

# Teaching and Learning – 5 minutes

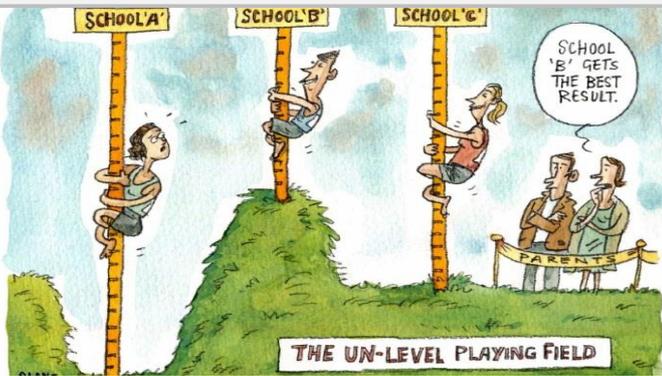
...over a hot brew!

Research, Resilience, and Reflection

Issue 35:



## 1. In Pictures:



## 2. Questioning

Not too long ago we had a great inset which looked at Socratic Questioning. With ‘stretch & challenge’ being our clear whole school focus for development, these four question categories are well worth a revisit as we push our students harder and keep them out of their comfort zone and firmly in a state of challenge (but not panic).

**THE GADFLY:** Mimic the practice of the gadfly, which nips away at larger animals. This involves asking lots of little questions intended to push thinking and avoid sloppiness: “What do you mean by that?”; “But, what if...?”; “What evidence do you have?”; “Does that always apply?”; “How can you be certain that is true?”

**THE STINGRAY:** Administer a shock to pupils’ traditional way of thinking in the same way a stingray unleashes its sting: “Imagine if X was not the case, what then?”; “What if everything you’ve said was turned on its head?”; “What if a great change happened?”

**THE MIDWIFE:** Ask questions that help give birth to ideas: “That’s an interesting idea; could you explain it a bit more?”; “How might that affect things?”; “What made you think of that idea?”

**THE IGNORAMUS:** Emulate a character who has never encountered the topic you are discussing and play dumb to encourage explanation: “What does that mean?”; “I don’t understand – can you start from the beginning?”; “So, do you mean that...?”

## 3. Teaching Strategy: No opt out

What is it? Turn “I don’t know” into a success by helping students who won’t try or can’t succeed practice getting it right (and being accountable for trying).

Why do it?

Raising classroom expectations – increase rigour

What does it look like?

After a student has claimed ‘I don’t know’ you have opportunity to pursue the correct answer through different ways including:

1. You provide the answer; your student repeats the answer.
2. Another student provides the answer; the initial student repeats the answer.
3. You provide a cue; your student uses it to find the answer.
4. Another student provides a cue; the initial student uses it to find the answer.

Increase the degree of rigour by requesting another correct answer or an explanation of the “why.”

## 4. To ponder...

*“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” [Nelson Mandela]*

