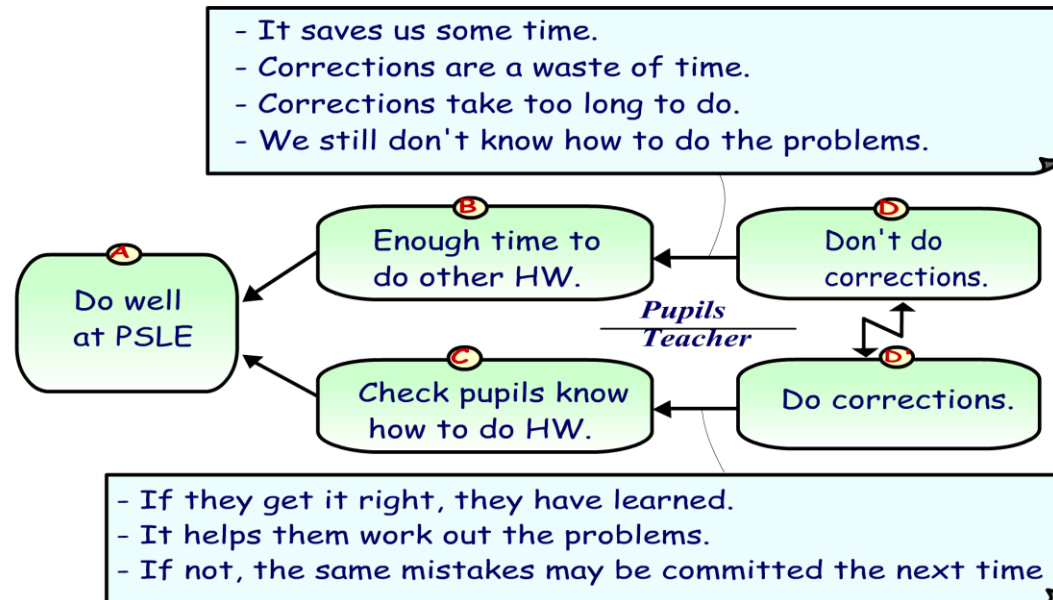


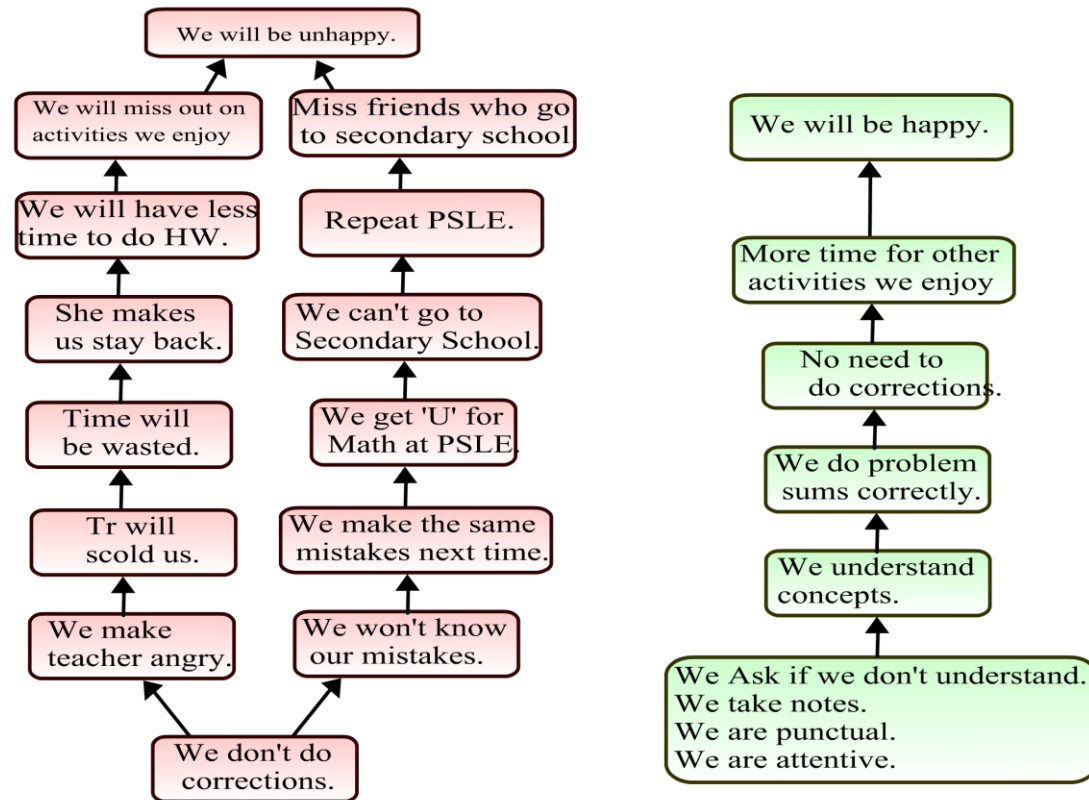
ENABLING STUDENTS TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPROVING THEIR CLASS WORK

My confidence in the use of the Cloud and the N.Br (Negative Cause and Effect Branch) has grown tremendously, fueled by the positive results that I receive in all my attempts. Today, I decided to take on a bigger challenge. I had my Math Remedial Class today. "Good opportunity to practise on them," I told myself gleefully. But truthfully, if my need were only to practise on them, I would not have wasted 20 minutes of 21 of my students' life. I have this strong conviction that this investment would reap a harvest far more valuable than we can fathom. Can we ever quantify the value of a gift that will affect ourselves, our family members, our friends, our colleagues at the workplace, the nation and in turn the world? I worked through the Cloud with them. The conflict was that students did not want to do their corrections and I want them to do their corrections



*TOC in Conduct: Wong Siew Shan, Vice-Principal
Singapore, Improving class work p.2*

We went on to use the N.Br I was quite surprised that they could think of the cause and effect in the chain quite easily. All I did was to help focus them with relevant questions. Although we had not been taught the P.Br (Positive Cause and Effect Branch), I tried to use my own brand of it. All in all, it was a very satisfying experience. I hope that I will see some changes by 3.3.2000 when I have my next class with these pupils. But even if I see no concrete results or positive indications, I would not say that I have engaged 20 minutes of every student in vain. They would have been exposed to 3 powerful focusing tools and gone through the problem-solving process, which they could use to think through behaviours so that they could begin to make responsible choices.



As I was reflecting on the Math lesson that afternoon,
Desiree (my 10 yr old daughter) came into my bedroom.

"Mum, can you write a letter to my Chinese Language teacher,
requesting for permission for me to join her Chinese Remedial lessons?"

My first reaction was one of total disbelief. Which child in her right mind
would want to attend remedial classes if she has not been 'chosen'?

"Why would you want to join the Chinese Remedial lessons?" I asked Desiree.

"The fact that you have not been asked to attend remedial sessions
shows that you are doing relatively well. Therefore, I don't see why I
should waste my time writing the letter for you!"

oops! How insensitive I could be at times. I realised it too late. I tried to
retrieve my words but it was too late. I noticed Desiree's eyes turn red as a
drop of tear rolled down her cheeks. It tore my heart to see how much I have
upset her by my total disregard for her needs. I said, "Being able to attend
the Chinese remedial lessons is really very important to you, isn't it?
Have you thought about the whole issue very, very seriously? Are you
aware that it would reflect very badly on you and me if you decide later
that you really don't want to attend the remedial sessions?"

She nodded to indicate that she has. "Would you like to do a cloud for this
little dilemma of yours? Maybe you could also convince me
about writing your teacher the letter you requested for."

So it was that Desiree drew her first cloud that night. Her cloud revealed to me some of her feelings about the learning of Chinese that has never before been revealed to me. Her cloud communicated to me her insecurities about learning the Chinese Language and her quest to do better in a subject that I thought she was doing well in - that's what I call self-motivation! I never knew that she was feeling frustrated because she couldn't get any help in Chinese at home - somehow her feelings have never been verbalised before. Well, we never had this wonderful tool called the Evaporating Cloud back then!

