

A critical evaluation and the identification of next teaching and learning steps focusing on a case study of an individual learner or a group of learners, based on an observed critical incident.

Introduction

Critical incidents are core resources for teachers to advance their professional development. Tripp (2011) claims that critical incidents are to be observed and then created by the practitioner. It is how the term 'critical' describes the teacher's act of viewing a routine event in the classroom setting that is crucial, but their perspective as a practitioner causes them to analyse the incident and uncover a potential avenue to explore. As seen in figure 1, the creation of a critical incident requires the practitioner to look beyond the immediate context and give a position of classification. Although these events may appear to be insignificant, they are invaluable as they are 'indicative of underlying trends, motives and structures' (Tripp, 2011, p. 24) of the classroom environment and its influence of the child's learning.

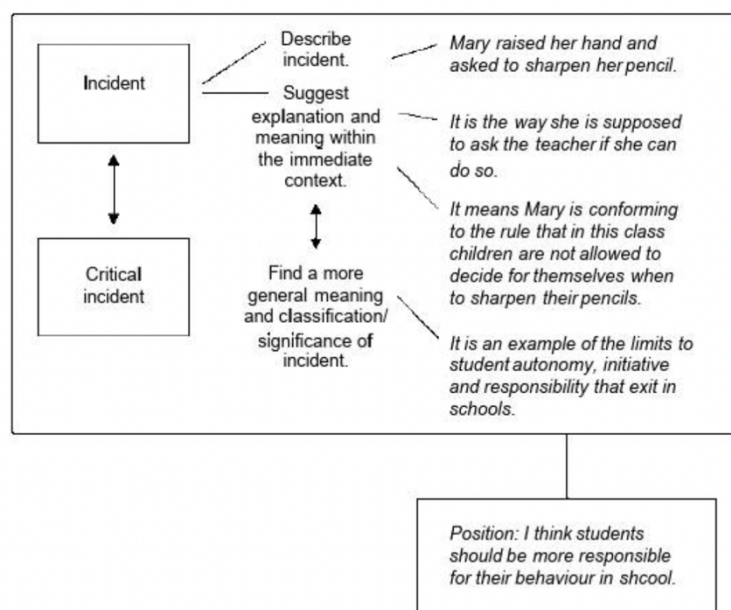


Figure 1. Creating a critical incident (Tripp, 2011)

As a developing teaching professional, observing and constructing critical incidents are a strong foundation for establishing a personal pedagogical approach. This assignment will be exploring a critical incident linked to one of Donaldson's Four Purposes (Donaldson,

2015) observed in the classroom setting whilst complying with the BERA (2018) guidelines. This assignment will then review literature surrounding the general meaning of the critical incident and consider a wide range of perspectives encompassing the area of significance of the critical incident. These aspects will then enable the practitioner to explore how the role of critical reflection informs professional development as a teacher, whilst being conscious of maintaining an ethical practice. By using reflective models, this assignment will then proceed to evaluate the next steps in teaching and learning.

The Role of Critical Reflection

There are a variety of approaches to critical reflection which complement each other and assist a practitioner when producing a critical incident. The importance of conducting an informed professional reflection is outlined in the QTS standards. As 'wider reading and research findings' is identified in professional learning, it allows the practitioner to reflect on their teaching approaches which is crucial in the pedagogical standard (Welsh Government, 2019). As practitioners follow these standards, they critically reflect on their pedagogy through classroom incidents, whilst continually being 'informed by literature and research' (Zwozdiak-Myers, P., 2012, p. 67). This enables them to conduct research relevant to their classroom environment as well as achieving goals within their professional development. Schon's (1987) model of 'reflection-in-action', allows practitioners to reflect on their interpretation of incidents and construct a plan of action moving forward informed by the incident. Schon explains that a reflective practitioner should always have awareness of the ongoing phenomena within their classroom and provide inclusive details of observations. The practitioner must then have the confidence to use these as experience and act informed by the critical incidents. This action is crucial for the practitioner as they gain intimate knowledge of pupils and construct the classroom environment accordingly.

This idea is explained in the context of education as Schon presents the view that practitioners must be informed by observing incidents within their classroom to relate this to a specialised area. This allows them to gain further knowledge of the learners' behavioural trends (Zwozdiak-Myers, P., 2012). Korthagen and Kessels (1999) expressed that reflection-on-action is the starting point for a practitioner to devise action to professionally develop. As Korthagen and Kessels' ALACT model (action/looking back/awareness of essential aspects/creating alternative methods of action/trial) (ibid) displays the process of the practitioner being critically aware of what events take place within the classroom. In figure two, teachers are encouraged to analyse their Gestalts and how they influence their pedagogy. Zwozdiak-Myers expresses that this process is most successful when reflection-on action is performed after the event has taken place. This is essential as it enables teachers to gain a wider perspective of the context.

As a teacher's practice is continually developing, bringing critical

evaluation to pedagogical practice and classroom environment is fundamental to professional expansion. Formative evaluations indicate developmental needs, required resources and desired goals by exploring the systematic research and methodical judgement (Zwozdiak-Myers, P., 2012). Both Schon and Korthagen and Kessels' reflective models address this and aid the practitioner in 'employing a broad repertoire of teaching approaches' (Impact Wales, 2018). As these models directly support the practitioner in meeting the 'Professional Values and Attributes (Welsh Government, 2011), they allow teachers to incorporate professional research within their practice. By recognising the significance of critical reflection in their pedagogy, teachers then take 'responsibility for the continuing professional development' (Welsh Government, 2011, p.5). By recognising the significance of a continuing professional development, the practitioner will be innovative in their approaches to overcome challenging events.

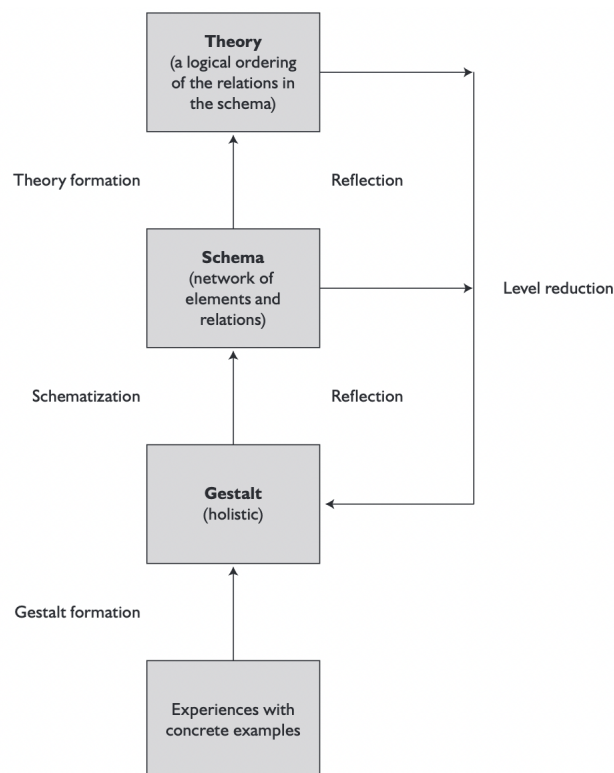


Figure 2. 'Levels in the process of learning with regard to a certain domain: Adapted from Korthagen and Kessels' (Zwozdiak-Myers, P., 2012, p. 72).

Observation – School and Class Context

As affirmed in the BERA guidelines (2018) practitioners engaging with educational research must treat participants with respect whilst maintaining their rights, and 'should operate within an ethic of respect for any persons' (BERA, 2018). Consequently, informed by BERA

guidelines, the school's name, members of staff and pupils will have anonymity throughout the research.

The following observation took place in a mixed-gender English-medium Primary School located in the Vale of Glamorgan in South Wales. At the time of the observation there were 471 children aged between 3-11 enrolled, with 14 single-year classes along with four nursery classes. The observation took place in a Year 3 classroom setting.

The school has identified that 36% of pupils have eligibility for free school meals (FSM), which exceeds the national average of 19% (Estyn, 2017). Although the school does not contain any pupils who have a statement of 'Additional Learning Needs' (ALN) the school has identified '31% of pupils as having ALN', this is above the average for Wales which is 21% (Estyn, 2017). There are no pupils identified as Welsh speakers within their household, and majority are of 'white British ethnicity where English is the main language', and only a select few consider English as an additional language (Estyn, 2017).

The school has had substantial involvement with the development of professional learning making input towards the new Curriculum for Wales by assisting the Welsh government and working cooperatively with other schools.

Critical Incident linked to Donaldson's 4 purposes

The critical incident I will be focusing on is located in Appendices 1. It took place after lunchtime break, as the children transitioned from the playground to their classroom for a carousel-style session revolving around literacy. At the beginning of the observation, I was sitting outside the classroom where I had a view of both the corridor staircase and inside the classroom. The children walked independently and sat on the carpet to wait for further instruction. After the children had filtered into the classroom, 'Child A' walked a distance behind; visibly emotionally distressed as they held onto a LSA's hand and were then guided into the classroom. As the teacher entered the classroom, they sat on a chair in the carpet area as the children sat silently. Instead of joining their peers on the carpet, Child A was still emotional and sat on the teacher's lap. The teacher began to calmly address the class and informed them of the reason of Child A's distress, explaining that they were frightened because the toilet lights had been turned off, and it was followed by 'scary noises' made by classmates. As the teacher explained that they hope that pupils were not being unkind to Child A, they also explained that it is normal for the lights to turn off as they are on a motion timer. The teacher began to brief the class of the afternoon's activities, which led to Child A emotionally regulate whilst still sat on the teacher's lap. In response, Child A's peers began to ask the teacher if Child A was sad and became concerned. The teacher acknowledged this and expressed that Child A was feeling better and happier now.

What made this incident critical was the teacher's awareness of Child

A's health and well-being, more specifically their emotional well-being. As the teacher acknowledged Child A's emotional distress, they also had awareness of the impact this could have on the class. As the teacher was conscious of this, they conducted themselves accordingly by creating a settled environment for both Child A to express their emotions and share with their peers. This incident reflects one of Donaldson's purposes outlined in the 'Successful Futures' review (Donaldson, 2015), conducted to alter the curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales. Donaldson's purpose of creating 'healthy, confident individuals' who are empathetic and resilient within their mental and emotional well-being (Donaldson, 2015, p.30). Donaldson outlines that learners must have the confidence to overcome struggles as independently as possible, informed by positive relationships based upon a shared mutual respect. The teacher observed displayed the qualities of this purpose, which then in turn created a modelled response of empathy from the children. As the children witnessed the teacher reinforcing resilience, they were able to react with vocal compassion towards Child A indicating a mutual respect among their peers. This displayed the pupils successfully demonstrating the ability to be healthy and confident individuals by developing their knowledge of both their own and their peers' emotions.

Literature Review

From this critical incident, this section will explore the literature surrounding Modelling and Children's relationship with teachers.

As critical incidents inform the practitioner of the underlying needs of the child which advises the action needed to support the child. By following this definition, the observed critical incident reflects the practitioner's awareness of the emotional needs of the class and has identified action to build resilience within the children. This was demonstrated when the children observed the teacher exhibiting sensitivity and empathy towards Child A, which they mirrored independently. This phenomenon also comes under the term 'modelling' (Bandura, 1977), which is a theme I have identified for further research. Bandura's widely recognised social learning theory (1977) is the core of modelling philosophy. Bandura states that by viewing purposeful modelling behaviour from a caregiver, the individual then constructs appropriate behaviour by fusing the action and intention together. This approach not only enables the practitioner to assist the child to decode their thoughts and emotions, but creates an environment to exchange and receive the concern and communicate it back to them. Rose, Gilbert and Richards (2015) expand this point by expressing the practitioner assists the child in solving the concern until they can do this independently.

Although education has developed since Bandura first developed the modelling approach, many theorists still apply it to well-being in education today. There are adaptations to the theory of modelling, such as CBM (Case-Based Modelling). Lyons and Bandura (2018) suggest that in this revised approach, cognitive processes aid to expand knowledge through both participation and guided assistance of others,

resulting in solutions for challenging events within the classroom. By implementing this approach, the child is informed for appropriate action in similar events in the future. In addition to this concept, Hyson (2003) suggests that as the stages of the child's development progress children begin to seek models beyond family members and start to refer to teachers to guide their behaviour. Hyson also expresses how crucial it is to have an emotion-centred curriculum as a practitioner, as this encourages the children to associate problem solving with positive emotions. Further to Hyson's approach, Goleman adds to Bandura's modelling theory by suggesting that the observer must inhabit the model's emotional space to resemble theirs' and to gain 'emotional attunement' (Goleman, 2009). In this notion, Goleman expresses the pertinence for practitioners to assist children's emotional attunement with others as it is a key element to develop empathy, which Rose, Gilbert and Richards (2015) suggest will enable the child to gain self-awareness and accomplish recognising their peers' emotions. Goleman suggests that the intention of this process is to achieve emotional intelligence within the observer, as it will result with the child attaining emotional regulation independently within the classroom environment and for life beyond (Rose, Gilbert and Richards, 2015). By encouraging the child to independently regulate emotionally, this will build resilience and bring a calmer environment into the classroom.

As Goleman expresses the importance of emotional attunement within a modelled approach, there is consideration for the significance of the practitioner's relationship with the child. Harlow (Vicedo, 2010) is key to the progression of attachment theory, as Harlow considered the combination of a caregiver and peers as the most beneficial for an individual's development. Harlow expressed the view that interaction amongst peers and caregivers has the potential to fulfil the need for reassurance and comfort needed for the individual and will begin to be a source for positive emotional health and well-being (Vicedo, 2010). This takes the view of teachers as caregivers, and it is fundamental that the practitioner forms a positive relationship with the child to encourage health and well-being.

Siegel builds on this notion and has developed a framework applicable to modern attachment theory approaches. Siegel addresses the significance of positive relationships in relation to attachment theories, and how they can be used to develop health and well-being (Rose, Gilbert and Richards, 2015). Within this consideration for the importance of positive relationships Siegel has developed a framework to decode the foundation of the attachment process and how it should be applied, which Siegel identifies as the '4 Ss of Attachment' (Rose, Gilbert and Richards, 2015). This theory translates to 'seen, safe, soothed and secure', and is a process the practitioner must follow to ensure that children feel their emotions are acknowledged empathetically, building an environment of safety and assisting in regulating the child's emotions when distressed. By following this process, practitioners establish security within the child, which encourages them to gain a sense of independence within their personal well-being (Rose, Gilbert and Richards, 2015). This attachment theory approach complements Bandura's modelling theory, as combined, it assists the practitioner to create positive engagement

with the observer when modelling desired behaviour through a mutual bond. This relationship is crucial when implementing Bandura's social learning theory as 'empathy and the disposition to be cooperative and prosocial emerge out of children's experiences of collaboration with their caregivers' (Watson and Ecken, 2018, p.11). Zaccagnini (2010, cited in Schweiger, 2015) express that positive and negative emotions are a continuum, therefore extinguishing our negative emotions is not sufficient to reproduce positive emotions. This supports the use of emotional modelling when encouraging positive emotions, as physically demonstrating creates a more memorable learning experience for the child.

As Bandura's initial theory expresses the importance of the practitioner's role, there are other theorists who suggest otherwise. Piaget advocates a constructivist approach to a child's development, where the child has an active role in the construction of their understandings of themselves and the environment (Halpenny, 2014). Piaget believed that the child's construction of knowledge relied deeply on how their environments were represented, as provoking opportunities for engaging exploration of a variety of different concepts is central to a rich learning environment (Halpenny, 2014). The practitioner's involvement within the child's developmental progress is not as valued as peer contact within Piaget's approach. Within Piaget's view, practitioners are advised to have awareness of what the child may bring in addition to the learning environment and are encouraged to construct the educational setting where the practitioner and child can come together to collaborate. Piaget is also widely recognised for his theory of the stages of cognitive development. As displayed in Fig. 3 Piaget's theory is describes the development stage in relation to the child's age and expresses that it is essential for the child to comprehend each stage in order to progress to the next (Gray and MacBlain, 2015).

Stage of cognitive development	Age	What is happening?
Sensorimotor stage	Birth to 2	Rapid cognitive growth. Development of 'object permanence'. Explores the world using senses. Symbolic language emerging.
Preoperational stage	2 to 7 years	Egocentric. Symbolic representation. Rapid language development.
Concrete operational stage	7 to 11 years	Understands mathematical concepts (time, space, quantity) Concepts are attached to concrete situations.
Formal operational stage	12 years on up	Can think logically and hypothetically. Understands the abstract.

Figure 3. 'Piaget's 4 Stages of Cognitive Development' (The Early Years and Childcare Service, 2021).

Piaget has been met with criticism within contemporary education. A proportion of practitioners do not agree entirely with the stages of cognitive development due to the lack of flexibility to be applied to those who are considered 'underdeveloped' for their age (Gray and MacBlain, 2015). When a proposed review of applying Piaget's theory

of cognitive development to the curriculum of social studies of children within the primary age in Arizona, many practitioners expressed concern (Hinde and Perry, 2007). Many practitioners effected by the proposed implementation of Piaget's developmental approach argued that the children would not only forgo education time focused on developing the appropriate key literacy skills but be exposed to content for which were not emotionally mature (Hinde and Perry, 2007). Some practitioners used Piaget's theory to contradict the application of the approach, as they suggested those aged between 3-5 are in the preoperational stage of Piaget's theory which requires the children to be egocentric, and therefore concludes they are unable to assimilate the suggested curriculum (Hinde and Perry, 2007). The core foundation of the practitioner's argument was that 'no amount of teaching, resources, or interventions can cause a child to comprehend what s/he is not developmentally ready to comprehend' (Hinde and Perry, 2007, p. 68). Despite the practitioner's concern of the Piagetian approach going against their pedagogical standards, the state of Arizona implemented the standards along with the contested content (Hinde and Perry, 2007). Jones and Brader-Araje (2002) disagree with the practitioners' upset of the Piagetian implementation and suggest that constructivist pedagogy is necessary as it considers the child's conceptual ecology. The consideration of the child's prior knowledge is crucial when encouraging positive health and well-being, as it assists the practitioner to make appropriate judgements on future action.

The debates between the state of Arizona and primary practitioners who work within it reflect the contrasting ideology of Bandura and Piaget. As Piaget viewed the child within the role of a lone scientist (Gray and MacBlain, 2015), Bandura believes that it is essential for the child to be guided by a model's behaviour in order to formulate responses to support their progression (Bandura, 1977). Bandura also personally recognised Piaget's cognitive development approach and disputed its application to children's development. In Bandura's rejection of Piaget's approach, he suggests that Piaget put limitations on the incentives in which children require to perform matching behaviour. In addition Bandura also disagrees with Piaget's view of schemata, which decides the actions an individual can or cannot mirror and is determined by maturation. In response to Piaget's theory in relation to this concept, Bandura states 'the critical issue in observational learning is not how input is matched to performed plans but how input creates the plans' (Bandura, 1977, p.31).

Reflection/Evaluation & Next Steps

The observed critical incident captured the essence of Donaldson's purpose of creating 'healthy, confident individuals' (Donaldson, 2015), as this informed the practitioner's course of action providing guidance and empathetic encouragement. As Wales has a Children's Commissioner (Sally Holland), it is crucial that practitioners refer to the 42 rights formulated by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Welsh Government, 2019). A central article within the UNCRC that is the core for the purpose of ensuring 'healthy, confident individuals' (Donaldson, 2015) is Article 27 as it

requires the practitioner to recognise and provide an environment that establishes a standard for 'the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development' (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, 1990). I will instil this into practice, as practitioners must adopt this Article to ensure the child's environment is appropriate for their development of health and well-being.

As I have explored the social learning approaches of modelling and attachment and relationships, I will integrate the key aspects of these concepts into teaching. Following Siegel's ideology of attachment theory, I will adopt a practice of constructing a collaborative environment with the children. I will build strong personal relationships with each child to gain insight into their needs and adjust my approach accordingly. This approach must be undertaken with consistency and in a receptive manner, as this will result in the children gaining a foundation of trust internally and externally (Watson and Ecken, 2018). Donaldson outlines the importance of a mutual collaborative educational environment between the practitioner and child, as 'independence, self-reliance and respect for others should be fostered throughout the teaching and learning process' (Donaldson, 2015, p. 28).

In addition to my adaption of Siegel's attachment theory framework, I will formulate a pedagogical approach which is informed by Bandura's learning theory of modelling. By applying Bandura's concepts within my approach to health and well-being, I will build on the collaborative partnership created mutually with the children. These interactions are central to building children's communicative skills, which will result in promptly identifying their needs and encouraging emotional independence. Not only will this approach develop their understanding of their own needs, but they will recognise needs within others. In our role as a practitioner, we are also caregivers, which requires us to build a relationship that reaffirms to the child their importance whilst also providing a sensitive environment tailored to their individual needs and qualities (Watson and Ecken, 2018).

With my next steps in my developing professional teaching practice identified, there must be consideration of how I will implement these concepts. As established in an earlier section, there are key approaches to critical reflection that a practitioner could use. The reflective models that I have selected are Schon's 'reflection-in-action' model (Schon, 1987) and Korthagen and Kessels' ALACT model (Korthagen and Kessels, 1999). To engage with Schon's reflection in action model, I will continually identify critical incidents within my teaching practice and critically analyse the event in order to understand where it originates. By then following Schon's model, I will reflect on the critical incident and use this reflection as a tool to inform the further action needed in order to progress within my professional teaching practice. As this process is completed, it will then assist my application of the ALACT model as it will allow myself as a practitioner to investigate my own pedagogical approach. By engaging with Korthagen and Kessels' model, it will allow myself within my professional development to critically reflect on the significance of my position as a practitioner within the critical incidents and decode the influences in which formulate my approach.

As the observed critical incident displayed the practitioner's actions informed by experiences of past events, it demonstrates the importance of a strong nurturing relationship with each child to model desired behaviour appropriately. To progress within my teaching practice, I must use these reflective models to identify the needs of the child physically and emotionally. Without the application of critical reflective models, the practitioner may not be aware of the characteristics of the unique needs of the child.

Conclusion

Throughout this investigation, I have maintained an approach that focuses on my personal pedagogical development within my professional teaching practice. As I have reflected on my observed critical incident, I have identified areas of literature in which educational theorists have explored the phenomenon of the incident and outlined the characteristics of what is successful and what is not based on extensive research. This approach to develop further within my teaching practice is key to the Welsh Government's national approach to professional learning, and is an example of how I have implemented the element of 'pedagogy for professional learning' (Welsh Government, 2018). As there are 8 elements to the national approach to professional learning, I have included a number of these element whilst undertaking this investigation. The element of an 'individual professional learning journey' (Welsh Government, 2018) has been considered thoroughly in the critically reflective aspects of my investigation, as I have identified the aspects I will carry through to my pedagogical development and have understood the requirements needed to be successful in this. An example of this is my planned implementation of Siegel's attachment theory framework (Rose, Gilbert and Richards, 2015) when building personal relationships with the children and considering the time frame in which this would be achieved.

Another element that I have instilled into investigation is a 'professional learning blend' (Welsh Government, 2018). I have engaged with this element as I have undertaken action research within the classroom and complemented this with further research accessed via an E-based route as I have included sources of research based purely online.

The final element of the national approach to professional learning (Welsh Government, 2018) is my consideration of the professional standards for teaching and leadership. As in an earlier section of my investigation I outlined the importance of 'reflection on learning' within the standard of pedagogy, blended with the professional learning standard centring around conducting 'wider research' and applying 'research findings' (Welsh Government, 2019). By following these standards, I have applied my research findings to critically reflect on the next stages of my professional development as a practitioner.

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Appendices

Appendices 1

Date and time, year group: 22/09/2021 at 1:30 pm: Year 3.
Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context This observation took place in school X in the Vale of Glamorgan. The time at observation was 1:30pm after lunchtime. Playtime had just finished, and the children were walking up from the yard to their classroom for a carousel-type session revolving around literacy. I was sat outside the classroom with a close view of the staircase and inside the classroom itself. The children walked independently and sat on the carpet ready for further instructions of their activities.
What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work) As all of the class had filtered into the classroom, child A walked a distance behind their classmates and was being guided up the stairs by a LSA. Child A was very emotional and teary as they held onto the LSA's hand and as they entered the classroom. As all their other classmates sat on the carpet around the teacher, child A sat on the teacher's lap still very emotional. The teacher began to calmly address the cause for the upset, as child A was frightened due to the toilet lights being turned off and other classmates making noises to scare them. The teacher explained that although they hoped that the pupils were not misbehaving, they also told them that it is normal for the lights to turn off suddenly due to them being on a motion timer. The teacher then calmly briefed the class with the afternoon's activities, and child A began to regulate whilst continuing to sit on the teacher's lap. As child A was on the teacher's lap, their peers began to ask the teacher if child A was ok and if they were sad. In response to this the teacher expressed that they were feeling better and happier now.
Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be "under the hood" in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider? In this incident, child A relied on the teacher as a trusted adult and needed them to be emotionally supportive in order to feel like their crisis is recognised. This could relate back to Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System theory, where the teacher's significance during this incident could be placed in child A's microsystem. Another avenue of research exploring the emotional reliance on the teacher could be Sigmund Freud's attachment theory also known as 'Cupboard Love', as child A associated the teacher with their need of comfort. This avenue could also link to Harry Harlow's attachment theory approach to comfort. Another key point to this incident was the modelling of emotion shown between the teacher and the pupils. This was prevalent when due to the teacher displaying empathy to child A, this caused other children to do the same. Albert Bandura

explored this in his social learning theory, where he explored that most human behaviour was learnt through observing others. In addition to Bandura's theory, Daniel Goldman's Domains of Emotional Intelligence also reflects the awareness that the children have of their own emotions and their peer's emotions.

Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here)

This observation took place just after lunchtime play, so the energy levels of child A could be considered in relation to their emotions.

Appendices 2

Date and time, year group: 23/09/2021, 10 am. Year 6

Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context

This observation took place during an outdoor learning session in school X's forest area of their field. This session is completely child lead, and has numerous different non-curricular activities laid out in different sections of the area. These activities included lighting fires, banging drums, carpentry, filmmaking, whittling station and jam making bench. The children were free to choose their activity for as long as they pleased, and they also had the option of foraging. Although this session as described as non-curricular, the goal is to increase and maintain the wellbeing of the class by teaching them different skills in the outdoors.

What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work)

During my observation I spent some time at the elderberry jam making station. At this station was child B who had a visual impairment. Child B was joined by two other classmates and a LSA. I asked child B what the process of the jam making entailed, and they explained and invited me to participate by asking "do you want to feel the berries?". I agreed and they placed berries in their hand and said, "feel them in my hand", and I began to feel them too whilst child B was describing how cold they were and slippery. As the berries popped, I asked what colour they were, and they expressed "bright red". During this incident, the groups using the drums in a different area began to bang them loudly. Child B then said, "can you hear those drums because they are so loud".

Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be "under the hood" in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider?

As child B has additional learning needs, an avenue of research of sensory experiences and how they inform the senses that are impaired. This was evident in this incident as child B's use of touch its crucial to understanding the task and exploring the curriculum. As the activity during this incident included child B at a equal level

to their peers regardless of their visual impairment, a exploration into the social model of disability could be taken. Another aspect of research could include Lev Vygotsky's social-cultural constructivist theory. This is related to the aspect of how child B is constructing their own understanding, but also how relaying the information to myself due to the language and engagement. It is also unique how this is done with their additional learning needs in mind. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development theory related to this as 'learning proceeds development'. Another interesting avenue could be how child B experienced a sensory overload by the drums, whilst undertaking a task that relied on touch. This could lead to research exploring the cognitive development between the two senses, and how they affect the learning experience and their cognitive load.

Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here)

Instructions for the task were made clear, and they were positively engaging with each other. The environment was busy as they were various activities being undertaken, and it also started to rain.

Appendices 3

Date and time, year group: 23/09/2021, 12:30 pm. Reception.

Where and When: Context of the observation – subject/AOLE, general classroom context

This observation took place in school X's play yard and was a session which included a focus group selected from the class to examine their number recognition and mark making level. The teacher explained to me how they have never done this session in their area before and how this was a trial to see how the children cope. The children's task consisted of them selecting numbers out of a pile, attempt to cycle a bike in the shape of that letter and deliver it back to the group to learn how to draw that number in chalk on the floor.

What happened: a detailed description of the critical incident (the more detail the better to refer to in your later work)
As the children were informed by one of their peers that the next number to draw was 7, they picked up their chalk and began to draw it. To reinforce and assist their memory, the teacher said, "across the sky and up to heaven, that's the way we draw a seven". This was met with a positive reaction from the students, as they repeated the rhyme whilst successfully producing a 7 from mark making with chalks at various times.

Areas of possible exploration: what you think could be "under the hood" in these incidents? What avenues of research could you consider?

During this incident, the teacher displayed learning theories

exploring the use of repetition. By using a musical rhyme to inform how to draw a figure 7, the teacher was conditioning the children to revert to the rhyme in order to access their memory of the activity. This relates to Edwin Guthrie's theory of a stimulus-response model of learning, more specifically his theory targeting contiguity. Another theory to consider is John B. Watson's classical behavioural theory, focusing on how the learner is passive and responding to environmental stimuli.

Notes: any details you can note (is it a busy environment, is it after lunch, are there lots of distractions, are directions made explicit - the more you can refer to the better here)

This observation took place after lunch time play, with a small amount of dizzily rain. Directions were made explicit by the teacher and had many physical elements to the task, e.g., riding the bike and mark making on the floor.