ABA, teachers can design activities to explore the theme of "adulthood." For example: **Learning and Understanding:** Discuss "the significance of turning 18 in different countries," share personal views on rights and responsibilities, and compare cases (e.g., voting ages, driving laws). **Applying and Practicing:** Role-play as Bethany, Lin Ning, or Morgan to articulate their expectations and realities (e.g., Morgan's financial dependence) and debate "whether responsibility correlates with age." **Transferring and Creating:** Reflect on "criteria for maturity," incorporating textual examples (e.g., organ donation, financial planning) to write My Vision of Adulthood, exploring how to balance freedom and responsibility. These activities enhance language expression (e.g., using "responsibility," "commitment") and information integration while fostering critical thinking and social responsibility through cross-cultural comparisons.

When teaching *The Age of Majority*, teachers should go beyond superficial knowledge (e.g., voting/driving ages) to explore deeper themes like "responsibility," "cultural differences," and "growth." The text is not just about legal milestones but narratives of maturity—Bethany's realization about driving responsibilities, Lin Ning's social engagement (e.g., organ donation), and Morgan's reflection that "responsibility is an attitude, not an age" all underscore that adulthood is psychological, not just legal. Teachers can design activities to explore these deeper meanings, such as:

Discussing "How would you view the rights and pressures of turning 18 if you were these teens?"

Analyzing "What societal values do cross-cultural differences in adulthood reflect?"

Such questions reinforce vocabulary (e.g., "responsibility," "commitment") while cultivating dialectical thinking, e.g., understanding "independence" as culturally relative).

ABA also emphasizes "internalization into action." Teachers can design practical tasks like creating My Adult Responsibility Checklist or simulating "coming-of-age ceremonies" (blending textual themes with local culture) to transform values like "responsibility" and "rationality" into actionable principles.

In summary, scientifically analyzing texts' emotional, cultural, and value dimensions is key to ABA-guided instruction. Teachers must use texts as vehicles for multi-level activities, transitioning students from "language acquisition" to "competency development," achieving synergy between language ability and thinking capacity.

3.2.4. Scientific Evaluation and Feedback: Implementing "Teaching-Learning-Evaluation" Integration

Since the new curriculum's implementation, "teaching-learning-evaluation" integration has garnered attention. Many teachers lack sufficient awareness of this framework. While designing ABA-based lessons, they focus on core competency-oriented teaching and learning but neglect concurrent evaluation design. This oversight leads to insufficient attention to students' progress, hindering learning outcomes and holistic development.

To address this, the following measures are proposed to gradually achieve "teaching-learning-evaluation" integration in high school reading instruction:

Clarify evaluation objectives: Before instruction, teachers

should define evaluation goals aligned with teaching objectives, covering reading comprehension, language use, and thinking capacity.

Diversify evaluation activities: Design varied assessments (e.g., class performance, oral presentations, written assignments, group discussions) to comprehensively evaluate reading abilities and overall qualities while motivating students.

Provide timely feedback: Offer constructive feedback on students' weaknesses and adjust teaching strategies to address learning challenges.

Leverage technology: Use online platforms or speech recognition tools for automated scoring and feedback to improve accuracy and efficiency.

Encourage self-evaluation: Guide students to reflect on their learning, identify shortcomings, and seek improvement.

Implement portfolio assessment: Compile students' work,

reflections, and achievements into portfolios for periodic review, tracking progress and areas for growth.

In conclusion, ABA-based reading instruction requires scientific evaluation and feedback to achieve “teaching-learning-evaluation” integration. Teachers must focus on clear objectives, diversified assessments, timely feedback, technology-assisted tools, student self-reflection, and portfolio systems to enhance learning outcomes and holistic development.

3.3. High School Reading Instructional Design Case based on the Activity-Based Approach

Following the detailed analysis of instructional strategies, this section presents a complete teaching design case.

Table 1. The Teaching Plan of *The Age of Majority* Based on ABA

| FLTRP(2019 edition) Book5 Unit1 The Age of Majority | | | |
|---|---|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Grade | Senior High (2) | Thematic context | Man and society、 Man and self |
| Time | 2 lessons | Text type | narration |
| Text analysis | <p>This article takes “coming of age at 18” as the theme, constructing a pluralistic cognitive picture of adulthood through the first-person narratives of three teenagers from Australia, China, and the United States.</p> <p>What: The text adopts a “general-to-specific” structure. The introduction raises the question of “the meaning and responsibility of adulthood”. The sub-narratives present the symbolic rights of adulthood, the conflict between ideals and reality, and reflections on responsibility through the stories of Bethany (focusing on the right to vote, driving rights, and driving responsibility), Lin Ning (expecting financial independence but deepening the understanding of social responsibility in reality), and Morgan (whose ideal independent life is constrained by economic pressures, leading to an understanding of the essence of responsibility). These stories implicitly convey the core idea that “adulthood = rights + responsibility”. Linguistically, it uses social issue-related vocabulary such as “vote” and “responsibility”, as well as contrastive sentence patterns like “Although...reality...”. Culturally, it reflects the logical social definitions through the differences in coming-of-age symbols among the three countries (e.g., the right to vote in China, the culture of independence in the United States).</p> <p>Why: The text aims to guide readers through multicultural cases to go beyond legal age and understand that the core of adulthood lies in the unity of psychological maturity and a sense of responsibility. Meanwhile, it cultivates readers’ global vision and dialectical thinking by contrasting different societies’ perceptions of “independence and responsibility”. At the language teaching level, it provides practical materials based on real-life scenarios (such as applying for credit cards and organ donation) to help students construct a vocabulary and sentence pattern system within contexts.</p> <p>How: In teaching implementation, thematic cognition can be activated through “riddle-based introduction + cultural prediction” (learning and understanding activities). Language knowledge acquisition and cross-cultural comparison can be implemented through “information table sorting + role-playing” (application and practice activities). Debates, writing tasks, etc., can be designed around the conflicts of “rights and responsibilities” and “ideals and reality” (transfer and innovation activities), such as discussing “whether maturity is determined by age” and “the values of coming-of-age rituals in different cultures”. These activities promote students’ transition from language knowledge comprehension to the development of critical thinking and social responsibility. Meanwhile, the integration of “teaching, learning, and assessment” is ensured through process-based assessment (e.g., the relevance of debate arguments) and summative assessment (e.g., the depth of essay perspectives).</p> | | |
| Goals of core competency : | <p>1. Language Ability</p> <p>① Master the contextual application of core vocabulary such as majority, responsibility, and commitment.</p> <p>② Analyze complex sentence patterns (e.g., object clauses, adverbial clauses) to extract and integrate key information from the text.</p> <p>2. Cultural Awareness</p> <p>① Compare the cultural differences in coming-of-age rituals among China, Australia, and the United States to understand the diversity of “adulthood” as a social ceremony.</p> <p>3. Thinking Capacity</p> <p>① Cultivate dialectical thinking and logical reasoning abilities through analyzing the “conflict between ideals and reality.”</p> <p>② Critically evaluate the text's perspectives to form personalized perceptions of “maturity.”</p> <p>4. Learning Ability</p> <p>① Enhance information integration and innovative expression skills through collaborative inquiry and cross-</p> | | |

| | cultural transfer. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------|---------------|----------------|-----------------|----------|------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Preparation | <p>1. Teacher Preparation</p> <p>① Create a PPT for cultural comparison featuring coming-of-age symbols in three countries.</p> <p>② Design learning tools such as an “Information Sorting Table” and “Debate Scoring Rubric”.</p> <p>2. Student Preparation</p> <p>① Pre-learn vocabulary: majority, vote, driving license, organ donation, commitment.</p> <p>② Reflect on the question: “What does turning 18 mean to you in China?”</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lesson1 | <p>Learning Comprehension and Application Practice</p> <p>Step 1: Lead-in (Learning Comprehension - Perception)</p> <p>Activity 1: Thematic Introduction - Riddle Game</p> <p>Question: What can you legally do at 18 in China?</p> <p>(Expected answers: vote, obtain a driving license, sign contracts independently)</p> <p>Instruction: Display document excerpts and guide students to answer in English to activate prior knowledge.</p> <p>Activity 2: Cultural Comparison Prediction</p> <p>Information Presentation: Introduce three teenagers:</p> <p>Bethany (16, Australia), Lin Ning (19, China), Morgan (20, USA)</p> <p>Question: “How might their experiences of turning 18 differ? Why?”</p> <p>(Anticipated responses: differences in legal rights, family values, economic conditions)</p> <p>Step 2: Structured Reading (Learning Comprehension - Acquisition and Sorting)</p> <p>Activity 3: 1st Reading</p> <p>Task: Skim the text to match paragraph functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction: Raises the question of “the meaning and responsibility of turning 18”. - Personal Accounts: Stories of Bethany (), Lin Ning (), Morgan (). <p>Activity 4: 2nd Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Task: Read assigned role paragraphs in groups and complete the table: <table border="1" data-bbox="290 965 1461 1227"> <thead> <tr> <th>人物</th> <th>对 18 岁的理解 (Understanding)</th> <th>现实体验 (Reality)</th> <th>责任反思 (Reflection)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Bethany</td> <td>投票权、驾照 (权利象征)</td> <td>母亲担忧驾驶安全、渐进式成长</td> <td>驾驶需对生命负责、器官捐赠决定</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lin Ning</td> <td>独立生活、信用卡自由</td> <td>学业压力、财务谨慎 (拒绝盲目消费)</td> <td>社会责任感 (器官捐赠)、理性规划</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Morgan</td> <td>经济独立 (高薪工作、租房)</td> <td>薪资低、依赖家庭、通勤成本高</td> <td>责任是态度而非年龄, 谨慎对待贷款</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Step 3: Cultural Comparison and Language Application (Application Practice - Analysis and Judgment)</p> <p>Activity 5: Group Discussion (Human-Society Perspective)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Question: "Why does Bethany's mom want to raise the driving age?" (Guided analysis: Link to Australia's traffic accident data to highlight adolescent safety concerns) - Extended Question: "In China, why is 18 the legal driving age? How does it differ?" <p>Activity 6: Role-Play (Internalization and Application)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Task: Students choose a role (Bethany/Lin Ning/Morgan) to retell key experiences in the first person, requiring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Core vocabulary: vote, responsibility, credit card, commitment - Sentence pattern: "Although I expected..., the reality was..." (to contrast ideals with reality) <p>Step 4: Classroom Summary and Homework</p> <p>Summary: Review the "understanding-reality-reflection" structure of the three teenagers' stories via a table, reinforcing the concept that "adulthood = rights + responsibility".</p> <p>Homework:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Memorize core vocabulary and complete sentence translation exercises. 2. Prepare arguments for the debate topic: "Is Turning 18 a Good Thing or Not?" (integrate text cases). | 人物 | 对 18 岁的理解 (Understanding) | 现实体验 (Reality) | 责任反思 (Reflection) | Bethany | 投票权、驾照 (权利象征) | 母亲担忧驾驶安全、渐进式成长 | 驾驶需对生命负责、器官捐赠决定 | Lin Ning | 独立生活、信用卡自由 | 学业压力、财务谨慎 (拒绝盲目消费) | 社会责任感 (器官捐赠)、理性规划 | Morgan | 经济独立 (高薪工作、租房) | 薪资低、依赖家庭、通勤成本高 | 责任是态度而非年龄, 谨慎对待贷款 |
| 人物 | 对 18 岁的理解 (Understanding) | 现实体验 (Reality) | 责任反思 (Reflection) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Bethany | 投票权、驾照 (权利象征) | 母亲担忧驾驶安全、渐进式成长 | 驾驶需对生命负责、器官捐赠决定 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lin Ning | 独立生活、信用卡自由 | 学业压力、财务谨慎 (拒绝盲目消费) | 社会责任感 (器官捐赠)、理性规划 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Morgan | 经济独立 (高薪工作、租房) | 薪资低、依赖家庭、通勤成本高 | 责任是态度而非年龄, 谨慎对待贷款 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lesson2 | <p>Step 1: Debate Introduction (Application Practice - Description and Interpretation)</p> <p>Activity 1: Let's Debate!</p> <p>Topic: "Is Turning 18 a Good Thing or Not?"</p> <p>Rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Affirmative Side: Focus on rights and growth (e.g., the right to vote, social participation), citing Bethany and Lin Ning's positive experiences. - Negative Side: Highlight real-world pressures and responsibilities (e.g., financial dependence, rule constraints), referencing Morgan's dilemmas. - Scoring Criteria: Relevance of arguments to the text, language fluency, logical coherence (e.g., use of however, in contrast). <p>Step 2: In-Depth Critical Thinking (Transfer and Innovation - Criticism and Evaluation)</p> <p>Activity 2: Philosophical Question Discussion (Human-Self Perspective)</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>Question: "Does age determine maturity? Cite examples from the text." Guiding Directions: - Markers of Maturity: Bethany’s sense of driving responsibility (behavioral maturity). - Limitations of Age: Morgan’s financial dependence (biological adulthood ≠ psychological independence). Activity 3: Cross-Cultural Extension (Human-Society Perspective) - Display: Chinese coming-of-age rituals (Guan Ji Ceremony, adult oath-taking) vs. Western debut ceremonies (e.g., U.S. high school graduation trips). - Question: "How do these rituals reflect cultural values of ‘adulthood’?" Step 3: Thematic Writing (Transfer and Innovation - Imagination and Creation) Task: Short Essay Writing Title: "Maturity: Beyond the Age of 18" Requirements: - Incorporate the text’s key concept of "responsibility" (e.g., social responsibility, financial caution). - Contrast "legal adulthood" with "psychological maturity" and present a personal viewpoint. - Minimum 150 words, using cohesive devices like for instance, in conclusion. Step 4: Evaluation and Summary Formative Evaluation: - Debate Performance: Team collaboration, accuracy of arguments (refer to the scoring rubric). - First Draft of Writing: Clarity of ideas, reasonable text citations (e.g., citing Lin Ning’s organ donation case). Summary: - Reiterate the core message: Adulthood is not merely about age, but about taking responsibility for oneself, others, and society. - Assign post-class tasks: Revise the essay by adding cross-cultural cases (e.g., Chinese coming-of-age rituals).</p> |
| Reflection | <p>Key Points for Teaching Reflection 1. Integration of Language and Competency: Were vocabulary and sentence patterns naturally embedded in activities like debates and writing? 2. Depth of Thinking: Could students dialectically analyze the relationships between “rights and responsibilities” and “ideals and reality”? 3. Effectiveness of Cultural Comparison: Did the three-country cases guide students to understand the social construction of adulthood?</p> |

Grounded in the Activity-Based Approach (ABA) and aligned with core competency development goals, this lesson plan implements the four proposed teaching requirements across four dimensions: teaching philosophy, design logic, text interpretation, and evaluation system.

3.3.1. Shifting Teaching Philosophy with Core Competency Orientation

The lesson plan breaks away from traditional fragmented language instruction by centering on the thematic context of “Rights and Responsibilities of Adulthood,” integrating language ability, cultural awareness, thinking capacity, and learning ability throughout the learning process. For example:

Warm-up Activity: A “guessing game” activates students’ linguistic knowledge about “legal rights at 18” (language ability), while “cross-cultural predictions” prompt reflection on adulthood experiences across countries (cultural awareness).

Critical Thinking Session: A debate on “Does Age Determine Maturity?” guides students to analyze the relationship between biological and psychological adulthood (thinking capacity). Comparisons of coming-of-age rituals (e.g., Chinese oath ceremonies vs. American graduation trips) broaden global perspectives (learning ability).

All activities target the integrated development of “Man and Society” and “Man and Self” core competencies, embodying a student-centered, competency-oriented approach.

3.3.2. Optimizing Instructional Design Through Tiered Activities

The lesson plan follows ABA’s three-tiered framework (“Learning and Understanding→Applying and

Practicing→Transferring and Creating”) to design progressive activities:

① Learning and Understanding (Lesson 1, Steps 1–2):

Skimming to match paragraph functions and close reading to complete information tables help students extract core elements (rights-reality-responsibility), building structured text comprehension. Activities like “acquiring and organizing” and “summarizing and integrating” reinforce foundational skills.

② Applying and Practicing (Lesson 2):

Group discussions on cultural differences (e.g., Bethany’s mother’s safety concerns about teen driving). Role-playing to retell characters’ experiences (e.g., practicing contrastive structures: “Although I expected..., the reality was...”). Debates (e.g., “Is Adulthood a Good Thing?”) transform textual knowledge into expressive and argumentative skills.

③ Transferring and Creating (Lesson 3):

Philosophical debates (“Is Maturity Age-Related?”). Cross-cultural ritual comparisons.

Theme-based writing (“Maturity: Beyond the Age of 18”).

These tasks encourage critical evaluation and creative expression, facilitating the leap from “knowledge input” to “competency output.”

3.3.3. Deep Text Interpretation: Uncovering Cultural and Cognitive Depth

The lesson plan emphasizes the text’s cultural diversity and dialectical thinking through:

Cross-Cultural Analysis: Contrasting adulthood experiences (e.g., Lin Ning’s academic responsibilities in China vs. Morgan’s financial pressures in the U.S.) reveals

how “adulthood” is socially constructed—balancing legal rights and family duties in Chinese culture vs. individualism and challenges in Western contexts.

Critical Details: Comparisons of “organ donation” and “credit card use” highlight differing views on social responsibility and consumer culture.

Ideal-Reality Conflict: Tasks like “cause-effect analysis→critical evaluation→creative expression” guide students to dialectically examine “rights vs. Responsibilities” and “freedom vs. constraints,” avoiding binary thinking. For example, debates require students to argue “Maturity Isn’t Age-Dependent” using Morgan’s perspective, fostering logical reasoning and critical thinking.

3.3.4. Implementing “Teaching-Learning-Evaluation” Integration

The lesson plan establishes a comprehensive, multi-dimensional evaluation system:

Real-Time Feedback: During role-plays and debates, criteria like “accuracy of core vocabulary,” “appropriate transition words,” and “textual relevance of arguments” are used (e.g., assessing proper use of “commitment” or “in contrast”).

Summative Assessment: Rubrics evaluate “information table completeness,” “essay clarity,” and “cross-cultural case integration” (e.g., checking if essays incorporate Lin Ning’s social responsibility or Morgan’s views).

Peer Review: Debate teams evaluate each other’s arguments; writing workshops include peer checks for logical coherence, promoting self-reflection and collaborative improvement.

By combining “competency-oriented philosophy, tiered activity design, in-depth cultural,cognitive analysis, and integrated evaluation,” this case study exemplifies how to unify thematic context, text interpretation, and competency development in high school English teaching.

4. Conclusion

The Activity-Based Approach presents a transformative challenge for high school English instruction. Its implementation is a prolonged and demanding process requiring continuous teacher experimentation, reflection, and adaptation to develop context and goal-appropriate reading pedagogies. No single strategy fits all teaching scenarios; any method that advances students’ core competencies is worthy of adoption. Educators must commit to ongoing learning and innovation to enhance students’ comprehensive qualities and language proficiency, ultimately realizing English’s full potential as a vehicle for holistic education.

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