

ECAD6007

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

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Research and inquiry within the teaching profession has often been deemed as inaccessible. Research is often seen as, “idealistic”, (Tripp, 1993, 28) in that it fails to acknowledge the many nuances of the classroom environment. As a result, the implementation of research within practice has been frequently neglected, which has led to a, ‘research-practice gap’ (Davies, 2017).

However, through ‘research-rich’ (Furlong, 2014, 8) analyses carried out by ‘Critically reflective practitioners’ (Bookfield, 1998, 197) we are able to uncover a wealth of incite regarding the learning environment and practice. It is with this ethos that I will undertake the critical evaluation and the identification of next teaching and learning steps focusing on a case study of an individual learner based on an observed critical incident. Critical incidences are events that often, ‘appear typical rather than critical at first sight’ (Tripp, 1993, 56), but through careful analyses become critical. In this essay I will present an analysis of a critical incident that I witnessed in a primary school. The incident I will be presenting brings into discussion a number of pedagogies such as Assessment for learning (William), Rosenshine’s Principles, (Sherington, 2019) And independent learning, as well as touching upon Ideologies such as social constructivism. (Pritchard, 2014) Through systematic analysis I will identify my hypothesis with reference to extensive research, addressing the implications of the incident and the potential impact it has upon the learning environment. In doing so I will identify next teaching and learning steps that can be applied to improve the learner experience and develop my own professional practice.

The Critical incident I observed took place in an English medium school where very few pupils speak Welsh outside of the school environment. There are approximately four hundred pupils, aged from three to eleven, including nursery children who attend full time. (Partership, 2020) Almost all of the students that attend the school are of white ethnicity

(Estyn, 2019). Only five percent of students are eligible for free school meals which is thirteen percent below the national average (Ibid), highlighting the fact that the school is located in a relatively affluent area. Only six percent of the school's students identify as having special education needs, which is fifteen percent lower than the national average (Estyn, 2019) yet it has been noted that, 'those with special educational needs and those who need extra support, make good progress in literacy, numeracy and ICT from their individual starting points.' (Estyn, 2019) This year 2020, there are eleven single-age classes within the school and three split classes which includes the Year one and two split class that I observed. The school has determined it necessary to mix the year groups in order to maintain appropriate class sizes but additionally mixed classes allows the teacher to view pupils as, 'unique individuals and pay more attention to their needs...teaching each child according to his or her own strengths.' (Learning, Outstanding teaching and learning in mixed-age classrooms, 2016) rather than assuming the students ability according to their age.

When considering the methodology most appropriate for research, it is useful to consider that, 'Research is not only a set of skills, but also a way of thinking' (Kumar, 2014, 2) thus the outcome of ones enquiries can be heavily influenced by one's own philosophies. Bearing this in mind I will address some concerns with regards to methodology and present to you the observation model that I used for my research, including the strengths and weaknesses of this method. The Methodology that I used was non-participant case study. In the context of educational research, a case study is, 'a single instance of a bounded system.' (Creswell, 1994, 237) In this example the single instance is a critical incident and the bounded system is a lesson, (Enhanced Challenge) that took place in the classroom. A case study examines phenomena within its context and is concerned with real people in real situations. This style of research allows for detailed, non-intrusive study, placing emphasis on the real-life nature of the event and implications of abstract ideas acted out in a real-life situation. As a result, case study arguably penetrates a situation better than the scientific methods which fundamentally concerns itself with numerical data that is attained through influence of phenomena. 'A scientific approach necessarily involves standards and procedures for demonstrating the "empirical warrant" of its findings, showing the match or fit between its statements and what is happening or has happened in the world' (Morrison, 2007,15.) It is important to acknowledge that the scientific method sets out the conditions in which

phenomena takes place and thus influences its outcome which would be detrimental to research into critical incidences in that it may influence the outcome of a scenario. It is for this reason in particular that I followed a non-participant case study model.

However the very nature of observation brings into discussion the notion of influence, in particular, 'The Hawthorne effect' which is concerned with, 'research participation, the consequent awareness of being studied, and possible impact on behaviour' (McCambridge, 2013, 276-277) It is therefore very important to consider the ethical responsibilities of the researcher and the impact the observation has upon the natural working environment whilst abstaining from researcher error or bias. (BERA, 2018) The purpose of observation in the context of educational research is to collect evidence that can be used to identify critical incidences that have an effect on pupils ability to learn in order to propose next teaching and learning steps that can be applied to improve the learner experience and develop one's own professional practice. I would argue that nonparticipant case study is the most appropriate method for this type of research in that it investigates real life events, focusing on qualitative research routed in the true experience of the classroom environment. As a result, non-participant case study avoids being out of touch or, 'idealistic' (Tripp, 1993, 28) by nature of being immersed in the environment and therefore is the appropriate method of research for the purpose of this investigation.

The current curriculum and measures for assessment in Wales has been under scrutiny. The curriculum has been accused of being out of date with its shortcoming highlighted by the *Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development report* that stated that the performance of students in welsh schools is below satisfactory. (OECD, 2014)

Donaldson notes that there are a number of deep seeded problems within the curriculum which has led to a failure to prepare students for the ever changing workplace. (Donaldson, *Successful Futures*, 2015) This failure stems from an oversight which underestimated the exponential growth of technology and subsequent economic shift from industry to globalisation as well as the unprecedented impact of the internet which were not, 'The essential features of a curriculum devised in 1988'.(Donaldson, *Successful Futures*, 2015, 10)

The new curriculum seeks to address these issues by giving autonomy to schools allowing them to design their own curriculum and come up with creative ways of preparing students for an uncertain future by developing Donaldson's Four purposes:

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives.
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work.
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world.
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society. (Donaldson, 2015, 29)

The critical incident observed took place during an enhanced challenge activity in a split year one and two class. Enhanced challenges require students to use independent learning in order to accomplish tasks set out around the classroom. One of the challenges was on a computer and required students to do letter formation on JIT paint. It was observed that one student was having difficulty with the task and was unable to form the four letters using a mouse on the monitor as required and eventually gave up. There was however an additional enhanced challenge which focused on numeracy requiring students to do addition using cubes and record their findings on a small whiteboard using a marker. The observer noted that the student who had previously struggled to do the letter formations on the computer went off task and began practicing her letter formations on a white board intended for numeracy. Using the whiteboard and marker, the student successfully wrote out the four-letter formations she was unable to do on the computer. To her dismay she was scolded by her peers who told her that she had gone off task and that she shouldn't have used the whiteboards for letter formations.

The incident is interesting in that the student is adhering to qualities promoted by the four purposes. It could be argued that the decision to go off task was an example of an enterprising, creative contributor (Donaldson, Successful Futures, 2015) in that she was able to think creatively in order to reframe and solve the predicament by identifying the initial problem; which was the computer and seeing an opportunity to overcome her difficulties, achieving the set aims by taking the risk of going off task. (Donaldson, Successful Futures, 2015) This being said the backlash she faced from her peers could additionally be seen as an

example of ethical, informed citizenship (Ibid) in that they criticised her based on their understanding of the tasks and the evaluation of her actions as evidence which formed their view. This is a predicament in that the intention of the purposes supposedly encouraged by the new curriculum would seem to undermine each other in this instance. The question therefore is how do we as practitioners identify next teaching and learning steps that can be applied to improve the learner experience and develop our own professional practice whilst promoting the development of the four purposes and the needs of the individual?

There are a number of underlying concerns surrounding the incident which through careful analyses and application of next learning steps may have been prevented. The critical incident observed not only highlights some of the issues we the practitioner may face when implementing elements of the new curriculum, such as Donaldson's four principles (Donaldson, *Successful Futures*, 2015) but it also addresses a number of concerns with regards to assessment for learning, cognitive development stages and independent learning, principles for learning as well as ideas expressed by social constructivism.

The incident took place during a lesson of independent learning known as enhanced challenges. The idea of enhanced challenges stems from the practice of continuous provisions, which refers to detailed recourses intended to aid the students learning by providing a variety of engaging provisions linked to assessment. (Bryce-clegg, 2015) This can be broken down further into enhanced provisions, which is specific to the needs of the individual based upon observations made of students within areas of continuous provisions (Sparks Linfield, 2010) This links to the works of Dylan Williams and Paul Black, who state that assessment for learning undertaken by teachers is intended to provide feedback in order to modify teaching and learning activities (Black, 1998) Alistair Bryce-Clegg in his book on enhanced provision notes that an essential element of continuous provisions, 'is a measure of ambiguity and open ended experience' (Bryce-clegg, 2015, 4) promoting independence and encouraging development of the four purposes specifically enterprising, creative contributors (Donaldson, *Successful Futures*, 2015)

The idea of open-ended learning as means of adapting learning reflects the beliefs of social constructivism. Jean Piaget a pioneer of social constructivism suggested that a child is like a, 'lone scientist' and comes to their own conclusions about the nature of their environment. (Pritchard, 2014. 25) Piaget suggests that individuals learn through assimilation

and accommodation of experience which he outlines in his model of assimilation and accommodation process. The model presents three fundamental processes that take place:

- Assimilation, which is the process whereby new knowledge is incorporated into existing mental structures. The knowledge bank is increased to include new information.
- Accommodation, which is the process whereby mental structures have to be altered in order to cope with new experience that has contradicted the existing model.
- Equilibrations, which is the process of arriving at a stable state where there is no longer a conflict between new and existing knowledge. (Pritchard, 2014. 21)

With the critical incident in mind we can make reference to Piaget's model in order identify a number of potential causes for concern. For instance, assimilation refers to the process of applying existing knowledge. However, in the instance of the critical incident, was the practitioner aware of the student's level of current knowledge? Accommodation refers to the process of amending old models of understanding in order to adapt it to new situations. However, without assessing the student's prior knowledge the practitioner is unaware of the extent of the student's knowledge if any, from which they base their new models of understanding upon. Alternatively, perhaps the student is familiar with one aspect of the learning, for instance working on a computer but is unfamiliar with letter formations or vice versa; has great knowledge of formations but is unable to use a computer. This brings up the idea of situated learning (Pritchard, 2014) which I will address later in the essay. There is an inherent codependency between the three stages of Piaget's model and as a result; equilibration, the process by which there is no longer conflict of knowledge cannot be achieved until assimilation and accommodation have first been established. Therefore, it may be suggested that Piaget's model although useful in understanding the process by which knowledge is attained does not address the external factors that may prevent equilibration from taking place and thus is dangerously close to being considered, 'idealistic'. (Tripp, 1993, 28)

The model does however address potential factors that may have led to the incident at hand and offers points of further investigation. One such observation that merits further discussion is assessment for learning (AFL). Williams and Black in their extensive research concluded that assessment is absolutely necessary in order to achieve effective learning. (Black, 1998, 3) They state that assessment for learning is intended to provide feedback in order to modify teaching and learning activities (Black, 1998) which if implemented would address issues highlighted in Piaget's assimilation model. (Pritchard, 2014) Through monitoring students in the practice of independent learning we can identify points of potential concern and implement measures to support the learner. (Sherrington, 2019) In the instance of enhanced challenges It has already been noted that enhanced provisions should be specific to the needs of the individual, based upon observations made of students within areas of continuous provisions (Sparks Linfield, 2010)

By assessing the level of understanding of the students, the practitioner is able to implement necessary measures in order to support the student which leads us on to the next point of discussion, scaffolding. (Sherrington, 2019)

In his book *Rosenshine's principles in action*, Sherrington discusses the efficacy of Rosenshine's principles of learning. These principles of learning focus around research-based principles of instruction intended to bridge the divide between research and the classroom. (Rosenshine, 2012, 6) The ten, 'instructional functions' outlined by Rosenshine look at three specific areas of research: cognitive science, classroom practice and measures of cognitive support. (Stevens-Fulbrook, n.d.) Rosenshine's principles of instruction like many theories of assessment place great emphasis upon the use of continuous and non-invasive assessment. Rosenshine however, places greater importance upon the development of working memory which he believes through, 'retrieval practice' which is the practice of reflection; develops long-term memory which he suggests is knowledge itself. (Rosenshine, 2012) A Schema refers to units of knowledge by which connections to previous models of understanding are made. For example, a physical skill such as the ability to construct basic letter formations can be applied as a basis from which to form words, sentences and essays. Therefore, assessment in the form of reflection serves the purpose of developing the pupil's ability to develop schemas advocated by Rosenshine who suggests daily, weekly and monthly review as means of promoting effective learning. (Rosenshine, 2012)

Sherrington takes this a step further and suggests that we can encourage effective development by implementing scaffolding as means of supporting the learner. (Sherrington,

2019) Scaffolding is a measure of temporary support that develops the cognitive process but is eventually withdrawn in order to prevent students from becoming reliant upon it.

(Sherington, 2019) In order to appreciate the significance of scaffolding we should first acknowledge the works of Vygotsky and his idea of a zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Pritchard, 2014,27) The zone of proximal development is, 'the area of understanding into which the learner will move next'. (Pritchard, 2014, 27) This is fundamentally different for each individual and requires additional support in order to facilitate the transition.

Scaffolding is therefore the process through which the transition is facilitated and is appropriate to the needs of the individual warranted by their assesment.

It has been suggested that situated learning can be implemented as means of promoting effective learning (Lave, 1991). For instance, the use of authentic learning tasks situated in social and cultural settings familiar to the students allows for smoother assimilation of knowledge as students are already familiar with the setting. Pritchard provides the example of, 'giving young children the task of investigating the pros and cons of fox hunting when their cultural setting is a deprived inner-city area' (Pritchard, 2014, 28.) We can infer that the task is to alien a topic for the children to effectively engage with as it is so far removed from their cultural values. In a study by Gazi university, Koksall stated that peoples lives are intertwined with their values and the intermingling of these values with ones own life is how individuals make sense of the world. (Koksall, 2019) Situated learning through the use of authentic tasks is therefore tasks that, 'Pupils can relate to their own experience inside and outside school' (Selinger, 2001) If as the research suggest that situated learning through the use of authentic tasks promotes effective learning by engaging the learner and developing already established schemas then it may be suggested that the enhanced challenge noted in the criticial incident was an example of an un-authentic task.

In order to effectively evaluate the critical incident observed I will adopt the, 'Four approaches to analyses of incidents' as laid out by Tripp. Using this approach as a basis of reflection I will provide *Next learning steps* that may be applied to improve the learner experience and develop my own professional practice. (Tripp, Critical Incidents in Teaching, 1993, 43) Tripp refers to this reflective approach as a series of, 'why' questions which are inteneded to rationalize the series of event that led to the incident and further more provoke the question of what didn't happen that led to the incident taking place. (Tripp, Critical Incidents in Teaching, 1993)

With this in mind I will first address the context of the lesson which focussed around an enhanced challenge (Bryce-clegg, 2015) The very nature of enhanced challenges is the promotion of independent learning and as a result it is inherently ambiguous. However, although enhanced provisions are intended to allow for, 'open ended experience' (Bryce-clegg, 2015) They should be based upon observations of student needs and thus requires assesment for learning as promoted by Rosenshine (Sherington, 2019) and apotheosized by Black. (Black, 1998) With reference to the four aproaches to analyses it may be suggested that the implementation of reflection and questions as tools for assesment for learning would help identify areas of learning that require scaffolding, thus promoting a smoother transition of promximal learning as presented by Vygotsky (Pritchard, 2014).

However, it must be acknowledge that enhanced challenges are extremely effective in promoting independent learning, advocated by Donaldsons four purposes and social constructivism. (Donaldson, Successful Futures, 2015) Whilst independent learning may encorage effective learning through experience it often neglects assesment for learning which has been shown to promote assimilation and accomidation of experience. Consequently, there should be compromise between the independence of the learner and the systamatic approach of assesment. Therefore in my own practice I will promote independent learning whilst incorporating assesment for learning through questions designed to promote reflection and encourage, 'retrieval practice' which has been shown to promote effective learning. (Rosenhine, 2012) Thus promoting independent learning and the features of Donaldsons purpose, whilst ensuring effective assimilation of the task at hand. (Donaldson, Successful Futures, 2015) By establishing the students present level of knowledge the practitioner can implement scaffolding to aid the transition of proximal learning by identifying areas of concern. (Pritchard, 2014) Therefore I will use scaffolding established through assessment for learning in my own practice as a principal tool for understanding the needs of the individual learner and determining the areas where I can support the learners development, encouraging a smoother transition of proximal development and overall effective learning.

When reflecting upon the observations made within the critical incident it may be noted that the use of situated and authentic learning was not a focus. The enhanced challenge presented in the critical incident required the student to produce letter formation on a computer using a mouse. It could be argued that letter formations, which requires fine motor skills would be

better suited to practical handwriting tasks using a pen or pencil rather than on a computer. Furthermore it may be suggested that the notion of assessing a child's ability to form letters using a mouse does not reflect the student's ability to form letters in the same way that one cannot merit someone the ability to shoot a gun, drive a car or play an instrument based upon their gaming prowess. This however does not mean that forming letter formations on a computer does not aid the child in the process of developing their formation skills and thus may yet have value, such as incorporating ICT skills. However, for the purpose of practicing letter formations as a skill to be applied in a written format it presents some impracticalities. Therefore, although the use of the computer will produce some practical results it may be suggested that there are more effective and efficient ways of producing the same result, for you can eat soup with a fork, but it will take longer and be a lot messier. Therefore, in order to promote effective learning I will implement the use of practical, situated and authentic tasks where appropriate, as means of promoting relatable and appropriate tasks for learners.

In conclusion, through the use of non-participant case study I have undertaken the reflective analysis of a critical incident observed in a classroom. The study is intended to reflect on a number of professional issues the practitioner may face in the learning environment, and provide possible next learning steps that could be implemented in order to ease the practice and promote effective learning. (Workforce, 2015) The critical incident I observed shows how independent learning can be used as a mechanism for encouraging creative learning in students, as well as promoting further aspects of the new curriculum laid out by Donaldson. (Donaldson, *Successful Futures*, 2015) Through critical and reflective analyses undertaken in this assignment, I have established a link between assessment and assimilation, reflecting the views of social constructivist such as Vygotsky and Piaget. It suggests, that the use of assessment for learning through the application of scaffolding promotes effective learning by easing the process of assimilation and encouraging healthy transition between stages of proximal development. (Pritchard, 2014) The research has highlighted the importance of assimilation, and has led me to consider the impact situated learning has upon assimilation and the overall development of existing schemas. (Pritchard, 2014) I will use this knowledge to inform my own practice, by creating tasks that not only encourage independent thinking but additionally promote assimilation through assessment, as well as incorporating authentic learning tasks when appropriate to further improve the process of effective learning, and the overall learner experience.

Appendices

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

29/09/20 (8:50-9:15)

Year one/two split class

Lesson details:

The observation took place within the classroom with students sat on the carpet facing the teacher. The task promoted the use of general welsh language skills, working in groups of two in order to practice basic questions and answers in welsh.

Classroom culture

The general atmosphere was of early morning excitement, but the children appeared engaged with the task. Students were familiar with what was expected of them and the teacher used buzz words such as 'Fish and Chip' to elicit specific responses.

Objectives

The purpose was to review their welsh language and practice it in their pairs. Once they had done this the teacher selected voluntary couples to present their question and answer dialogue. For example, 'Sut wyt ti?' 'Dwi'n hapus'.

Direction

The teacher gave direct instructions in order to do the task but additionally used key phrases like 'Fish and Chip' which the children instinctively new meant to pair up into partners. It was clear that the teacher had already established a routine with the children, and this was reflected by their immediate response.

Access and challenge

The students were engaged in the activity and were excited to work in their groups. There was a great deal of discussion amongst the students and they seemed to work effectively and stay on task. The teacher elicited responses from the children and using open ended question to encourage the students to participate. 'Have a little think... What might she say?'

Assessment

The teacher was able to assess the children simply by asking them to demonstrate basic dialogue with their partners. The students stood up in their couple and took turns of asking and answering questions in welsh.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

When the teacher used the buzz word, , 'Fish and Chip' there was a hurry of excitement in which students attempted to partner up with their friends. Amongst the commotion a few students were left out of couples and thus were unable to effectively participate in the task.

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	29/09/20 (8:50-9:15) Year one/two split class The incident took place within the classroom with students sat on the carpet facing the teacher. The task promoted the use of general welsh language skills, working in groups of two in order to practice basic questions and answers in welsh.
<i>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.</i>	The teacher began by eliciting responses to welsh language questions which engaged the children and prepared them for the task ahead. The teacher made reference to a buzz phrase they were clearly familiar with, 'Fish and Chip - turn to a friend', which prompted the children to get into groups of two. The teacher addressed the class stating that once they were in groups they were to ask and answer the welsh questions they had previously discussed. However, there were a number of children who were not coupled up and went without their 'fish' or 'chip'. One student in particular was very distressed by this. The student turned to the observer and stated that he didn't have a partner. The observer asked if he could join into a group of three. The student shook his head and explained that it was, 'Fish and chip'. The student did not participate in peer discussion or get the opportunity to stand up and practice his welsh in front of the class, which led to rewards in the form of 'DoJo' points an online reward system.

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group:
29/09/20 (9:15-9:45)
Year one/two split class

Lesson details:

The observation took place within the classroom. It was a foundation RWI class focusing on phonics. The students were practicing, 'Fred Talk' a model by which the children sound out each letter of a 'Green Word' which refers to words that can be sounded out using the Fred Talk technique. 'Red Words' cannot be sounded out using Fred Talk. In addition to the Fred Talk exercise the Students practiced their set sounds for example, ay, ee, oy prompt cards.

Classroom culture

The general atmosphere was relaxed. The children seemed engaged and familiar with the contents of the lesson. The lesson referred to images printed on to RWI cards corresponding to a rhyme and a specific sound. For example, oy-toy for a boy and an the image of a boy playing with his toys. This acted as great supportive stimulus and children seemed eager to answer.

Objectives

The purpose was to review already established techniques such as Fred Talk and set sounds. The lesson was effective in doing this by using appropriate activities suitable to the level of the learners in an engaging and entertaining way.

Direction

The prompt cards with the images and rhyme supported the students learning significantly. In addition, the lesson took on a game like activity in which the children got to hold on to the card when correctly answering the set sound. It was very clear lesson and all students seemed confident and happy with what was required of them.

Access and challenge

The activity which provoked an element of competition within the children stimulated a positive response with the majority of the class fully engaged with the content. The use of group sounding through Fred Talk avoided any children from being left out and The practitioner made an effort to get all children speaking.

Assessment

The fact that the students were familiar with buzzwords such as, Fred Talk, Fred Fingers and Speed Sounds suggest that the children had prior knowledge of the content at hand. There was a conscious effort from the practitioner to remind students to use these techniques and the children appeared confident doing so.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Directly rewarding students for answering questions led to a flurry of desperation amongst other children to participate and be rewarded. This meant that children were engaging for the wrong reasons but additionally they were blinded by their desire to be rewarded rather than paying attention to the lesson. This will lead me to look at Assessment for learning and the ideas presented in social constructivism.

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	29/09/20 (9:15-9:45) Year one/two split class The incident took place within the classroom with students sat in a circle on the carpet. The task focused around RWI and encouraged children to read set sounds specific to their ability from prompt cards. Upon correctly answering the prompt card students got to keep the card .
<i>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.</i>	The children sat in a circle on the carpet. A number of Fred cards were scattered on the floor inside the circle. The children raised their hands and the teacher chose a number of students to individually have a go of sounding out the words written on the card and then reading the rhyming sentence encapsulated by an image on the card. For example, 'oy- toy for a boy'. If they correctly sounded out the word using Fred Talk they were allowed to keep the card until the exercise was over. This led to a flurry of excitement and an arm wrenching desperation to be selected and rewarded with a card. However, the students were more concerned with getting a card to hold rather than being able to read them and often would attempt to answer cards they didn't know. In addition to this, when a student did answer correctly and were allowed to keep a card, they tended to lose interest with the task at hand and were preoccupied with the card in their hands. This brings up questions of reward and assessment for learning which I will address in my research.

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

29/09/20 (8:50-9:10)

Year one/two split class

Lesson details:

The observation took place within the classroom with students sat on the carpet facing the teacher. The children had just entered the classroom and the teacher was preparing to take the register and fire safety register.

Classroom culture

The general atmosphere was of early morning excitement, and the children were bustling with energy. There was a great deal of chatter which the teacher allowed. Students seemed very happy and relaxed within the classroom environment.

Objectives

The purpose of this part of the day was to gently introduce the children back into the learning environment by allowing them to engage in friendly discussion with their peers and settle in at their own pace. Additionally, preparing the students to take part in registration introduced measures of discipline again reinforcing elements of the learning environment.

Direction

The teacher instructed students to sit down on the carpet facing the whiteboard and engaged in general discussion with the students listening to any of their stories and answering their questions.

Access and challenge

The children took part in what was effectively a warm up lesson that allowed for gentle reestablishment of classroom expectations. The children were encouraged to converse with their peers encouraging effective relationships and communication skills.

Assessment

When the volume of discussion became too loud the teacher addressed the class and got the desired response once again re-establishing classroom expectation and teacher- student relationships.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

The students were allowed to settle in and talk amongst themselves whilst the teacher prepared to take the register. The noise volume eventually became too loud so the teacher used classroom management techniques in order to retake control of the classroom.

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	29/09/20 (8:50-9:10) Year one/two split class The observation took place within the classroom with students sat on the carpet facing the teacher. The children had just entered the classroom and the teacher was preparing to take the register and fire safety register.
<i>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.</i>	At the start of the day the children entered the classroom and sat on the carpet Infront of the teacher who was seated by her computer. The teacher allowed time for the children to settle in to the classroom environment allowing them to talk amongst themselves before they began taking the register. The children excitedly talked to their peers, but a number of individuals became overly excited. A small group of boys were being overly boisterous, pushing each other in a friendly, but never the less disruptive manner. The teacher calmly counts down 'Three, Two and One, eyes on me' effectively taking back control of the classroom. The children stopped talking and fidgeting and sat eagerly waiting instruction.

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

29/09/20 (13:35-14:35)

Year one/two split class

Lesson details:

The observation took place within the classroom During an enhanced challenge lesson which involves a number of activities spread out within the classroom. The activities encourage independent learning looking at a number of tasks including, creative arts, English and numeracy.

Classroom culture

The general atmosphere was relaxed. The children seemed engaged and familiar with the idea of enhanced challenges and knew what was expected of them. They content with the independent nature of the learning and went about the tasks at their own pace.

Objectives

The purpose of the enhanced challenges was to encourage independent learning and promoted an interactive style of learning in which children have the freedom to explore different styles of learning. The tasks within the classroom were varied and the teacher was able to observe some of the children.

Direction

Each of the enhanced challenge stations had a set of instructions detailing the purpose of the task. Most students were already familiar with what was expected of them however some children went off task.

Access and challenge

The task themselves were engaging and very varied. The students were encouraged to complete one task before moving onto another however some students lost interest and moved freely from task to task. However some children would remain at a task for the majority of the lesson not attempting any of the tasks they found challenging.

Assessment

The tasks themselves had targets that the children were intended to meet however there was little reinforcement of this and little assessment to assure that the students had achieved the task objective.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

One of the tasks took place on a computer and required students to do letter formation using a mouse. The observer noted that one student found the task very difficult. The student moved onto another station intended for numeracy. The student went off task and began practicing letter formations on the numeracy station using a whiteboard and marker. The student was able to do the four letter formations by going off task. However, was criticised by her peers. This will lead me to research Assessment for learning as well as learner theory and ideas of social constructivism.

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	29/09/20 (13:35-14:35) Year one/two split class The observation took place within the classroom During an enhanced challenge lesson which involves a number of activities spread out within the classroom. The activities encourage independent learning looking at a number of tasks including, creative arts, English and numeracy.
<i>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.</i>	The critical incident observed took place during an enhanced challenge activity in a split year one and two class. Enhanced challenges require students to use independent learning in order to accomplish tasks set out around the classroom. One of the challenges was on a computer and required students to do letter formation on JIT paint. It was observed that one student was having difficulty with the task and was unable to form the four letters using a mouse on the monitor as required and eventually gave up. There was however an additional enhanced challenge which focused on numeracy requiring students to do addition using cubes and record their findings on a small whiteboard using a marker. The observer noted that the student who had previously struggled to do the letter formations on the computer went off task and began practicing her letter formations on a the white board intended for numeracy. Using the whiteboard and marker the student successfully wrote out the four-letter formations she was unable to do on the computer. To her dismay she was scolded by her peers who told her that she had gone off task and that she shouldn't have used the whiteboards for letter formations.

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