

Using a chosen critical incident from your bridging experience, write a critical evaluation on why that incident occurred and how you might learn from it in your own teaching practice. Use research and learning theories to support your comments.

Introduction

During the course of this assignment, the role that critical incidents play in the educational environment and the impact of this on reflective teaching practice is discussed. In addition to this, this assignment also looks into how observations can play a role in enabling researchers, and other educational professionals, to investigate the impact of them in the classroom. This assignment considers the advantages of using observation as a research method and the issues that are associated with it. The observed critical incident is analysed in relation to the Four Purposes outlined in Professor Graham Donaldson's 'Successful Futures' (2015), which follows the 2022 Curriculum for Wales.

Furthermore, academic literature is explored surrounding the areas of research highlighted by the observed critical incident. Key points from the literature will be critically analysed and synthesised to form a basis for academic discussion. The assignment considers differing perspectives, and the implications of the points of view in contrasting literature pieces are discussed.

Critical incidents are a fundamental aspect to reflective teaching practice and can develop an individual's professional development in regard to teaching and learning. Critical incidents can be both positive and negative experiences, and some researchers may argue that they first appear very trivial and commonplace (Tripp, 2012, p.25), but they should be objective interpretations of a classroom experience which can then be developed into a composite finding.

Observation

School and Class Context

As part of the first bridging experience, I was placed in a Secondary school based in Swansea, South Wales. Upon my arrival in the morning, I was introduced to the Network Lead; they took me through the itinerary for the day, and informed me about COVID-19 Protection Guidelines within the school grounds, in line with Welsh Government advice. As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, my bridging experience was limited to one day, as opposed to the usual three, to limit the risk of cross-contamination between the home and school. In addition to this, I was only allowed to stay at the school and observe for four out of five lessons. This was as a result of the Health and Safety guidelines based in the school for the protection of staff and pupils.

I observed one class in Key Stage 3, a mixed ability Year 8 group, whom I observed and shadowed for the entirety of the day. Throughout the day I observed the pupils in a range of Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs) and subject areas, including Health and Wellbeing, Humanities, Mathematics and Numeracy, and Languages, Literacy and Communication.

Throughout the course of this assignment, the name of the school, staff and pupils involved will remain anonymous. Instead I will use letters to refer to pupils, and numbers to refer to staff, respectively. For example, 'Pupil A' and 'Teacher 1'. This is in line with the BERA Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2018) guidance.

Methodology

Educational research allows teaching professionals to establish a strong foundation on which to build their skills, pedagogical knowledge, and subject knowledge (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.48). The aim of critical incident analysis is that its synthesis can be applied to a wider and more general context, which allows teaching professionals to understand and implement its significance in their own classroom. Therefore, when conducting educational research, it is important to use an appropriate technique in which to obtain data.

One research method used as part of this bridging experience was the use of observation to collect data. Observations rely on the researcher having immediate awareness of their surroundings and the behaviour of the participants, and complete mental presence in collecting data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.396). Observation is the best method of data collection to use when the researcher is more interested in the behaviour being displayed, rather than the opinions of the participants (Kumar, 2005, p.120). A non-participant observation method was used, as I was not involved in interacting with pupils or teachers during the course of the observation (Mercatoris and Craighead, 1974, p.514). As an observer, I remained passive and analysed the data as it was being presented to me (Kumar, 2005, p.120).

The type of observation used affects the results the researcher wishes to obtain. Structured observations can provide results which are rich in quantitative data, and their goals are predetermined (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.398). Unstructured observations will revolve around the idea of 'the observer as the participant'. The observer may decide not to declare their role in the research, and actively participate in the study (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.404). In the context of the bridging experience, a semi-structured observational method was used. This means that the information is obtained in a less structured environment (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.397). A semi-structured approach was the best fit for this type of study; the pupils were aware of my presence and my role within the classroom as an observer, but I did have a predetermined goal in regard to looking for a critical incident during the course of my observation.

There are positives and negatives to using observation as a research method. One advantage, for example, is that the researcher is able to see the behaviour in its most natural form. The notes taken by the researcher are usually recorded in a narrative fashion, so must be unpolluted with opinion, and must reflect the actual scenario taking place in front of them (Kumar, 2005, p.121). On the other hand, the limitations of using observation is that they can often incur observer bias, as the observer may only record information that meets their thesis (Kumar, 2005, p.120). One potential solution to this may be to include a second or third observer in the environment simultaneously - all observers would have witnessed the same behaviour, but their perspectives may differ, providing a wider scope of reasoning and analysis (Kumar, 2005, p.121).

A case study methodology was used as part of the bridging experience in order for me to obtain data for my critical incident analysis. Case studies are real-life investigations into an individual or group of people (Kumar, 2005, p.113). They provide rich qualitative data which can subsequently be interpreted. Case studies help researchers understand general phenomena, and aid in providing an explanation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.253).

There are many benefits to using case studies as a method of research; for instance, they can provide great detail, highlighting abstract concepts in practical and meaningful ways, indicating that they can be applied to policy and decision-making (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007, p.255). This is the case in regard to Professor Graham Donaldson's 'Successful Futures' Review (2015), in which he and his team conducted meetings with teaching staff, educational stakeholders and community groups across Wales to discuss their concerns, and what they believe needed to be reformed in the Curriculum for Wales. In order to do this, Donaldson used the information provided by each of the case studies to design the new Curriculum for Wales (Donaldson, 2015, p.13).

However, there are also limitations to using case studies. Case studies can often have issues in regard to accuracy of behaviour witnessed. For instance, if the participant is aware that they form a part of a case study, they may be inclined to change their behaviour – positively or negatively - to fit the standards of what they believe the researcher is looking for (Kumar, 2005, p.120). This is known as the Hawthorne Effect, which can have disastrous effects on the case study taking place, as false information can lead to anomalies in the research.

Critical Incident linked to Donaldson's Four Purposes (Successful Futures, 2015)

Professor Graham Donaldson pioneered an overhaul of the Welsh Curriculum and released his final report and recommendations in 2015. The report suggested four main purposes which the Curriculum should revolve around. The aim of agreed purposes is that they can "mobilise the education community around a common mission" (Donaldson, 2015, p.21) meaning that all teaching professionals and educational stakeholders are on the same page in regard to progressing with a pupil's learning.

The critical incident I am going to explore during the course of this paper is in relation to a Key Stage 3 group (Year 8) I was observing throughout the bridging day. The lesson was Mathematics, as part of the Mathematics and Numeracy AoLE. The critical incident involved the teacher, and Pupil A and Pupil B. The critical incident I wish to focus on follows the plenary of the lesson (see *Appendix 2*).

Teacher 1 introduced the plenary task to the pupils which consisted of a 'plenary talk placemat' screen on the whiteboard, which had different sentence starters that the pupils could use in order to feedback their thoughts about the new multiplication method covered in the lesson. The pupils were given 5 minutes to talk about their reflections in pairs, then individually choose their sentence starter and complete the sentence. It was up to the pupils how much detail they wanted to give in their reflections, and each sentence starter was differentiated for differing abilities. Teacher 1 then asked the class, using the 'hands up' method, to share their reflections with the class. Teacher 1 chose Pupil A who said, "In this lesson, I learnt that the grid method works better for me than the column method because I can clearly see what I have to do next". Teacher 1 thanked Pupil A for their contribution, then asked for another show of hands for someone else to share. Teacher 1 chose Pupil B next,

who said “The best part about today’s lesson for me was learning the new grid method”. Teacher 1 thanked Pupil B for sharing with the class.

Both of the pupils whom the teacher selected had positive feedback to share with the class, which helped solidify their own learning. Pupils were given an opportunity to discuss in pairs what they planned to say, then write their reflections individually, and then discuss their own reflections with the class. This was a great example of peer and self-assessment working collaboratively to achieve a successful plenary, and the usefulness of formative assessment and Assessment for Learning (AfL) in the classroom.

The critical incident linked to multiple of Donaldson’s Four Purposes. In particular, it highlighted the purpose of the new Curriculum for Wales producing ‘*ambitious, capable learners*’ who ‘can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about’ (Donaldson, 2015, p.29). This was demonstrated clearly through the pupils being able to provide feedback to the teacher about their favourite method of multiplication, and why they prefer that method. This critical incident also highlights the concept of ‘*ambitious, capable learners*’ who ‘understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts’ (Donaldson, 2015, p.29). This was shown by the pupils using a new multiplication method in order to achieve the same answer they would have through the method they knew from primary school.

In addition to this, the critical incident also highlights the purpose of encouraging ‘*enterprising, creative contributors*’ who ‘identify and grasp opportunities’ and ‘take measured risks’ (Donaldson, 2015, p.29). This is evident through the pupils using and applying the unfamiliar new multiplication method, whilst utilising concepts learnt from the method they were used to – building on prior knowledge. Finally, this critical incident highlights the purpose of supporting ‘*healthy, confident individuals*’ who ‘have the confidence to participate in performance’ (Donaldson, 2015, p.30). This is illustrated through the pupil’s involvement in the teacher feedback plenary, as this process was entirely selective based on willing participation, it can be argued that the pupils have a good confidence in the classroom and are supported by their teacher.

Literature Review

In regards to literature that encompasses the themes highlighted as part of the critical incident, discussions will revolve around formative assessment as an effective tool for learning; Assessment for Learning as a means of consolidation of learning; and the Constructivist learning theory, in regard to the critical incident and the utilisation of the 2022 Curriculum for Wales.

Firstly, this literature review will focus on the use and impact of formative assessment in classrooms; why it is beneficial, but also the disadvantages surrounding its use. The purpose of formative assessment is that it looks at pupil’s progress as an on-going journey, rather than an assessment of all knowledge accumulated thus far (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.17). It looks at “frequent, interactive assessments” which will benefit pupils learning, and will benefit teachers as their methods will adapt to encourage student progress (Looney, 2005, p.21). Formative assessment should be taking place on a regular basis, ideally on a daily basis (Clarke, 2008, p.16). Formative assessment is designed to unlock a deeper level of learning. These ‘higher order’ concepts of thinking can be transferred between subjects and can be

utilised later in the lives of learner's (Clarke, 2008, p.7). This is why the use of effective formative assessment is seen as an invaluable advantage to a teacher's arsenal.

A survey study conducted by Black and Wiliam showed that effective formative assessment application "has produced incredible results in regard to a pupil's learning and progress" (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.3). However, it has also been argued that during the infant years of formative assessment use in the classrooms, the concept was not taken seriously. In his book, Daugherty – a member of the School's Examinations and Assessment Council (SEAC) - conducted a review into the implementation of formative assessment encouraged by this body. Daugherty found that the use of formative assessment was very limited as part of SEAC's workload; essentially, the official body responsible for the encouragement of formative assessment in classrooms were doing the absolute minimum in order to promote its use (Daugherty, 1995, p.190). Many UK research studies have taken place in regard to the implementation of formative assessment, and what was concluded from these studies was that formative assessment was "in serious need of development" (Russell et al, 1995, p.489).

There have been many debates between educational researchers about the definition of formative assessment. For instance, Bloom (1984) states that formative assessment is a combination of feedback and instructions for pupils (p.14). On the other hand, Cowie and Bell (1999) propose that instruction should take place during the course of the learning, not afterwards, so that pupils have a chance to implement the new knowledge they have acquired (p.32). The second definition provides more clarity for teachers in regard to the practicalities of applying formative assessment in their classrooms. The definition given by Cowie and Bell gives a narrower and more specific focus.

Formative assessment use in classrooms produces a multitude of benefits. Firstly, formative assessments can function summatively, and vice versa (Bennet, 2011, p.7). For example, the scores of the end of unit tests can be used to influence the pedagogy of the teacher, by changing the ways in which lessons are delivered. Secondly, formative assessment supports lower-achieving pupils. It enhances their learning experience, giving them a more positive outlook on their education and may encourage them to achieve good qualifications (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.4). Finally, the implementation of formative assessment requires collaboration between education stakeholders and teachers alike (Heritage, 2010, p.3). This links into the Twelve Pedagogical Principles encompassed in the 2022 Curriculum for Wales. It is stated that good teaching and learning should "encourage collaboration" (Donaldson, 2015, p.70). By discussing different formative assessment strategies amongst colleagues and stakeholders, knowledge is shared and is used to further benefit the pupils.

On the contrary, there are also some limitations to formative assessment. Firstly, in regard to the point made previously by Heritage (2010), Black and Wiliam (1998) discovered that there was a distinct lack of collaboration between educational stakeholders and teachers – even down to teachers within the same school (p.5). This is an issue as valuable knowledge is not being shared between the teaching cohort; a bigger issue arises from this, however, in the form of missed information about Additional Learning Needs (ALN). Whilst in school, pupils have many different teachers, who all take responsibility for formative assessment within their own classroom and are responsible for keeping their own records of assessment details. The issue arises in that there is rarely a compilation of data provided from formative assessment strategies, and so, potential ALN difficulties can be overlooked. This means that a

pupil may be struggling across all of their classes, but due to the formative assessment data not being logged, and subsequently teachers not addressing this issue collaboratively – they may miss out on the opportunity to benefit from the true purpose of formative assessment. Secondly, teachers are already feeling an increased pressure from the implementation of the new 2022 Curriculum for Wales, so putting emphasis on formative assessment in every lesson will increase teacher stress and workload when designing lessons plans (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.18). In this circumstance, it is important to remember that effective use of formative assessment may take some time; teachers should inhabit the ‘spirit’ of formative assessment and AfL, not continue to focus on formative assessment on a ‘tick-box’ basis.

Another aspect to consider in this literature review is Assessment for Learning (AfL). AfL gives the pupils guidance on how to improve, and what to do next in order to achieve their desired goal (Clarke, 2008, p.9). It is important to remember that AfL is not the same as formative assessment, but they can be used simultaneously to achieve the same goal – to develop the richness of pupil learning (Wiliam, 2011, p.10). AfL can be applied in many ways within the classroom environment; for instance, through DIRT (Directed Improvement Reflective Task) time, live marking, and pop-quizzes. Within this literature review the role of self-assessment and peer-assessment will be explicitly discussed as forms of AfL and why they are so effective - as witnessed in the critical incident. Broadfoot et al (2002) described AfL as “the process of seeking and interpreting evidence...to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there” (pp.2-3).

When considering the term ‘assessment’ as a learning tool, we also need to consider the principles of peer-assessment and self-assessment (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.2). Peer-assessment can also be referred to as ‘reflective assessment’ (Black et al, 2003, p.9). This is because pupils enter a state of reflection as to how to improve their own work, or help another pupil improve their work (Rotsaert, 2018, p.257). Self-assessment and peer-assessment, when done correctly, can be empowering for pupils. Pupils need to be supported in their self and peer assessments, so they know to be accurate and honest. Pupils need to understand success criteria, and teachers can guide pupils through this process. This improvement to self and peer assessment should be completed in phases, to avoid cognitive overload (Clarke, 2005, p.114). It is important that pupils understand that these self and peer assessment skills can be developed; they are often too hard on themselves when evaluating and assessing their own work, but when assessing work of their peers they produce honest and reliable feedback (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.9).

Lower ability pupils often make little effort to involve themselves in their own learning process, as they believe they are not capable (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.9). The more capable they feel about accurately assessing work, the richer the feedback will be – for themselves and for other pupils (Rotsaert, 2018, pp.258-9). When pupils work on their self and peer assessment skills, they become more critical thinkers (Rotsaert, 2018, p.258). This means that, in line with the Four Purposes illustrated in the 2022 Curriculum for Wales, pupils will become ‘*ambitious, capable learners*’ in the respect that they ‘are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply that knowledge in different contexts’ (Donaldson, 2015, p.30).

Pupils being able to feedback to a partner has a great impact on many of their skills, including communication skills, pupil willingness to participate and lower ability pupils

feeling listened to (Clarke, 2008, p.52). In order for peer feedback to be completely effective, it needs to be “delivered correctly”, with respect to other pupils in the class (Shute, 2008, p.154). It is important that the teacher encourages respectful listening and constructive feedback amongst pupils, as this will encourage them to ask and answer questions confidently (Heritage, 2010, p.15). This is referred to as having a strong ‘classroom culture’. In addition to this, an element of collaboration is fundamental to having a strong classroom culture – pupils must feel as though they have a big responsibility in regard to applying their assessment strategies. The learning is ultimately shared between students, so all students can improve (Heritage, 2010, p.100). This links back to the Twelve Pedagogical Principles highlighted in Donaldson’s ‘Successful Futures’, whereby it is stated that good teaching and learning should “encourage collaboration” (Donaldson, 2015, p.70).

Whilst conducting research into AfL, a simile to describe feedback came to light. That is that strong feedback should be likened to a ‘good murder’ (Shute, 2008, p.175), in the respect that it needs:

1. Motive (the pupil requires it)
2. Opportunity (the pupil receives it in enough time to utilise it)
3. Means (the pupil is willing and able to use it).

Teachers have embraced constructivist learning theories in classrooms, as they can be utilised to enhance their own pedagogy, and to focus on learner-centred teaching (Candra and Retnawati, 2020, p.836). When pupils are involved and engaged with peer and self-assessment, they are considered to be ‘active learners’ (Rotsaert, 2018, p.267). This highlights the principles outlined in the ‘growth and fixed mindset model’ proposed by Dweck. Pupils with a ‘fixed’ mindset believe that they are either innately capable of achieving, or they are not. Whereas pupils with a ‘growth’ mindset are constantly striving to succeed and develop their skills in order to achieve (Dweck, 2014, p.28). This ‘growth’ mindset model can be achieved through the continued use of effective formative assessment and AfL (Clarke, 2008, p.19). It is important as teachers to set a strong model for growth mindset, by encouraging them to meet new challenges and not to be afraid of failure (Clarke, 2008, p.21).

The ‘Successful Futures’ document also suggests that the Four Purposes will “promote broad ownership of education...” (Donaldson, 2015, p.21). This can be inferred as applying to teaching professionals taking control over the curriculum they teach; however, it has been suggested by educational researchers that this would apply to the pupils themselves. The new Curriculum for Wales follows a constructivist school of thought, whereby the Curriculum for Wales promotes the ideology that pupils take charge of their own learning in order to derive meaning from it, whilst the purpose of teachers is to guide them through this process (Agarkar, 2019, p.854).

Another significant theory to consider as part of constructivism is Vygotsky’s ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ZPD). This theory suggests that pupils learn best when they are being challenged outside of their comfort zone. The ZPD assesses the level of learning which the pupil is currently at, and where the pupil could be based on teacher recommendation (Vygotsky, 1978, p.86). Once they have realised they can achieve whilst in the ‘struggle zone’, the pupil will feel more confident in their learning capabilities (Clarke, 2008, p.28). In regard to the critical incident, the pupil’s ZPD was being utilised through the pupils using the

new multiplication method and being challenged beyond their current understanding. It is advised that feedback given to pupils from the teacher should be targeted within the ‘struggle zone’ of their ZPD (Heritage, 2010, p.84). The goal of the ZPD is to close the gap between the pupil’s current position in their learning and pushing them to achieve progress in their learning (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.10). Constructivism lends itself well to the 2022 Curriculum for Wales, as it does not require pupils to “reinvent the wheel”, but encourages them to be ambitious and capable learners, who are enterprising and creative (Agarkar, 2019, p.855).

Reflection and Next Steps

When reflecting upon my critical incident, and analysing information in my literature review, it can be inferred that the use of formative assessment and AfL in the classroom is paramount to the learning journey of pupils. As an observer, it was my job to witness the use of formative assessment and AfL in the classroom. In addition to witnessing the behaviour, the observation also gave me an opportunity to reflect on my own professional development. I considered what I liked and disliked about what I witnessed; how I felt this followed the theory of formative assessment and AfL that we had learnt about in university lectures; and whether I would need to adjust my pedagogical knowledge to fit the classroom in a real-world context.

In order for me to find the answers to these questions, I needed to undertake a period of reflective practice. In order to do this successfully, I needed to focus on why formative assessment and AfL were used, rather than how they were used (Harrison, 2004, p.14). During my reflective practice period I used the ‘Critical Incident’ method by Harrison (2004), which encompasses three stages. These are:

1. Description – describing the critical incident, the events of what happened and providing context.
2. Analyse – why the incident was ‘critical’, what processes were taking place and why.
3. Assumptions – discussing assumptions that were made about pupils prior learning and drawing up new assumptions made after the critical incident had been identified.

The aim of this reflective practice is to continually adapt the assumptions made until the theory matches the practice (Harrison, 2004, p.13). Throughout the course of my assignment, I had completed the stages one and two. The third stage is focussed on in this section, where I will identify what I plan to do in line with what I had observed as part of my critical incident.

I also looked at Brookfield’s (1995) reflective practice model, which involved looking at four lenses. As outsiders, we can often be blinded by our own opinions and experiences. This is why looking at different perspectives – or lenses – is fundamental to effective professional reflection and development (Brookfield, 1995, p.197). I took a particular interest in ‘Critically Reflective Lens 2’, which focussed on looking through the eyes of our learners (Brookfield, 1995, p.199). By looking at the perspectives of our learners, we follow their learning journey, we become empathetic to their difficulties and we become more responsible teachers (Brookfield, 1995, pp.199-200).

It is undeniable that the use of formative assessment and AfL is important to a pupils learning journey (Shute, 2008, p.157) – it is designed to reduce cognitive overload, encourages collaboration and communication skills, and provides a means for improvement

as opposed to summative assessment strategies (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.6). Although the AfL techniques used were peer and self-assessment, personally, I would like to have seen more time for peer and self-assessment rather than using it quickly at the end of the lesson as a plenary. In reflection of my professional development, I will consider the use of peer and self-assessment as a main aspect of my lessons – for example, allocating more time for this during the main activity, and using a different form of AfL for the plenary. I am also going to consider enquiry questions as a form of AfL, as this ensures that learning is taking place without the need for pupils to be summatively assessed (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.12).

Conclusion

In conclusion, formative assessment in the form of peer and self-assessment is fundamental to the progress of a pupil's learning. Formative assessment is encouraged in all schools, but whether it is being taken seriously, rather than just as a 'tick box' exercise is undetermined. The skills that formative assessment gives pupils is greatly beneficial to their time in education, and throughout the rest of their lives. For example, the skill of higher order thinking and meta-cognition (Heritage, 2010, p.13).

What is important to remember is that children carry immense pride in their success, so as teachers it is vital to encourage pupils to push themselves beyond their perceived capabilities (Clarke, 2005, p.88). As wisely stated by Black and Wiliam (1998), "learning is driven by what teachers and pupils do in classrooms" (p.1). Here, the concept of collaboration has been eluded to, and it holds a strong place in the 2022 Curriculum for Wales as part of the Twelve Pedagogical Principles in Donaldson's 'Successful Futures'. The 2022 Curriculum for Wales encourages pupils to feel pride in their ability to learn and progress, and not to feel limited by the education system. In this way, I feel that the 2022 Curriculum for Wales will provide a major refurbishment to the education system, to help both our pupils and our teachers understand the benefits of the journey of learning.

AppendicesAppendix 1 – Observation 1 notes

1) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES (Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))
Date and time, year group: KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - 9am - Year 8
Lesson details: (Context and focus - /AOLE/subject- is it near start of end of unit of study? Indoors/outdoors? Ability range? Any particularly relevant information). AOLE - Numeracy. Maths lesson - focussed on method of multiplication. Mixed ability group.
Classroom culture (What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like <u>at this point in time?</u>) Teacher shows good control over class disruptions. Relaxed atmosphere - pupils are encouraged that mistakes are valued. Comfortable environment for learning.
Objectives (What happens in the environment that communicates the purpose of the experiences? What can be observed regarding the way lesson activities relate to these purposes?) Key purposes and lesson objective shown on the interactive whiteboard. Pupils given a starter activity related to previous lesson's <u>work</u>, and work they will <u>continue this lesson</u>.
Direction (What can be observed that helps learners understand what they are engaging in? What in the environment helps them understand how to achieve well?) 'Ready to Learn' poster at the front of the class - establishing a good foundation for learning. Everyone follows the same protocols. The starter activity on the whiteboard is also <u>given</u> with several examples - which the teacher runs through with the pupils step-by-step. Clear instructions given and pupils encouraged to have a go themselves.
Access and challenge (What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners? What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?) Teacher asked pupils if they follow the 'column' or 'grid' method - this assesses the pupil's current level of understanding, so the teacher knows how to proceed from here. Main activity followed a 'Bronze', 'Silver' and 'Gold' format. Each category is adapted for differing abilities, pupils are asked to choose their own category which they feel most comfortable working at. This allows the pupils to push <u>themselves</u>, and exceed their own expectations (only one pupil in the whole class completed the 'Bronze' activity!)
Assessment (Can anything be observed about how student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience?) Explicit mention/show of APK (applying prior knowledge) on the whiteboard when pupils were completing the starter activity. The starter activity was recapping from the previous lesson - this allowed the teacher to see the pupils current level of understanding.
The pupils were asked to complete the main activity independently to consolidate the new information given to them. Plenary task involved a 'plenary task placemat' - this gave the pupils sentence starters in which to format their own feedback of the new <u>multiplication</u> method they had learnt. Most pupils said they had a greater understanding of the multiplication after <u>being showed the new method</u>.
Specifics / Critical Incidents (Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching?) 'Chunking' information to allow for deeper learning. Allowing pupils to carry on with work if they <u>didn't</u> have enough time to complete it (as a result of them opting for a higher level, which required greater thinking). This is helpful, as rushing through a topic will mean that the information <u>hasn't</u> been properly absorbed by the pupils. Plenary talk 'placemat' - useful form of self-assessment!

Appendix 2 – Critical Incident 1 notesCRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - Year 8 People involved - Teacher and pupils (each working in pairs) Contextual information - Teacher has allowed pupils to finish the main activity, and wants to check if they have fully understood the new method given to them. The teacher asks pupils to form a pair with the people they are sitting next to, and check each other's answers to see if they are correct.
What happened? A detailed description of what you observed and what thoughts on pedagogy and practice occurred to you as a result, looking towards your research.	Teacher asks pupils to form pairs with the person they are sitting next to and feedback on each other's answers. 4/5 minutes pass, and the teacher asks pupils using the 'hands up' method... Teacher: "who managed to get all of the questions they completed right? So if you managed to do 7 of the 13 I set, did you get all of them correct?" Pupils: *put hands up* Teacher: "Ah very nice! Well done guys! Now, who got only one answer incorrect?" Pupils: *3 or 4 pupils raise their hands* Teacher: "Excellent work guys. Now how about those who had more than one answer incorrect?" Pupils: *Only one pupil raises hand* Teacher: "So 'pupil A', how many did you get incorrect?" Pupil A: Three out of the 13 you set. Teacher: That's still fantastic progress! The pupils are then shown the 'plenary talk placement' on the whiteboard, which gives the pupils sentence starters to provide feedback on the lesson.
	Pupils are given 5 mins to choose their sentence starter and complete the sentence. Teacher then uses the 'hands up' method to ask pupils to volunteer to share their answers. Pupil B is chosen and goes on to say "In this lesson, I learnt that the grid method works better for me than the column method because I can clearly see what I have to do next". Pupil C is chosen and says "The best part about today's lesson for me was learning the new grid method for multiplying". Teacher thanks the pupils for sharing and the class is dismissed. <u>PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE</u> - Pupils providing feedback to each other and to the teacher is a good form of peer and self-assessment. This shows the usefulness of formative assessment and assessment for learning in lessons. - The main activity also consisting of 'Bronze', 'Silver' and 'Gold' categories encourages the children to choose their own path of differentiation, and they can choose to push themselves and challenge their ability. - The plenary tasks involved different sentence starters, all pitched at different abilities - this encourages differentiation, as well as the use of literacy in maths (which is a cross-curricular responsibility). - 4 purposes - - ambitious capable learners who... - o set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge - by choosing a higher level to work at. - o can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about - by giving feedback to the teacher about their favourite method of multiplication. - o understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts - by using a new multiplication method. - o can use number effectively in different contexts - by using a new multiplication method. - enterprising, creative contributors who... - o identify and grasp opportunities - by using a new multiplication method. - o take measured risks - by trying something new and seeing what the outcome will be. - healthy confident individuals who... - o face and overcome challenge - by choosing a higher level to work at. - o have the confidence to participate in performance - by feedbacking to the class about their answers.

Appendix 3 – Observation 2 notes**2) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group: KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - 10am - Year 8
Lesson details: (Context and focus - / ~~goal~~ /subject- is it near start of end of unit of study? Indoors/outdoors? Ability range? Any particularly relevant information). Health and Wellbeing - PE. Map reading/orientation Outdoor lesson
Classroom culture (What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like ~~at this point in time?~~) Very relaxed Behaviours to learning - some behaviour issues as a result of the outdoor environment.
Objectives (What happens in the environment that communicates the purpose of the experiences? What can be observed regarding the way lesson activities relate to these purposes?) Pupils were explained the task verbally - pupils given a map and have to find the points on the field. Reading map and orientations outdoors provides a real-world context designed to give the students a better understanding. As ~~opposed~~ to learning about this indoors.
Direction (What can be observed that helps learners understand what they are engaging in? What in the environment helps them understand how to achieve well?) Teacher verbally explained the task to the pupils - they are told the lesson objective to "find at least 3 of the numbered points on the map" and log them in their notebooks.
Access and challenge (What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners? What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?) Levels of challenge = pupils grouped together by teacher, mixed ability groups. The groups of pupils were encouraged to work together, but if they needed help the teacher was on hand to assist them. Two groups asked the teacher for extra assistance throughout the activity, but the other groups were comfortable in working alone. The purpose of grouping the pupils by mixed ability was to ensure that they could bounce ideas off each other, and that no pupil was left behind to struggle.
Assessment (Can anything be observed about how student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience?) Teacher explicitly mentions APK before starting the ~~activity~~ - asks pupils how to locate directions on a map (eg, North West, South East). The teacher asks about which way the map should be facing, and what the scale on the bottom of the map means. This recall activity allowed the pupils to remember information from prior lessons. Development of knowledge - recap at the end of the lesson about how many numbered points they found, how they located them, and what they can do next time to speed up the process. Pupils showed increased confidence in being able to read the map
independently at the end of the lesson, from the beginning.
Specifics / Critical Incidents (Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching?) Try to take lessons outdoors where possible! Pupils engage in a different way from being in the classroom, and 'hands-on' learning allows for pupils to understand the topic on a deeper level. They are more likely to remember the information.

Appendix 4 – Critical Incident 2 notesCRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - Year 8 People involved - Teacher and Pupil D and Pupil E. Pupil D and E were <u>off-task</u> in the beginning of the activity, and started misbehaving.
What happened? A detailed description of what you observed and what thoughts on pedagogy and practice occurred to you as a result, looking towards your research.	After the pupils had been sent off separately to complete the map-reading task, one group seemed disengaged. Pupil D and E had walked away separately from the group, disbanding themselves and leaving the rest of the team to complete the task. The teach approached Pupil D and E, who had walked far away from their group to the school <u>fence</u>, and asked them why they weren't participating in the activity with the rest of the group. Pupil D replied "it's boring, I don't know what I'm meant to be doing" The teacher then asked the pupils to follow him back to their <u>team</u>, and asked the other team members if they understood the task that had been sent. They said they did understand. The teacher then asked if they could explain the task to Pupils D and E because they <u>didn't</u> know what to do. The pupils explained the task. The teacher asked Pupils D and E "do you understand what to do now? Are you able to <u>rejoin</u> your team and help out?". They agreed and carried on with the task. At the end of the lesson, the teacher regrouped the pupils to feedback on how many points they had found and what they thought about the lesson. The group which had pupils D and E in reported finding 5 of the points - more than any other group in the class. They were praised on their hard work, and Pupils D and E seemed excited about their accomplishment. PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE
	- Pupils providing feedback to each other and to the teacher is a good form of peer and <u>self-assessment</u>. This shows the usefulness of <u>formative assessment</u> and <u>assessment for learning</u> in lessons. - Pupils explaining the tasks to one another, in potentially simpler terms, allows struggling pupils to grasp what the purpose of the task was. This allows for a <u>greater confidence</u> in the struggling pupils, as it may be seen as less embarrassing to have things explained to you by a teacher than your peers. - 4 PURPOSES - - <i>healthy confident individuals who...</i> - o face and overcome challenge - by problem solving with the map. - o have the confidence to participate in performance - by working well in a team. - o form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect - by working well in a team. - <i>ambitious capable learners who...</i> - o set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge - by aiming to reach the target of the lesson. - o can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about - explaining to the teacher about how to read directions. - o understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts - by using the scaling system. - o can use number effectively in different contexts - by using the scaling system.

Appendix 5 – Observation 3 notes**3) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group: KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - 11:20am - Year 8
Lesson details: (Context and focus - /AOLE/subject- is it near start of end of unit of study? Indoors/outdoors? Ability range? Any particularly relevant information). AOLE - Humanities History - Victorian Era - forms of punishment Mixed ability. Mid-unit.
Classroom culture (What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like <u>at this point in time?</u>) Cover teacher in class - pupils took advantage of this! Cover teacher controlled the class effectively, potentially somewhat more sternly as there were ~~behaviour~~ issues. Pupils do not appear particularly engaged - took a long time to <u>settle</u> and seem distracted easily.
Objectives (What happens in the environment that communicates the purpose of the experiences? What can be observed regarding the way lesson activities relate to these purposes?) Lesson objectives displayed clearly on the whiteboard, and pupils are asked to copy them into their books. Activities are related to the topic which they are being taught - forms of punishment in the Victorian Era. Activities consist of watching a video clip and noting 6 facts, then time for a question and answer session afterwards.
Direction (What can be observed that helps learners understand what they are engaging in? What in the environment helps them understand how to achieve well?) The pupils understand what they are <u>engaging</u> in due to the lesson objectives being on the <u>whiteboard</u> and copied into their notebooks. When making notes on the video clip, children are asked to produce 6 things of note.
Access and challenge (What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners? What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?) Pupils are in control of how challenging they wish to make their 6 facts.
Assessment (Can anything be observed about how student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience?) Teacher asks pupils for 'hands up' about information in previous lesson. Links to themes from previous lesson ~~eg~~ Poverty. Video clip contains new information about punishments in the Victorian era - developing knowledge.
Children <u>peer</u> assess each other's work - formative assessment/assessment for learning. Homework task to <u>solidify</u> new information - 5 facts about Jack the Ripper.
Specifics / Critical Incidents (Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching?) Using sources to provide greater depth of understanding - learn how to analyse and interpret images/text. Having a steady control of the classroom from the moment the pupils enter (single file, straight to seats in the seating plan etc.).

Appendix 6 – Critical Incident 3 notes**CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD**

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - Year 8 People involved - Teacher and class. Teacher is talking about punishments in the Victorian era, and discussion turns to punishments across the world today.
What happened? A detailed description of what you observed and what thoughts on pedagogy and practice occurred to you as a result, looking towards your research.	The teacher talks to the pupils about how harsh and nasty the punishments were in the Victorian period, and that they were designed to deter the criminals from committing another crime. Pupil F talks about how punishments today have the same purpose. The teacher <u>agrees, and</u> adds by saying that punishment changes all over the world. Teacher gives some examples, like some Middle Eastern countries cutting your hands off for stealing. She also discusses how what is deemed to be a criminal offence also changes depending on where you are in the world. For example, in Saudi Arabia women were not allowed to drive cars until recently, and this would be a criminal offence that could be taken to a court of law and the woman could be punished. PRACTICE AND PEDAGOGY - Pupils are given a real-world context and can apply this to other circumstances in their life. It gives them a greater understanding of the world around them. - The teacher-led discussion is important as pupils can learn more from casual discussion and debate, rather than being lectured. This follows a humanistic approach to learning, as the children and the teachers are collaborators working together. - FOUR PURPOSES - - <i>ambitious capable learners who...</i> - o set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge - by aiming to reaching the number of facts the teacher wanted. - o can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about - by feedbacking to the teacher about last lesson's information.
	- o are building up a body of knowledge and have the skills to connect and apply knowledge in different contexts - by looking at different forms of punishment across the world. - <i>ethical, informed citizens who...</i> - o engage with contemporary issues based upon their knowledge and views - by looking at different forms of punishment across the world. - o are knowledgeable about their culture, community, society and the world, now and in the past - by looking at different forms of punishment across the world.

Appendix 7 – Observation 4 notes

4) OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group: KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - 12:20pm - Year 8
Lesson details: (Context and focus - /~~AOLE~~/subject- is it near start of end of unit of study? Indoors/outdoors? Ability range? Any particularly relevant information). Language, Literacy and Communication. English lesson - mixed ability. Lesson context - spelling and ~~vocabulary~~ - using the best words we have.
Classroom culture (What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like ~~at this point in time?~~) Really nice vibe, teacher gets along well with pupils, and pupils respond well to the teacher. Behaviour is well controlled and managed - pupils are engaged and excited to learn.
Objectives (What happens in the environment that communicates the purpose of the experiences? What can be observed regarding the way lesson activities relate to these purposes? Lesson objective and APK clearly displayed at the front of the classroom on the whiteboard at the beginning of the lesson. Activities link to the main lesson objective, and the plenary links to the main activity - very well organised! Main activity = 'Challenge the teacher' by trying to come up with better words for typically used 'boring' ones. Plenary = roll the dice, and whichever number you land on dictates which activity you have to do relating to the breakdown on the board.
Direction (What can be observed that helps learners understand what they are engaging in? What in the environment helps them understand how to achieve well?) Pupils copied the Lesson Objective from the board at the beginning of the lesson. Pupils are praised when they have 'beaten the teacher' in the main activity, for coming up with a better more exciting word to use in their work. Pupils were encouraged to share their ideas with the class, no answer is wrong!
Access and challenge (What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners? What can be observed regarding levels of challenge? Teacher allows the pupils to use a thesaurus if they are really struggling to think of another word - extra resources and scaffolding in place. Starter activity - children were asked to pick their 'best word' from the short essay task they completed the lesson previously. Children were told previous lesson to choose the best words they could to share them with the class that I was observing in. 'Challenge the teacher' - fun competition, pushing children to do their absolute best.
Assessment (Can anything be observed about how student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience?) Explicit link to APK - starter activity involved previous lessons work. Main activity trying to 'beat the teacher' - pupils were encouraged not to use slang. This allowed the pupils to really think and deepen their knowledge, instead of ~~using~~ the words that come easy to them. Roll the dice game plenary - used to reinforce understanding. Tasks included 'drawing a visual image of the word you've chosen', 'writing the word out three times', 'think of an antonym for that word'. This really develops their knowledge and understanding, ~~memory retention and spelling.~~
Specifics / Critical Incidents (Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching?) If conducting a memory task, repeat the thing you want pupils to remember 3 times. If removing a pupil from the class - make sure they are adequately caught up with what the task is, and the lesson objective, when they return so they ~~don't~~ feel like they have an excuse to not do the work. 'Challenge the teacher' - encourages competition, pupils do not realise they are bettering their understanding and the understanding of their peers. Using games to reinforce knowledge - good as formative assessment. When counting down, use an example/demand for them to achieve by that time eg, 'John look at me in 3, Daisy turn around in 2, Michael do not swing on your chair in 1...'

Appendix 8 – Critical Incident 4 notesCRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	KEY STAGE 3 - 29/09/2020 - Year 8 People involved - Teacher and class. Teacher is allowing pupils to share their answers from the main activity, 'challenge the teacher' to the class. The teacher then has their own list of words, and the pupil's 'best' words are then compared to the teacher's 'best' words.
What happened? A detailed description of what you observed and what thoughts on pedagogy and practice occurred	Pupils complete the main activity of 'challenge the teacher' in which there are a list of 'boring and overused' words on the board, and the aim of the pupils is to find better synonyms for these words. The children share their ideas in front of the class - and the class rate out of 5 on their hands how good the word is as an alternative (1 = worse, 5 = better). After working through the list of words one-by-one and jotting them on the board, the teacher then presents the class with their list of 'best' words, to see how they compare. The pupils also rate the teacher's words out of 5 to
to you as a result, looking towards your research.	see how they compare to their own list they curated. <u>PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE</u> - Pupils providing feedback to each other and to the teacher is a good form of peer and self-assessment. This shows the usefulness of formative assessment and assessment for learning in lessons. - The pupil's words were also being compared against the teachers, which would be a good example/platform in which to progress from. Also a form of formative assessment. - The plenary activity with the dice also encompasses numeracy as part of English - a cross-curricular responsibility in the 3 frameworks. - 4 PURPOSES - - ambitious capable learners who... - o set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge - by trying to 'beat the teacher'. - o can explain the ideas and concepts they are learning about - by explaining what a synonym and antonym are. - o understand how to interpret data and apply mathematical concepts - by using the dice to complete the plenary. - o can use number effectively in different contexts - by completing the dice plenary challenge, using numbers to dictate tasks. - enterprising, creative contributors who... - o identify and grasp opportunities - by trying to 'beat the teacher'. - o take measured risks - by trying to 'beat the teacher'. - healthy confident individuals who... - o face and overcome challenge - by trying to 'beat the teacher'. - o have the confidence to participate in performance - by feedbacking their words to the class. - o form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect - by working together to try and 'beat the teacher'.

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