

A 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

Introduction

When observing teaching and learning, a critical incident is an event which occurs naturally within a lesson, involving an individual or multiple individuals, which is analysed in detail to investigate the theory which underpins why it occurred and can then be reflected upon (Tripp, 2002). The incident itself is not 'critical' until the analysis has been carried out and often incidents may not appear noteworthy at all until this critical analysis investigates further beyond what is observed.

Critical incidents are widely used in education to analyse and develop professional practice (Joshi, 2018). By observing an incident, analysing it in detail and reflecting upon that analysis, teachers and other professionals can identify or develop new strategies to influence their practice (Ewens, 2015). The use of critical incidents to develop teaching practices enables professionals to look further into an issue and to investigate the influences behind the incident itself and act based on these deeper causes, rather than the observed incident. Further, by enabling teachers to reflect and develop their practice with purpose and thought, standards are inevitably higher and pupil progress improved (Brookfield, 2017).

This essay intends to present a critical incident observed in a Year 1 class of a primary school in Cardiff, Wales at a time where teachers, students and schools are preparing to implement a new curriculum. The analysis of the incident will be brought together with a thorough literature review of learning theories relevant to the incident and the new Curriculum for Wales, in order to identify suitable next teaching steps for ensuring pupil progress within the setting and in order to develop my own teaching practices as a student-teacher.

Observation

The observations were carried out in a primary school in the city of Cardiff. The schools' pupils range from the ages of four through to eleven. The school has children from a diverse range of backgrounds, with around 30% of children from minority ethnic backgrounds and English as a second language (Estyn, 2014). The observations were carried out in a Year 1 classroom. The class had twenty-seven children, made up of seventeen boys and ten girls. Two of the children are identified as having additional learning needs (ALN) and they both are allocated one-to-one support. The class has one full time teacher and one part time teaching assistant, as well as the two one-to-one teaching assistants.

Methodology

The method used for this study was a non-participant observation, conducted under natural conditions (Kumar, 2012), meaning that the observer was present in the classroom but did not in any way interact with the children, nor were any of the situations in the classroom manipulated for data collection. Non-participant observation was chosen in this study so as not to affect the outcomes. Particularly, as this was a behavioural observation, it was important for the observer not to have any impact on the subjects. Also, in this instance, it was important to view the interactions between individuals, such as teacher- pupil interactions, during the observations which would not be possible using methods such as interviewing (Mercatoris and Craighead, 1974).

The purpose of this observation was to observe a critical incident for analysis. Critical incidents, by definition, allow researchers and practitioners to be reflective on their practice and analyse incidents in great depth. The incident itself may not have seemed to be of any great significance, but when analysed as part of a wider context, it can allow researchers to find more meaningful explanations and reflect from the incident (Tripp, 2002).

By using case studies as the basis of research, practitioners and researchers can gain an in-depth, real life understanding of a subject or situation (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). This is particularly useful in education where practitioners need to reflect on real instances, rather than collecting data from an experimental design in order to develop their professional practice (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). This is particularly true when looking at critical incidents as due to their nature they are not able to be manipulated into an experimental design.

There are of course several potential drawbacks to qualitative research in general and more specifically to the analysis of an observed critical incident (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). Diefenbach (2008) discusses some of these in detail. Qualitative data can be affected by observer bias, where the data collected is skewed because of the researchers' beliefs or prejudices. This is one bias which could affect case studies such as the one in this investigation, where for example I, as the observer, could have a belief that boys' behaviour in school is worse than girls', and thus would be more likely to notice incidents surrounding boys' behaviour or behaviour management. In this study, great care was taken to acknowledge and avoid potential bias during the observations and the critical analysis of this incident allows any potential bias to be identified and discussed.

Further to this, there is the potential that data collected from case studies or other qualitative methods can be scrutinised for not being representative of the wider community or population (Cohen *et al.*, 2007). This may be true, particularly in this instance where observations were conducted in one class, in one school as these conditions are very specific. Every class of children is unique and teachers and other teaching staff all have their own techniques and strategies for learning. This creates an environment which is likely to be very different from any other classroom, even if they may share characteristics. However, Diefenbach (2008) discusses this as an issue specifically in relation to interviewing for data collection. When it comes to critical incidents, these are usually analysed by taking the incident out of its original context and exploring its wider meanings, so it could be argued that perhaps this mitigates for the fact that the situation in which it occurred was unique.

Critical Incident

In this study, the critical incident was observed between two teaching assistants (TA's) and one pupil within the class (Appendix 1). During a morning session, half of the class were in another room for an ICT lesson and of the remaining pupils, five were carrying out a handwriting task under the supervision of a TA and the remaining children were working independently on the enhanced provision around the classroom. The other TA was in the room to support individuals as required. One of the boys in the class often exhibits disruptive behaviour and can often be disengaged from the tasks he is given. Although not yet diagnosed with ADHD, it is considered by the staff that he is likely to receive a diagnosis in due course and so measures are in place to support him in line with such a condition.

During the lesson, the child was assigned to the handwriting task, but he began to start swinging on a chair and stopped doing the task. After a few minutes of this negative behaviour, one of the TA's came over to the child and reprimanded him by raising her voice and telling him his behaviour was unacceptable and told him to continue with the task. The boy then continued to act in this way and chose not to engage with the activity. After another few minutes, the TA who was directly supporting

the task turned to the child and in a quiet, positive voice explained to him, making eye contact, that if he was struggling with the task, he could ask her for help, and she would be able to support him to complete the work. He then began to sit on his chair at the desk and ask her for help, which she gave to him and prompted him to carry on with the sheet. Once he had started to work again on the worksheet, he began to then motivate himself to continue and as he did the TA continued to praise him and as he was successfully completing the work, he was rewarding himself for doing so (Appendix 1).

In this instance, the child has motivated himself as he made progress in his work and he visibly gained in confidence throughout the lesson. As part of the new Curriculum for Wales, there are four overarching purposes which have been designed to help children and young people to develop into adults who can thrive in the world and lead fulfilling lives (Taylor and Power, 2020). One of the four purposes seeks to create 'ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives'. This purpose also encompasses several aspects, one of which is to become learners who 'set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge'. It is this aspect of the purpose which was demonstrated during this critical incident. The child was not only completing his work, but he was enjoying doing so and was then motivating himself through the rest of the challenge. Similarly, the confidence being developed in this situation is an attribute which will be supported throughout the child's education as part of developing 'healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society'. By having the four purposes of the curriculum, it leads practitioners to support children to develop holistically, encompassing more within their education than subject knowledge. In this observed incident, the set task itself was not necessarily linked to any one of the four principles, but the interaction that the boy had with the teaching assistant could have been key to building confidence for him (Archambault, Vandenbossche-Makombo and Fraser, 2017) which will continue to develop through his education and beyond.

Literature Review

The Curriculum for Wales

Several authors have discussed the upcoming new curriculum in Wales. The Curriculum for Wales (Curriculum for Wales - Hwb, 2020), which is due to be implemented fully in 2022 has been developed by teachers following on from Graham Donaldson's report entitled 'Successful futures' (Donaldson, 2015). As with any curriculum reform, practitioners are discussing the different aspects and their potential downfalls (Sinnema, Nieveen and Priestley, 2020). The article by Sinnema *et al.*, discusses the flexibility within the Curriculum for Wales, allowing teachers to develop a curriculum which can directly reflect the needs of their learners, a concept supported by Power, Newton and Taylor (2020) who suggest that this flexible student-centred curriculum can address some of the key issues faced by learners in Wales today. Power *et al.*, (2020) discuss the impact of the new curriculum on addressing inequality amongst welsh learners. The article concurs with Sinnema *et al.*, suggesting that the flexible approach can allow teachers to develop a curriculum which is child-led and allows learners to access 'powerful knowledge'. However, they continue to explain that whilst this approach may be beneficial in principle, there are inevitable risks here. Due to the nature of having a flexible curriculum, there is a potential for areas to be missed out from teaching unknowingly, a risk which is higher amongst new teachers who may not be familiar with all key areas of learning. It is this autonomy within developing a curriculum which I, as a student-teacher, am acutely aware of, as at the point of qualifying as a teacher in Wales, I will be expected to begin delivering this new curriculum. As a newly qualified teacher I will need to be continually reflective on my own practice and development in order to ensure pupils' progress.

Another article by Gatley (2020) discusses the new curriculum from a different approach to other authors, exploring the two different strands of the curriculum and how well this can provide a coherent curriculum for learners. Despite the different, and quite critical, approach that this author took looking at the curriculum, a similar conclusion was drawn regarding the autonomy of teachers having to create their own curriculum. The article broadly suggests that the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales and the six areas of learning and experience (AoLE's) do not necessarily give a unified curriculum. Gatley discusses his opinion that whilst some AoLE's can be linked to the four purposes, others are left redundant.

Gatley concludes that it may be possible for practitioners to develop a broad, effective and coherent curriculum, more guidance would be required for teachers. This is a conclusion which all three of the papers here drew, despite their different angles for investigating and different opinions on the new curriculum. Sinnema *et al.*, (2020) goes as far as to say that successful implementation of the new curriculum would depend on teachers making sense of it fully. The Power *et al.*, (2020) article also suggested the importance of teachers that understand the curriculum and its purposes fully, and they presented findings from teachers in pioneer schools who are developing the curriculum.

Despite their similar points, the articles discussed here vary greatly in their approach to the subject. Gatley (2020) is very critical of the new curriculum and the potential disparity between its two strands. The author does try to give some positive rationale for the strands but largely the conclusions are critical. Contrary to this, the Sinnema *et al.*, (2020) article gives a far more rounded discussion of the opportunities and challenges brought by the Curriculum for Wales based on learning theory. Further, the Power *et al.*, (2020) article brings data from teachers and other stakeholders in the new curriculum in order to evaluate its potential strengths and weaknesses, this suggests that this article may give the most reliable analysis of the new curriculum because the people discussing it are also the ones attempting to develop it.

Reducing Disruptive Behaviour in the Classroom

Behaviour management is often one of the biggest challenges facing teachers in the classroom and can have a direct effect on pupil achievement (DiLalla, Marcus and Wright-Phillips, 2004). As a student teacher I am learning and developing behaviour management skills, drawing from the literature and evidence-based theories.

One of the most widely recognised strategies for increasing student engagement and reducing disruptive behaviours is to praise learners for their successes and good behaviour. This rewards children and reinforces the behaviour, making them more likely to repeat the good behaviour in the future (Scott and Landrum, 2020). The article by Scott and Landrum (2020) responds to some common criticisms of the strategy, such as the argument that puts forward how rewarding children can reduce their intrinsic motivation. The authors argue that there is far more evidence to support positive reinforcement as a driver for student motivation, providing this reinforcement is used effectively. This is an argument supported by Simpson *et al.* (2020) who described behaviour specific praise (BSP) as a successful evidence-based strategy for reinforcing positive behaviour and reducing disruptive behaviour within a classroom. This is a strategy which they explain has a positive effect on the class but also for individual students, particularly those who are identified as having additional behavioural needs. This reduction in disrupted behaviours will also then create a better overall learning environment and have a positive impact on student-teacher relationships, which again contributes to better outcomes for all.

Furthermore, Archambault, Vandenbossche-Makombo and Fraser, (2017) discuss the importance that student-teacher relationships have on a students' engagement in school. They investigated the effect that positive relationships had on children with additional behavioural needs. Students who had closer relationships with their teachers showed higher engagement compared to students who did not have these positive relationships. Further, when directly comparing boys and girls in schools, high levels of conflict were detrimental to boy's achievement.

Jenkins, Floress and Reinke (2015) discuss in their article that the literature is strongly in agreement that positive reinforcement and praise is an effective management technique for teachers. However, they are one of the few articles to identify a gap in the literature surrounding rates of praise and how most effectively implement this technique. Rates of praise in general education have been studied (Jenkins *et al.* 2015), however these are generally in standalone studies or under varying conditions which makes drawing any meaningful, reliable analysis from them difficult. Similarly, these studies have not generally been carried out specifically looking at children with any emotional and behavioural disorders (EBD).

One author who has carried out such an investigation is Caldarella *et al.* (2019). The authors conducted research on the behavioural response of children to teacher praise to reprimand ratios (PRR). They studied students with emotional and behavioural disorders in the classroom and found that students responded better to higher PRRs. The research was conducted on elementary school children across several states of America, so whilst the ages of children are comparable to primary school children in the UK, teaching styles and expectations may not be directly comparable between countries. Various analyses have been carried out comparing the UK primary school system to those of other countries (National Foundation for Educational Research, 2008) and this highlights the need for careful and thorough scrutiny before comparisons can be made. No other comparable studies have been carried out to assess the reliability of these results. This would be interesting for practitioners and myself, to allow use of the data to find the most effective rates of praise to implement in practice.

By contrast, an article by Gage *et al.* (2019) does draw on extensive analysis of the effectiveness of active supervision as a technique to avoid disruptive behaviours before they occur. Active supervision is a technique based on similar principles and with concurrent aims to BSP, but where teaching staff interact with students, move around the teaching space and reinforce positive behaviour expectations. This article found that active supervision was successful at reducing the occurrence of disruptive behaviour. This conclusion was based on a meta-analysis of data from twelve individual studies on active supervision. The authors here have demonstrated a sound evaluation of these studies, although they did still conclude that more research was required, highlighting that active supervision is not yet classified as an evidence-based technique.

Reflection

The critical incident identified in this study was an example of a child exhibiting disruptive behaviour in the classroom. The child was not engaged with his activity and the supervising adults both adopted a different approach to dealing with the behaviour. These approaches had contrasting levels of success. The first approach, reprimanding the child for not doing his work, had no observable effect on the child, who continued to display the same behaviours. However, the second approach, using encouragement, support and positive praise noticeably influenced the child's engagement with the activity. Once he had been praised for positive behaviours, he began to self-motivate and further praise caused him to then succeed in the task by completing the hand-writing sheet in full and to a good standard.

The incident here shows a strong supporting link to the literature and evidence-based approaches to reducing disruptive behaviour in the classroom, whereby practitioners use positive praise to build confidence, aid motivation and encourage children to make positive choices, such as seeking help from an adult when required rather than disengaging from the work, which is when disruptive behaviours typically occur (Simpson *et al.*, 2020).

Archambault, Vandenbossche-Makombo and Fraser, (2017) found in their study that relationships which centred around conflict had a negative impact on boys' engagement, which suggests a reason for why the initial reprimand had no visible effect on the child's behaviour. Further, it could suggest that the relationship between the student and teaching assistant could continue to have a detrimental effect on the child's education. Contrary to this, the teaching assistant who began to support the child with his work, had a positive and meaningful interaction with him. This, according to the research, would help develop a positive relationship with him which has been shown to be of particular importance when supporting this child in line with a condition such as ADHD.

Further, many of the studies highlighted in this analysis exemplify the importance of using positive interaction and praise to reduce the disruptive behaviour shown. By offering help and encouragement to the student, and subsequently praise as soon as he began to exhibit good behaviour, the teaching assistant used positive reinforcement techniques which are widely regarded as the most successful strategies. To develop a cohesive strategy in the classroom and thus ensure pupil progress, I would suggest that the initial action to be taken would be for all adults involved to reflect on this incident. If all the adults involved in this situation can use this reflection to develop a positive approach to dealing with this child's behaviour, it could benefit this child's progress. As an individual practitioner outside of this situation I would use this incident to reflect upon and consider each interaction that I have with pupils, ensuring that I try to consider what I am trying to achieve before reacting to a situation.

In order to further reflect upon this critical incident, the moments before the incident occurred can also be investigated. During the session, both teaching assistants were present in the room, one supervising students working on continuous provision around the room and the other sat with the group of children carrying out the handwriting task. There was little direct involvement here between the children and adults as most of the tasks were independent. Perhaps this could have been an opportunity to implement an active supervision technique such as engaging with the children individually or moving around the room, modelling positive behaviour and praising children when good behaviour is shown. In this situation, hypothetically, it could be argued that the child observed here may have asked for help before beginning to act disruptively, or the TA may have identified that he was struggling or losing engagement. I would be interested to observe this approach in the future and begin to reflect upon its place as a classroom strategy in combination with the evidence-based literature. Further, as a qualified teacher I will be responsible for leading the other adults in the room, developing these leadership skills as part of my personal and professional development (Welsh Government, 2011). As part of this responsibility, I could discuss the strategies that could be implemented within the class with the other adults, to ensure we all work together as a team to ensure pupil progress.

Building from this, building positive relationships and using effective classroom management strategies will be key to delivering the new Curriculum for Wales. Two of the four purposes of the curriculum discussed in this essay are to create individuals who are 'ambitious, capable learners who are ready to learn throughout their lives' and 'healthy, confident individuals who are ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society' (Curriculum for Wales - Hwb, 2020). As the literature has discussed, meeting these purposes may not directly correspond to the six AoLE's (Gatley, 2020). However, perhaps when reflecting upon incidents such as the one in this essay, it could be proposed

that these purposes can be met by skills taught throughout a learner's journey through education, occurring concurrently to the AoLE's and without being directly or visibly addressed to the student. In this incident, the child's task was handwriting, part of the languages, literacy and communication AoLE, but he was also developing his confidence and building relationships which contribute towards the four purposes.

Positive relationships built with teaching staff, such as those developed through praise and encouragement will act as a model for children as they develop and allow them to grow and build positive relationships as members of society. This can be particularly important for students with EBD, or children who may not experience positive relationships outside of the school environment (Cook, Lloyd and Therrien, 2019). Every interaction in school can be used to develop these skills for children and thus the importance of maintaining these relationships as positive ones, free from conflict could be viewed as critical as part of the new curriculum and meeting its four purposes.

Developing a child's confidence, especially in their learning, is key to delivering the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales. In this incident, it was observed that once the child began to succeed in his work and receive praise for his achievement, he grew visibly in confidence and subsequently continued to motivate himself. For this to have occurred, the teaching staff needed to help him engage with the task, which as demonstrated, was not something that was achieved through reprimand. This suggests an important link between creating a positive classroom environment, with high levels of engagement and reduced levels of disruptive behaviour and developing children's confidence and motivation. This understanding of how the four purposes are crucial to pupil progress in school and outside of school will allow me to consider more deeply how I develop my curriculum as a qualified teacher as well as how I conduct myself as a positive and professional role model for my pupils, to help develop them holistically as individuals as well as imparting broad subject knowledge.

Conclusion

Overall, the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales will allow teachers to develop a curriculum which provides their students effective access to powerful knowledge (Power et al., 2020). This curriculum can then be delivered in a way which develops the children holistically and does meet the four purposes that it sets out. Successful implementation of this new curriculum can develop children who have learnt a broad and balanced range of knowledge and can be successful, healthy members of society in the future. As a newly qualified teacher, this curriculum development will be a difficult aspect to developing my own practice and ensuring pupil progress.

It may be true that the four purposes do not always directly link to the content of the AoLE's, but these can be met as part of how the curriculum content is delivered. This should in turn also cause practitioners, including myself, to be more reflective on their practice, as the balance between curriculum knowledge and the four purposes is explored and developed in classrooms. Teachers will need to consciously evaluate the skills and content they are delivering to mitigate for the risks associated with the autonomy of this curriculum. This will produce teachers who are far more critically aware and can reflect and develop on their practice, ultimately becoming better practitioners and raising pupil outcomes.

When conducting analysis of critical incidents such as the one investigated here, there is often clear evidence in the literature for behaviour management strategies which could be implemented or avoided perhaps to improve outcomes. In this case, I put forward that the positive approach seen from one member of staff could be implemented by all adults in the classroom, to ensure a cohesive approach

and thus pupil progress. However, sometimes the theory is simply not sufficient in order to draw clear conclusions or new developments are being made where research has not yet been conducted. The crucial factor here is for teachers and practitioners to be critical and reflective of their practice. Each case study is unique, and teachers should continually seek to develop their own practice based on this critical analysis as well as using research-based practice where possible (Brookfield, 2017). It is from this observation, analysis and thorough research that I can begin to develop my own practice, before then continuing to reflect upon and improve it throughout my career as a teacher as part of continued professional development (Welsh Government, 2011).

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AppendicesAppendix 1**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group: 30/9/20, 9.30, Year 1	*1/2 of class elsewhere in ICT suite
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). Handwriting (LWC), lower ability group of a class which are developing their skills. Working in group of 5. Students at desks in the classroom with a TA. Other students were around the room using containers, provisions. Task = complete writing sheet.	
Classroom culture (What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?) Class room fairly calm & quiet as each TA (2 in class) has a small group & rest of class work independently. Children mostly engaged in activities talking with each other & TA's. Child with suspected ADHD causing minor disruptions & not engaging much.	
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?) Students had done a warm up / intro to the activity, however there was not a lot of input as to the purpose of this activity the target group. Objective was simply to complete the activity sheet and copy out their handwriting.	
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?) Learners take part in regular handwriting and are familiar with the activities. The activity was based on copying letters to student's know what to do & that the target was to complete the activity.	
Access and challenge (What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners? What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?)	

This activity was designed for this ability group, building on work through the weeks in their books. Children were generally engaged with their work & were happy to work mostly independently.

Assessment

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

continued practice of handwriting skills building on previous learning. Students have learnt letter formations & are now practicing them. Students were being praised by TA during their task.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

Boy within target group with suspected ADHD. Began swinging/shuffling around on chair & not working on the task. He was really not interested in the work and was disruptive. In order to deal with the situation, the TA supervising explained that if he needed help he had to ask, it would not just be done for him, he had to choose to ask & engage with the task. This prompted him to ask for help and then he proceeded to excel within the activity.

④

CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	30/9/20, 9.30am, year 1 class Handwriting lower ability group of 5 children and others around the class doing continuous provision. Supervised by 2x TA's
What happened? A detailed description of what you observed and what thoughts on pedagogy and practice occurred to you as a result, looking towards your research.	The child here is supported in line with having an ADHD diagnosis as teachers believe he will soon be diagnosed. He began to cause disruptive behaviour and disengaged with the activity. 1 TA told him off which had no effect on him and the other calmly and positively asked him to ask for help if he needed it. He did then ask for help and he proceeded then to receive praise for his work which clearly motivated him to continue. This supportive approach rather than either being negative or helping too much is something I would like to investigate.

Appendix 2

①

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group: Yr1, ~~Yr2~~ 29/9/20 10.30am
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). Literacy / Poems / Writing. Second activity of the morning for this group. Group of 5 children, same ability group. Working with class teacher
Classroom culture (What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?) This group seem calm & engaged, doing task independantly. Children progressing through the task.
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?) objective to finish writing poem on their sheets, work on writing skills, ~~but~~ independant task was hand writing and phonics. Aim of poem task to complete 4 'verses'/sentences on their sheets. poem content based on themselves and their interests.
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?) Children were shown an example earlier in the morning as a whole class. when deciding what to write, children were encouraged to engage + think about their likes & dislikes. They know their task and wanted to get it finished.
Access and challenge (What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners? What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?)

Task differentiated from previous group, less structure on the sheet so more to write. However, children were struggling to remember what to write so teacher scaffolded ~~it~~ by writing on whiteboard for children to copy.

Assessment

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

Had books in front showing yesterday's work to help with the task.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

Adaptation of task to meet learners needs
Balance of independantly working & teacher led.

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CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	Year 1 Class 29/9/20 10:30am (second session of the day) Group of 5 children in single ability group working with the class teacher although also expected to work with some level of independence.
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.	As the students began the task, which was a differentiated writing task, the teacher observed from questioning that the children were actually struggling to complete the task, so rather than ~~either~~ letting them continue, the class teacher adapted the ~~sc~~ task. She decided to scaffold by writing words down on the whiteboard for the children to copy. This enabled the children to successfully complete the task.

Appendix 3

~~Questioning/scaffolding~~
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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group: Year 1 9am 29/9/20

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).

Literacy, 1st lesson of day,
input section + writing a poem, filling
in blanks with words.
Indoors
whole class on carpet, in front of board

Classroom culture

(What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?) -class overwhelmingly boy!
Seems slightly unsettled, children on carpet some sitting nicely others having trouble/fidgeting/touching each other. Class teacher seems to have strict standards. Not many answers being offered from children

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? ?? followed on from yesterday's work.

Practicing describing words?

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?)

task given to complete, variation in the activity to diff. groups.

Access and challenge

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

using named sticks out of a cup to choose who to answer. Praise given for answers. Random children chosen to stand up in front to look at eye/hair colour etc. Class teacher scaffolded some answers using questions and examples, such as "look at my hair, how is this different to child x's hair"

Assessment

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

Build on work from yesterday (not seen). Following group work children went on in groups to complete individual poems based on themselves.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

child (boy) answered first question having been chosen at random, ~~was not sure~~ was not sure so teacher suggested he gave a colour so he answered with brown. This scaffolding helped the child to have an answer. overall class engagement was low so perhaps a more interactive task would ~~be~~ ~~be~~ be worth trying.

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CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	Year 1 class, 9am, 29/9/20 First lesson of the day, literacy. Input section of the lesson with the whole class in front of the board, writing a poem together.
What happened? A detailed description of what you observed and what thoughts on pedagogy and practice occurred to you as a result, looking towards your research.	Teacher was drawing sticks at random to choose children to contribute. When Child X answered, he could not think of anything to say. Instead of moving on to another child, the teacher scaffolded by suggesting he gave a colour. The boy suggested brown. By allowing this child to answer with support, could this improve the child's confidence?

Appendix 4

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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date and time, year group:	30/9/20, Year 1, 9-15am
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).	Handwriting warm ups, (AOLE → 4.0) to work on fine & gross motor skills. working on basic skills to develop writing as a whole class. inside classroom on carpet. Activity was video on the board copying actions.
Classroom culture (What is the classroom 'vibe.'? What do attitudes, dispositions, behaviours towards learning seem like at this point in time?)	Classroom vibe okay, children keen to be involved in this activity, all mostly engaged with the actions & following the video. 2x children with ALN sat on table with their 1:1 support, also joining in where poss.
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?)	Children clearly knew the activity & were familiar with its purpose as a warm up. Class have been observed to struggle with engaging & with literacy so this exercise was great to get them involved and practice their motor skills.
Direction (What can be observed that helps learners understand what they are engaging in? What in the environment helps them understand how to achieve well?)	Teacher was encouraging students to be involved & giving praise to individuals & the class as a whole. There were no obvious success criteria for the children however observations were done by the teacher who did comment on their improvement over prev. few weeks.
Access and challenge (What can be observed in the environment that enables engagement of learners? What can be observed regarding levels of challenge?)	

Several short video clips were played with varying levels of challenge. These were well developed to engage the children and all children accessed the activity on some level. Staff were all participating to give extra help to class.

Assessment

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

Students had practiced these videos before, so did seem familiar with some movements/skills. Teacher commented on how many children had improved & it was clear how students could still improve with practice next time. Would like to see direct impact activity had on writing.

Specifics / Critical Incidents

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

Using this activity as a hook/warmup got the students to engage really well where they hadn't in other sessions. It was an effective way to practice fine/gross motor skills which with a group of children who otherwise might not have participated in the task.

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CRITICAL INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION RECORD

Details relevant to the research context. Date/time. Age/Stage of group. People involved. Contextual information from field notes.	30/9/20 Year 1 9.15am. The class were carrying out a warmup prior to their handwriting lesson. The aim was to practice fine & gross motor skills in a fun interactive way.
<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 in this class are often unsettled and disruptive, however once they began to engage with the song, only positive behaviours were shown. Engagement was increased and the outcome was met. I would like to implement techniques such as these in my practice to investigate how effective they are as part of a curriculum. I have noticed that this class do not always participate well in whole class activities, so I could investigate why using interactive video song, they responded so well.