

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

Essay Word Count: 3892, Appendices: 1000 word equivalent

Introduction:

As an educator, teacher or facilitator - particularly in relation to Wales' curriculum and pedagogical principles - it is imperative to reflect and evaluate on personal teaching practice. This allows informed decisions to be made regarding next step teaching and learning, creating experiences for learners that are effective in facilitating their holistic development. It is central to the values and dispositions, or core principles, of educators in Wales to consistently investigate their practice and allow this to be developed through relevant pedagogical research and theory; essential if educators are to facilitate the successful implementation of the four key purposes of the new welsh curriculum, in a beneficial manner for the learners. Effective teaching practice can be developed in a variety of ways, with this essay exploring the use of identifying incidents deemed to be critical through analysis and indicating how these moments can inform future teaching.

A critical incident is any incident that occurs, that typically would be observed as normal - an emotion is often associated with the event, such as happy or frustrated (Tripp, 2012, p.8). Upon deeper observation and critical analysis of the event, or incident, it can therefore be deemed as a critical incident; author and educator David Tripp writes in *Critical Incidents in Teaching* (2012), 'critical incidents are produced by the way we look at a situation: a critical incident is an interpretation of the significance of an event' (Tripp, 2012, p.8). Through the identification and analysis of critical incidents, professional judgement is enhanced, resulting in developed next step teaching. The intended purpose of critical incidents is not to analyse every aspect of the teaching and learning occurring, but rather to inform educators of their impact within the classroom and how this impacts on the learning in order to enact change or continuation of effective teaching and learning (Cook, 1994, p.408). A case study, based on an observed critical incident, will be discussed and evaluated throughout this study in order to identify appropriate next step teaching and learning practice.

School and Class Context:

The school in which the observations took place is located towards the east of Swansea, Wales. The area in which the school lies is relatively high in terms of deprivation; in 2019 the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIDM) identified the area to be within the top 25 most deprived Lower Super Output Area's (LSOA) in Swansea, out of 148 LSOA's in Swansea (Welsh Government, 2019, p.1). This is partly replicated in the percentage of eligible free school meal learners – just below 30% (Wales Online, 2019). The area is high in minority communities, with a considerably high amount of learners attending the school with English as an additional language, approximately 16/17% of learners (Wales Online, 2019). The school is state funded and run by the local authority, accepting learners between the age range of 11 and 16. The school's delivery of lessons and communication is predominantly through an English medium; Welsh medium communication is mainly delivered through Welsh lessons.

The class that was observed, within the school, were in year 8 and aged between 12 and 13. They were of mixed ability, with some learners presenting a high level of achievement/ability, some presenting an average ability and a few showing a lower ability. Although the class was mixed, all learners seemingly achieve an appropriate level of learning, differentiated by the teachers. A couple of learners in the group had a mixed timetable between the mainstream school and a specialist teaching facility (STF) connected to the school site. The group were mixed gendered also, with an approximate 50/50 split. Within the group there were mixed ethnicities that may play a role in the interpretation of activities/tasks.

Methodology:

The methods used within this study were selected to allow a critical analysis and reflection, based on the findings, to make informed pedagogical choices in the development of next teaching. A case study model was favoured, with non-participant observation methods used to identify a case incident, which can be explored critically. The observations took place in one morning, in a real classroom setting, as opposed to a manufactured classroom setting, to increase the reliability and transferability of the findings to a realistic setting. William Little (2014) suggests that field observation provides information that 'might be considered more accurate since it was collected without interference or intervention by the researcher' (Little, 2014). Little (2014) does however note that it can be difficult to generalise findings when using field observation methods.

A case study model was chosen for this research; a case study is described in Research Methods in Education by Cohen et al. (2013) as ambiguous, meaning it both identifies a general concept ('a single instance of a bounded system' Creswell 1994, in Cohen et al. 2013) and places this instance in a context (Yin, 2009 in Cohen et al. 2013). This method essentially provides insight to 'real people in real situations' (Cohen et al. 2013). It is important to note there are weaknesses to the case study method, with Nisbet and Watt (1984) highlighting case studies are prone to observer bias, subjectivity and ungeneralisable findings. A further limitation to case studies, as described by Little (2014), is the Hawthorne effect - behaviour changes due to the awareness of being observed. Experimental research methods could have been used, however due to the often laboratory based nature of experiment research, it was felt that a case study method would allow for a more accurate and real identification of an incident to inform next teaching.

Within case study research, observation is often the primary source of data collection. For this particular case study, non participant and structured observation was used to identify critical incidents. The primary focus of the observation was to recognise critical incidents; the structured observation method allows for the researcher to identify areas of interest prior to the observation, giving structure with what to look for. Price et al. (2017) adds that this method provides a clear focus for the researcher. This structured observation was an adapted version of Fletcher Wood's (2016) observation checklist; this allowed for context to be recorded in relation to the critical incident - an important element of a case study. Annotated copies of the adapted observation sheet can be seen in the appendices (A.i for example). It is also important to note that this observation was non participant based; there was no interaction between the researcher and participants. Ranjit Kumar (1996) states that non-participating observation allows the researcher to 'remain a passive observer' (Kumar 1996). It can therefore be inferred that this approach limits the possibility of observer bias. When using a participant observation based method, it was identified that participant error and bias, as well as observer bias, was likely to occur.

Critical Incident and Donaldson:

An observed critical incident will be described in its entirety and followed up with a critical analysis. A significant critical incident that was observed in the observation/test phase of this study related to a teacher's use of group work/collaboration. The recordings of the lesson can be found in the appendices labelled A.i and A.ii. The context of the critical incident was influential in its identification. The lesson was an ICT lesson with a year 8 class, with the focus of the lesson being to refine their cell referencing skills they had previously developed in prior lessons; evidently the lesson was towards the end of the topic.

The main body, or teaching and learning core, was centred around the use of cell referencing skills on Microsoft Excel. In order for the learners to be successful in using these skills as required, the activity used was a game of battleships. This required the learners to partner up and work collaboratively to be successful in the task. The teacher firstly modelled an example of how to play and use cell referencing within the game, to highlight the skills they would be refining. Then the learners partnered up to complete the task. It is important to note that learners were progressing through the tasks of the lesson at their own pace, resulting in two learners that became partnerless due to finishing the previous task at a late stage. When asked to partner together by the teacher, one learner (Learner A) refused. Instead of pursuing partnering the learners together, the teacher accepted Learner A's view and partnered the other learner with somebody who had finished.

This incident was deemed critical due to the analysis that took place upon reflection. Group work or collaboration is often used within a classroom and appears to be a successful strategy. However, upon analysis of this event it can be suggested that group work as a strategy for learning encourages learner independence and a plethora of interpersonal skills; autonomy and motivation for learning is essential in learners, in order for them to flourish in the wider community and world. When breaking down the incident, there are clear links to Professor Graham Donaldson's revised curriculum for Wales. Donaldson suggests that there are twelve pedagogical principles that educators should be implementing for effective teaching and learning; four of these principles can be identified as relevant to the incident. These are: encourage collaboration, support social and emotional development with positive relationships, encourage learners to take responsibility for their learning and build on previous knowledge and experience to engage interest (Donaldson, 2015). These directly relate to the incident as group work encourages collaboration whilst developing positive social relationships as a result. Additionally, the learners are building on previous knowledge through independent collaboration - there is no reliance on the teacher to facilitate their knowledge application. As a result, the four purposes of the curriculum can be seen to be

embedded within this strategy for learning. Collaboration in this context has been used to develop autonomy and independence of the learning which relates to increasing the learners confidence, capability, ethical values and creativity – all key skills specified in the four purpose statements for education in Wales. This also links to the constructivist theory, in that learners should take ownership of their learning and construct the task in a way in which they will develop their skills independently. This is supported by Virginia Richardson, a Professor in education, when she writes in an article on constructivism, ‘individuals create their own new understandings on the basis of an interaction between what they already know and believe and ideas and knowledge with which they come into contact’ (Richardson, 2003, pp. 1623-1624).

Additionally, humanistic approaches to teaching have been observed; when Learner A refused to work with the other learner, the teacher identified the emotional and personal feelings and growth of both learners and adapted his plan to suit their needs. This decision could have also been informed by the teacher's knowledge on effective collaboration.

Literature Review:

Collaboration is a tool used by teachers or educators often. What is its use and is it purposeful? Does the use of collaboration do anything for the learners? In its simplest form, collaboration can be seen as the ‘mutual engagement of participants in a coordinated effort to solve a problem together’ (Lai, 2011). To contextualise, learners engage together to solve a problem. David Didau (2013) supports Lai when he advocates the use of effective questioning (probe, clarify, recommend model) in order to generate collaborative discussion, rather than learner isolation, adding collaboration is key to learner development. Lai (2011) also implies that collaborative interactions can be distinguished by ‘shared goals, symmetry of structure, and a high degree of negotiation, interactivity, and interdependence’ (Lai, 2011). It can be inferred that teachers may use collaboration as a strategy to develop learners communication and personal skills; when considering this point of view, if a teacher incorporates group work they could be seen to be acknowledging cross curricular responsibilities (in particular literacy and communication) and developing learners towards achieving the four purposes of the new curriculum for Wales. Skills developed through collaboration could be: problem solving, creative and critical thinking and independence – clear links to the four purposes.

Summarising the rest of Lai (2011), she states that collaboration can be powerful particularly for low achieving learners. It can be argued that the opposite is also correct - consolidation of knowledge for high achieving learners can occur when grouped with lower ability learners with Tom Bennett (2015) claiming learners help other learners be successful through group work. Lai (2011) identifies that cognitive conflict, or dissonance, may arise - particularly in lower ability students - when presented with a group work task, as their prior understanding of the knowledge is challenged. This could suggest that there are negatives to group work to consider when deciding on how to group learners. The foundations of group work can often be seen to be influenced by the work of Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky therefore; the concept of cognitive progress and conflict are rooted within the task of collaboration (Dillenbourg et al. 1996). Linking to Vygotsky's zone of proximal development theory (1978), it can be argued that group work is an important factor in scaffolding lower ability learners, through grouping with higher achieving learners. This would eventually allow the lower learners to flourish independently, with Vygotsky stating:

‘the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers’ (Vygotsky 1978 in McLeod 2019).

This again is supported by Bruner's theory of scaffolding (1976), which suggests taking an element of freedom away from low achieving learners, to focus them on understanding the skill they're acquiring (Bruner, 1978 in McLeod 2019). Additionally, there is a potential link between these two practitioners and other socio-constructivist theories in terms of collaboration. Socio-constructivists aim to construct knowledge, and eventual independence of learning, through positive social relationships - ‘social factors affect the ways in which groups of people form understandings and formal knowledge’ (Richardson, 2003). It is therefore imperative that socio-constructivists adopt, or are at least considerate of, Piaget and Vygotsky's cognitive development and conflict theories.

Bennett (2015), similar to Lai, champions the use of teamwork or collaboration. Likewise, he approaches collaboration from a humanistic and constructivist lens, claiming group work allows learners to take ownership of their work and is a stage to independence; 'What a child can do today in cooperation, tomorrow he will be able to do on his own' (Bennett, 2015). This idea allows the learners to construct their own knowledge as a group, and consequently independently, but also allows them to go through this process at a pace of their own - this is where the humanistic concept is identified. When considering this concept, Didau's (2013) Teacher Talk wholeheartedly agrees that teamwork or collaboration is essential to learners becoming independent: the teaching and learning cycle used within his blog entry suggests collaboration (or joint construction) is the third step to independence - the next being independent construction. This model doesn't suggest who the learners should be collaborating with; reading between the lines suggests this could be with other learners, or the teacher. Teachers have a responsibility to collaborate with, and encourage collaboration between, learners when considering the twelve pedagogical principles and values and dispositions (Impact Wales, 2018; Welsh Government, 2019).

Urie Bronfenbrenner, psychologist, developed an ecological theory (1979) that suggests there are multiple systems around a learner that aid development - the microsystem contains school which is often where immediate relationships with peers are formed, providing role models and collaboration opportunities to build knowledge. However, Bennett (2015) suggests that collaboration with friends can lead to the task being seen as a chat session, taking the focus away from the learning. Furthermore, Alison Burke (2011), adds that passivity in learners within group work is a negative - 'some members may rely too heavily on others to do the work' (Burke, 2011). It can be deduced that in order to be successful in group work, all learners involved need to be engaged. If this isn't the case, the group work could be deemed ineffective. Burke (2011) suggests a behaviourist approach to group work could limit these scenarios stating, 'make every group member aware of the goals and objectives of the group and assign specific tasks or responsibilities to each member' (Burke, 2011). If group work is used in an ineffective scenario, it could therefore be seen to be a detriment to learners development and hindering the teachers effort to develop learners within the four purposes of the new curriculum.

When considering ineffective group work, with behaviorism theory embedded, Lee and Marlene Canter's (1976) assertive discipline theory provides a sound framework for teachers setting group based tasks. Charles (2005) writes that 'teachers are most effective when proactive, rather than reactive' (Charles 2005). The identification of what proactivity looks like, provides teachers an opportunity to lay ground rules for group work situations, or discipline plans for wider behaviour management. One element of assertive discipline is tactically ignoring secondary behaviour; this concept may apply in group work also, potentially making the learner begin to engage with the group. This idea is supported by Bill Rogers (2012) when stating, 'tactically ignore until the student works by everyone's fair rule' (Rogers 2012). However, the opposing argument to behaviourist approaches in group work is that this approach limits the autonomy of the group and/or individual. Claus Langfred (2000) highlights 'a group may have great discretion in deciding what tasks to perform and how to carry them out, but individual members within the group may have little discretion or control over their work' (Langfred 2000). This directly links to Burke (2011) when she states that disadvantages of poorly planned or ineffective collaboration leads to pressure to conform and individual learners dominating. This goes against all principles of the curriculum and standards as a teacher in Wales; the aim of the new curriculum is to develop independent, ambitious, informed, confident and creative learners - not strip them of their autonomy.

Reflection, Evaluation and Next Steps:

It is apparent, based on the observation and review of literature, that there are many components to consider when using group work as a learning strategy. Brookfield's (1998) Critical Reflective model will be used within this reflection. Based on personal experience, the effects and experiences of effective and ineffective group work has been around in classrooms for a while, yet effective collaboration is still to be definitively defined and is frequently debated. Experiences of consolidating knowledge through grouping with lower achieving learners in some areas, whilst being scaffolded in others by higher achieving students; embarking on friendly chatter rather than the work at times, while at other times fully focused and taking on a more dominant role. These experiences, combined with the observation record (A.i/ii) of the critical incident, lend themselves together to inform the implementation of effective group work. The benefits to group work seemingly outweigh the negatives, particularly when focusing on the new four purposes of the curriculum; group work can allow learner autonomy, capability, confidence, creativity, ethical values and independence.

When viewing group work or collaboration from a learners perspective (or lens), it is visible how challenges can occur when group work is used. Equally, it is visible how it can be the most beneficial experience too. As a learner, there may be a sense of pressure to conform to the group or take a passive role which can be debilitating to some, especially in confidence. This experience could be stripping the learner of their ability to become independent and take ownership of their learning - hindering holistic development, which is something the new curriculum wants to avoid. Rather aiding holistic development. However, a learner may see this opportunity to thrive on others experiences and knowledge, whilst actively offering their own suggestions and knowledge. As a learner and teacher this is something to be encouraged and celebrated, particularly when considering a teachers standards and pedagogical principles, and purposes of the new curriculum. Granted, a learner would definitely prefer to be grouped with peers and this may often work to their advantage, but when learners are grouped with non peers, it is possible they can understand to an extent the reasons behind the decision. From the learners lens, it is apparent that group work is valued as a method of learning; it is not every learners preference however, so considerations around the class context should be made when deciding on whether to use group work, in order to make it useful and effective.

Using the experience of the teacher observed in the critical incident (A.i), it is evident that group work is a successful learning strategy. Out of a large class, all learners bar one actively engaged in consolidating knowledge and developing towards independence. If purposefully used, the role of a teacher is partly fulfilled in relation to the twelve pedagogical principles by Donalson (2015), as well as developing learners in relation to the four purposes. Why should a teacher stop the implementation of a near enough fully engaging strategy? At the stage the learners were at, group work was the next step on taking ownership of their learning, according to the teaching and learning cycle in Didau (2013). As long as the teacher can identify when it is purposeful and gain trust in the learners to guide the implementation, the application of group work and collaboration is vital and effective.

Combining the case study with literature clearly identifies both pros and cons to group work. With Bennett (2015), Burke (2011) and Langfred (2000) all highlighting that group work can hinder a learners progression, it is clear that considerations need to be made when using group work in order to not reverse the development of the four purposes in the learners. Depending on the context of the class, it is clear that behaviourist approaches and the framework of assertive discipline theory may be essential to make group work effective, whilst at other times a more humanistic approach can be adopted, giving the learners more freedom. Also class dependent is the use of selecting groups - if certain members of the group require scaffolding, then grouping should maybe replicate that through placing high achievers with low achievers; this approach has been seen to have pros and cons itself, but research suggested this is mostly a positive and effective use. The overarching theme for next steps in teaching, based on group work, is to continue its use with consideration of how class context can and will shift how the approach is used. It is of clear use to learners in developing them holistically and requires the teacher to actively partake in developing their practice in relation to the pedagogical principles and professional values and dispositions.

Conclusion:

Through critical analysis of an incident and reviewing literature to support this evaluation, it is evident that group work supports learner development, supports the success of the new welsh curriculum and supports the development of teaching practice regarding pedagogical principles and values/dispositions. Many factors can influence when and how group work could be implemented into a session. The important role of the teacher is to adapt the typical model to the needs of the learners. This can be done in a variety of manners, such as choosing groups, setting rules, assigning roles, scaffolding, tactically ignoring secondary behaviour, using a humanistic or constructivist approach. All of these are valid shifts that can be adjusted and implemented at the teachers' needs and will allow for the learners to develop holistically and towards independence.

References:

1. Bennett, T. (2015) 'Group Work for the Good', *American Educator*.
2. Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *Ecological Systems Theory*
3. Brookfield, S. (1998) 'Critically Reflective Practice', *The Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Profession*, 18.
4. Bruner, J. (1976) *Scaffolding Theory*
5. Burke, A. (2011) 'Group Work: How to Use Groups Effectively', *The Journal of Effective Teaching*, 11(2).
6. Canter, L. and Canter, M. (1976) *Assertive Discipline Theory*
7. Charles, C. (2005) *Building Classroom Discipline* 8th edn. Pearson.
8. Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2013) *Research Methods in Education* 7th edn. Routledge: Oxon.
9. Cook, L. (1994) 'Review: Critical Incidents in Teaching: Developing Professional Judgement', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 42(4), pp. 407 – 409.
10. Creswell, J. (1994) *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Sage: Thousand Oaks.
11. Didau, D. (2013) *Teacher Talk: The Missing Link* [Online] Available at: <https://www.learningspy.co.uk/english-gcse/teacher-talk-the-missing-link/> (Accessed: 25/10/2020)
12. Dillenbourg, P. et al. (1996) *The Evolution of Research on Collaborative Learning*.
13. Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures: Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales* [Online PDF] Available at: <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/asset/A788604C-3046-4005-A1EA0EAFF023E0DD/> (Accessed: 24/10/2020)
14. Fletcher-Wood, H. (2016) *Ticked off*. Crown House: Caramarthen.
15. Impact Wales (2018) *12 Pedagogical Principles of Teaching* [Online Image] Available at: <https://www.impact.wales/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/12-Pedagogical-Principles-1.pdf> (Accessed: 25/10/2020)
16. Kumar, R. (1996) *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners*. Sage: London.
17. Lai, E. (2011) *Collaboration: A Literature Review*. Pearson.
18. Langfred, C. (2000) 'The Paradox of Self-Management: Individual and Group Autonomy in Work Groups', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21(5).
19. Little, W. (2014) *Introduction to Sociology – 1st Canadian Edition*. BCcampus; Victoria.
20. McLeod, S. (2019) *Bruner – Learning Theory in Education* [Online] Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/bruner.html> (Accessed: 26/10/2020)
21. McLeod, S. (2019) *The Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding* [Online] Available at:

- <https://www.simplypsychology.org/Zone-of-Proximal-Development.html>
(Accessed: 26/10/2020)
22. Nisbet, J. and Watt, J. (1984) Case study: In J.Bell, T. Bush, A. Fox, J. Goodey and S. Goulding (eds) *Conducting Small-Scale Investigations in Educational Management*. London: Harper & Row, pp. 79-92.
23. Price, P. et al. (2017) *Research Methods in Psychology* 3rd U.S edn. California.
24. Richardson, V. (2003) 'Constructivist Pedagogy', *Teachers College Record*, 105(9), pp. 1623-1640
25. Rogers, B. (2012) *Tactical Ignoring*. Sage.
26. Tripp, D. (2012) *Critical Incidents in Teaching: Developing Professional Judgement*. Routledge: New York.
27. Vygotsky, L. (1978) *Zone of Proximal Development Theory*
28. Wales Online (2019) *The Real Schools Guide: Swansea* [Online]. Available at: <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/7540597> (Accessed: 24/10/2020)
29. Welsh Government (2019) 'Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) 2019 : 148 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Swansea' [Online PDF]. Available at: https://www.swansea.gov.uk/media/34273/WIMD-2019-Swansea-LSOAs-Ranked/pdf/Welsh_Index_of_Multiple_Deprivation_WIMD_2019_LSOAs_in_Swansea.pdf (Accessed: 24/10/2020)
30. Welsh Government (2019) *Professional standards for teaching and leadership* [Online] Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/19bc948b-8a3f-41e0-944a-7bf2cadf7d18/professional-standards-for-teaching-and-leadership-interactive-pdf-for-pc.pdf> (Accessed: 25/10/2020)
31. Yin, R. (2009) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* 4th edn. Sage: Thousand Oaks.

Appendices follow this page

Appendices:

A.i

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group:

28th September 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).

The lesson observed was an ICT lesson (Science and Technology AoLE). The class are of mixed ability and split approximately 50/50 between male and female. The lesson was taught indoors in a specialist IT computer suite, equipped with rows of computers. Due to the nature of the subject, there is definite development in the students digital competency. Due to COVID-19 and the disruption it caused to education, the lesson being taught was part of the Year 7 scheme of learning - the main focus of the session was to refine cell referencing and formula use. There was evident cross-curricular teaching within the session, drawing on skills, and consequently developing these, from mathematics (formulas) and geography (map reading and cell referencing). The session observed was towards the end of this particular topic.

Classroom culture

(What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?)

All students presented with a positive attitude towards their learning. There was consistent chatting between the learners, mostly relating to the work. There was a visible boy - girl divide between the class in relation to the seating arrangements. A small group of four boys situated at the back of the classroom displayed disruptive behaviour when the teacher was explaining tasks, through interruption and messing around, however this was confronted by the teacher and the learners were refocused with the tasks and engaged with the lesson well overall. The learners expressed an enthusiasm towards the lesson, particularly when they were presented with a battleship task, using a spreadsheet to develop and refine their cell referencing skills. There were two learners that were partnerless for this task however, resulting in one learner becoming disengaged with the objective and the other merging with a pair and simply observing them. When asked to join together

for the task by the teacher, one student refused - the teacher left this learner to it and found a partner for the other partnerless learner. This was picked up by the teacher through regular check-ins with the learners to keep the focus related to the work and engaging with the activities. Overall, the classroom culture was successful and positive.

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?)

As soon as the learners entered the room, there was a starter activity on the board ready for the learners to engage in. The starter was an APK starter (activating prior knowledge) - they needed to use the knowledge they built in the previous session in order to complete the task. When the learners were answering the starter, the teacher explained how their previous learning was going to be developed and refined during this lesson - the objective was to refine their cell referencing skills and use of formulas in a spreadsheet. After the starter, the teacher gave learners an opportunity to complete the work from the previous lesson if it wasn't finished. Alternatively, the learners were given the opportunity to move on to the next activity of playing battleships via a spreadsheet, if they had completed the work last session. The activities were evidently connected to the objective. The unfinished task related to using formulas on Microsoft Excel, to work out mathematical problems in relation to a scenario and battleships refined their understanding of using cell referencing. This task also enabled the learners to develop their ICT literacy skills, in particular in oracy. Questioning was used to assess objective understanding and the teacher circulated the room discussing the tasks with individuals or pairs. The whiteboard at the front of the classroom also contained the tasks for learners to make reference to. The plenary activity consisted of questioning the learners, with a cold call approach, after a momentary TPS (Think, Pair, Share) opportunity. The questioning was the share phase of this task. They were asked for the advantages of the knowledge they had refined and developed in the session and how this could be applied in other lessons (making cross curricular links explicit to the learners).

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 starter was displayed on the board with APK written at the top - an indication to the students that they need to access prior knowledge in order to complete the task. Throughout the lesson, the board was used to display the activities/tasks for pupils to refer back to if needed; there were visual aids to support the tasks description - a possible differentiation technique, or additionally a strategy developing the learners ability to transfer their knowledge to the long term memory (schema theory). The teacher consistently moved throughout the classroom asking and answering questions relating to the objective and tasks. They used positive reinforcement frequently to acknowledge the success of learners and as a behaviour management tool to re-engage learners when they felt the focus drifting. The teacher also used oral direction to explain tasks and the success criteria. When explaining the battleship task, the teacher modelled an example of how to play the game, ensuring all learners understood the rules and how you can use cell referencing within the game. All combined, the teacher covered multiple methods of explanation so that it became accessible and easily understandable for all learners - this was evident through the whole class engagement throughout the lesson.

Access and challenge

(What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners?
What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?)

The teacher used multiple methods of explanation for the learners, which enabled an all round accessibility to the learners, i.e. oral explanation, visual aids, modelling and written explanation. This was clearly effective, as all learners engaged with the tasks in the lesson. Another tool they used was positive reinforcement to keep the learners engaged within the task, i.e. 'Come on you two, you're doing extremely well and you've nearly finished the game. Let's finish it off and see who the champion will be.' The starter activity really captured the learners engagement in particular - the task on the board was related to cell referencing via map reading. The teacher had chosen to insert not just geographical maps, but maps from a popular game Fortnite. This makes the task relevant for the learners, and most learners will have heard of or played the game, aiding engagement and access levels, but also the transfer of knowledge from the working memory to long term memory (schema). One method used to differentiate the learners, was progressing in tasks at their own pace - some learners needed to finish work from the previous session, in order to move on to the next task. Instead of pressuring those learners finding it more complex, they were allowed to pace themselves appropriately, with guidance from the teacher. Additionally, tasks always had an extension for the more academically

talented learners (MAT), who found themselves progressing at a faster rate. These were always building on and developing the knowledge they had been working on in the main task, providing an appropriate challenge to the learners, consequently engaging them consistently.

Assessment

(Can anything be observed about how a student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience)?

The starter activity (APK) was used by the teacher as a means to assess the pupils' understanding of the knowledge built in the previous lesson. This was an opportunity to correct any misunderstandings or misconceptions and was effective in its use. The learners were told how their prior knowledge would be used and enhanced through today's session. It was clear they needed this knowledge to be able to continue on their learning journey - where this was lacking, the teacher spent individual time with the learner to enable them to grasp the concept and knowledge. There was evidence of differentiation questioning throughout the lesson, with more closed questions for the less confident learners and open questions for the more confident. This method was used as a means of assessment for learning, rather than assessment of learning, as the teacher then adapted their plan to move misconceptions into sound knowledge. Additionally, the use of TPS in the plenary gave the teacher a clear understanding of where the learners were in terms of their journey and if they would be able to make links to where this knowledge could be useful or beneficial to them.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching)?

The use of group/pair work was particularly of interest - this enabled the students to work collaboratively together to develop their learning. The most interesting aspect was when the teacher attempted to partner two students who were partnerless and one refused. Instead of taking time to attempt to get them to work together, the teacher moved on and found a new partner that had finished the task in their pair. This may have been an effective behaviour management technique, as it caused little disruption to the rest of the class by taking time to try and get them to partner. However, it could also be a strategy used by the teacher to make pair/group work effective - if the learners are unwilling to work together, can the work they do actually be of any use to the learners? Effective group work will allow learners to become independent, confident and capable which are some of the four purposes of the new welsh curriculum.

Additionally, the use of positive reinforcement was enjoyable to observe. The teacher used it as a means to celebrate achievement of the learners, but also as a tool to re-engage learners with the tasks. Using positive reinforcement to celebrate achievement and engage learners allows motivation of the learners to develop intrinsically, consequently developing their autonomy and independence. Positive reinforcement and using it within teaching links to the four purposes of the welsh curriculum (capable, confident, healthy and ambitious learners in particular).

A.ii

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context.	28th September 2020, 9am - 10am
Date/time.	Year 8: 12-13 years old
Age/Stage of group.	The whole class and teacher were involved within this critical incident.
People involved.	The lesson in which it occurred was ICT. Throughout the lesson the main focus was to refine their cell referencing skills they had developed from the previous lesson; this was achieved through a battleship task on excel. In order for this task to work, the learners had to work in partners (essentially group work/collaboration). Learners were also able to progress through tasks at their own pace. The class was mixed gender and of mixed ability. The seating arrangements meant that there was a visible boy - girl divide in the room, with the exception of a few.
Contextual information from field notes.	The learning was towards the end of the topic.

<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 main task of battleships, using cell referencing on excel, required for learners to partner up and work collaboratively together in order to achieve and succeed in the task and consequently lesson objective. The idea of getting the learners to work collaboratively directly links to Donaldson's new vision for teachers and learners in the new curriculum. Firstly, Donaldson's pedagogical principles for educators states part of the responsibility of a teacher is to: 1. Encourage collaboration 2. Support social and emotional development with positive relationships 3. Encourage learners to take responsibility for their learning 4. Build on previous knowledge and experience to engage interest. These four principles could be seen to be the reason why the teacher decided to incorporate collaboration within the lesson and task. The teacher is evidently encouraging collaboration by partnering learners; the teacher is supporting the development of social skills and positive relationships; the learners are taking ownership of their work through working in a pair and not relying on the teacher; the learners are developing their prior knowledge through collaborative sharing. When considering these, it is clear that the learners are also experiencing personal development in relation to the four purposes of the curriculum. Collaboration develops learners independence, consequently developing the learners confidence, capability, ethical values and creativity. These skills all form part of the structured sentences regarding the four purposes of the welsh curriculum. Due to learners progressing through tasks at their own pace, the event of partnerless learners occurred. The teacher attempted to partner these learners, however one refused to work with the other. The teacher decided to leave this scenario without further attempts, and found a new partner for the learner; this could be seen to ensure the collaboration was effective in its use and additionally as a behaviour management technique, in order to not disrupt the work of the class. This choice from the teacher, to not force a collaboration, can be seen as identifying the role of collaboration and when it is useful and how negative collaboration can be detrimental to learners holistic development. There are also links to humanist and constructivist theories, with the teacher putting learners emotional and
---	---

	personal development first, as well as getting the learners to work independently and construct their own learning in pairs.
--	--

B.i

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group:

28th September 2020, 10am - 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).

The lesson observed was an English lesson (Literacy, Language and Communication AoLE). The class are of mixed ability and split approximately 50/50 between male and female. The lesson was taught indoors in the school's library; the english lesson was a library based session. Due to the nature of the subject, there is an evident development in literacy skills. The lesson focus was split into three areas in which the students carouseled between. Area one, was focusing on literacy skill development (prefixes and suffixes). Area two focused on allowing the learners to select a book for their reading. Lastly area three allowed the learners to develop their oracy skills through reading a selected book (from the teacher) together. This area also aimed to develop learners' empathy skills. There was evident cross-curricular teaching within the session, drawing on skills, and consequently developing these, from mathematics (mathematical terminology such as centimetre). Additionally the teachers incorporated cultural references to develop learners' awareness of current culture. The observed lesson was the first time learners had a library session this year.

Classroom culture

(What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?)

All students presented with a positive attitude towards their learning. There was a little disruption at the beginning of the lesson, with the teacher warning that if the disruption continued the learners would spend break time inside. The learners presented a willingness and excited behaviour when they found out this lesson would be a library lesson. When they reached the library there was consistent focus and engagement from all learners, in every area of the session. The teachers insisted and repeated that the emphasis of the learning was to attempt and build confidence, rather than succeed and be right. Teacher A: 'no need to be worried or afraid of answering, we are all here to learn and develop'. Even though this was emphasised repeatedly, a couple of learners asked for new activity sheets because they'd made a mistake on their original sheet.

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?)

When the learners reached the library, the objectives for the lesson were displayed on the board. The teacher went through each objective clearly and allowed the learners the chance to ask any questions regarding the objectives. They mutually agreed on timings for each carousel. This was left on the board for the entire lesson, for learners to refer back to if needed. Area one (literacy skill development) in particular had clear links between the objective and purpose of the activities; the focus on what a prefix is and how they're used, with examples, was replicated in the activities - questioning on prefixes and a prefix crossword. This also allowed the learners to activate prior knowledge and build sound links between their previous learning and current - activity one they were given a prefix and asked to think of words and subject specific words that use these prefixes.

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 use of displaying objectives and timings on the board enabled the learners to focus on what it is being asked of them in each section. Due to there being three areas of learning in the session, there was at least one teacher per area, enabling a more personal teaching experience for the groups. This meant that unfocused behaviour would have been picked up quickly. There were a variety of techniques used to engage and direct the learners' learning. Questioning was a common method used; the use of questioning to access learners' knowledge using a matrix of closed to open questions depending on learners ability meant that all learners were directed in what to engage in. Additionally, cold calling was used if focus began to wane to redirect learners' attention to the objective. Positive reinforcement was used also to keep learners engaged within the session.

Access and challenge

(What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners?
What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?)

Consistent discussion occurred in areas one and two regarding the activities for each area. This focused the learners on the task and made any task that was challenging accessible to the learners. It could be said that the level of challenge was consistent across all learners, with no real differentiation in challenge for higher achieving learners - these learners were the ones frequently answering questions if not using cold calling as a strategy. There were extension tasks provided however, for learners that performed the tasks at a quicker rate. The book chosen for area three was chosen to provide a challenge for learners in order to develop their oracy and empathy skills to a more advanced state/level. It can be said that the teachers emphasis on trying rather than succeeding made the activities more accessible to all learners.

Assessment

(Can anything be observed about how a student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience)?

The learners existing knowledge was used mostly in relation to area one, however area three incorporated elements of APK. Learners had previously experienced empathy development through the school's connection with the Empathy Lab. They were developing these skills in this session through questioning at intervals of the book, regarding what emotions were being explored in the book via characters. This gave the teacher the chance to guide and assess the learners current ability to empathise, rather than sympathise providing an insight to what next steps in teaching may be needed to continue this development (assessment for learning [AFL]). In area one, learners used prior language knowledge in order to engage in the tasks provided - this also gave other learners the opportunity to learn from others word banks. There was no summative assessment within the session, mostly AFL.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching)?

Taking time in a lesson to read with and hear the learners speak was of particular interest. This idea can be implemented in all subject areas, aiding the learners ability to develop oracy skills within a subject specific context. Additionally, this can be seen to be meeting and acknowledging teachers cross curricular responsibilities in developing literacy skills (Literacy Framework). For subjective subjects, such as English, Drama, Art, Music etc. it can be seen to be developing empathetic skills, which relate to the four purposes of the new curriculum (ethical and informed, healthy and confident and creative skills). Using any written texts, it could be suggested to allow for time to read through this together as a class in order to guide their development holistically, rather than specifically in a subject context.

B.ii

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context.	28th September 2020, 10am - 11am Year 8: 12-13 years old The whole class and teacher were involved within this critical incident.
Date/time.	
Age/Stage of group.	The lesson in which it occurred was an English library lesson. Throughout the lesson, the focus was split into three areas in which the students carousell between in small groups. Area one, was focusing on literacy skill development (prefixes and suffixes).
People involved.	Area two focused on allowing the learners to select a book for their reading. Lastly area three allowed the learners to develop their oracy skills through reading a selected book (from the teacher) together. This area also aimed to develop learners' empathy skills. In area three the focus was to develop literacy, oracy and empathy skills. Learners were also able to progress through tasks with guidance from a teacher. The class was mixed gender and of mixed ability. Additionally the teachers incorporated cultural references to develop learners' awareness of current culture.
Contextual information from field notes.	

<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 third area of the carousel had one task; to read a book, taking it in turns to read paragraphs. The groups were small. The aim was to allow the learners to further develop their literacy, oracy and empathetic skills. This concept of allowing the learners to read through a text or book together in a collaborative and safe environment, guided by a teacher, can be seen to be useful in developing learners' subject specific language and analytical/critical skills. Reading together allows the teacher to intervene and address misconceptions in the understanding of the text, but also in their oracy. This idea relates nicely to the cross curricular responsibilities of teachers in Wales with the literacy framework being an important aspect of learner development. Additionally, this strategy allows empathetic skills to be developed further, guiding the learners towards achieving the four purposes of the new curriculum. The strategy has links to behaviourist, constructivist and humanist theories. This approach is behaviourist in that the learners can be told which section they will read and a set of instructions given to the learners before the activity i.e. 'respect whoever is reading by not talking'. The constructivist approach is seen when the learners are independently constructing links between prior knowledge and the text being used, whilst also using social relationships to further enhance this construction (socio-constructivism). Humanistic approaches can be seen in adopting a 'try rather than succeed' atmosphere, in which the learners can be guided. Additionally they can allow the learners to choose a segment to read. This strategy allows the teacher to engage with the pedagogical principles also. Examples of links: 1. Encourage collaboration 2. Create authentic contexts for learning 3. Support social and emotional development and positive relationships 4. Employing broad repertoire of teaching approaches 5. Promote problem solving, creative and critical thinking 6. Build on previous knowledge and experience 7. Reinforce cross curricular responsibilities i.e. literacy, numeracy and digital competence.
---	--

C.i

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group:

28th September 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).

The lesson observed was a product and design lesson (Science and Technology AoLE). The class are of mixed ability and split approximately 50/50 between male and female. The lesson was taught indoors in a technology suite that had computer space, desk space and 3D printing and wood work facilities. There was evident cross curricular teaching involved in the session, with part of the lesson focusing on marketing for a product (Business links). This also links to the four purposes in creating ethical, ambitious and enterprising learners. The lesson focus was to continue working through a booklet provided at the start of the term - this related to the design and production of a unique product. Additionally the teacher incorporated cultural references to develop learners' awareness of current culture, with links to the numeracy framework, i.e. the USA uses inches and feet, Europe tends to use centimeters and metres. The observed lesson was around half way through the unit.

Classroom culture

(What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?)

Some learners' attitude towards their learning was positive and they engaged fairly well with the tasks. However, the majority of the class presented with a hostility towards the teacher and consequently the work. There was a real sense of tension within the atmosphere - this was perceived to be largely due to the relationship between the learners and teacher. There was a lot of disruption throughout the lesson, with the teacher visibly growing frustrated before reaching a stage where shouting was the means of communication. The learners presented some willingness to engage in the lesson when the teacher tailored the session to the class specifically. The teacher used a strict seating plan, and managed the learners through stopping learners from moving from their seats and working collaboratively

- it was evident the learners were unhappy with this and some stopped working as a result.

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?)

It could be suggested that the learners were unclear of the objective of the subject; they repeatedly queried the teacher, asking what they actually need to be doing in the session. The objective was only discussed at the beginning and was not situated on a board or elsewhere in the room for the learners to refer back to. The starter activity was partially supported by APK and directly linked to the purpose of the lesson. They were presented with a unique product, relevant to the subject, and were asked to find good features of the product, bad features of the product and identify its use. This allowed the learners to access prior knowledge on what makes a good or bad product, whilst developing critical analysis skills. The booklets were unseen, so a definitive statement on whether the tasks related to the objective cannot be made.

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 learners repeatedly questioned the tasks and what they needed to do; the teacher directed the learners to the task and explained that this should be independent and she shouldn't need to explain the tasks further. This could be detrimental to learners, but equally it could be argued the teacher is aiming to develop learners autonomy and independence. The teacher often used questioning strategies to direct the learners focus to the tasks - cold calling and hand raising techniques were used. The majority of questioning took place in a hand raising setting. It was noted that the teacher often chose the same person to answer any questions, possibly shifting other learners direction away from the task.

Access and challenge

(What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners?
What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?)

Through the repeated questioning of the tasks, it would appear that the level of work was not quite accessible for all. It suggests that the challenge is there for the higher achieving learners, but possibly at a detriment to lower achieving learners who may require additional scaffolding. The teacher did however adapt her plan to incorporate a more personalised approach to the starter and activities, by asking students what they would like to design or produce. There were almost mini activities in place to try to engage all learners in some aspect of the lesson; numeracy and business teaching was incorporated into the session. This could be seen as a method used to engage some learners in a manner that's accessible to the individual. Overall, there was no real differentiation in level of challenge which was pitched at a higher ability with limited scaffolding for lower achieving learners.

Assessment

(Can anything be observed about how a student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience?)

The starter activity can be seen to use learners' existing knowledge in order to inform their work. They used this prior knowledge to develop informed critical analysis which was assessed by the teacher in a structured sharing. This clearly links to the development of learners in relation to the four purposes - informed, capable, creative, enterprising and confident learners. The learners also developed skills in relation to the numeracy framework - a cross curricular responsibility of a teacher. Other than this, there was no real assessment of, or assessment for, learning that took place in this session.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching)?

Disruptive behaviour was frequent throughout the session - one learner (Learner A) became so disruptive that they had to be moved to a space in front of the teacher. The disruption continued and was met with hostility from the teacher. It can be said that Learner A may have an already established negative relationship with the teacher. It could also be said that the teacher is aware of how to deal with this behaviour from Learner A. Furthermore, it could be suggested (based on Glasser 1965) that Learner A may have an underlying desire for their needs to be met. Glasser states there are 5 needs in learners and if one of these is not met, it can be displayed through disruptive and ineffective behaviour. Establishing a relationship is consequently important with the learners in order to identify the appropriate action required for behaviour management.

C.ii

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context.	28th September 2020, 11:20am - 12:20pm
Date/time.	Year 8: 12-13 years old
Age/Stage of group.	One learner and the teacher were involved within this critical incident.
People involved.	The lesson in which it occurred was a product and design lesson. Throughout the lesson, the focus was to continue working through a booklet provided at the start of the term - this related to the design and production of a unique product. The learner involved in the critical incident, consistently disengaged with the tasks provided (similar to most of the group), however the behaviour from this particular learner was more dominant than others. The class was mixed gender and of mixed ability. Additionally the teachers incorporated cultural references to develop learners' awareness of current culture, and cross curricular teaching and responsibilities.
Contextual information from field notes.	

<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>	Learner A consistently portrayed disruptive behaviour throughout the session, disengaging with any tasks that were given to the group - it is important to note that most learners were disengaging with the task, however Learner A was almost fuelling this. The teacher had to move the learner to in front of her desk, however this strategy was still ineffective in trying to engage the learner. The learner continued to disrupt the learning and the teacher became increasingly hostile with the learner, eventually resorting to shouting as a means to communicate with the learner. It can be suggested that a negative relationship between the learner and teacher had previously been made, which can occur sometimes. Approaching the situation with hostility or conflict can be seen to be limiting the teachers ability to develop social and emotional skills, through positive relationships - one of the pedagogical principles for teachers. Additionally, it can be seen to limit the learners ability to develop against the four purposes of the curriculum as learners may lose confidence and make a connection between conflict being the appropriate tactic to use when in difficult situations - hindering the ability to become ethical and informed. It can be suggested that the learner was not having their needs met within the session, so displayed negative behaviour in order to signal their struggle. According to Glasser (1965) there are five needs that need to be met by learners; if one of these is not met, disruptive or ineffective behaviour may be presented in order to gain the teachers attention and fulfill their needs.
---	---

D.i

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group:

28th September 2020, 12:20am - 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).

The lesson observed was a science lesson (Science and Technology AoLE). The class are of mixed ability and split approximately 50/50 between male and female. The lesson was taught indoors in a science room. There was evident cross curricular teaching involved in the session, with part of the lesson focusing on literacy skills - picking out key scientific words and defining them. The lesson focus was to learn about reflection - what is it and how is it in our lives? Learners had to use creative thinking and analysis skills in order to fulfill the tasks.. The observed lesson was around half way through the unit.

Classroom culture

(What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?)

All learners presented with an extremely enthusiastic and positive approach to the science lesson. Whilst lining up outside the classroom, all of the learners were chatting about how excited they are for the lesson. There was some disruptive chatter occurring sporadically in the session, however this was combated by cold calling on these learners to give responses - an attempt to refocus these learners which seemed to work. There was also a no coercion atmosphere in the classroom, with the teacher not forcing learners to respond or read aloud if this isn't something they wanted to do at the time. This links to a humanistic approach in that the teacher is considering the learners feelings in the situation. It also can be seen to build positive relationships and trust with the learners. These elements link to the four purposes of the curriculum in that by not coercing the learners, confidence can still be developed further, rather than knocking their confidence by coercing them and them getting it wrong or making mistakes.

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?)

The objective was clearly displayed on the board when the learners entered the room, with a starter activity below. The starter activity was a recall (APK) based starter and consisted of a series of questions rated in difficulty. There was a reading activity within the session that spoke about what reflections are in relation to science and how they are used or evident in daily life. This reading task specifically and directly linked to the objective, which the teacher made clear before setting the task going. The plenary activity directly linked to the objective and assessing the learners understanding of the content to this point. The activity was a MR Wrong task - learners were presented with a series of statements and had to identify if they were true or false. If the statement was false, they had to use the information learnt in the lesson to change the sentence to make it correct.

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 teacher frequently reiterated the objective and how the tasks linked to the objective and their learning. This gave clear intent and direction for the learners. Objectives were on constant display for learner referral too. Positive reinforcement was used throughout to acknowledge student achievement - if they answered correctly, or they grasped a concept well. This allowed the learners to identify what they needed to do to be successful in the objective, as well as encouraging learners to engage. Physical reward was used also to get learners to engage with the tasks - learners wanted to sing a song from the previous lesson, so the teacher agreed that if they work well, at the end of the lesson they could play/sing the song. Visual aids were also used throughout the session to direct learners to the task or what is being asked of them in the task.

Access and challenge

(What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners?
What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?)

The starter activity was leveled in difficulty - the questions became progressively more challenging. This technique was seen to be a great tool for differentiation of learners; higher ability learners were able to progress onto these questions and answer them correctly, whereas lower achieving students managed to answer the simpler questions effectively. The use of visual aids in the lesson also made the lesson more accessible to the learners, as it acted almost as a scaffold to the tasks. Again a great differentiation technique that was effective in the learners engagement. Cold calling questioning was used throughout so the teacher had an understanding of everyone's knowledge. Those that were called upon had varying questions, with higher achieving learners being presented with open questions that encourage deep thinking, whereas lower students received closed questions in order to clarify their knowledge. For each task there was an extension task available so that learners always had an opportunity to challenge themselves if required.

Assessment

(Can anything be observed about how a student's existing knowledge is used? Can anything be observed regarding the development of knowledge during or after the experience?)

The starter activity can be seen to activate prior knowledge. They had to recall and recap concepts and knowledge from the previous session in order to engage with the task. This provided an opportunity for the teacher to assess the learners current understanding of the previous topic and therefore inform their future plan with the class. This also links to the cognitive science theory of transference of knowledge to long term memory. The use of questioning and the plenary task were effective tools used by the teacher to assess the learners development of knowledge. Scaffolding learners was used when questioning to guide the learners into accessing their knowledge.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there moments which cause you to consider aspects of practice when you come across them in future teaching)?

The teacher adopted a no coercion approach with the learners. This approach can be seen to be underpinned by humanistic theories in that the teacher is considerate of the learners feelings and emotions, not using trust as a way to force an answer or behaviour in the class. The example identified is the teacher asked for volunteers to read a text aloud - students volunteered other students, but the teacher responded by asking those learners if they would like to read, whilst reiterating that they don't have to if they don't feel comfortable to. The no coercion approach could be seen to allow learners to continually develop, particularly in confidence, rather than hinder or potentially damage their confidence. There is the argument that a no coercion approach could stop learners from actively engaging as they know they won't be forced to respond if they do not wish to.

D.ii

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context.	28th September 2020, 12:20am - 13:20pm
Date/time.	Year 8: 12-13 years old
Age/Stage of group.	The class and teacher were involved within this critical incident, but the main focus is on the teachers approach.
People involved.	The lesson in which it occurred was a science lesson.
Contextual information from field notes.	Throughout the lesson, the focus was to learn about reflection - what is it and how is it in our lives? A series of tasks were engaged in by the learners in the lesson in order to meet the objective. Multiple strategies were used by the teacher to develop their knowledge and assess their understanding. The class was mixed gender and of mixed ability.

<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 adopted a no coercion approach to the learning. One task that was used in the session required volunteers to read a text aloud - students volunteered other students, but the teacher insisted on asking those if they truly wanted to volunteer reiterating they don't have to if they don't want to. This humanistic approach can be seen to build the confidence of the learners (an element of the four purposes) rather than forcing the learner to do something and then make mistakes and feel unaccomplished - less confident. This also assists the teachers role in relation to the pedagogical principles - creating and developing social and emotional skills. This also develops a positive relationship between the teacher and learners; when trust is built the learners are more likely to offer themselves forward when asked for volunteers. This can also be seen as a differentiation technique in that not forcing lower learners to answer or do something, shows the teachers understanding that they may need additional scaffolding in place in order to achieve well in the task. It can be argued this approach could allow for passive learners, rather than active and teaches them to be reliant on others to protect them - limiting autonomy and independence in the learners. Additionally, they may abuse the trust with the teacher and use the session as an opportunity to relax and disengage with the task or learning.
---	--

