



DiaNable: A Mobile App for Effective Reading in a Science General Education Course

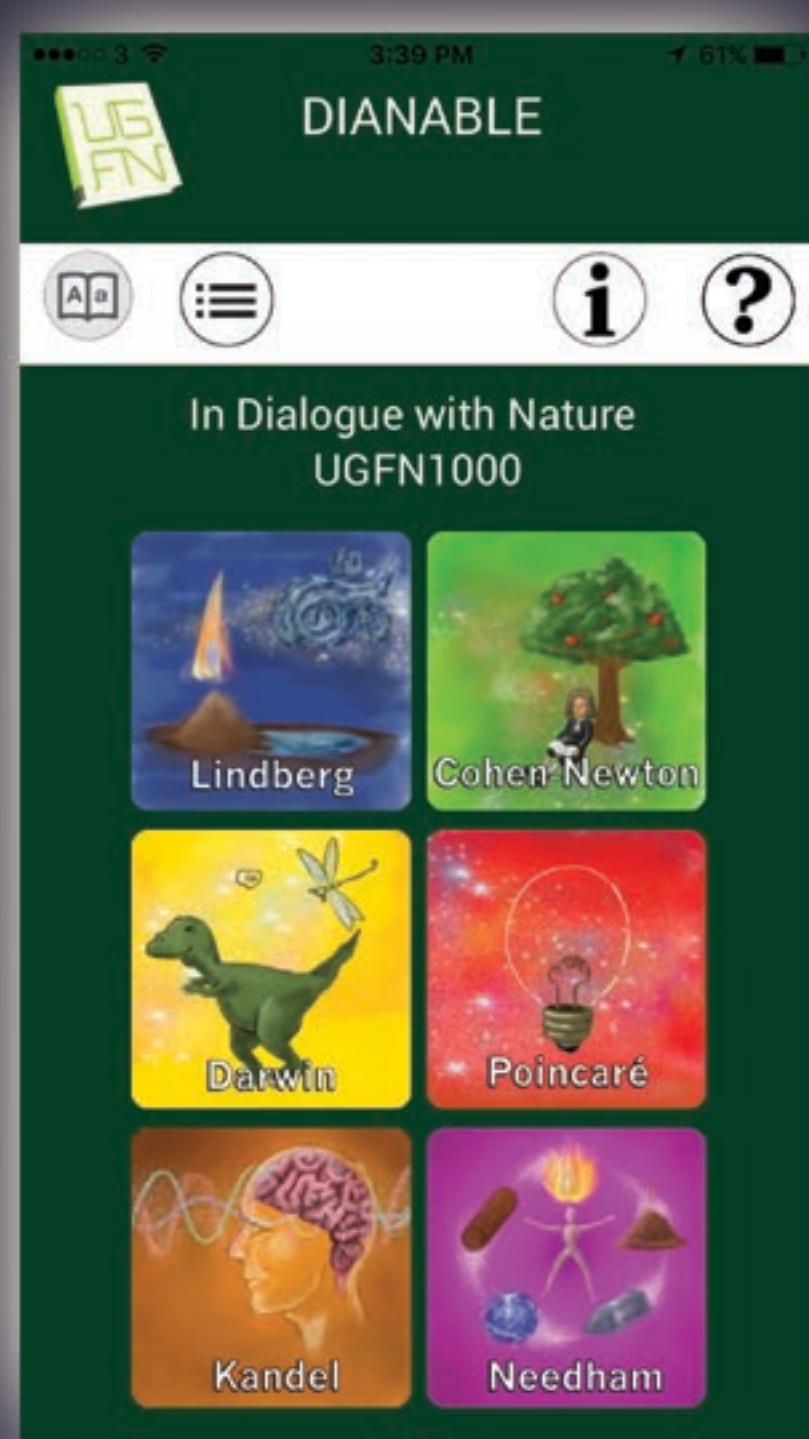
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Introduction

'UGFN 1000 In Dialogue with Nature' is a compulsory general education foundation course for undergraduates in The Chinese University of Hong Kong. It requires students to read excerpts from early selected science classics. Students without basic science knowledge often reported to have difficulties in understanding the texts on their own. In response to the needs of students, DiaNable, a mobile learning app, was designed and launched.

1. Main Page



DiaNable app serves as a reading companion for students and aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- Stimulate students' self-initiative in reading,
- Enhance students' comprehension of the texts,
- Self-evaluate understanding of the texts.

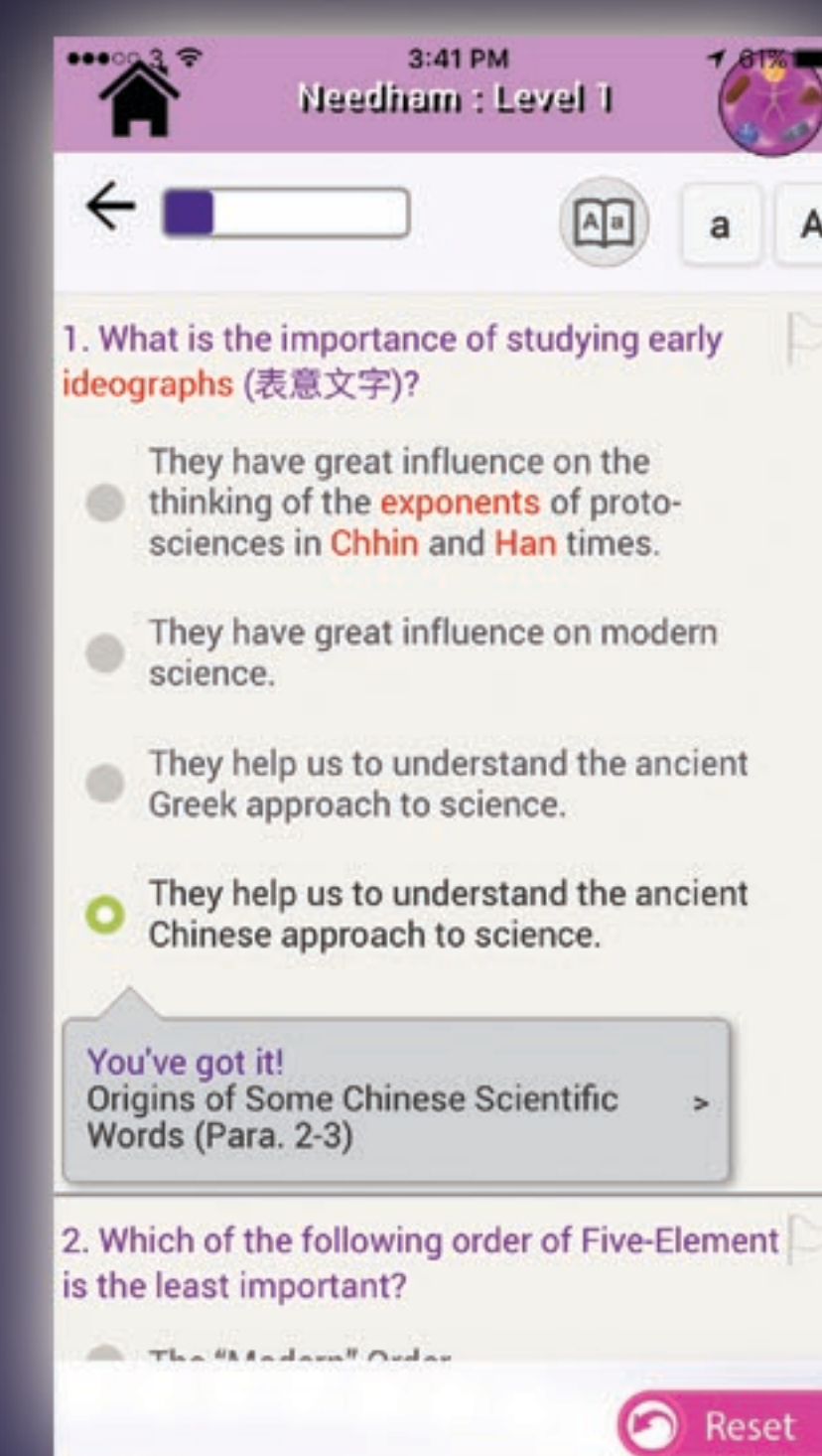
Six texts that are particularly challenging to students are included in the DiaNable app.

4. Level 1 and 2 Questions

Level 1 focuses on basic understanding of the excerpt such as its structure and its main themes.

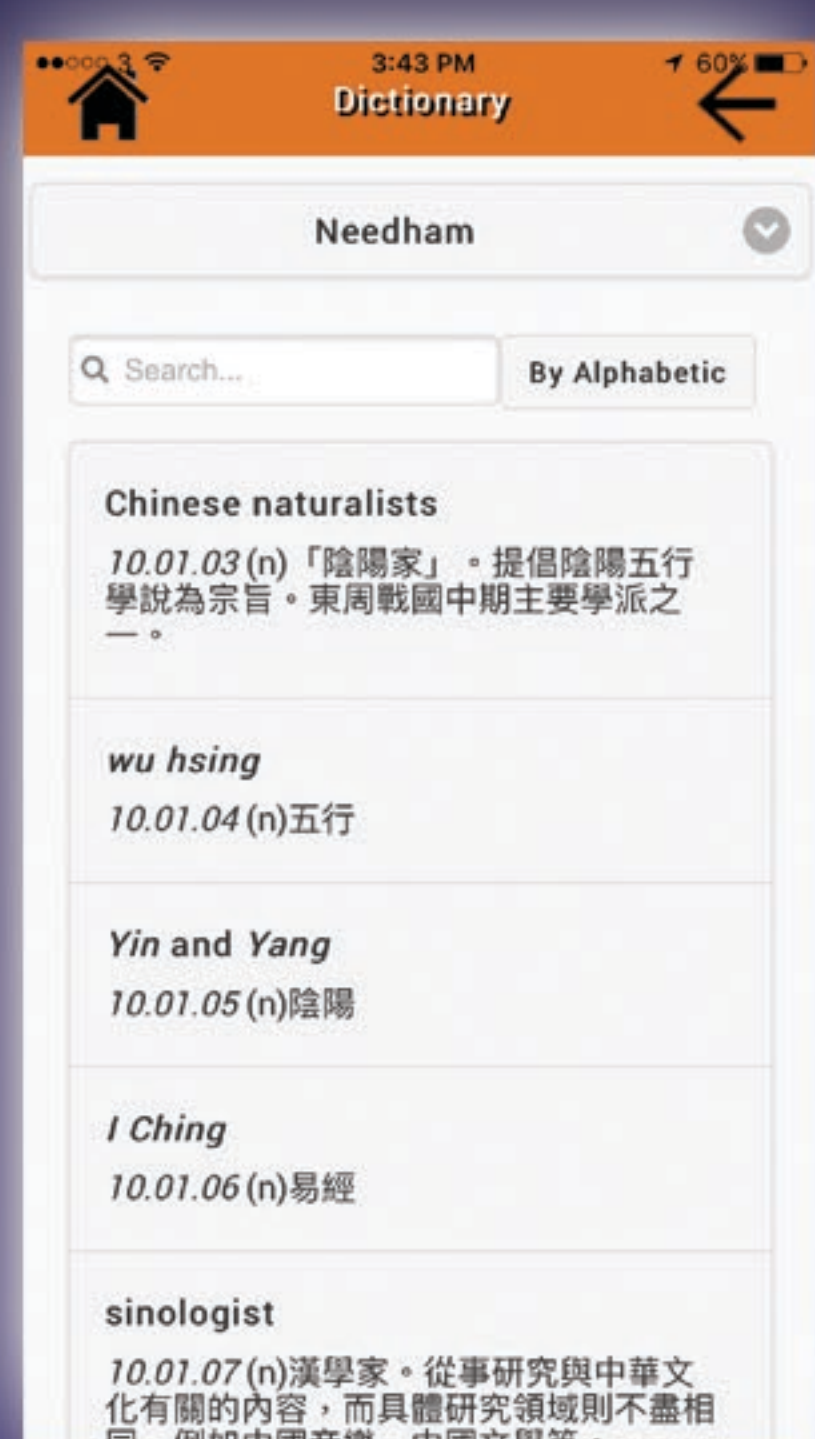
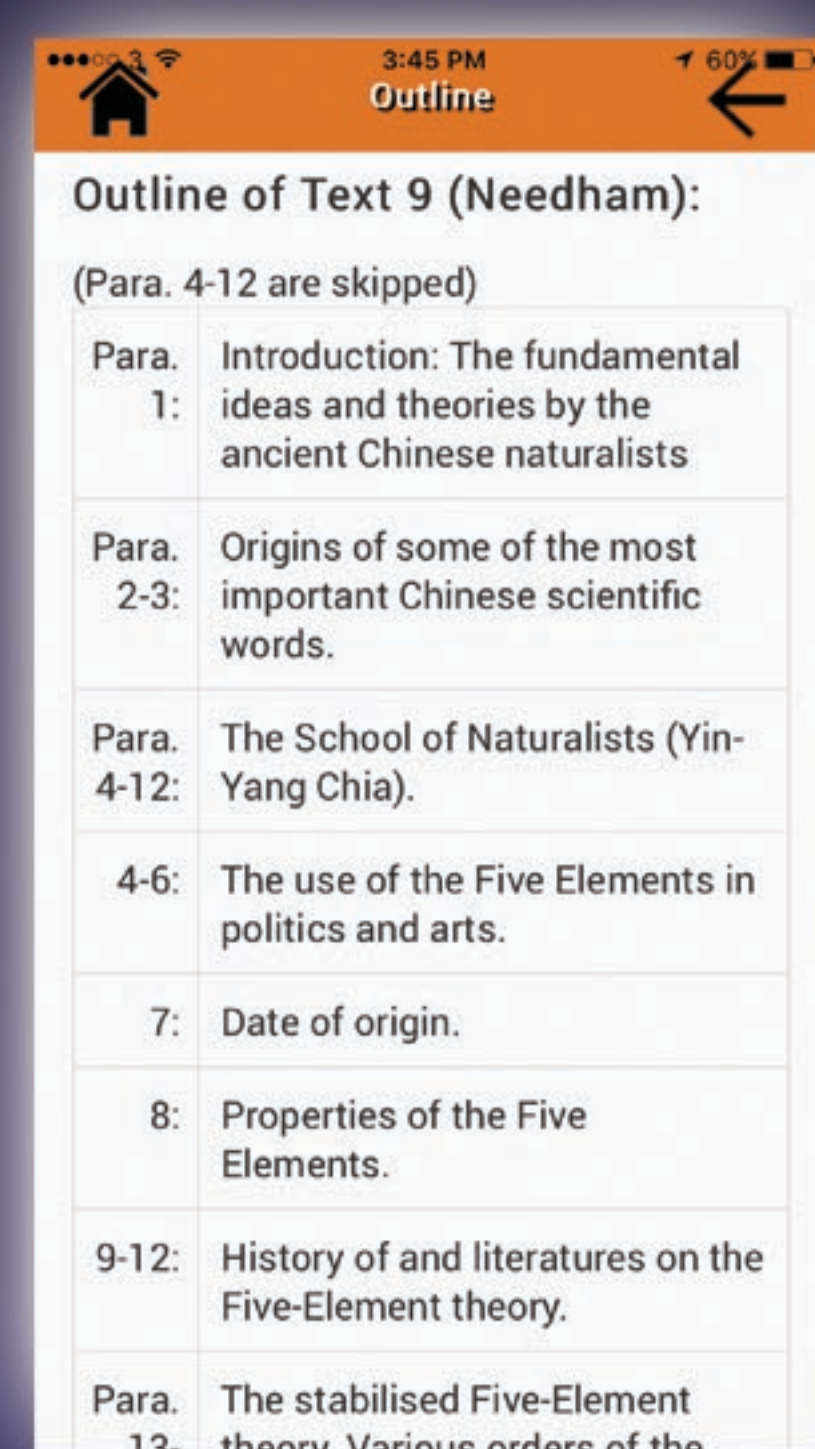
Level 2 requires students to digest the ideas and concepts in the excerpt thoroughly.

For both levels, immediate responses and guidance are provided to help the students grasp the complicated concepts and clarify misconceptions in the texts.



2. Paragraph Outline

A paragraph outline is included for each text to let students understand its basic structure.

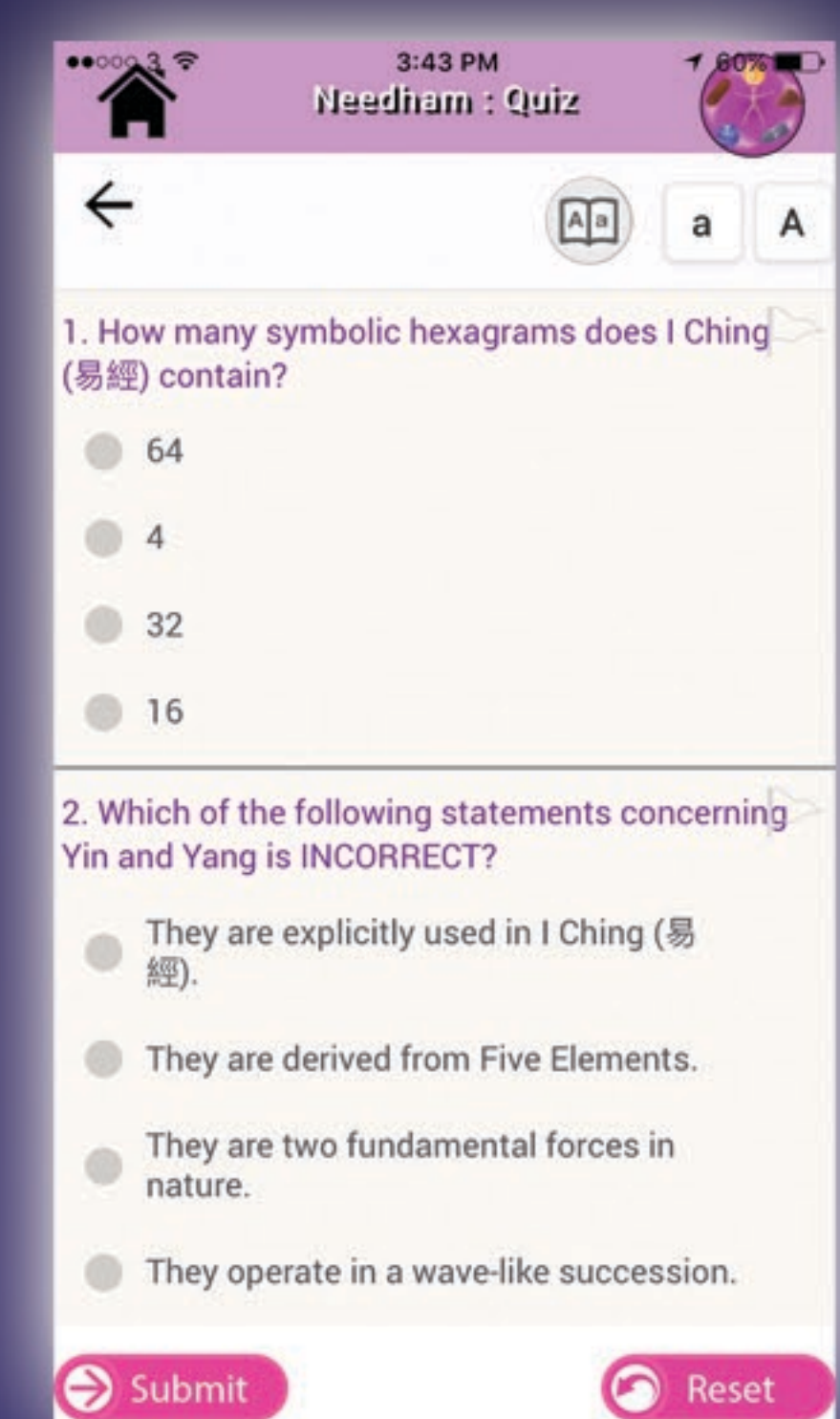


3. Mini-dictionary

A searchable mini-dictionary is provided for easy extraction of meaning and notation of unfamiliar words or phrases. Audio pronunciation in original language is provided for some nouns to enhance students' interest in reading the texts.

5. Quiz

Questions about the text at various levels of difficulty are randomly selected from a pool. This section helps students self-evaluate their mastery of the whole excerpt.



Focus Group

"I won't pull out the UGFN textbook in public transport. But with DiaNable, I can attempt the questions and see if I actually understand the content. It showed the paragraph number when I answered the question incorrectly. I can then read it again; this saves time and is convenient."

"Solely reading the texts is boring. With DiaNable, I have some questions to attempt, the learning experience is more 'tangible'."

"I thought I understood the content of Poincaré's text thoroughly. But when I attempted the self-evaluation questions, I found that I did not totally get the details of the texts."