

# Teaching and Learning – 5 minutes, 5 tips!

EPCS's best ideas, sourced from staff all over the school...

...over a cup of tea!



Issue 2: **Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

Issued: Quarterly

*"Respect and Pride"*



## 1 - Resource of the week:

Do your students sometimes arrive at your lessons highly strung and with an excess of energy? **Laura Murphy** recommends three **'Pre-starter' techniques** to get students focused and ready to learn!

1. Minute Count
2. Group Count
3. 3-2-1 Clap

See **Page 6** for further details.

**With thanks to Laura Murphy.**

## 2 – Whole school Literacy and numeracy tips:

### Literacy:

For extended writing and to stretch HAS students across a range of subjects, give them a Post-It note to stick next to their extended writing piece. Students write all of the punctuation marks that they could potentially use and aim to get 6 different types of ambitious punctuation incorporated into their writing. They can tick off the punctuation marks as they use them which would support the lower ability students, challenge the HAS students and allow for easy differentiation and AFL.

**With thanks to Courtney Pettipas.**

### Numeracy:

When estimating the answer to a calculation, try to round the numbers in the question so that they only have one digit that is not zero. Now the calculation will be easier. Look at the answer to have an awareness of whether it is an over-estimation or an under-estimation.

**With thanks to Preeti Devine.**

## 3 – Top tip for creating CHALLENGE:

### Starting with the end point...

When starting a new topic, a technique **Kelly Swift** uses in her first lesson is to present the students with an example exam question for that particular topic (this can be differentiated). Provide resources such as an article, text book page, video clip or practical example and as a starter task, ask the students to try and find the content that they would need to answer the question.

This can be completed individually, in pairs or as a team. The students create an answer at the start of the topic based on their own research as part of the starter activity.

The exam question is then revisited after the topic has been covered by the teacher and the students then add additional information to their answer and modify the structure if they see fit with a different colour pen.

This technique acts as a hook to get the students engaged and it makes the teacher begin the topic with an independent task, plus a focus on the end result - being able to apply their knowledge to an exam question.

**With thanks to Kelly Swift.**

## 4. Current focus in the classroom is:

1. **'Hooks'** - How are you 'hooking' students at the starts of lessons, making them engaged in learning? Wobble questions? Images? Games? Challenges?
2. **Differentiation** - How are you scaffolding writing in your lessons for the less able? Sentence starters? Writing frames? Word banks? Verbal rehearsal?

#### 4. Current focus in the classroom is: continued

3. **AFL** - Are students very clear on what they need to do to be successful in each task they set? Are you providing frequent opportunities for them to evaluate their progress with reference to a success criteria?

#### 5 - Recommended reading:

Blog of the month is by **Laura McInerney**; McInerney is current editor of education newspaper *School's Week*. She is also a frequent columnist in the Guardian. Her blog is an entertaining and thought provoking read, containing comments on her experiences as a classroom teacher, thoughts on current issues within education and reflections on her own schooling. Check it out at <https://lauramcinerney.com/>

New to the EPCS CPD Library is **Dylan Wiliam's 'Embedding Formative Assessment.'**

Wiliam sets out why assessment for learning is vital if students are to make excellent progress, and then offers strategies for making this a reality in the classroom.

Read it and enhance DIRT time in your lessons! See Matt Hall to borrow a copy.



#### Food for thought ...

'I often ask teachers, "What are your learning intentions for this period?"

Many times, teachers respond by saying things like, "I'm going to have the students..." and then specify an activity. When I follow up by noting what the teacher expects the student to learn as a result of the activity, I am often met with a blank stare, as if the question is meaningless or trivial.

This is why good teaching is so extraordinarily difficult. It is relatively easy to think up cool stuff for students to do in the classroom, but the problem with such an activity-based approach is that too often, it is not clear what the students are going to learn.

#### Food for thought ... continued

It is also relatively easy, on the other hand, to approach students directly about what you want them to learn, but this often results in unimaginative teaching.

Teaching is hard, because as Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2000) have pointed out, it has to be designed backwards.' – **Dylan Wiliam, 2011.**

#### Upcoming CPD events:

- 2nd Feb 3.20-4.10: Final ResearchMeet session prior to presentations on 16th March.
- 3rd Feb, 1.25-1.55: NQT Sharing best practice lunch.
- 9th Feb 3.20-5.00: Whole School Teaching and Learning Conference, focused on an informative assessment and DIRT time
- 7th March 3.30-4.30: NQT Pedagogy session: Differentiation – Challenge and engagement for all
- 16th March 3.20-5.00: ResearchMeet – Presentation evening

#### Homework – A reminder!

Are you promoting your department's KS3 enrichment projects for each half term with your Discovery school classes? Are you rewarding excellent student effort with home learning?

Have you set up a Google Classroom for every class you teach? Are you regularly sharing all homework tasks and resources with your students?

Are you setting Destiny school students' a minimum of 45mins-1hr's homework weekly in English, Maths and Science, and fortnightly in all options subjects?



**Have a T+L idea to share? Email it to Matt Hall, so it can appear in the next bulletin!**

## What does outstanding behaviour management look like?

....According to teachers...



*"Outstanding behaviour management is not an individual teaching and learning skill. It is about being part of a community, school and department and, as such, building a consistent culture of positive attitude towards learning and each other."*

**(Robert Bradley)**



*"I see outstanding behaviour management as having a relationship with the students based on mutual respect. This will allow the students to be engaged, and enthusiastic while knowing the boundaries and having fun."*

**(Simon Taplin)**



*"Outstanding behaviour management is the ability to cope with a variety of disruptive behaviour to ensure it has no real impact on the class's teaching and learning."*

**(Martin Cook)**



*"Outstanding behaviour management is where the boundaries and expectations for student behaviour are clearly established and maintained with use of routines and lots of praise! The teacher should aim to create a safe learning environment where students can take risks and flourish."*

**(Charlotte Emmett)**



*"A silent classroom does not mean a teacher has outstanding behaviour management! Students simply have to know the boundaries, but should be enabled to be excited and enthusiastic."*

**(Lisa Thornton)**



*"For me behaviour management isn't just about what happens inside of the classroom, but it is also about what you do when the lesson ends. To show my students that I respect, support and appreciate them, I take time out of my week to make positive phone calls home, write personalised post cards and visit key students around the school to see their achievements elsewhere. This strategy has not only ensured that I have better relationships with students, but has also been a great motivational tool for others within my lessons."*

**(Julie Fear)**

## What does outstanding behaviour management look like?

....According to students...



"Teachers who manage behaviour most effectively have a sense of humour but still set clear, firm boundaries. They make learning feel personal - like we all matter. They don't let things get too out of hand but also don't make things strict to the point of constant silence."

(Tom Atkinson, Y7)



*"I think effective behaviour management is when teachers make lessons fun like including drawing tasks, watching video clips, telling the odd joke and letting us be active in lessons. You may not believe it but students learn best in fun lessons in my opinion because then you remember the fun, and therefore remember the work!!"*

*(Darci Andrews, Y7)*



"I think one of the best ways a teacher controls a class is by making learning fun. The teachers with the best behaviour management are firm not strict in a mean way. They treat everyone fairly by the same set of rules and don't pick favourites."

(Alisha Martin, Y7)



"Teachers with the best behaviour management let us talk occasionally but don't stand any nonsense! They're fun but will be serious if anyone misbehaves. They explain tasks well and we learn straight away at the start of the lesson. They deal with misbehaving students firmly so they don't wreck the lesson for everyone else."

(Rhiannon Dower, Y7)



*"Effective behaviour management is when teachers plan fun and interactive lessons. If the lesson is interesting and well planned, students will behave well. It also helps if teachers are approachable and patient."*

**(Chloe Baigent, Y8)**



*"Effective behaviour management involves teachers making it clear what is expected of students and treating everybody equally. But it is also about making the work fun so students have enjoyable lessons and want to learn."*

**(Ellie nation, Y8)**



*"A good teacher is one who is easily approachable, who rewards good behaviour and offers one to one help. They create fun activities and everything is well organised so lesson time is spent efficiently and lots gets learnt."*

**(Racheal Makumbi, Y11)**



*"I think effective behaviour management is all about a teacher being able to judge when to let students get on with something, and learn independently, and when to intervene. In sixth form, some teachers are more preoccupied with imparting their knowledge to the class, rather than letting us explore topics and ideas for ourselves."*

**(Leon Wise, Y12)**

# What an excellent idea!

*'Pre-starter' techniques to get students focused and ready to learn! – With thanks to Laura Murphy*

Particularly after lunch, a fire bell, or simply if the wind blows the wrong way, students can come in to lessons quite highly strung and not with a mindset to learn. When this happens I use an activity before my starter just to get them calm and focused. The most simple but effective ones I have found are the following:

## **1. Minute Count**

Students are told to close their eyes and when given the signal, count to sixty seconds in their heads, putting their hands up when they think the time has passed. It is important that the exercise only starts when there is absolute silence with all eyes closed. When all hands are up and the time has passed they should put their hands down. You might choose to talk about what skills this activity develops (timing, concentration, focus) and link this to how it will help them be better learners. You can also make this a competition and give a small prize or positive points, as competition often engages the more reluctant members of the group.



## **2. Group Count**

The “Group Count” is where the class have to count out loud with their eyes closed and avoid anyone saying the next number at the same time. It is a good idea for the teacher to start the count as a point of focus.

Explain at the outset that if a particular order develops, i.e. a small group of counters effectively taking turns, then the count is cancelled. When the exercise works it is almost as though students are engaging telepathically. At the very least it promotes a powerful sense of concentration, clears their minds and calms them down.

You may find of course that some classes are better at the count than others but most seem to enjoy doing it, particularly given that they get the chance to beat their own and other classes scores. In order to keep the exercise fresh, it is good to give only five chances.



### 3. 3-2-1 Clap

(This takes a little bit longer for students to get, but if you teach it and then regularly use it, it can be highly effective.)

Ask for a volunteer that can count up to three! Stand opposite the volunteer and explain to the class that you are both going to count up to three by taking turns. i.e. I say "1," you say "2," I say "3," you say "1" etc back and forth. Aim to do this as many times as possible before one of you makes a mistake. Ask the class why it is suddenly so difficult to do something so simple.

Pair the whole class up and allow them to try to do it themselves. Such a seemingly simple task will surprise them in its difficulty, and when you up the ante by asking them to replace one of the numbers with an action, say a hand clap, they will be forced to concentrate even more. When they've had a go at this, give them 5 seconds to find another partner and repeat the exercise. Replace another number with a further action, say a foot stamp and let them try it again, swapping partners again after a short time. Replace the last number with a head tap and let them build up a silent sequence of gestures. Alternatively you could replace the actions with key subject terminology for the lesson the students are about to take part in.



