

Teaching and Learning – 5 minutes

...over a hot brew!

Research, Resilience, and Reflection

Issue 46:



1. In pictures..



Student autonomy and expectations: How do we encourage learners to make the right decision? How do we get them to overturn a culture that says the hamster wheel is the only viable and expected option?

2. Teaching Techniques: Control the game

What is it? Ask students to read aloud frequently, but manage the process to ensure expressiveness, accountability, and engagement. Readers will be 'cold called' in a smooth succession at 'unpredictable' intervals.

Why do it? Reading out aloud is important!

- It can be a source of AFL – you hear how they cope with reading tier 2 & 3 vocabulary and allows you to support and help with pronunciation.
- Reading aloud helps support healthy learning mindsets – it is ok to make a mistake in front of peers... and we will all learn together how we can 'fix' it.
- Reading in front of each other (including the teacher) affords modelling (students can hear what expressive reading sounds like).
- By changing reader at unpredictable intervals accountability is introduced. That is, students must follow the text and not 'drift off' in case they are next to read – they cannot afford to wait for the next 'obvious' break in the text i.e. end of paragraph.
- By using unpredictable intervals 'weaker' readers are not embarrassed if shorter sections, or sections containing 'easier' vocabulary are given to them.

What does it look like? Students take it in turn, as prompted by the teacher, to read. The teacher will also take a turn at reading to promote modelling and reading ethos.

- Instruct the class that we will be reading and that they should follow closely (in order that they can take over when requested)
- The teacher indicates a change in reader at an unpredictable point (mid paragraph).
- The transition should be as smooth as possible – just a name, or even just a thank you and a tap on an alternative desk.
- The teacher should use the unpredictable intervals to differentiate who reads what
- The teacher should also read portions to provide modelling.

3. Perfect practice

Perfect practice makes improved outcomes. This, however, is easier said than done and begs the question what can we do to support perfect practice for all? Here are five principles for teaching children in a way that supports equality of access to a desirable education environment:

1. Work to create and maintain strong social norms where it's 'cool to be clever' and working hard is seen as natural.
2. Treat all children as if they can achieve the highest standards. This may not be true, but treating some children as less able, than others ensures that they will know less and therefore be less able. As Graham Nuthall put it, "Ability is the consequences not the cause of what happens in the classroom."
3. If a procedure can be performed automatically it ought to be practiced to that point - don't encourage practice until one can do it, practice to the point where one can't not do it... what some call automaticity
4. If a procedure can't be performed automatically (essay writing for example) instead concentrate on what you want them to be able to think about. Only if children encounter powerful factual knowledge will they be able, in the words of Basil Bernstein, "to think the unthinkable and the not yet thought".
5. The more children know, the better they'll be able to think. Use the most effective methods to help children understand new concepts (worked examples) and recall important semantic information (retrieval practice) before giving them the opportunity to solve increasingly difficult problems with increasing independence.

4. To ponder...

"I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I can't accept not trying." [Michael Jordan].

Thoughts about Teaching
and Learning... Share!