



INSIDE
MATRIX ACADEMY TRUST



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Growing the Mind
Engaging a Captive Audience
Literacy Spotlight

How many times have we looked at a new specification and thought 'wow that's a lot of content to get through'?

I'll be honest: it's what's going through my head right now as I've just gone through the new A level Film Studies specs and, compared with what we do now, they are intimidating to say the least. Aside from 'how do I enthuse 17 year olds about silent cinema and reading lots of subtitles?' the biggest question for me is 'how am I going to get through it all in the time?'



Permanently extending the school day to fit it all in isn't an option. **The worst thing I could do would be to just carry on doing what I do already.**

I need to take a step back and change my approach. It will probably involve the following:

- Flipping learning even more than I do currently so pupils acquire most of the content outside the lesson (lots of directed reading so pupils arrive prepared for lessons) so we can do things with it in the lesson time itself.
- Teaching pupils how to retain what they've learned as they go along. If we're moving more quickly I will need to be checking they're not losing knowledge as we go.
- Meta-cognition strategies. Loads of them. My pupils will need to be working as hard as I am.

There are lots of ways for doing these things in this booklet. Whether you're currently teaching new specs or getting ready to do so I'm sure you will find something you'll want to try.

David Lowbridge-Ellis
Deputy Headteacher, Barr Beacon School

SPREAD THE WORD IN THE NEXT EDITION
NEW EDITION DUE SPRING 2017

EMAIL YOUR IDEAS TO [SFOSTER@BARRBEACONSCHOOL.CO.UK](mailto:sfooster@barrbeaconschool.co.uk)

COINCIDENCE

OR NOT

IF....

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

EQUALS....

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

THEN

K . N . O . W . L . E . D . G . E
11.14.15.23.12.05.04.07.05 =96%

H . A . R . D . W . O . R . K
08.01.18.04.23.15.18.11 =98%

BOTH ARE IMPORTANT, BUT FALL SHORT OF 100%

BUT

A . T . T . I . T . U . D . E
01.20.20.09.20.21.04.05 =100%



As I played with my two young sons during our summer holiday at the seaside it struck me that at times they lack resilience and have a fixed idea about their abilities that they are not prepared to change.

For example, my youngest son point blankly refused to play a family round of crazy golf. Why? "I'm rubbish at it, I can't do it." No amount of modelling and praise would change his mind. I began to dwell on why this was the case and came to the conclusion that my wife and I are effusive in our praise of his slightest actions. Could it be that he now realises we scrutinise these actions and doesn't want to let us down? In fact, that very morning we had watched slapstick cartoons on TV and commented on "silly" and "daft" characters getting things wrong. Perhaps we should show the same interest in his actions but offer helpful feedback on how to develop further rather than the usual "WOW! That's amazing, how clever". Perhaps we should focus upon his efforts and not his successes or the process rather than the outcome?

Similarly my eldest son decided to try his hand at body-boarding. As I tried to point out the technique of other children and model it to him he cut in "just let me have a go daddy". "Great!" I was thinking. He had a go and fell off the board 2-3 times. I tried to model it again. This time his response was "This is so boring Daddy, I want to play football." He found body-boarding tough and disengaged from it. Both of my boys are now displaying worrying signs of what can be termed a 'fixed mind set.' As a much younger child he would try, try and try. His environment has clearly changed his willingness to fail and learn from it. As a young child he didn't have a concept of failure as a bad thing.

So how would I like my boys to respond to such challenges? Firstly I would like them to both be open to the challenges and be resilient after initial failures. I'd like them to take on board constructively critical feedback and consider success to lie within the effort rather than the outcome. I want them to demonstrate what is popularly termed a 'growth mindset'. I want this not just for my sons but for all of the pupils and students that I encounter on a day to day basis too.

So how might we begin to embed this mind set in the classroom? Below are just a few ideas taken from a range of academic books and articles.

"Plan for regular trial and error learning in your classroom. Pupils can use mistakes as an indication not of failure but of what still needs to be learnt. They will begin to think about the process of learning and monitor their own learning."

Hymer & Gershon 2014

This has been a key part of academic theory since the early part of the 20th century when Edward Thorndike defined the features of trial and error learning.

1. Learning by trial and error is a gradual process.
2. For learning to occur, the learner must be definitely motivated.
Learning must be purposeful and goal directed.
3. The learner makes random and variable responses.
4. Some responses don't lead to the goal (annoying response).
5. Some responses lead to the goal (satisfying responses).
6. With the increase in number of trials the annoying responses will tend to be eliminated and the satisfying responses will be strengthened and repeated.
7. The time taken to perform the task (to repeat the satisfying response) decreases with successive trials.

- Model trial and error to your pupils. e.g. "This mistake has been helpful to me because..."
- Ensure that trial and error learning is correctly structured. Pupils should picture the end goal and understand what success would look like. They should decide how to break the task into logical and manageable chunks. They should put the whole thing together to produce a final piece. This should then be checked. The knowledge and process should be regularly revisited and practised. (Picture, chunk, assemble, check, practise.)
- Extoll the benefits of 'good mistakes' and their value in learning. Warn of the dangers of 'bad' mistakes and help change pupil perceptions of mistakes as a wholly bad thing.
- A pupil might be assigned the role of recording trial and error during whole group work. This can be shared with the whole class to show progression and how responding to setbacks inform the learning process.
- Make explicit reference to the failures that preceded a great discovery, event, theory, etc. This might best be sourced by the pupils themselves through homework. e.g. Find out what barriers this person overcame to make their breakthrough? When have you shown these qualities?
- As a teacher you may also want to model mistakes to the class and spread the message that 'good' mistakes are brilliant so long as we are learning from them.
- The use of constructive feedback over praise and prizes is crucial. AfL plays a crucial part in the process of changing mindsets. Focus comments on the process and skills and how these may be amended to reach the desired outcome.

Questions that encourage pupils to think about their learning process are crucial.
You might find the 50 example questions below helpful.

Reflection and Collaboration

- What do you think about what was said?
- How would you agree or disagree with this?
- Are there any other similar answers you can think of with alternative routes?
- Does anyone in this class want to add something to the solution?
- How might you convince us that your way is the best way?

Self Reflection

- How did you determine this to be true?
- Why didn't you consider a different route to the problem?
- Why does that answer make sense to you?
- (in response to an answer)... what if I said that's not true?
- Is there any way to show exactly what you mean by that?

Reasoning

- Why do you think this works?
- Does it always?
- How/Why do you think this is true?
- Show how you might prove that?
- Why assume this?
- How might you argue against this?

Analysis

How might you show the differences and similarities?

What patterns might lead you to an alternative answer?

How many possibilities can you think of and why?

Predict any number of results?

Reasoning

How did any of the characters or events remind you of yourself? Why?

How did the character's actions affect you? Explain.

If you were this character, how would the story change?

What surprised or confused you about the characters or events? Explain.

Why do you think the author wrote from this character's view?

What do you think the author is trying to accomplish?

Literacy I

How does this relate to daily occurrences?

Which ideas make the most sense and why?

Which problems feel familiar? Why?

How does this relate to current events?

What kinds of examples make this problem workable?

What other problems fit this style or example?

Literacy II

How would the story change from another character's view?

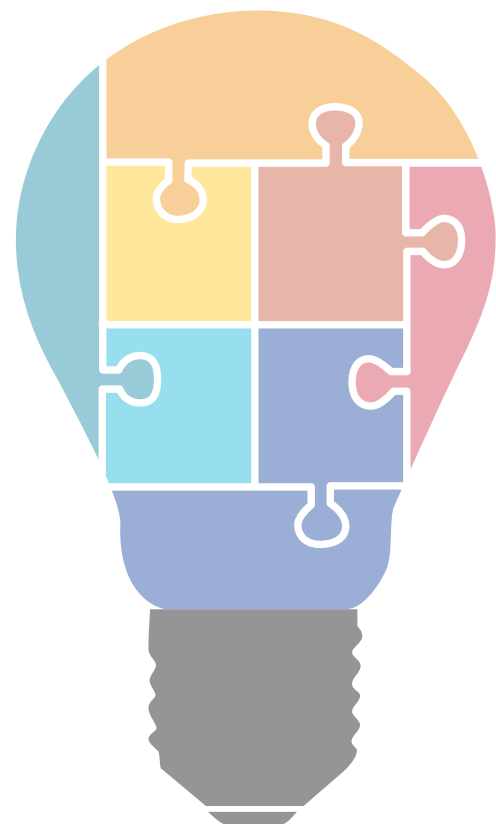
Why do you think this story could actually happen, or not?

How can this story teach us something about our lives?

How do you think the characters resolved the major conflict in the story?

How would you have resolved it?

How would you change the end of the story and why?



'Growing The Mind'

- Pupils can use "if and then" sentences to frame solutions to obstacles they face. e.g. "If I am unable to attend a catch up session then I will ensure I use the library resources at break time to go through the work."
- Pupils should be exposed to memory and revision strategies of all types to provide them with examples of methods they might use to take control of their own memory.
- AfL strategies embedded in lessons such as a 'traffic lights system' can allow us to intervene and ask the probing questions required to encourage our learners to think about how to overcome obstacles.

We all wish for our learners, sons, daughters, nieces and nephews to succeed to the very best of their abilities to improve their life chances. We must strive to help them 'learn how to learn'.

I hope that during our next summer trip to the coast my sons will place value in effort and persistence and take on the challenges life may present with resolve and resilience.

"Before they learn metacognitive strategies, children do not use tactics like planning their work or monitoring their own problem solving. They do not realize that they can use strategies and short-cuts to help them solve problems." (Darling-Hammond et Al. 2003.)

Recommended Reading

'Thinking About Thinking: Metacognition'

Darling-Hammond, Austin, Cheung, and Martin. Stanford University School of Education. 2003.

'Mindset - Changing the way you think to fulfil your potential.'

Dweck, C. Robinson. 2012.

'Visible Learning and the Science of How we Learn.'

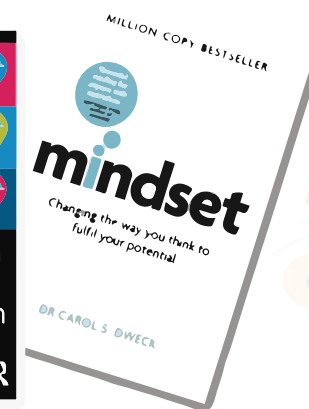
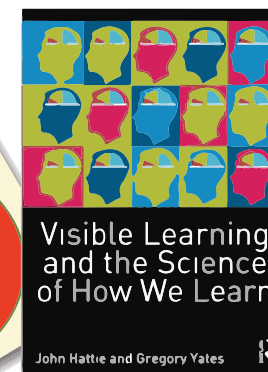
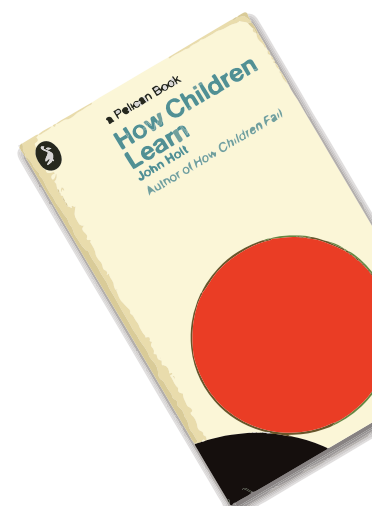
Hattie and Yates. Routledge. 2014.

'How Children Learn.'

Holt. Penguin. 1991.

'Growth Mindset Pocket Book.'

Hymer and Gershon. Teacher's Pocketbooks. 2014.

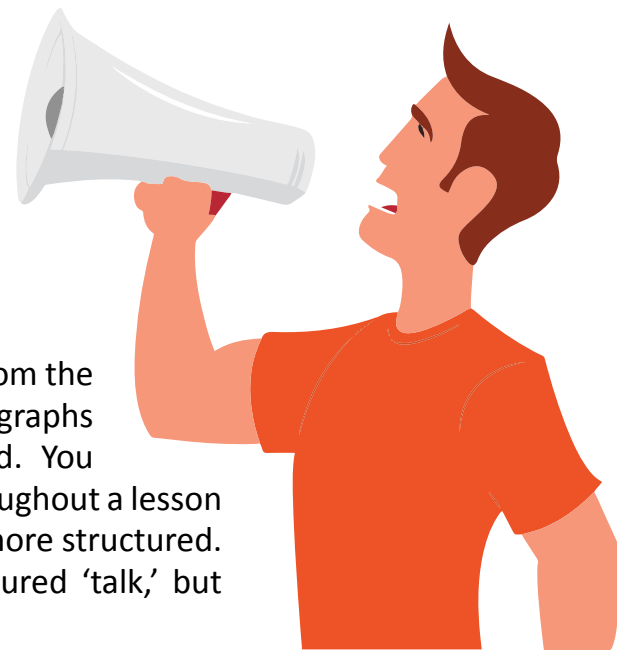




We would all like our students to be more cohesive in their communication skills. One way that we can encourage this, is to get them engaged with structured 'talk' with their peers. In doing so, one would hope that this would soon filter through into their written work.

Using this discourse marker card (bottom right), pupils can then be given a topic to discuss or a prompt of your choice linked to the lesson. They then have to build a conversation around that topic, making sure that they are using the connecting phrases that they have been assigned from the card. (These phrases can be adapted to be more subject-specific, but essentially will help pupils to shape their discussions.)

You can make this easier or harder depending on the group, by challenging some with more or less numbers from the card and eventually get them building verbal paragraphs together that can later be transcribed on to a whiteboard. You could also encourage them to answer your questions throughout a lesson using the discourse markers so that their responses are more structured. Not only will the pupils benefit from developing structured 'talk,' but they will also develop the literacy skills required to inform the cohesion of their written work.

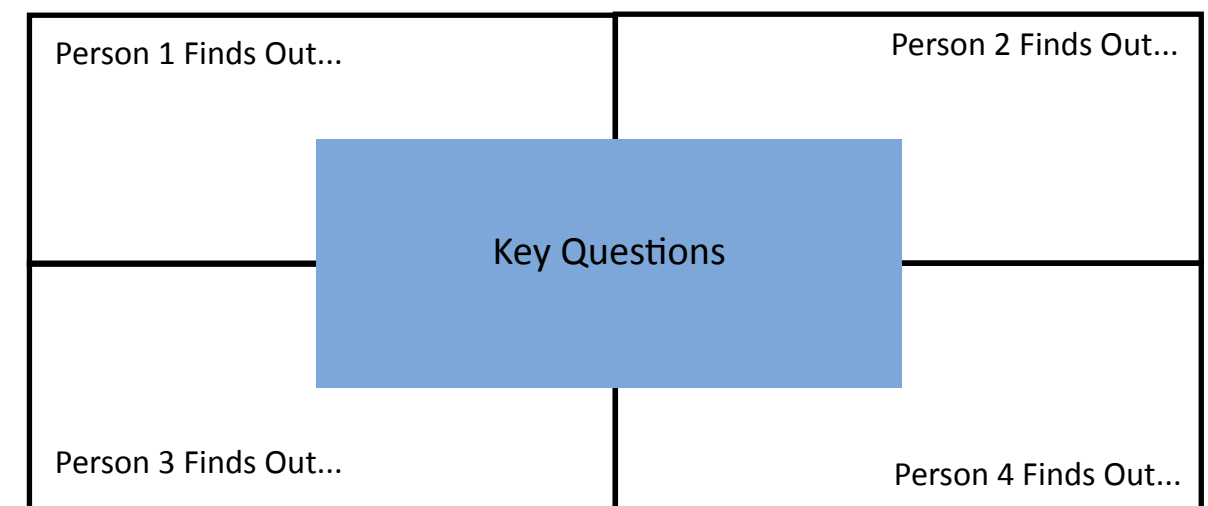


<u>ADDING</u> and also as well as moreover too furthermore additionally	<u>SEQUENCING</u> first, second, third... finally next meanwhile after then subsequently	<u>ILLUSTRATING</u> for example such as for instance in the case of as revealed by... illustrated by	<u>CAUSE and EFFECT</u> because so therefore thus consequently hence
<u>COMPARING</u> similarly likewise as with like equally in the same way..	<u>QUALIFYING</u> but however although unless except apart from as long as if	<u>CONTRASTING</u> whereas instead of alternatively otherwise unlike on the other hand.. conversely	<u>EMPHASISING</u> above all in particular especially significantly indeed notably



Sometimes it pays to be flexible so here are a few quick strategies you can drop into a lesson if you feel you are losing the engagement of your learners.

- Inform the group that you will be using a visualiser throughout the lesson to show examples of their work to really motivate them and model your expectations.
- A ball of string might be employed to get pupils moving around the room to show the links between the concepts, events, processes, individuals or prior learning.
- A handy pack of post-it notes can transform a classroom in an instant. Individual and paired reading can be turned into a 'reading race'. Individual envoys or teams of pupils can get moving around the room adding ideas, questions, answers, vocabulary or examples to collection points for use by the whole group through the duration of the lesson. They can also be used to check understanding in a paired game of 'sticky head'.
- Ask your pupils to each write in the style of a different character, person or group to encourage creative responses that show understanding of your topic.
- Give them an option in how they present their work (newspaper front page, 'idiots' guide, pictograms, speech, TV show, rap etc)
- Assume the role of a person, character, process or theory. Respond to pupil's questions about you. (an accent is always well received if you can pull one off!) They might try this out for themselves in small groups.
- Divide up a few pieces of A3 paper in 4 with a central question in the middle. Each pupil works to be the 'expert' of a particular aspect of the key question which they must collaboratively answer using their notes at the end of the task. This will ensure all are kept on their toes so as not to let their team down!



- Tell a story linked to the topic. We all love a good tale, don't we?
- Structure paired work slightly differently. Consider giving out roles such as mentor/mentee, researcher and clerk, envoy and spy, sage and scribe, etc.
- Pose, pounce, bounce. Pose a question, give them thinking time and pounce on a pupil who must give an answer. Bounce their answer to another pupil who must respond to the prior person, this can go on across the room.

Sometimes having a small 'box of tricks' to draw from can quickly transform a lesson. Post-it notes, A3 paper, string and a bit of thinking on your feet can have the captive captivated.



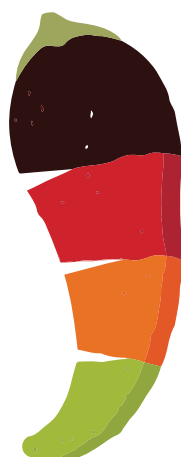
Nando's Take Away Homework

A great way to differentiate homework and ensure that it is inclusive and challenging for all. All pupils choose a starter, main and dessert and use the periometer to choose how hot they want to go. The hotter it gets the more challenging!

Jenny Brazier

CHOOSE YOUR HOMEWORK FROM THE MENU BELOW:

You need to pick a starter, main and a dessert from the menu. The Peri-ometer suggests the difficulty or challenge the homework may offer. You should attempt at least one 'EXTRA HOT' task! People aiming for purple or a higher level 5 should also attempt one extra task.



Extra Hot
Hot
Mild
Lemon & Herb

Starter	Main	Dessert
Create a 3D model of a department store out of boxes and label the different floors, departments and items that are sold. Possibly even find pictures of items etc. to decorate the inside. Be creative!	In pairs/groups write and record a short film clip set in a department store - stating on what floor things are, where you can buy certain items etc. Extra points for more imagination!	Write a review of a department store you have been to. It should be in the past tense and include where you found things, what you bought, your opinion, and if you would go back again.
Draw a detailed floor plan of your own department store and label the different floors, departments and find at least 1 picture of items you can buy in each department.	Write a role play in your book about a person in a department store looking for where to buy different items. Make it as interesting as you can!	Write a description of your own department store, include as much info as you can such as name, floors, departments, opinions etc.
Draw a department store from the outside and label the different floors and departments.	Create an activity for a partner to do, matching up the vocab for items to the department in which they can be bought.	Create a jingle, rhyme, rap for an advert for your department store. In GERMAN.
Find a picture of a department store and jot down the floors and departments it has.	Pick 6 departments. Make a list of at least 3 different items you can buy in each one.	Design an advert for your own department store - explaining some facts about what it has/opinions.



Inclusion Strategies

I have recently been including the following strategies in my lesson to ensure the inclusion and engagement of all pupils. These strategies can be modified to suit any subject.

Fortune Teller

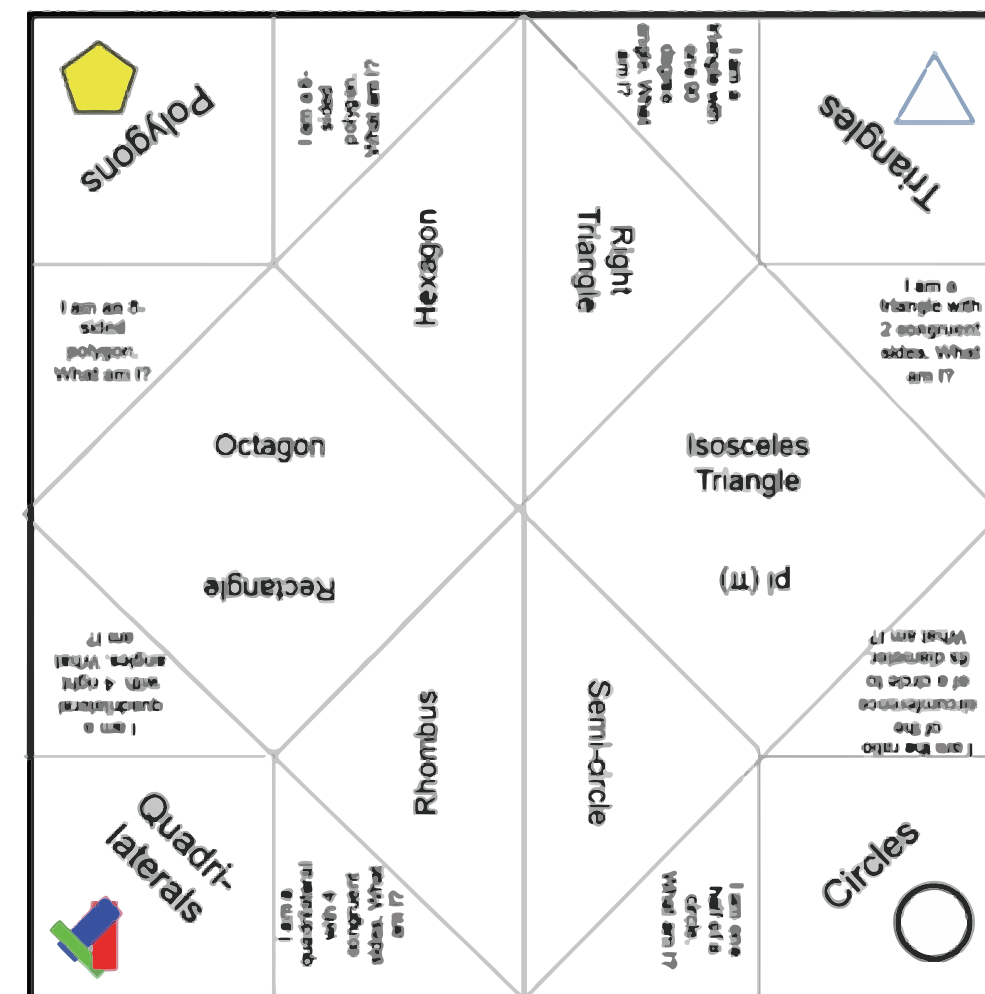
This is an example of how it could be used in a maths context:

Pupils could make these to practise key questions.

Revision for key topics.

Engaging/love of learning.

Great for revision.



BEAT THE TEACHER

Feature	Frau Brazier
Opinion phrase - 1 point	
Reason - with a nice connective 1 pt	
Reason - with a boot connective 1 pt	
Past Tense 2 points	
Future Tense 2 points	
Conditional tense - 3 points	
3 rd person - 2 points	
Extra: Um...zu.... 4 points	
Extra: Relative Clause 4 points	
Total	

If you are assessing a presentation or a piece of written work give pupils a scoring system for each feature of the success criteria. You go first giving an example - you could do a low scoring piece of work, an average piece of work or a high scoring example. They have to mark you first and come up with a total for your work.

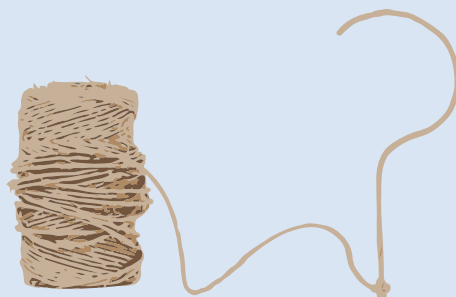
You then set them the challenge of having to beat you - everyone is aiming for higher than you. More challenging features are worth more points to push pupils to include these.

Read each others' and work out the amount each other should have scored - check with you to see if you agree.

5 Minute Marking Plan

Select 3 pupils to come to the front. They are each given pieces of string of differing lengths. Pupils have to talk to the group about a particular theme or topic whilst winding the string up – they can stop talking when they run out of string. You would give your least able a shorter piece of string/more able longer piece of string. Other members of the class should make notes as they are talking about what they say – you can then ask questions. Who said this? Who mentioned...? Great way of getting lots of pupils involved and everyone uses listening/speaking/note taking skills.

HOW LONG IS A PIECE OF STRING?



This 5 minute marking plan was found on 'Teacher Toolkit' and might be a nice way of helping you to identify pieces of work to use as significant pieces of marking.

It might also be used as a support resource for a wide range of colleagues from trainees to experienced members of staff who wish to reflect upon their assessment practice and continue to develop it.

RETENTION TECHNIQUES

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Ellbogen | 1. Elbow |
| 2. Kinn | 2. Chin |
| 3. Gesicht | 3. Face |
| 4. Körper | 4. Body |
| 5. Rücken | 5. Back |
| 6. Spritze | 6. Injection |
| 7. Impfungen | 7. Innoculation |
| 8. Zunge | 8. Tongue |
| 9. Wange | 9. Cheek |
| 10. Husten | 10. Cough |
| 11. Grippe | 11. Flu |
| 12. Bleiben | 12. To Stay |
| 13. nehmen | 13. To Take |
| 14. Heuschnupfen | 14. Hay Fever |
| 15. Stirn | 15. Forehead |
| 16. Hals | 16. Throat/Neck |
| 17. Schulter | 17. Shoulder |
| 18. Bauch | 18. Stomach |
| 19. Durchfall | 19. Diarrhoea |
| 20. Übergewicht | 20. Over Weight |
| 21. Sonnenbrand | 21. Sun Burn |
| 22. Fieber | 22. Fever |
| 23. Schnupfen | 23. Sneezes |
| 24. Handgelenk | 24. Wrist |
| 25. Fussgelenk | 25. Ankle |
| 26. Knochen | 26. Bones |
| 27. Hustensaft | 27. Cough Medicine |
| 28. Medikament | 28. Medicine |
| 29. Tabletten | 29. Tablets |
| 30. leiden an | 30. To Suffer |

Bob Up Classic

You divide the room into two teams and elect a captain.

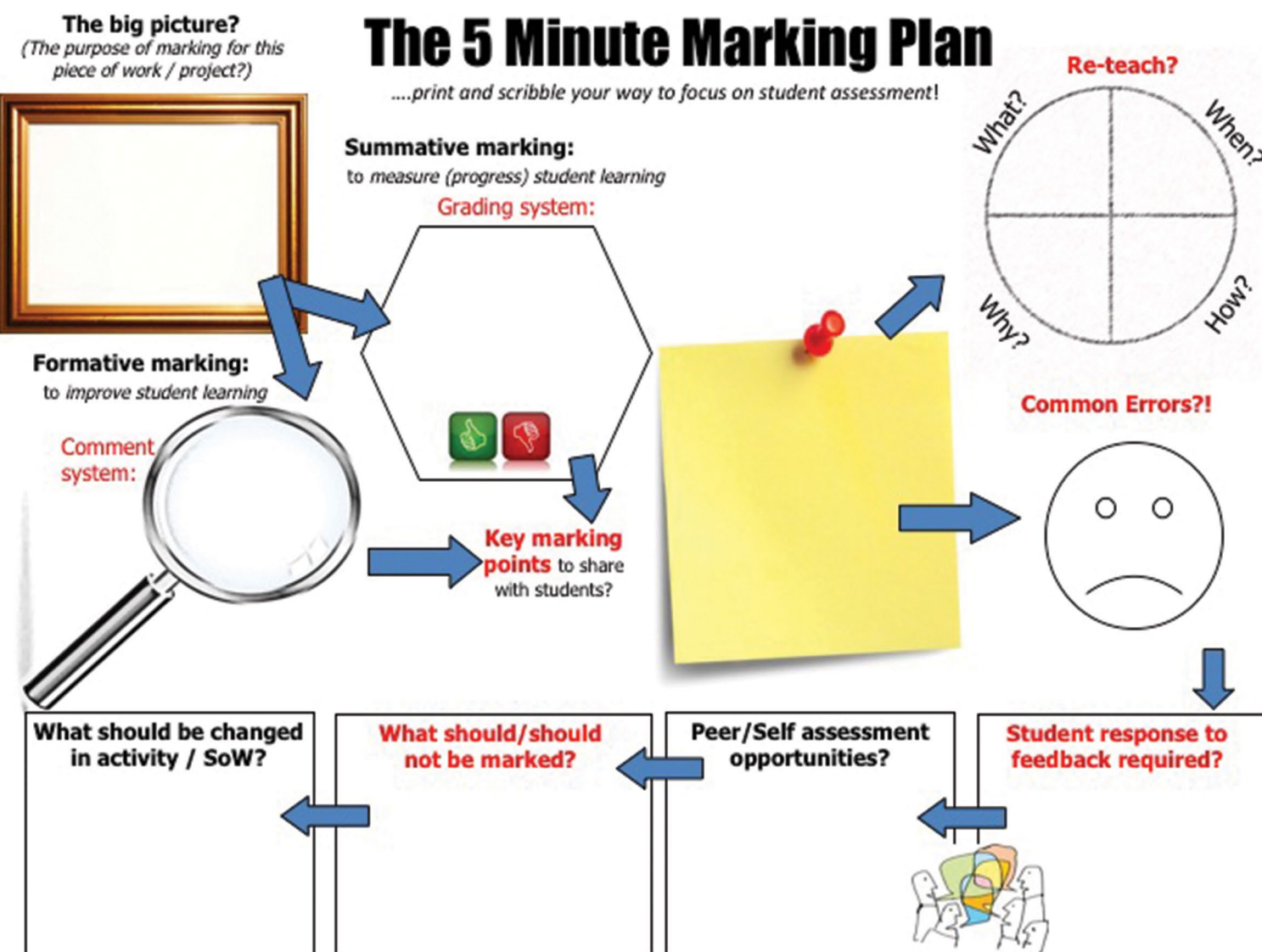
The captain divides out all the numbers of key vocab between the pupils – i.e. if 15 pupils on their side, each has 2 numbers.

Teacher calls out word – either target language/English/definition.

If it is their number, that pupil has to stand up and say the alternative language/give the key term.

The side whose person stood up first gets the point.

Everyone is involved because everyone has a number – can obviously be tweaked to make it harder/easier depending on who you are doing it with – i.e. most able have to have 3 numbers/least only 1.





Using Success Criteria to Support Pupil Progress

When using success criteria to enhance pupil progress and use of formative assessment I ask pupils to complete a number of tasks:

- Pupils design success criteria using ‘spot the difference’ style approach-perhaps you might give ‘categories’ to scaffold responses.
- Notes are collated and differentiated (by pupils/staff - use discretion here).
- Graded criteria is then sorted into categories to create an assessment ‘matrix’.
- Staff to mark the finished work using the success criteria and key terminology including ‘step up’ and pupil response to prove progress.

In teams of three, place your assessment criteria into the grading grid in order of challenge.
When complete, copy your names into the box for your baseline grade.

GRADE	IMAGERY	COMPOSITION	LINE
GRADE A BASELINE Names:			
GRADE B BASELINE Names:			
GRADE C BASELINE Names:			

Stretch & Challenge **STRETCH**
Add further criteria headed with your own categories

Pop Culture Composition Success Criteria			
GRADE	IMAGERY	COMPOSITION	LINE
GRADE A BASELINE Names:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The composition displays thoughtful and inventive use of imagery that suggests a message to the viewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The COMPOSITION uses PERSPECTIVE to suggest depth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LINES are used to suggest texture and toneDirect observation of relevant objects/items
GRADE B BASELINE Names:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The composition displays a 'theme' within Pop. Culture and all of the imagery used is based on this idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The COMPOSITION displays overlapping and the image 'flows' as the viewer looks at it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LINES vary in weight to indicate areas of heaviness/lightness and tone.Drawings display attention to detail and high level of accuracy
GRADE C BASELINE Names:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The work uses images and text that is based on POPULAR CULTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The COMPOSITION displays a well planned layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none">LINES are smooth and joined up without gapsDrawings are recognisable

In addition, I asked pupils to highlight any words they did not understand the meaning of and addressed these within the lesson.



‘Independence Ladder’

Graeme Hodgson

If pupils genuinely cannot access the answer to a question or problem, then they can ask their teacher for support. Planner cards can be used to indicate to staff when a pupil needs support – turning them to red to indicate that they have tried all stages of the independence ladder but now really do need further support and guidance.

We have monitored the effectiveness of the Etone independence ladders through pupil voice and lesson observations to ensure a consistency of approach across the school. Pupils are able to articulate confidently how they use them as support in lessons. When completing student interviews to inform a marking CPD, pupils talked about how they liked the ladders and found them helpful, particularly during fix it time.

Independent learning remains a focus for the year ahead with a particular emphasis on providing our learners with the skills needed to best tackle revision and examinations. Having equipped our pupils with a simple strategy to make them more independent, we will continue to drive forward with a focus on independence for teachers considering a variety of learning activities within lessons and homework activities. Whilst the 3 Before Me and Independence Ladder idea is a tried and tested one, it had not been used consistently across the school and therefore, its impact had been limited. Pushing it forward with this very focused approach has allow it to become embedded and begin to really impact upon the learning skills of our pupils.



ARE YOU AN INDEPEDENT LEARNER?



ARE YOU AN INDEPEDENT LEARNER?

Ask Yourself

DO I REALLY NEED SOMEONE ELSE TO HELP ME?

CAN I FIND ANYTHING TO HELP ME?

CAN I EXPLAIN WHERE I THINK I AM GOING WRONG TO A PEER?

CAN A PEER HELP ME WITHOUT TELLING ME THE ANSWER?

CAN I EXPLAIN WHERE I THINK I AM GOING WRONG TO THE TEACHER?

DO I NEED TO HAVE IT EXPLAINED AGAIN FULLY!

Brain

Book

Buddy
(you)

Buddy
(them)

Boss

What I Need To Do?

LOOK AT PAST WORK & SIMILAR PROBLEMS.

SHOW/EXPLAIN TO A PEER WHAT YOU THINK IS CAUSING YOU THE PROBLEM.

LISTEN TO A PEER'S EXPLANATION/LOOK AT THEIR METHODS

TRY TO EXPLAIN TO THE TEACHER WHERE YOU THINK YOU ARE GOING WRONG.

SEEK ANOTHER EXAMPLE FROM THE TEACHER.

2. If you cannot remember and you've tried your best, then look at other similar work that will link to what you are doing now.

Maybe look in a text book as well as your exercise book.

4. It is now time for a buddy to explain to you how they did the bit you are stuck with, or to try and explain a similar problem to help you. It is important:

- (i) *You Listen Now*
- (ii) *Your buddy doesn't just tell you the answer.*

Brain

Book

Buddy
(you)

Buddy
(them)

Boss

1. Before looking back at prior work, try and think hard for atleast 60 seconds to remember what it was that you did before on this work.

It is easy to just try and find a similar question and copy how you did it. Train your memory first of all.

3. If this still hasn't helped you then try explaining two things to a peer.

- (i) What you **do** know
- (ii) Where **you** believe you are getting stuck.

Sometimes explaining a problem can help you see the way forward. Make sure your **buddy is listening to you.**

5. It is now **and only now** that you should be asking a teacher to help you directly. Asking the teacher too early may restrict you from becoming an even better **Independent Learner.**



A Lesson In String

Claire Taylor

When teaching relationships in Romeo and Juliet, I decided that I would try and make this as visual as possible for my class. Rather than get them to simply draw a diagram, I thought we could map this together. Moreover, by approaching the task this way, I was able to monitor their understanding of the relationships and eliminate any confusion.

The class themselves decided who needed to be paired with whom and, as we worked through, they explained the reasons why. As there were only a handful of pupils involved in the task, the rest of the class created a diagram to help them revise the theme and this will be photocopied for their peers. The pupils were really engaged in the activity and it allowed them to see how love, in a variety of different forms, causes problems throughout the play.



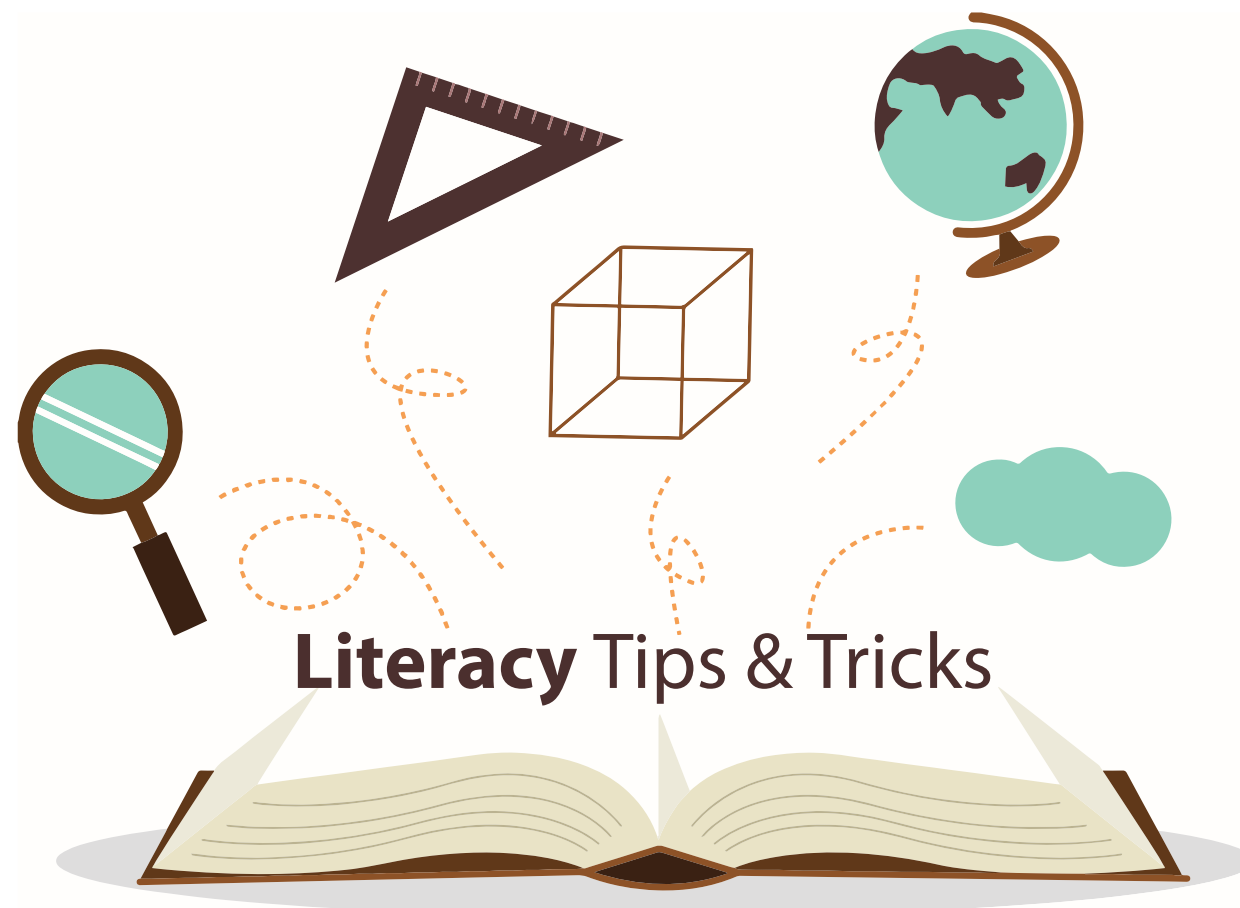
Inside Matrix
Academy Trust

Supporting Descriptive Writing

National
Literacy
Trust

The National Literacy Trust has some fantastic activity ideas designed to expand your pupil's descriptive language and add more colour and depth to their writing. Their 6 page toolkit can be found by following the link below.

www.literacytrust.org.uk/resources/



The National Literacy Trust published their report about the reading habits of children in June of this year. 'Children's and Young People's Reading in 2015' surveyed 32,569 children and young people aged 8 to 18 from 111 schools from across the UK. The report shows the vital role that we as secondary school teachers play in promoting a love of reading.

In 2015, just 40.2% of Key Stage 4 pupils (age 14 to 16) said they enjoy reading either very much or quite a lot, versus 72.6% of Key Stage 2 pupils surveyed (age 8 to 11). This is a trend that has been maintained since 2010. Secondary school students also feel much less positively about reading than primary school students. Pupils at Key Stage 4 are less likely to say reading is cool: 24.1% versus 70.5% at Key Stage 2. This gap in enjoyment and attitudes exists despite similar daily reading patterns, with 41.4% Key Stage 4 pupils and 45.5% Key Stage 2 pupils reading daily outside class. With a clear link shown between attainment and reading frequency and attitudes we all have a clear responsibility to promote wider reading to our pupils. It is estimated that in order to access the GCSE Mathematics paper a reading age of around 16 years old is required by all pupils, and so those who fall short will have more trouble accessing the papers.

It is not all bad news though as the survey reveals that levels of reading enjoyment and frequency are the highest they have been in a decade. As we begin a new year it is imperative that we take every opportunity to promote reading enjoyment and frequency both explicitly and implicitly through modelling a love of reading and seeking out opportunities to engage our pupils with varied and interesting text.

Clark, C. (2016). Children's and Young People's Reading in 2015.
Findings from the National Literacy Trust's annual survey 2015. London: National Literacy Trust.

www.literacytrust.org.uk/research/



Subject Specific Literacy Maps

Laura Baker

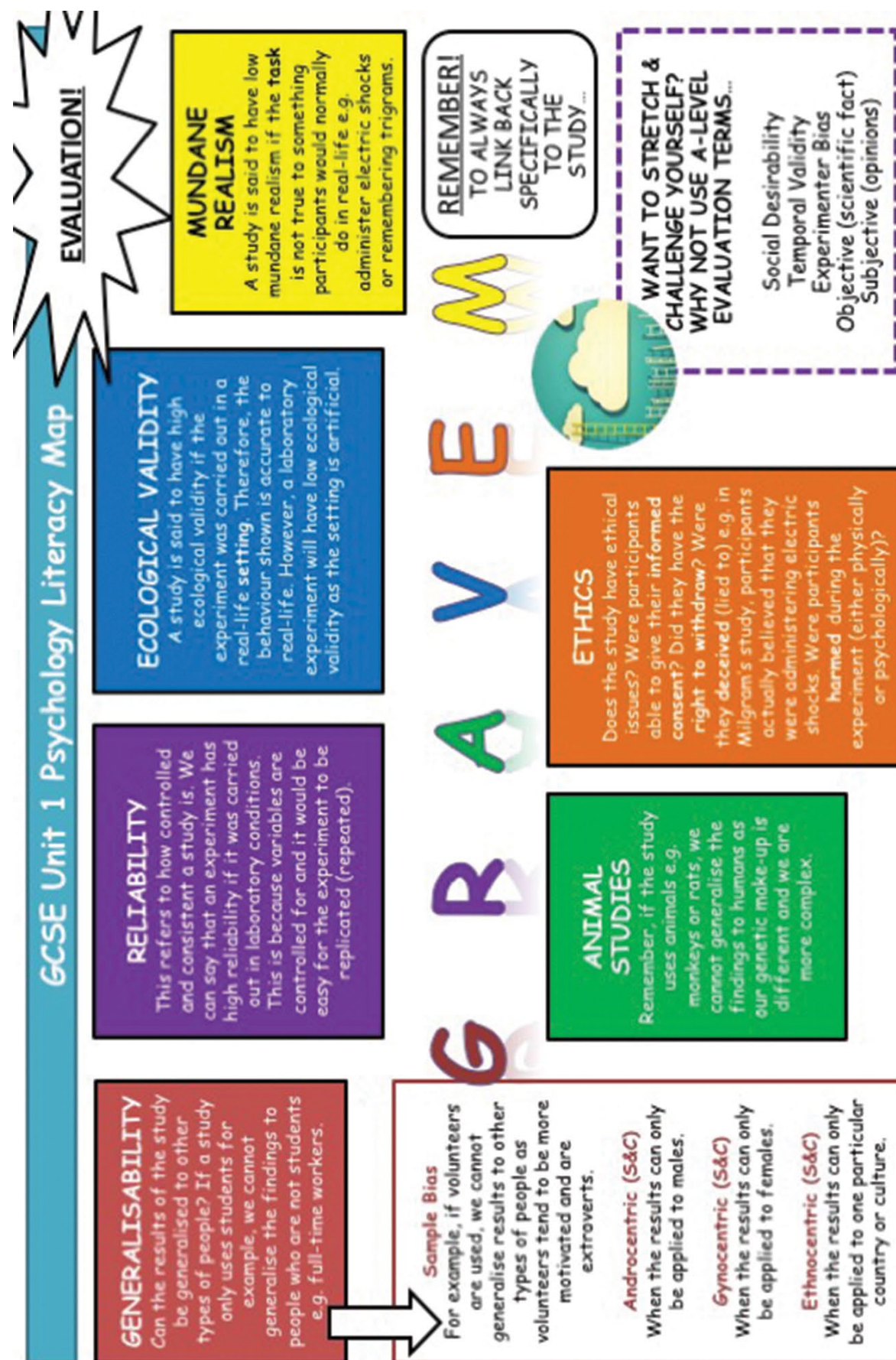
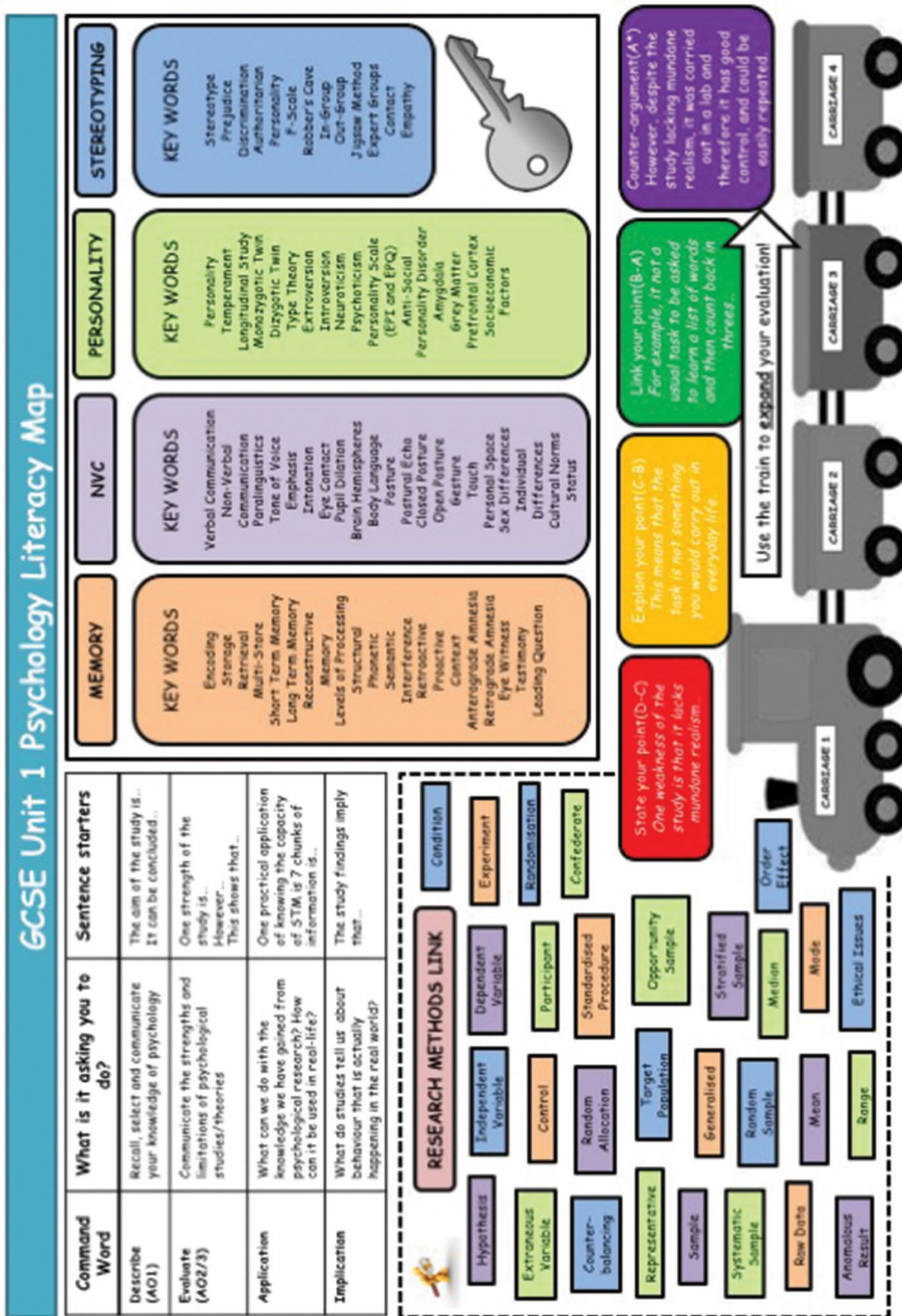
The use of subject specific literacy maps can greatly enhance the quality of written responses in your subject and enhance pupil's understanding of examination techniques. They can be incorporated into lessons at the drop of a hat to support targeted groups of pupils or can be given to every pupil to keep in their folders or books as a point of reference.



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A very interesting chapter in a fantastic book by Hattie and Yates ('Visible Learning and the Science of how we Learn.' Routledge. 2014.) has made me extra cautious about the language I am using in text I provide for my pupils.

In chapter 7 of their book they talk about the natural reading speeds that we hold. As we read, our eyes fixate only briefly on virtually every word although smaller ones such as 'at' or 'it' may be skipped over. Our eyes fixate on individual words for varying amounts of time depending on how well we know the word. In normal reading this will be between 60-250 milliseconds but if an unfamiliar word occurs this can take much longer. For mature readers around 300 words per minute is a comfortable reading pace, this can be slowed to 200 words per minute in information laden material as we re-read sentences or words twice over. When we engage in conversation, words are likely to be paced at 150-200 word per minute and the target pace for most published books is 150-170 words per minute. When the pace of reading drops to 100 words per minute we begin to suffer problems of comprehension. Our minds need coherent sentences that fall within our working memory spans to create meaning from text, to do this words need to come out at around 2-3 per second. Hattie and Yates used this to explain how a major cause of reading failure was that many children were stuck on mental processing at the level of word access.

So as I plan and prepare my resources I'll certainly be ensuring that I not only watch my language to assist in pupil comprehension, but also make extra sure that the key topic vocabulary is familiar and comfortable for my learners. To support me in doing this I found a fantastic online tool that allows you to copy and paste your text to check its readability against a variety of different scales. The readability of this very piece can be seen below the link.



www.online-utility.org/english/readability_test_and_improve

Number of characters (without spaces) .	1,539 00
Number of words	350 00
Number of sentences .	16.00
Average number of characters per word	4 40
Average number of syllables per word	1 50
Average number of words per sentence	21 88

<i>Indication of the number of years of formal education that a person requires in order to easily understand the text on the first reading</i>	
Gunning Fog index	11 84

<i>Approximate representation of the U S grade level needed to comprehend the text</i>	
Coleman Liau index .	8 73
Flesch Kincaid Grade level	10 61
ARI (Automated Readability Index)	10 22
SMOG :	10 98

Flesch Reading Ease	57 97
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"Some helpful questions you might consider using in lessons to get pupils thinking about their progress and the learning process as a whole."

Academic Performance

- What did you learn (today, this week, this year, etc) ?
- Why do you believe we're studying this objective?
- Did this activity help you learn more than others we've done? Why?
- Did you come to class today prepared to learn (in both your attitude and with all your supplies)?
- What are some things you did really well on this assignment?
- What mistakes did you make on the last assignment that you did not make on today's assignment?
- What resources do you have that can help you learn new material?
- If you could do this assignment over, what would you do differently?
- What class activities or assignments help you learn the most?
- What do you believe the teacher could have done differently to help you learn this objective easier?
- What's one thing the teacher did for this objective that you really liked?
- How can you prove to the teacher you know the objective?
- What evidence do you have to support your answer?

Future and Goal Setting

- What would you like to learn more about (today, this week, this year, etc)?
- What problems do you hope to solve (today, this week, this school year, in your lifetime, etc)?
- What will you need to learn to solve those problems?
- How can you take what you have learned and apply it to your own life?
- What are your dreams?
- What are some of the potential obstacles you may face in chasing those dreams?
- What are some things you can do to overcome those obstacles?
- What actions are you taking today to help you reach your goals in the future?



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