



Prifysgol Cymru
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University of Wales
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Effective Observations

Bridging 1
Meet
25/09/19

Trawsnewid Addysg; Trawsnewid Bywydau
Transforming Education; Transforming Lives



www.uwtsd.ac.uk

Session's aims

By the end of this session you will have learnt:

1. Some effective observation techniques you'll be able to use in your own observations.
2. The impact these techniques can have on teaching and learning.

Tomorrow (26.09.19)...

You will

- Observe an experienced teacher at their work.
- Observe the teacher's skills.
- Focus on a particular aspect of teaching and learning that will be discussed today.

Observation challenges

What might you find challenging about observing a lesson?

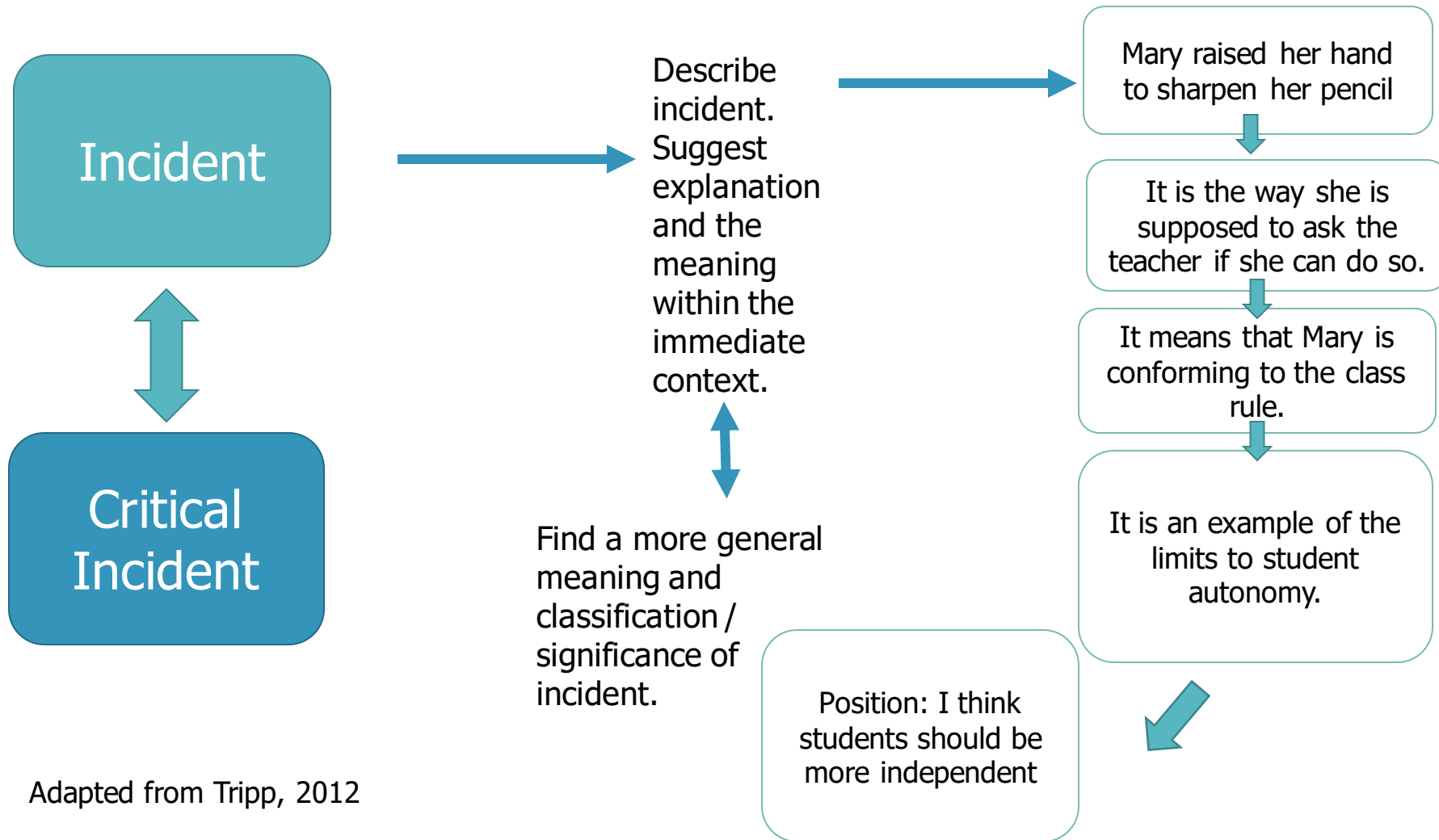


Giving the observation a specific focus

Here are some things you could focus on in an observation:

- Communication
- Questioning and Wait Time
- The teacher's movements

These may well form part of a critical incident you may observe.



Adapted from Tripp, 2012

Observing communication:

Teacher → pupils

Some things to consider:

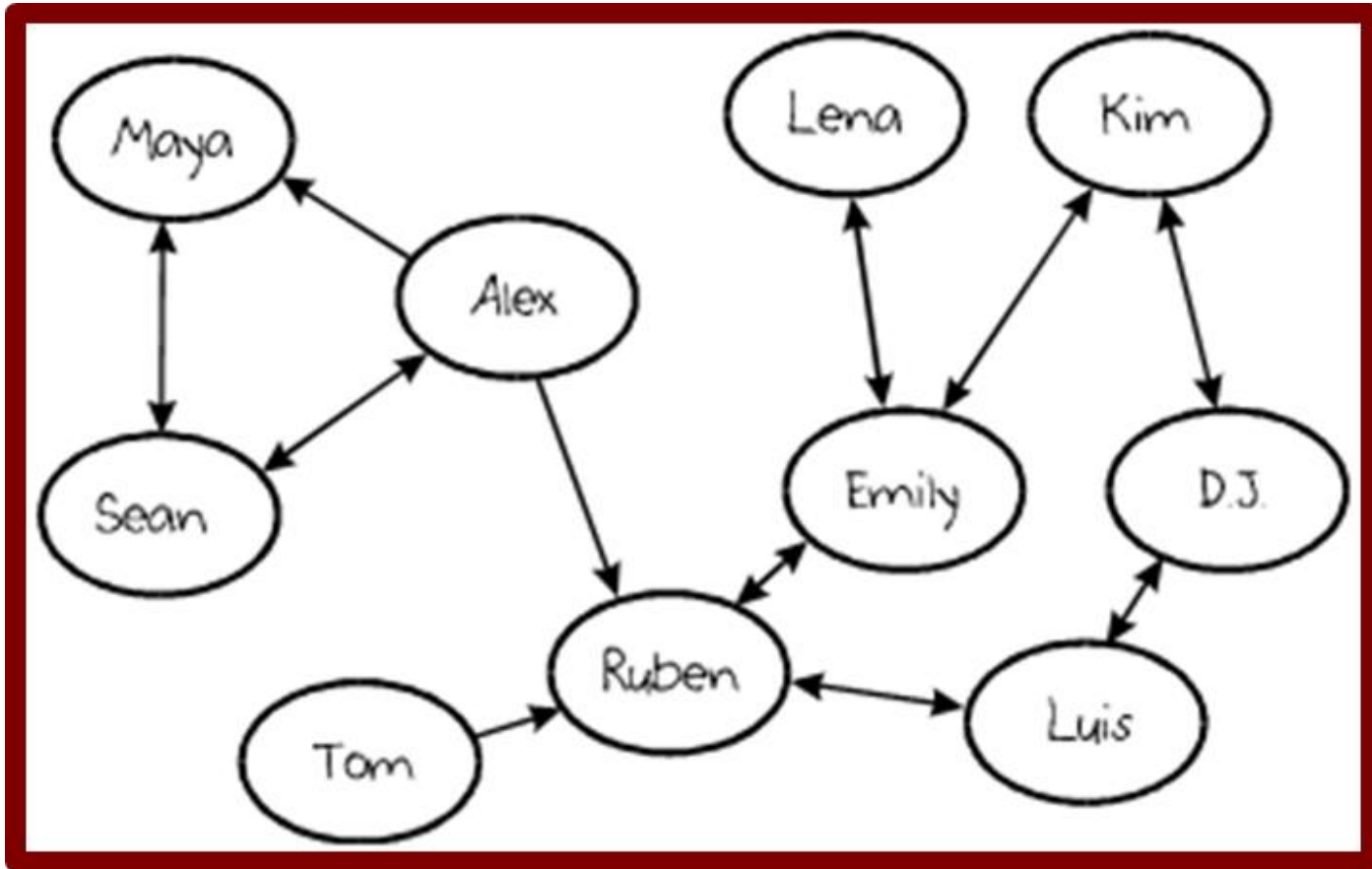
- the purposes of communicating e.g. to instruct, persuade, encourage, transmit information
- possible barriers to effective communication e.g. linguistic, environmental & physical and how these are addressed
- non-verbal means of communication e.g. facial expressions, movement of teacher and pupils
- explanations e.g. of key vocabulary, activities to be undertaken

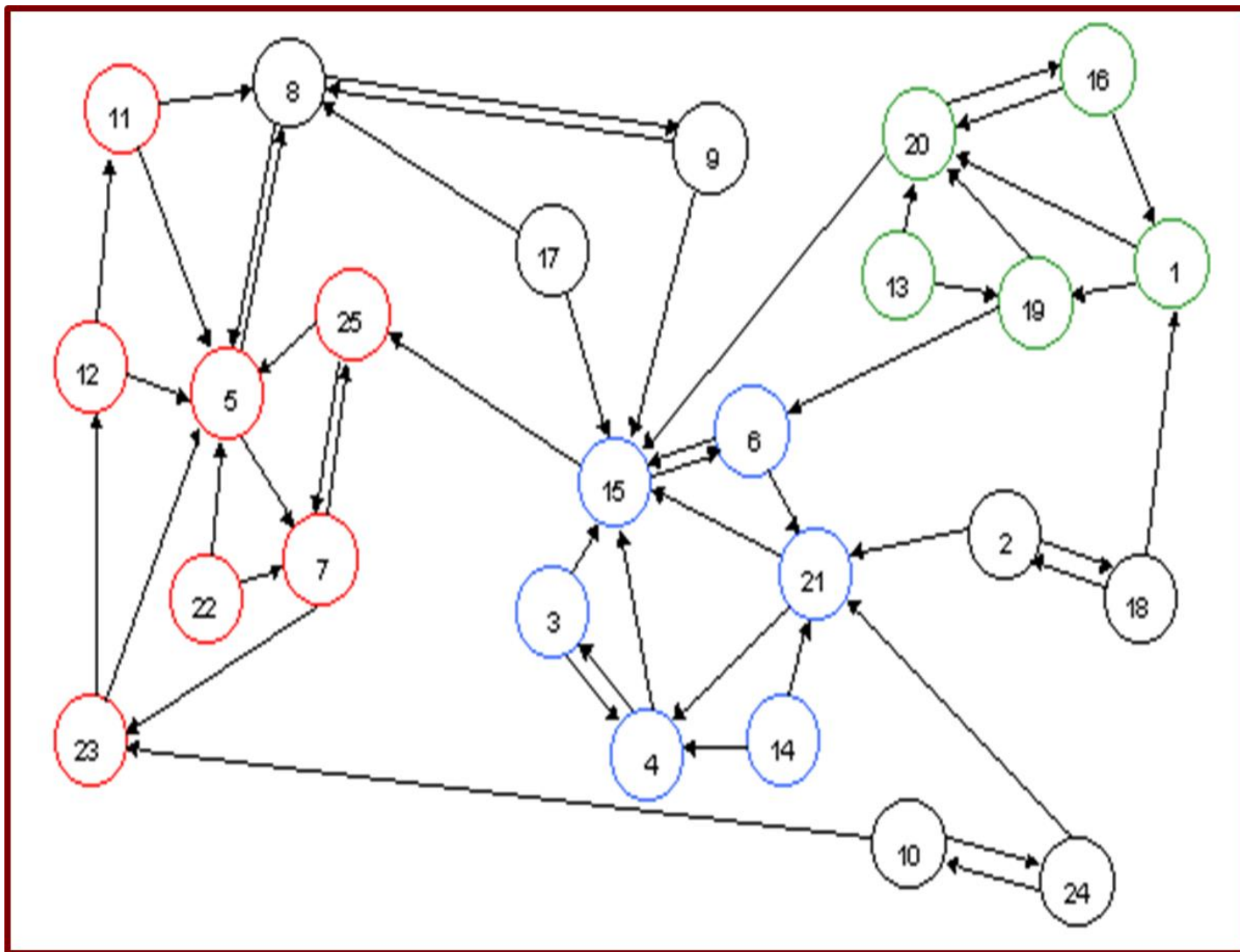
Observing communication:

Pupils → pupils

- Communication between pupils – sociometry
- **How about using a Sociogram?**
- A sociogram is a charting of the inter-relationships within a group. Its purpose is to discover group structure and interactions.

Sociogram





What about non-verbal communication?

IT'S WHAT YOU **DON'T SAY** THAT COUNTS!



LEARN TO **READ** AND **INFLUENCE** PEOPLE THROUGH
NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION.



Figure 9.14



Figure 9.15

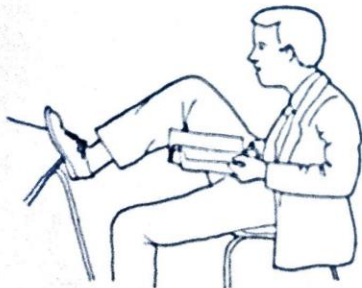
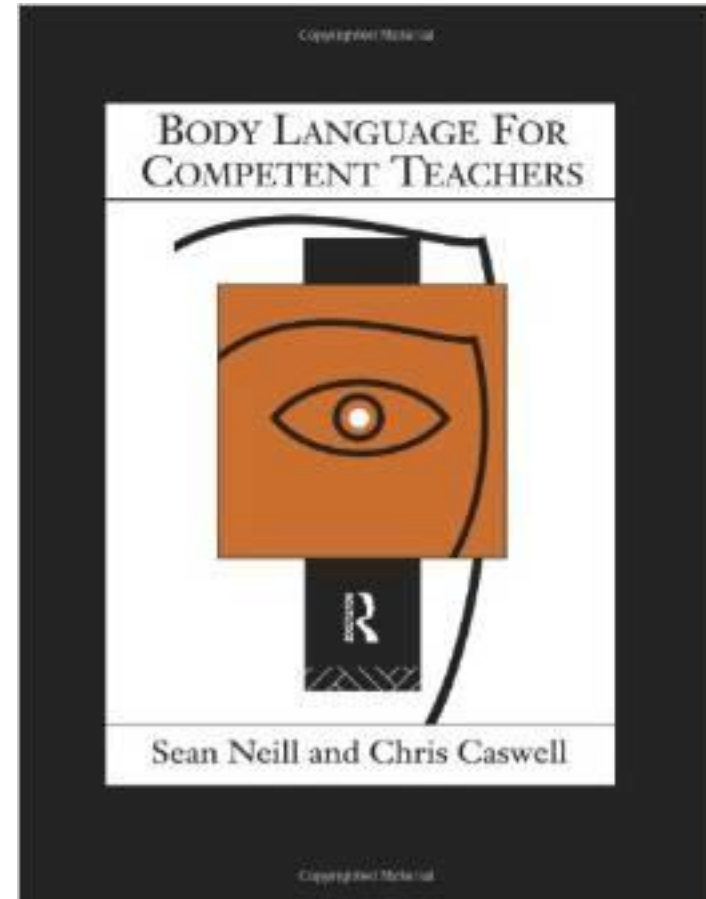


Figure 9.16



Figure 9.17



NEILL, S. R. S. J., & CASWELL, C. (1993). Body language for competent teachers. London, Routledge

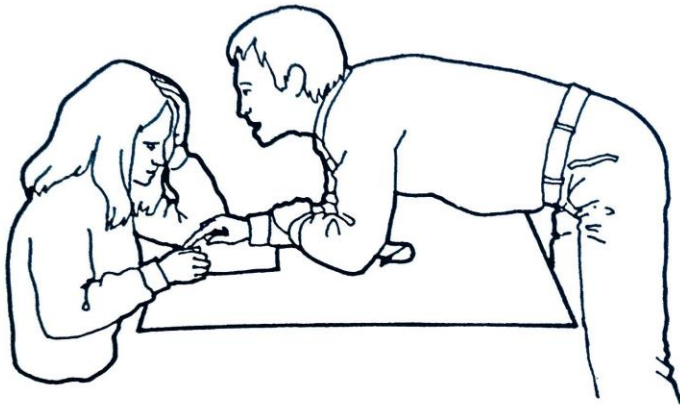


Figure 9.3 'Personal distance' between teacher and child. The meaning of the approach depends on the teacher's words and expression. Many children saw this teacher as helpful

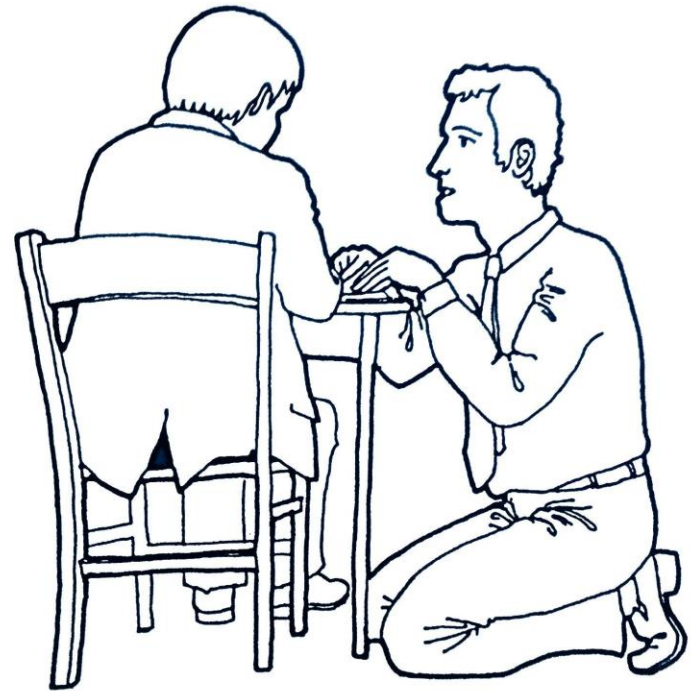


Figure 9.4 Kneeling, a sign of a teacher who is closely involved with the children. Almost all children saw this teacher as helpful; a few saw him as friendly

Observing questioning

- Questioning skills, e.g. types of question, waiting time.

From Studies done in classrooms

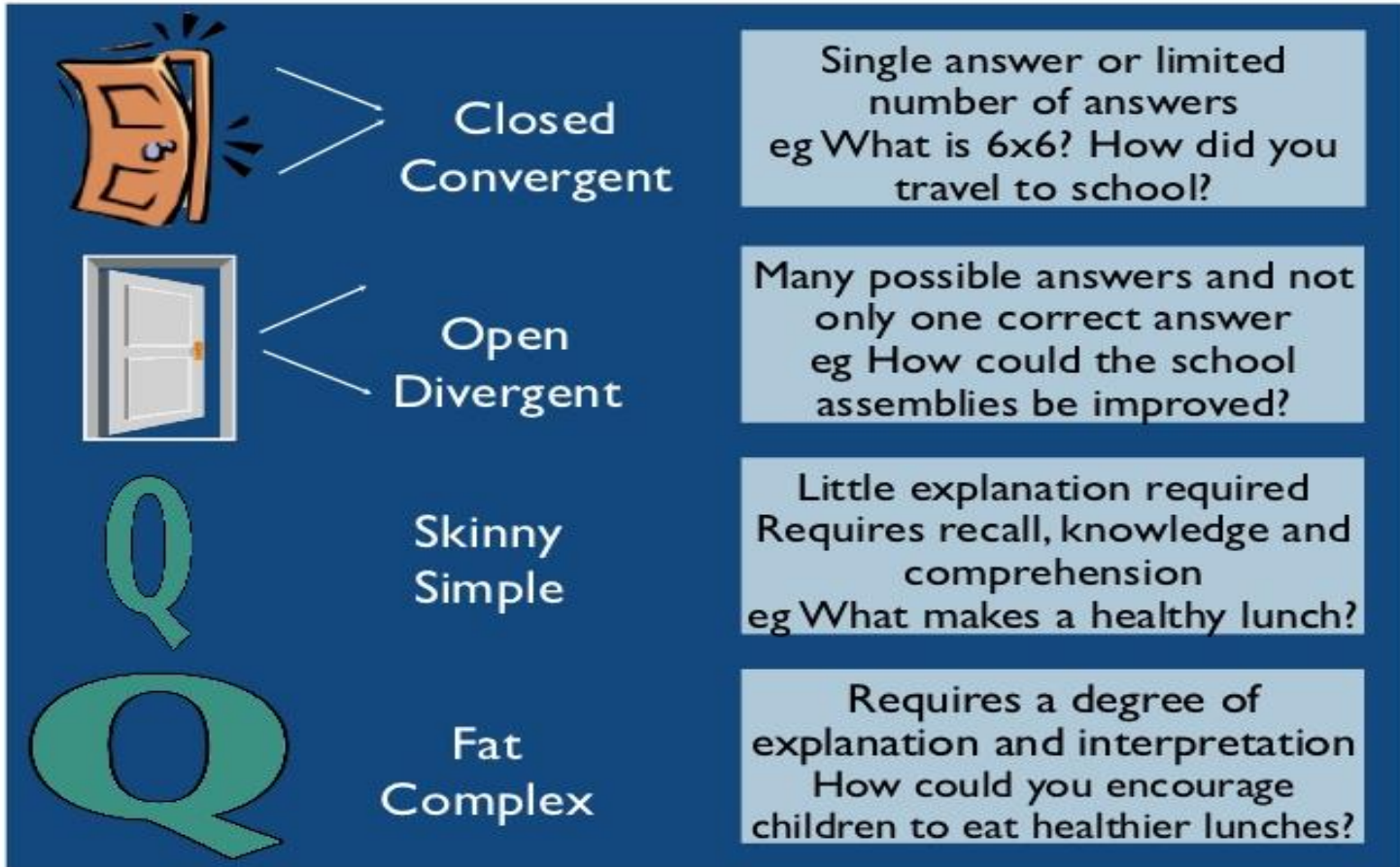


Q

1 every $\frac{2}{3}$ seconds

They tend to be RECALL questions rather than questions requiring higher level thought.

Types of question



Wait Time

- The average time teachers give between asking a question and taking an answer is 0.9 seconds.
- Rowe (1972) argues that teachers should wait for at least 3 seconds before taking an answer.

Observing the teacher's movements

- The teacher's positioning in the classroom affects the teaching and learning.

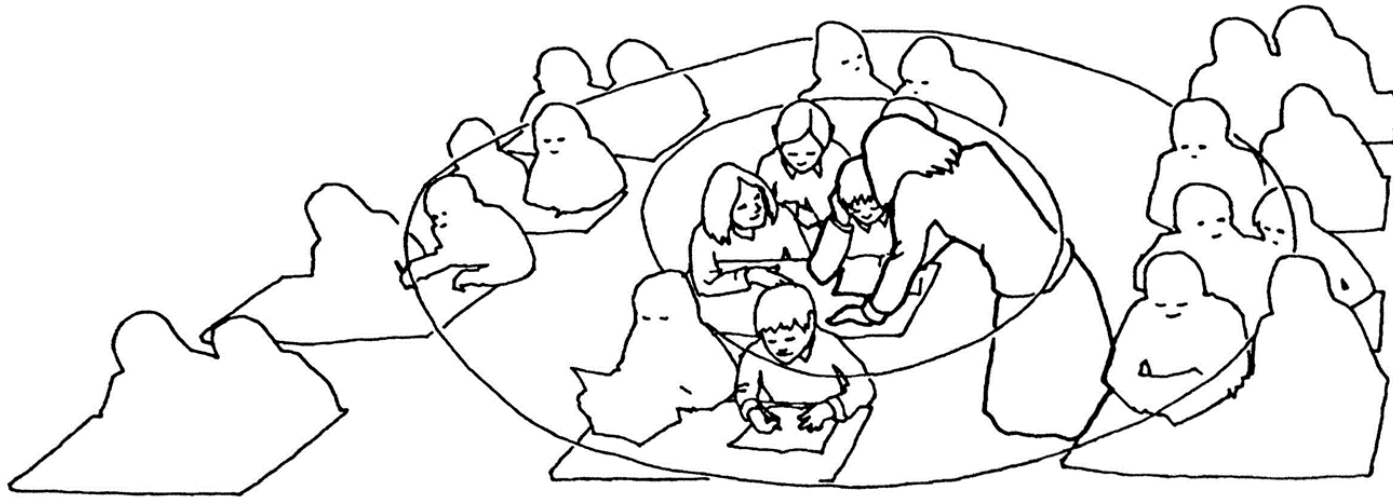
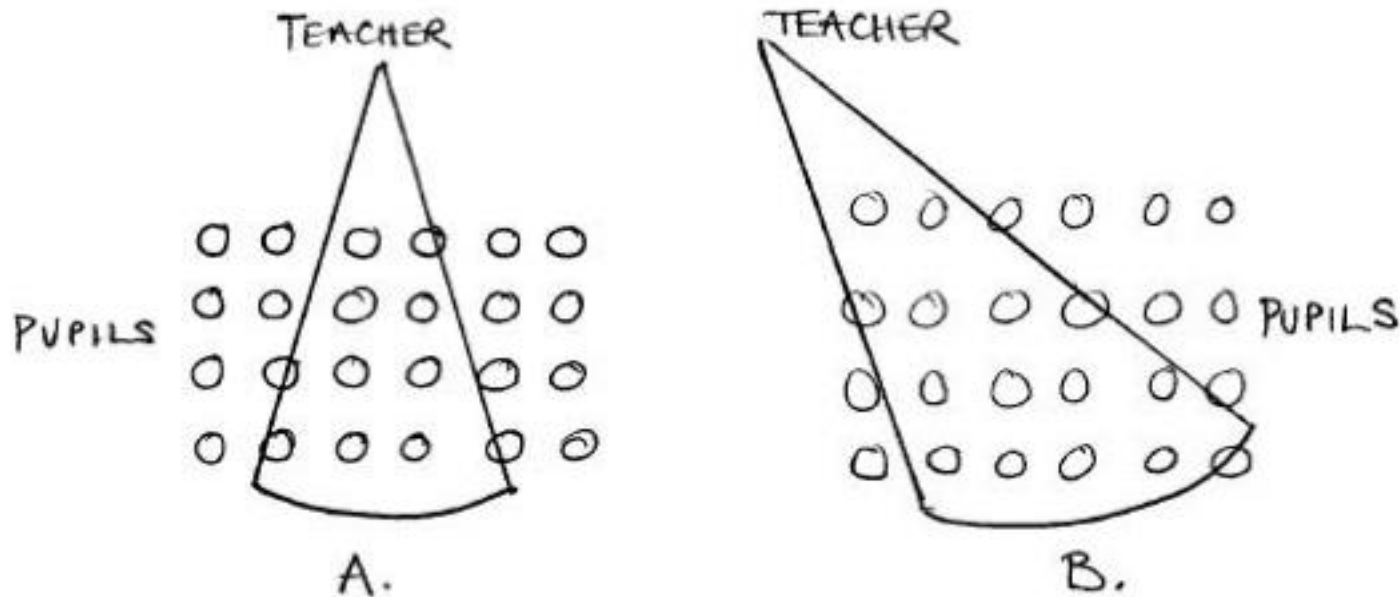


Figure 3.1 Personal, social and public distance as the teacher moves round the classroom (cf. Figure 9.3). Her behaviour will have particularly strong effects on the children within personal distance, but she will be more easily able to influence children within social distance with lower-intensity behaviour than the rest of the class

Positioning

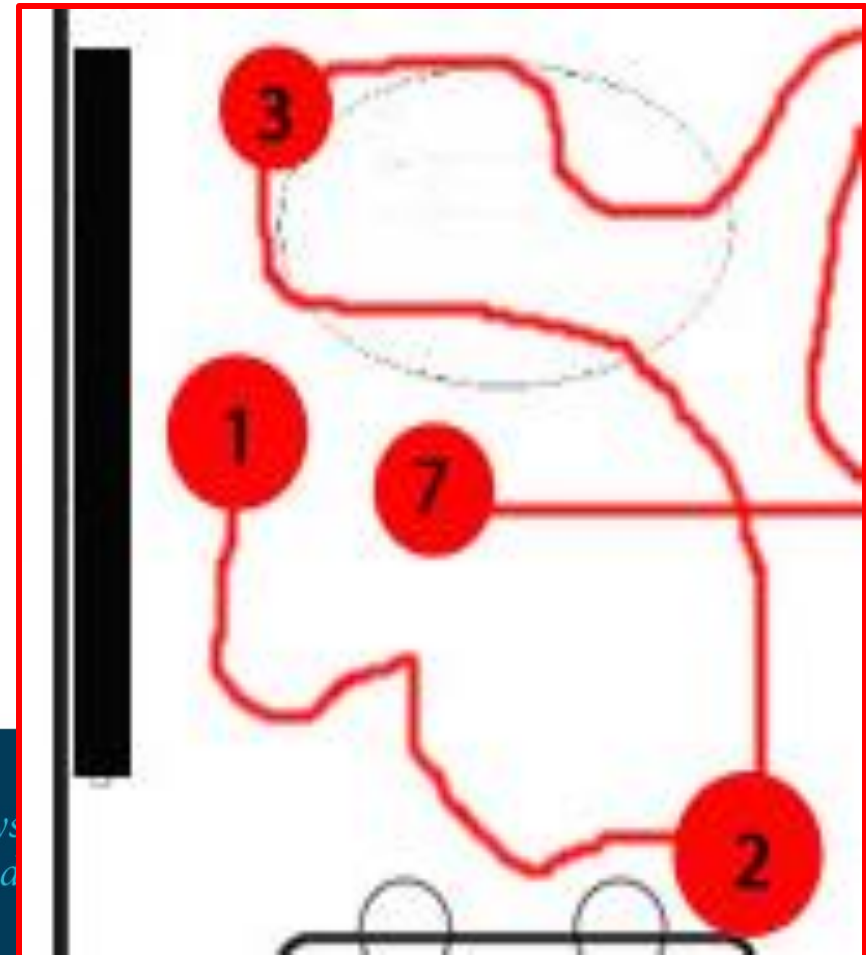
This is a simple classroom management technique that helps in the distribution of questions around the class. In Fig. 2 are diagrams of a teacher talking to a class whilst standing in two different positions. If she stands as in diagram B, she has a much better view of the group. By moving to a new position relative to the pupil group, the teacher is able to gain a better view of the group. This means that targeting questions to specific pupils is easier, so is watching reactions to questions, and to the answers that other pupils are giving. Control of the group is easier also, should this be necessary.



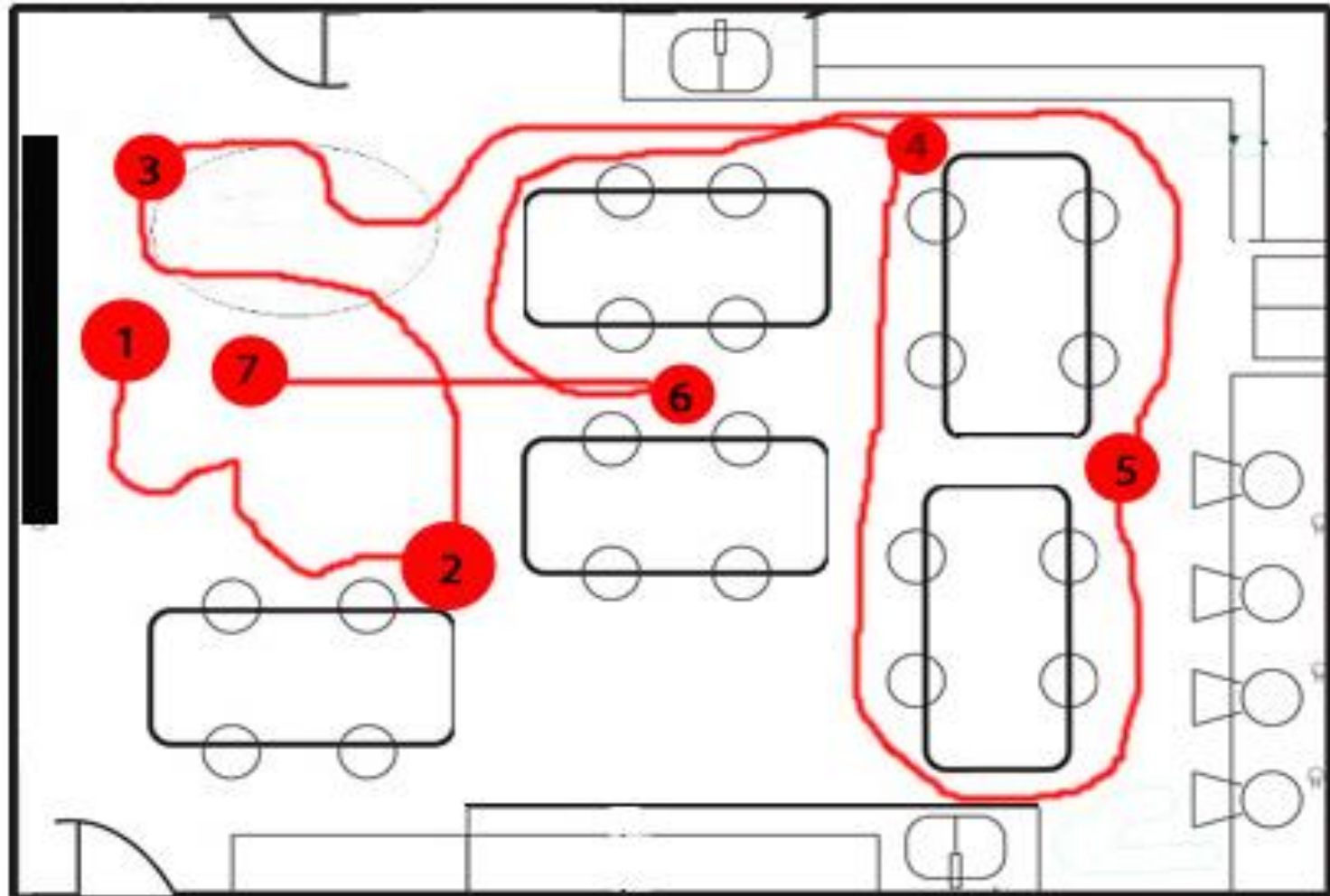
Tracking the Teacher's Movements

The teacher movement technique is a tracking record of where a teacher positions himself or herself and where the teacher moves throughout the

Number the teacher's initial location as 1 and draw a circle around the number. Draw a continuous line from there to the next stop and label it 2 with a circle around it and so on.



Tracking the Teacher's Movements



What am I looking for in this observation?

ADAPTED FROM

Fletcher-Wood (2016:
125)

- **Classroom culture:** Are the students focused on learning?
- **Objectives:** Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?
- **Direction:** Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?



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Observations

- **Access and challenge:** Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?
- **Assessment:** How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?
- **Specifics:** Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?