

SIRIUS ACADEMY WEST

Teaching and Learning Magazine

Issue
No 3

THE
CONSTELLATION
TRUST



Introduction from
HOS

12
Art Caption
Challenge

13
Health &
Wellbeing



Sirius
ACADEMY WEST

WHERE STARS ARE BORN



Sirius
ACADEMY WEST

WHERE STARS ARE BORN

THE
CONSTELLATION
TRUST

C CONTENTS PAGE

Pg 4 - 5 - Introduction from HOS - GRA

Pg 6 - 7 - Challenge for all in periods of catch up - ANI

Pg 8 - 9 - Catch up in the classroom - APR

Pg 10 - 11 - Catch up in the classroom continued

Pg 12 - Art caption challenge - GMO

Pg 13 - Managing your health and wellbeing - SWI

Pg 14 - 15 - Engaging learners in the classroom - VRT

Pg 16 - 17 - Tom Bennett Book Review - ADU

Pg 18 - 19 - Encouraging kindness in pupils - VST

Pg 20 - 21 - Literacy reminders - JPA

Pg 22 - 23 - The importance of assessment for learning in the classroom - RMO

Pg 24 - 25 - The importance of assessment for learning in the classroom continued

Pg 26 - 27 - Teaching and learning star award - JHO

Pg 28 - 29 - Embedding Rosenshine's Principles in Science - JEV

Pg 30 - 31 - NQT and RQT - APR

Pg 32 - 33 - CPD Board - APR/GRA

Pg 34 - Vision, Values and Priorities - GRA

Pg 35 - The Last Word - JQU



INTRODUCTION

FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL



It is becoming somewhat of a cliché to begin my introduction to acknowledge the complexities of our current circumstances, but as Terry Pratchett said, most cliches are true. You have all done the most amazing job in the most trying of times and as I have said previously, it's getting progressively better as we return to normality.

So, I instead wish to focus on the positives. In the upcoming term we will see the inputting of our Centre-Assessed grades, the conclusion of the cumulative hard work done by so many of you. You have all ensured that we can evidence our assertions and that all our young people progress on to important, viable and worthwhile destinations – our primary obligation as educators.

The grades we put in are the outcome of the outstanding teaching and learning that goes on in our school (some of which we can see in this issue of our Teaching and Learning magazine). Students learn because of the strategies we implement, the in-class practice and support we give each other as a team. I can't wait to see so many happy faces on the 10th and 12th of August.

This is a particularly special issue as it looks at pedagogy from both practical and theoretical perspectives. The how and why of the classroom. Often it's great to know what to do, but even better to know why you are doing it and what you hope to achieve. I believe there is a little something for everyone.

As always, I hope that you enjoy reading this as much as I have. I look forward to seeing future, brilliant contributions from a diverse range of our community, displaying what is best about us.



Gemma Ransom – Head of School.



C HALLENGE FOR ALL IN PERIODS OF CATCH UP



Gone are the days when challenging work was something that was saved for only the top students in a class. Previously challenging student took the form of extension activities or extra worksheets to keep speedy workers occupied whilst others in the class caught up. Today, as teachers and professionals, we are encouraged to ensure that all students in our classes are stretched and challenged appropriately. However, the situation we presently find ourselves in provides obstacles to this; faced with a room of students who have engaged with varying amounts of remote learning and completed work to differing standards over the past year presents a new challenge for us all now that some normality is returning to the school environment.

There are a range of strategies that can be implemented to ensure that content is recapped whilst still maintaining challenge for all students. Below are some strategies that could be considered for the classroom and teaching practice.

Retrieval Practice: Regular low stakes testing has been shown to have a positive impact on retention of knowledge. This allows staff and students to identify areas of weakness to be addressed. Furthermore, the repeated use of the same questions can be used to track progress over time. A mix of questions can be used, encompassing content from remote learning and the rest of the academic year, to ensure that all students are suitably challenged.

Drop Everything Tasks: 'Random' revision breaks linking to prior learning can be used to break up a lesson and refocus a class. However, in this instance they can be used to recap key knowledge and address any misconceptions in students understanding. These can also be used as an opportunity to teach various revision strategies to students which they can then replicate for themselves, be that as homework or as part of revision for assessments.

Group Work: This can be used in various ways for catch up whilst ensuring all students are challenged. To challenge students with strong understanding of a certain aspect of topic use them as a 'leader or learning' in group activities. This challenges them in getting them to explain the content to other students whilst addressing gaps in other students' knowledge. Other strategies include giving students a task on different pieces of information, assigned based on their prior knowledge, which they then share and collaborate to complete a task.

Student Evaluations: Completing self-evaluations allows students to become more aware of the content they need to know and enables them to identify any gaps in their own knowledge. Students can use this in class or for homework to allow targeted, personalised tasks to be completed that will challenge them, address gaps in knowledge, and build confidence.

Scaffolding: Being mindful of potential gaps in knowledge and scaffolding accordingly allows students to address and catch up on missed content whilst allowing other students to move onto more challenging tasks applying what they have learnt.

Questioning: Targeted questioning is something we all use in our daily practice. Adapting and being mindful of the way we use this can be used to both target individuals to gauge their understanding of prior content as well as to stretch and challenge others in periods of catch up. This can provide valuable insight to us as teachers without being obvious to the students!

Utilising Synoptic Links: Whilst teaching new content look for opportunities to go back and revisit topics and draw on knowledge from other units of work. These provide the perfect opportunity to plug any gaps that existed or have developed since teaching of the unit.

Giving Students Control: Allowing students to have an element of choice when choosing which tasks to complete can help challenge all students whilst recapping content. It also places the emphasis for their learning back on them, meaning they are responsible and accountable for their own progress. For example, linked to self assessments or retrieval tasks, students could be given a choice of follow up tasks to complete based on their areas of weakness.

As much as it is important to ensure gaps in knowledge and understanding are addressed, we must be mindful of the wellbeing of our students. Overloading them with 'missed' content will be overwhelming, therefore an approach involving drip-feeding content in manageable chunks should be applied.



CATCH-UP IN THE CLASSROOM

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES TO PLUG GAPS IN LEARNING



Assessments have already been conducted across the academy informing us of the specific gaps in learning each of our pupils has following the lockdown. Whether through non-attendance, not engaging in online learning or developing misconceptions arising through the method of delivery online, pupils need to plug their gaps in learning. This is essential for knowledge that forms requisite prior learning for next year's teaching, as this knowledge forms the foundation that future learning is built upon. With time a barrier to covering essential content before the summer, it is vital that every second in the classroom counts. Strategies to secure learning in long term memory rapidly are essential to support this progress.

Below are just a few:

Whiteboards – Basic but necessary



Regular quick checks of learning on whiteboards allows the teacher to respond rapidly to misconceptions to inform responsive teaching and ensure all students are paying attention and are engaged in learning. All students should have their own whiteboard and pen and should be completing AfL tasks on these each lesson to inform the next steps in teaching and differentiation. Opportunities to practice answers on a whiteboard where corrections can be made, provide students who do not want to put their hand up in front of the class to ask for help, with an opportunity to have their learning checked and support given.

Getting the most out of your Retrieval Practice Starters



Retrieval Practice

The retrieval starters should check that students have the requisite prior knowledge from previous lessons, previous years or previous key stages to build new learning upon. Ensure students self- assess these with green pen and circulate to identify the errors being made. Ask the students to score each question and check how many marks each gets by encouraging them to raise their hand when you say their score aloud. This allows you to recognise gaps and re-teach content if needed – to make sure this is secure, get them to practice the knowledge and re-test (and re-test again the following week or term). Spaced learning, having gaps between retrieval and teaching is important for developing long term memory. Use your retrieval starters to test some learning from past topics also – but be ready to re-teach or plan to address in a later lesson if the students need help. The retrieval task alone won't plug any gaps in knowledge.



CATCH-UP IN THE CLASSROOM

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES TO PLUG GAPS IN LEARNING

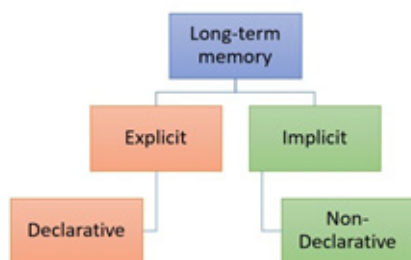
Elaboration



When we develop a deep understanding of how something works, linking it to prior knowledge secure in our schema, the new information is more readily transferred to long term memory. Allowing students to discuss and question how or why something works using their prior knowledge will help them to retain more challenging concepts. You could try strategies such as the 5 why's, where students answer a question, and then need to answer why, challenging themselves to get to

5. For example, in biology when learning about the structure of the heart we teach that the function of the heart is to pump blood around the body, but students often do not question why. By posing this question they understand that the blood carries oxygen and glucose to cells. By asking why again they consider that the oxygen and glucose are used in a process called respiration (taught in another topic). And when asking why again they understand that this is to release energy, used to fuel other processes inside of the cell, such as active transport (taught in a different topic). This process allows them to link knowledge and develop a greater understanding of their bodies and importantly, to secure their learning in long term memory.

Practice ALL knowledge (procedural and declarative).



Declarative knowledge is the facts that we teach as part of our curriculum, eg. In English it can be the definitions of the language devices used in writing and in maths the times tables.

Procedural knowledge is the knowledge required to carry out a skill. For example, how and when to apply the knowledge of the language devices to one's own writing or in maths how to multiply 2 fractions together. Sometimes there is an explicit step by step process that can be described, for example when multiplying fractions together e.g.

Step 1: Multiply the numerators together

Step 2: Multiply the denominators together

Step 3: Simplify the fraction

Whereas, in English, simply adding every language device to a text does not produce a good piece of writing. There is no explicit procedure that will produce a quality piece of writing each time.

However, using a metacognitive approach to model thought processes when writing on the board or using a visualiser to discuss a students work and how it could be improved further, will allow students to develop and then subsequently practice their procedural knowledge in these contexts.

Encourage students to practice knowledge out loud



Following a short period of teaching new content, asking students to describe that content to each other and explain it gives them an opportunity to practice the knowledge out loud. As you circulate the classroom you will be aware of which students are quiet, and perhaps uncomfortable due to lack of knowledge and which have misconceptions that need addressing. Students who describe their learning are more likely to transfer this into their long term memory, it will also build up their confidence completing independent practice (including guided practice) in their books.



ART

CAPTION CHALLENGE

The Art Team were invited to take part in the following Photography/Caption Challenge. They were given 5 captions to choose from and needed to take the most artistic photograph to match the caption.

CAPTIONS

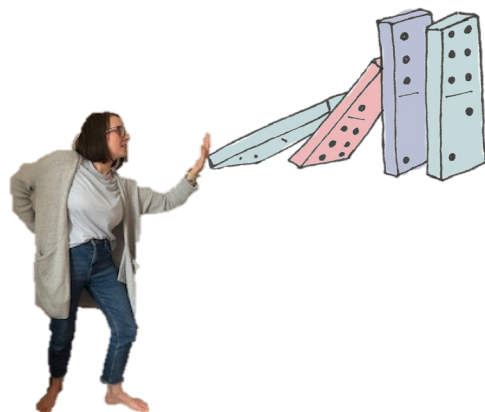
The floor is lava
You can't fit in here
The Domino effect
Doctor, Doctor it hurts when I do this
Between a rock and a hard place



Mrs Ollerhead- The floor is lava



Mr Rickard - You can't fit in here



Mrs Morris - The Domino effect

MANAGING YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING.

Remember you can not pour from an empty jug. Without you your students would not achieve their potential and the academy would not be able to offer the quality teaching and effective support to our students. We are all important in the care we offer to our students. Your health and wellbeing are vitally important.

So what can you do at a time when CAGs are required, deadlines for coursework and moderation are looming (if you teach BTEC anyway). Students are anxious about the exam system for this year and Covid 19 is still impacting on our work?

The NHS recommend these five ways to maintain your health and wellbeing;

- 1. Stay connected with people. We are starting to be able to meet people socially again. Don't rely on zoom calls and social media. Get outside and see real people. Talking with friends is a great stress reliever and can help you find a way forward.**
- 2. Be active. This does not necessarily mean we all have to head for the gym, getting out for a walk with friends or cycling are just as effective and free. Being outdoors is also great for improving wellbeing and being active can improve the quality of your sleep.**
- 3. Make time for what you enjoy. This could be anything from baking to a glass of wine in front of the TV. Have some time in each day where you switch off and focus on yourself.**
- 4. Be aware of the pressure of others. You may line manage others or just simply be part of a team (or family). Be aware of the stresses of others and the pressures you put on them when you ask for tasks to be completed. Overstressing others will ultimately cause you and them more stress.**
- 5. Focus on the moment, take time to see the positives and let go of your worries.**

Remember – before you can support others, you need to support yourself.



ENGAGING

LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM



Student engagement. It is not a phrase that is unfamiliar to us, in fact it is a term we hear frequently. Ensure maximum student engagement, active listeners- active learners. And yet. Do you ever have a lesson where you have had to practically beg a student to complete their work or give a response? A lesson where you felt like all you did was deal with low level behaviour issues? A lesson where you worried because a student was subdued and silent? Why was that? Whilst there may be a whole variety of valuable and variable reasons, student engagement (or lack of) is often the main cause.

So what can we do? How do we move forward? How do we make sure that ALL students are engaged without putting on a performance as though you are an actor in a West End musical?

Cast your mind back to the days when you were a student (a long way back for some staff!) Which teachers inspired you? Who unleashed your confidence? Inspired a love of learning? Promoted teaching as a career? Gifted you a thirst for knowledge? And more importantly, what do the most memorable teachers have in common? Clearly, if we remember the teacher who made a difference, who stuck with us, they must have been doing something right; they must have been a superstar in engaging learners. So what can we do to engage learners in our classrooms?

1: Make it memorable and meaningful

In aiming for full engagement, it is essential that students perceive activities as being meaningful. Research has shown that if students do not consider a learning activity worthy of their time and effort, they might not engage in a satisfactory way, or may even disengage entirely in response (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Link the learning to their lives and their experiences. If you capture the interest of the students from the very beginning, you are much more likely to have a captivated audience!

2: A chance for success

Researchers have found that effectively performing an activity can positively impact subsequent engagement (Schunk & Mullen, 2012). Essentially, provide students with activities they are able to achieve in. This doesn't mean giving students easy work, but embracing challenge and differentiation so that every student is a learner and that every student has the opportunity to be successful in that lesson.

3: Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is another powerful facilitator of engagement in learning activities. When students work effectively with others, their engagement may be amplified as a result (Wentzel, 2009). Peer support and challenge is a huge benefit to students, as is the opportunity to move around the room (only when it is safe to do so). The knowledge that they are contributing to their school community will increase engagement.

4: Make use of technology

It will come as no surprise to anyone that young people nowadays enjoy technology. As technology moves on, so does the opportunity to incorporate that into the classroom. Around the world, schools are replacing books with Ipads and having more interactive lessons. Use of technology in your lesson is a sure fire way to improve engagement.

5: POSITIVE TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Positive teacher-student relationship and positive teachers full stop! When you are positive about the topic you are teaching, you are modelling and demonstrating to the student how to develop a love of learning. A positive teacher is able to create a positive learning environment, allowing students to thrive rather than wither under the weight of negativity. Students feel more relaxed and comfortable in being able to express their opinion and share their learning. In addition to this, the relationship between teacher and student is crucial. Sadly, for some, school is their fortress, their safe place. When you take the time to develop a positive relationship, you are ultimately showing that student that you care- it may well be that you are the only person who does. This also allows you to notice any changes in student attitude and behaviour. Whilst we cannot possibly be parent/guardian/ counsellor too- knowing you care can increase student engagement.

Student engagement is achievable for each and every one of us. It requires a little time, a little effort and a lot of consistency but it can easily change your students' lives. Try it! Have a little fun (whilst adhering to the risk assessment!) and await your award for 'all-time favourite teacher!'



TOM BENNETT

RUNNING THE ROOM BOOK REVIEW



This academic year, I have had the pleasure of working with a small group of staff to explore how we can get the very best out of students in our classrooms. The approach was very different to previous 'behaviour management training', that no doubt we will have all sat through in different points of our careers.

Our approach was to use the latest research, which had been very kindly 'put on a plate for us' by Tom Bennett's book, 'Running the room' and within our discussion group, reflect upon our own experience.

(Both face to face and on line)

It would be fair to say that we are all at very different points in our educational journeys and as a consequence (of age!!!!!!) much more probably resonated with me than my younger colleagues.

Many of us in the Constellation Trust had the pleasure of listening to Tom 'wax lyrical' about his experiences as the behaviour tsar and founder of ResearchEd, in person a couple of years ago at Sirius North. As a consequence I was under no illusions that his book would also reflect his personality, energy and dare I use the word.....banter!



The first section explores human nature and in my opinion is essential. Sadly, “Google”, book reviews for Tom’s book and some feedback suggests that the important practical steps are left to the end. I can confirm this, however, take the time to consider the first few chapters and what interpretation you will give to quotes such as: -

“That’s exactly what teachers do: the same small good things for a very long time”

“I think potential isn’t discovered; its carved or built. it usually takes skilled sculptures working sensitively with the material”

“For most part, the techniques that create calm, safe classrooms are relatively straightforward and basic. what it does take, however is dedication, persistence and consistency”

And possibly my favourite, “Children are lovely indeed, but they can be lazy, and kind, and hypocritical, and selfish, and angry, and forgiving, and every other sin and virtue, which is to say, they are just like us”

The ultimate test of any education book must surely be whether it can be productively applied to your classroom. But my advice, if you decide to read it is to take out your highlighter and post it notes and share and discuss it with a colleague.

To quote Dylan William, Emeritus Professor, University College London, “This book is the best guide I have ever read on getting good behaviour in classrooms”. I would concur, happy reading and thought provoking discussion.



ENCOURAGING KINDNESS IN PUPILS

**No act of kindness,
no matter how small,
is ever wasted.**

—AESOP

Although it can feel like children often behave in selfish and self-centred ways, they are actually intrinsically built to be kind. Studies show that when we look after each other we all do better. When we help others we feel better.

Doing good feels good.

Being kind is also good for our health. When we are involved in acts of kindness we release oxytocin. One of the side-effects of this happy hormone is that it lowers our blood pressure and even protects our hearts.

Doing good does us good too.

If we encourage kindness in our pupils, both staff and students will reap the benefits.
Please think about, and aim to try:

Modelling kindness. We must set a good example if we want children to act in a kind manner. Speak kindly (be mindful about moaning and saying unkind things about pupils, parents and colleagues) and act kindly.

Encourage good deeds. Kindness is contagious; the more we witness it, the more likely we are to be kind as well.

Encourage acts of kindness. Let students experience how good it feels when they do something kind for others.

Acknowledge each student with a greeting as they enter your room. Let them see how happy you are to see them.

Allow your students time to have a friendly chat with one another.

Compliment your students for their efforts. Encourage them to compliment each other.

Publicly acknowledge every kindness you witness in your classroom.

Ask your students questions about their time away from school. Encourage them to be interested in each other.

Compliment another teacher's class.

Be kind to your colleagues.

Offer to help your colleagues at appropriate times.

Support your colleagues with more challenging students.

Be kind to the whole school community and encourage students to do so too.

Don't ignore situations – thinking someone else will fix that or deal with it.

Be kind and respectful to parents and families. Call a few parents/carers to share some positive news about a piece of work or an act of kindness.

Be available and approachable for your students and encourage them to be there for each other.

Encourage students to make eye contact.

Listen

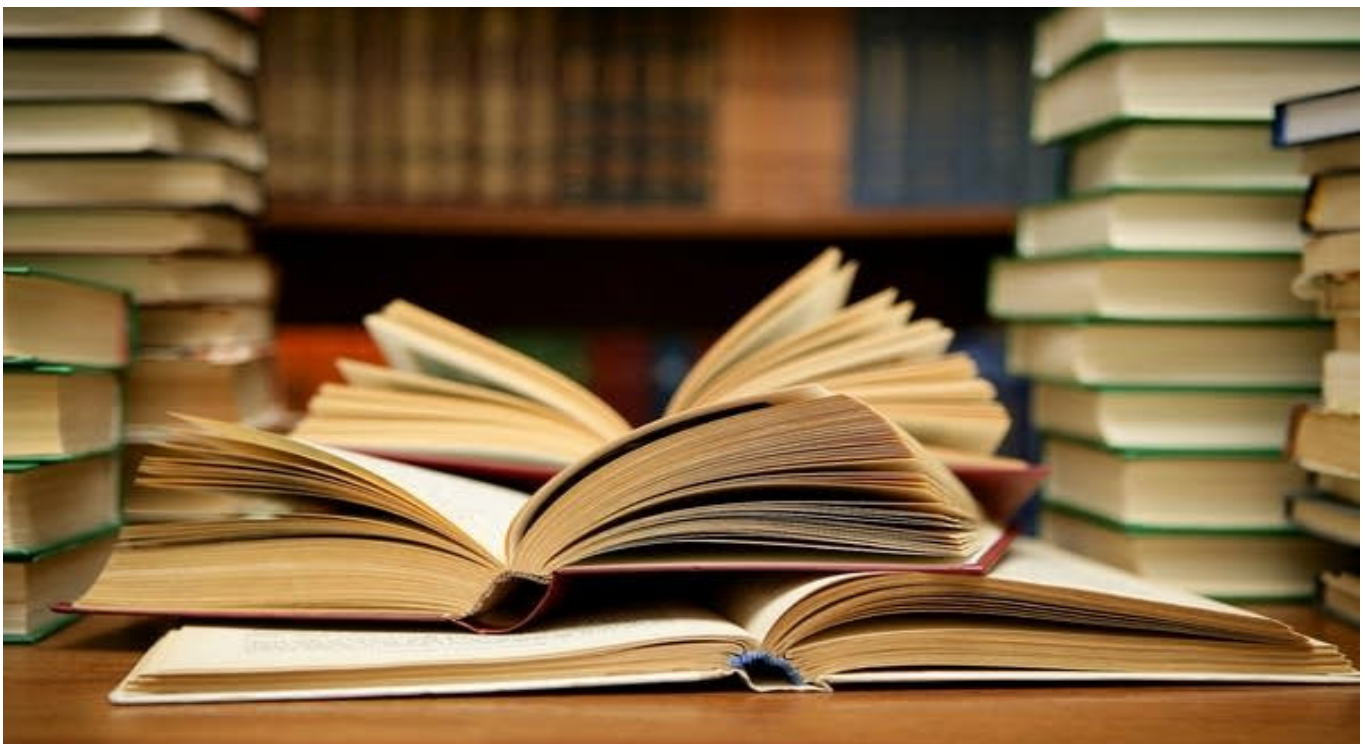
Smile!

Kindness is a vital life skill that not only grows children's emotional intelligence but teaches them the importance of looking after others as well as themselves.

"Remember there's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end." —Scott Adams



LITERACY REMINDERS



Literacy has been a whole-school focus this year both inside and outside of the classroom. We've undertaken CPD projects, read with our tutor groups, been part of the SAW staff book club and many of you have even shown off your storytelling skills to read the first part of a story for the 'Jackanory' series.

Here are a few reminders of things we should be doing to continue to support our students' literacy.

In the classroom:

Provide opportunities for students to learn new vocabulary and read appropriately challenging materials at least once a half term.

Allow students to demonstrate their learning through an extended piece of writing or a chance to speak formally to develop their oracy skills.

Provide quality marking that includes highlighting spelling, punctuation and grammar errors (SPaG) and allow students to use dictionaries to amend mistakes during green pen time.

Model high levels of oracy ('say it again, but say it better') and encourage students to answer verbally in full sentences to develop their public speaking skills.

Model high levels of literacy in your marking, PPTs and when writing on the board.

Trial teaching strategies that are effective in delivering or improving literacy content and share successful strategies with your team. There are literacy resource folders in your departmental SharePoint area.

Reading for pleasure:

Promote a love of reading by engaging in conversations with students about books they have read recently. Send them to the library to stock up on more!

Be actively engaged with tutor time reading by either reading your own book or by speaking to students about what their books are about.

Encourage students to take part in library competitions. During the final half term, there will be a sponsored Readathon to raise money for charity for all KS3 students. This would be a fantastic chance to not only raise money for a good cause, but also build up a dialogue around reading with your students. Even if you don't tutor a KS3 group, you can still get involved!

Everything we are doing to improve the literacy levels of our students has a direct impact on their success at GCSE and their future opportunities, so thank you for all you continue to do.



T HE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM



Assessment for learning is essential for effective planning and student progress.

This is especially important as we continue to identify gaps in learning following lockdown and plan to plug them. This needs to be embedded in every lesson and the student skills of AfL may need to be retaught as procedural knowledge.

The AfL cycle should begin with sharing and clarifying learning objectives so that students are clear on what knowledge or skill they are learning that lesson and why. Effective questioning, discussion and tasks will provide evidence of where the learning is and the next steps needed to improve. Reviewing student work is vital for proper planning as this is the only way to identify and remove misconceptions apparent in the work and develop and refine the next lessons work to address them. Peer and learner review of work should be planned into lessons so that students have the opportunity to activate their own learning by improvement work in green pen.

Dylan Wiliams defined the principles and actions needed within AfL in this grid produced back in 2013.

	Where the learner is going	Where the learner is	How to get there
Teacher	Clarifying, sharing and understanding learning intentions	Engineering effective discussions, tasks, and activities that elicit evidence of learning	Providing feedback that moves learners forward
Peer		Activating students as learning resources for one another	
Learner		Activating students as owners of their own learning	

Five Methods for every classroom

Mini Whiteboards Mini whiteboards -For almost instant feedback on where each student in your class is at that moment and where they need to be next. Ask a question or set a task on the board. Scan the room for responses on the mini whiteboards to get instant feedback of who needs additional support and who can move on to further challenge. A small group may need taking aside for re-teaching while the rest continue.

Student friendly assessment criteria

Give the students the mark scheme you will use for marking when completing the task. Knowing how to achieve the marks gives them a clear target to aim for. Students can peer assess work and verbally explain why they have awarded the marks they have as well as steps needed to improve. Mark the grid with a highlighter showing their current mark and the criteria to improve. Students can use green pen time to improve their responses then remark with a different colour to give them a visual demonstration of how they have improved their work. Focus comments on how they can improve their work rather than what they have produced so far.

Retrieval Practice

This bingo card example shows how knowledge can be embedded and retained over time. The different colours indicate topics taught recently and further back in the year or previous years. This allows assessment of what knowledge needs to be retaught to a small number with your support, or to the whole class. The aim over time is to build fluency in the students and sharpen your areas for retrieval practice as new knowledge is introduced. At present these could be set up to cover the requisite knowledge identified in curriculum reviews.

Retrieval Practice Challenge Grid!			
What's your score?			
Who was Head of the Cheka in 1917?	Explain the term 'bourgeoisie'.	Who was Anatoly Lunachsky?	List four different enemies of the Cheka.
Describe Khrushchev's attitude towards religion.	Explain the term 'Proletkult'.	List three aims of the NEP.	What was the October 1917 Decree on Land?
Explain the term 'show trial'.	Who was Patriarch Tikhon?	What were the aims of agitprop?	Describe one strength and one weakness of War Communism.
Last lesson (1)	Last week (2)	Two weeks ago (3)	Further back! (4)



T HE IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING IN THE CLASSROOM



Post-it notes

Giving each student a post-it note and asking them to write down questions they have on a topic, things they are unsure of or would like re-teaching at the start of a lesson and sticking them on the whiteboard. Review for common questions, misconceptions and address them. Revisit at the end of the lesson through questioning to see if the class have moved on and to identify students who still need additional support.

Connect Starters

Connect starters allow differentiation at the beginning of a lesson but are only effective if the students work from the previous lesson has been effectively reviewed and the starter designed in direct response to the class. You may also use this time to support students who were not in the previous lesson. It is important that this work is reviewed after the lesson to see if the starter had the desired impact of moving the student on or if there is something that still needs revisiting.

Perhaps the most important aspect of assessment for learning is the use of effective questioning. Barak Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction state that during the instructional phase of a lesson the teacher should talk through their thinking to make the process explicit to students who can then model their thought processes on it. In questioning, students should then be asked to talk through their thinking, methods and reasoning so that the teacher can assess understanding. At this point student can also be asked to talk through how they will improve their work and how they learned through mistakes they made. They should then be given the opportunity to improve their work.

These cycles of learning, demonstration, feedback and improvement should be explicit in every lesson.



T EACHING AND LEARNING STAR AWARD



T+L star for the half term – **Laura Chamberlain**

Since joining the team at Sirius West in September, Laura has quickly established herself as an indispensable member of the English department. Whether that has been driving teaching and learning standards online, sharing quality resources or (and perhaps most importantly) offering a friendly smile and positive attitude to put anyone who comes in contact with her in a good mood.





It's evident that Laura makes it a priority to establish positive relationships with her students which unlocks the pathway to excellent teaching and learning. To emphasise this point, I asked some of our Year 10 students what made Miss Chamberlain a great teacher with one replying that "She is arguably my favourite teacher because she is always in a joyful mood, makes lessons enjoyable and always offers help". Another added that "her lessons are really fun because she sings everything she says". More of this in department meetings please, Laura!

It's clear that singing is not Laura's only strong point. Her classroom environment is always calm and purposeful, marking clear and effective and she sets high expectations for all. On top of this, Laura is playing a key role in identifying students who may have gaps during lockdown and creating strategies to ensure students can catch up.

Well done, Laura. Your students are lucky to have you as their teacher, and we're lucky to have you as part of the team.



E

MBEDDING ROSENSHINE'S PRINCIPLES IN SCIENCE- JAMES EVANS

Barak Rosenshine's principles of instruction are a list of research based strategies which teachers can apply in their practice. The principles were derived from cognitive Science research, application of that research and backed up evidence from classroom observation. The principles are outlined in the graphic below:




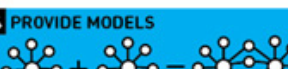


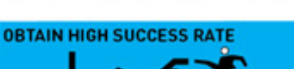



THE PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION

TAKEN FROM THE INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF EDUCATION

This poster is from the work of Barak Rosenshine who based these ten principles of instruction and suggested classroom practices on:

- research on how the brain acquires and uses new information
- research on the classroom practices of those teachers whose students show the highest gains
- findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students.

HOW2
teachinghow2.com

01 DAILY REVIEW  Daily review is an important component of instruction. It helps strengthen the connections of the material learned. Automatic recall frees working memory for problem solving and creativity.	02 NEW MATERIAL IN SMALL STEPS  Our working memory is small, only handling a few bits of information at once. Avoid its overload — present new material in small steps and proceed only when first steps are mastered.
03 ASK QUESTIONS  The most successful teachers spend more than half the class time lecturing, demonstrating and asking questions. Questions allow the teacher to determine how well the material is learned.	04 PROVIDE MODELS  Students need cognitive support to help them learn how to solve problems. Modeling, worked examples and teacher thinking out loud help clarify the specific steps involved.
05 GUIDE STUDENT PRACTICE  Students need additional time to rephrase, elaborate and summarise new material in order to store it in their long-term memory. More successful teachers built in more time for this.	06 CHECK STUDENT UNDERSTANDING  Less successful teachers merely ask "Are there any questions?" No questions are taken to mean no problems. False. By contrast, more successful teachers check on all students.
07 OBTAIN HIGH SUCCESS RATE  A success rate of around 80% has been found to be optimal, showing students are learning and also being challenged. Better teachers taught in small steps followed by practice.	08 SCAFFOLDS FOR DIFFICULT TASKS  Scaffolds are temporary supports to assist learning. They can include modelling, teacher thinking aloud, cue cards and checklists. Scaffolds are part of cognitive apprenticeship.
09 INDEPENDENT PRACTICE  Independent practice produces 'overlearning' — a necessary process for new material to be recalled automatically. This ensures no overloading of students' working memory.	10 WEEKLY & MONTHLY REVIEW  The effort involved in recalling recently-learned material embeds it in long-term memory. And the more this happens, the easier it is to connect new material to such prior knowledge.

Do the principles apply in every lesson?

No. It's really important not to think of the Principles as some kind of lesson plan. Different lessons in a learning sequence will require a different focus; some might have more explanatory modelling, more questioning or more independent practice. You might have whole lessons of practice and whole lessons of teacher modelling and questioning. You might not literally do 'daily review' every day. However, over a series of lessons that relate to a secure sequence, you might expect all elements of the Principles to feature in some form.

Do the principles apply in every subject?

Yes, to varying degrees. I can't think of a subject where ideas about review, modelling, questioning, sequencing concepts and practice don't apply. The Principles will be more directly relevant to the parts of the curriculum where the learning relies on teacher modelling, when there is a specific knowledge base that is best delivered by teacher instruction, where students are more definitely novices relative to the teacher. Where there is more emphasis on collaborative learning, open ended project work, making things etc, then instructional teaching will be less of a **focus**.

What about supporting students with SEND or lower confidence?

Teachers worry that questioning, reviewing and checking for understanding puts undue pressure on less confident students. If you know your class you can create a positive 'high challenge, low threat' culture then all of these things actually build confidence. It can be useful to use pair discussion to allow students space to rehearse their thinking before giving public answers during 'cold call.' If you pitch the material right, you should be providing under confident students with opportunities to practice that makes them feel more successful and therefore gain confidence.

What about stretching high attainers?

As Rosenshine says, the more confident your learners are, the greater their prior knowledge, then the more you can afford to present material in bigger chunks, the less you need scaffolding and the more quickly you can move in to the independent practice phase. If you use Rosenshine's 80% success rate as a guide, if students are approaching 100%, then you need to adjust to push them on to harder questions and challenges. Instructional teaching is responsive- you adapt according to the level of understanding and fluency students achieve.

Is it a checklist?

A resounding no. The problem with it being a checklist is that it could mutate in to a list of non-negotiables to be done every lesson. This isn't appropriate. However there is value in using a list of Rosenshine's principles as a self evaluation tool and a departmental sharing of good practice tool (as we do weekly in the Science department).

Where could we gain the most by developing our practice? Which of the principles do we use regularly? Where in our lessons do students get independent practice? Do we all check for understanding in sufficient depth and responsively adapt our teaching accordingly?

Like anything, it's what you do that matters. Turning Rosenshine's Principles in to a set of rules or checklist is just a failure of understanding.

If you would like any more insight in to Rosenshine's principles and how they can be used as a common language in your department, please do not hesitate to talk to any one of the Science team. In fact, I would encourage you speak to them as the people on the ground.



NQT AND RQT CPD OPPORTUNITIES



Teaching is a challenging profession, often it can feel like spinning plates trying to plan effective lessons, provide effective feedback in student's books and differentiate lessons so that all students make progress in the lesson. This year, added to the normal challenges faced when training to teach, our NQTs and RQTs have also had a significantly disrupted training period caused by the Covid-19 pandemic where staff have moved across three floors and from in classroom to online lessons at the drop of a hat. For most staff this has been the most challenging time of the professional teaching carriers, so for trainees this must have been the most challenging year to train to teach.

Thankfully, there are lots of resources and support available to support our NQTS and RQTS. Below are the just a few of the opportunities available (to all staff):

The National College – an online resource the academy subscribes to full of video CPD sessions recorded by nationally recognised specialists in education.

The academy's open door policy means you can visit anyone at any time to share best practice.

I enjoy observing others teach, it gives me a chance to pinch ideas and try in my own classroom.

Opportunity to work with a coach – anyone can request support from one of our many trained coaches who will work confidentially with you to work on the areas of teaching you feel you would like more support with Departmental CPD – this CPD is subject specific and gives you an opportunity to share ideas with colleagues teaching in the same subject area.

Research project – reading educational research on your chosen area of focus will allow you to bring new and innovative ideas for teaching in your classroom to secure learning in the long term memory of your students. Discuss your project with your line manager and others in your team so you have opportunity to regularly reflect on the impact of your project and improve further.

Restorative practice CPD from RRH – please ask APR if interested in attending a session

LBK has started a CPD board and a CPD bookshelf is being added to the staff room for staff to share books and teacher resources – please feel free to borrow books and add to the bookshelf once you have finished with one

Top Teacher Recommended Reads –

1. Tom Sherrington's The Learning Rainforest: Great Teaching in Real Classrooms.
2. Tom Sherrington's Rosenshine's Principles in Action
3. Daniel Willingham's Why Don't Students Like School?
4. Peter Brown's Make it Stick, The Science of Successful Learning
5. Tom Bennett's Running the Room: The Teacher Guide to Behaviour
6. John Hattie's Visible Learning and the Science of how we Learn
7. Oliver Caviglioli Dual Coding with teachers

Recommended online CPD –

1. <https://www.stem.org.uk/online-cpd/early-career>
2. <https://www.creativeeducation.co.uk/available-webinars/>
3. <https://www.open.edu/openlearn/education/free-access-courses-teachers-and-student-teachers>
4. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/>
5. <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/>
6. <https://impact.chartered.college/>



C PD BOARD

**Staff CPD board/ book
shelf- share your books
and T&L ideas**



CPD Board:

Staffroom CPD Board
Lauren Barkas has added a
CPD board to the staffroom
for all staff to share best
practice and examples of
high quality educational
research. Share your
teaching experience and
findings from your
research project!

RESPECT



RESPECT
for yourself



RESPECT
for each other



RESPECT
for the environment



RESPECT
for the community



RESPECT
for education



RESPECT
for the future

VISION, VALUES AND PRIORITIES

Sirius Academy West, where every child achieves and believes in success. Our fully inclusive school nurtures high aspirations and respect and removes all barriers to learning to enable all students to reach their potential and become productive citizens in our community.

Our Values

We are guided by our 6 core values of RESPECT. Our staff explicitly model our values in everything they do.

1. Respect for yourself
2. Respect for each other
3. Respect for the environment
4. Respect for the community
5. Respect for education
6. Respect for the future

Our Curriculum Principles

To achieve our vision we are guided by the following curriculum principles known as “the 5B’s”

1. Broad and Balanced
2. Built on Firm Foundations
3. Barriers to learning removed
4. Beyond the classroom
5. Bold and Brave – The Best

Our Teaching and Learning Priorities 2020-21

To ensure effective implementation of our curriculum and achieve excellence in teaching and learning, our 3 CPD areas of focus to drive us to be the best are:

1. Literacy
2. Securing Learning in Long Term Memory
3. Removing Barriers to Learning

We need to remain focussed on the Academy priorities and to remind ourselves regularly of our vision – where we’re moving to as a team

THE LAST WORD



GET THE LAST



WORD

The last word

My decision to be a teacher coincided with my move to Hull, following a decade working in London in the Film Industry. Although I enjoyed my work in the creative sector, and even had the odd acting role along the way, it was only when I came to teaching that I truly discovered my vocation. I have always found teaching to be a highly rewarding job and knowing the difference that you can make to student's life chances and aspirations is the thing that keeps me going through challenging times. When I joined the last year of Pickering High School as a trainee teacher, I would never have guessed I'd still be on the Sirius journey 13 years later. Over the years, teaching at Sirius has created so many memories, opportunities and career highlights for me, from gaining a Masters in Teaching and Learning to the numerous extra-curricular projects I've done including my City of Culture funded school production in Pickering Park. My work at Sirius may not have won me any Oscars, but I do believe that teaching is its own reward.

If you'd like to have The Last Word in next term's Sirius T&L Magazine please email Abbey Preece



