

Student Self Evaluation Form

This section repeats in brief the common assessment criteria detailed on previous pages. The *extent* to which these are demonstrated by you determines your mark. Using these criteria, tick the box that best indicates the level of achievement you feel you have achieved with regard to each of them.

Common Assessment Criteria Applied	REFER		D	C	B	A
	OUTRIGHT FAIL	UNSATISFACTORY	SATISFACTORY	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
1. Subject Knowledge and Understanding (which includes using research-informed literature and knowledge and understanding of the subject)	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
2. Intellectual Skills (Analysis)	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐
3. Pedagogic and Professional Applications (Practical Application and Deployment)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
4. Key Transferable Skills	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

PLEASE COMMENT ON AREAS IN WHICH YOU FEEL THAT YOU HAVE PERFORMED WELL	PLEASE COMMENT ON AREAS YOU FEEL THAT YOU NEED TO DEVELOP
Working with my peer	Being critically reflective Being analytical

Student's Name		Date	15.04.18
Student's Signature	R.Miles		

Write a critical and analytical essay that discusses your practitioner research 'lesson study' in relation to a chosen field.

ECPP7001 - C

Title: Do different types of questions encourage pupil engagement during story time in Foundation Phase?

Student Number: 1700351

Group: 5

Word count: 6116

Appendices included

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Research context	1
Literature Review.....	2
Methodology	6
Lesson Study Design.....	6
Semi-structured Interview.....	9
Reflections	9
Ethical Considerations.....	10
Lesson Study 1 and Analysis.....	12
Contextual Information.....	12
How did the children achieve the research goal?	12
How was the lesson improved?.....	15
What have we learned?	15
Lesson Study 2 and Analysis.....	16
Contextual Information.....	16
How did the children achieve the research goal?	17
Discussion.....	19
Conclusion	21
References.....	24
Appendices	27
Appendix A – Observation Schedule.....	27
Appendix B – Refined definitions of Leuven’s Involvement Scale and Schlecty’s Five Levels of Engagement.....	29
Appendix C – Pre-determined Questions.....	30
Appendix D – ARC Reflection.....	31
Appendix E – Consent Form	33
Appendix F – Assent Form.....	34
Appendix G – Observation Schedule Lesson 1	35
Appendix H – Observation Schedule Lesson 2	37
Appendix I – Transcript from Lesson Study 1.....	39
Appendix J – Transcript from Lesson Study 2.....	41
Appendix K – Lesson Plan	43
Appendix L – Completed ARC Reflection	44

Title: Do different types of questions encourage pupil engagement during story time in Foundation Phase?

Introduction

The aim of this research was to gain an understanding of how the use of different question types can encourage pupil engagement during story time. This area of interest was chosen due to an ongoing personal target highlighted from my first teaching placement.

Throughout my first placement, the use of questioning was highlighted as an important aspect to include in my lessons and although I showed progress with using questioning as a strategy I was still unclear as to what type of questions I should be asking and therefore the purpose of this research study was to refine and develop my own teaching practice by paying particular focus on the use of questioning techniques during story time.

Research context

The research study was carried out in two primary educational settings, both of which located in different counties in South Wales. The schools in which the research was carried out are both English-medium primary schools; one of which set in a rural area of Neath and Port Talbot and the other in a suburban area on the outskirts of Swansea. Both schools have not been named in this research and will be referred to as School A and School B. The data collection process was carried out between two Foundation Phase classrooms with the age of the children ranging from 5-7 years old. Between both Foundation Phase classes, the total number of children ranged from 21-26.

For the purpose and method of carrying out this research, we were encouraged to work collaboratively with a partner in order to reflect together to improve our own practice in order to become enquiring practitioners. In discussions with my partner, it was made clear that we both shared an interest in the area of questioning as a strategy for effective learning and teaching in the classroom. From our discussions, we gathered ideas and together formed our research question;

Do different types of questions encourage pupil engagement during story time in Foundation Phase?

Literature Review

Story time has been found to play a vital role in the growth and development of children. There is evidence to suggest that the benefits of being read to frequently as a child go beyond just literacy skills (BBC, 2018). Stories have found to not only develop the language and literacy skills of children but introduce new ideas into their world, develop their imaginations, builds their confidence and self-esteem and also helps children to understand and accept their own feelings along with the feelings of others (BBC, 2018). Research has found that children that have fiction read to them regularly show more empathy and a better developed theory of mind (BBC, 2018). Bruner (2009) believed in creating a 'narrative sensibility' in children by giving them access to and familiarising them with conventional stories, myths, fairy tales and folk tales and found this to be vitally important. Additionally, Bruner (2009) believed the combination of these stories and the child's evolving development of comprehension, analysis, discussion and imagination that can play an instrumental role in the development of a child's sense of who they are. The value of stories

in children's language development is not just based on hearsay but is also backed by research, an example of this was described in a longitudinal study by Gordon Wells which provides strong evidence to suggest in comparison to those not exposed to stories at an early stage in life, the young children who are read to and told stories have considerable advantages later on at school, not only in relation to the development of their literacy skills but also their social skills, equally supported by Fisher (2005).

Furthermore, according to Dr Sarah McGeowan, a lecturer in Developmental Psychology, asking your child questions about the books they read improves their comprehension, vocabulary and understanding of the world (McGeowan, 2015). McGeowan (2015) not only emphasises the importance of asking questions before, during and after story time but placed emphasis on the type of questions asked. McGeowan (2015) believed was an important factor that contributes to your child thinking creatively. For example, McGeowan suggests that by asking children to think of an alternative ending to a story encourages creativity and develops their imaginative skills.

Asking questions is "one of the most fundamental ways by which the teacher stimulates student thinking" (Ashner, 1961). Questioning as a teaching and learning strategy is of immense importance and documented widely. As stated by Ashner (1961) who called the teacher 'a professional question maker'. Good questioning has been found to maximise a potential learning opportunity and can generate higher level thinking and quality discussion. It has been found that a child's level of engagement in the process of learning can largely depend on the type of questions formulated by the teacher in order to prompt and guide the thinking process (Wilén, 1991). Likewise, Campbell and Mayer (2009) stated that asking

questions is an effective approach to engage students and improve their learning. Research into the use of questions during a science investigation found that the use of questioning at different stages throughout the investigation significantly facilitated productive learner thinking (Ramnarian, 2011).

Questioning is the most commonly used techniques in education and teachers have been found to ask between 300 to 400 questions a day (Levin and Long, 1981). The use of questioning has been identified as one of the “essential nine” instructional practices identified by Marzano, Pickering & Pollock (2001). Research as far back as 1966 by Hilda Taba described questions as “the single most influential teaching act’. From researching into the impact of questioning on learning, it is widely acknowledged that questions are better than no questions at all and a review of research into questioning found that asking questions can be effective in all three phases relative to instruction: before, during, and after (Gall, M.D. and Rhody, T. as cited by Wilen, W.W. 1987). Research into effectiveness of different types of questions found that no particular question type is more effective than another but stated that question types associated with Bloom’s hierarchy of cognitive processes can be effective when tailored to the lesson objective (Cunningham, 1977 as cited by Wilen, W.W. 1987). Bloom (1956) developed a taxonomy of educational objectives based on a hierarchy of cognitive process and therefore researchers began to see this as a useful way of classifying teaching goals and activities. Alternatively, it has been well established that higher order thinking questions such as those that require analysis, synthesis and evaluation have been found to encourage learners to think more abstractedly and foster critical thinking (British Council, 2008).

Research has found to offer a number of different reasons as to why questioning is beneficial to learning, for example, questioning has been found to motivate children and keep children on task; focus the children on the content that has to be learned; elicit depth of process; activate metacognitive processes and the learners mastery of the curriculum, avoiding any misconceptions and appropriate praise for correct answers (Gall, 1984. Palincsar and Brown, 1984. Wilttock, 1981 as in cited by Wilen, 1987). However, in contrast, Dillon (1981b, 1978 as cited by Wilen, 1987) argued that there are other more effective methods than question asking to stimulate learners thoughts such as, inviting students to elaborate on their responses. It is also important to note that there are a number of factors that determine the effectiveness of a question, Cunningham (1977) states that how you ask and present a question can affect the impact on a learner. For example, employing effective, well-established questioning strategies such as, providing sufficient thinking time, no hands questioning, think-pair-share and phone a friend (Gast, unknown date).

It is widely considered that a child's development and effective teaching and learning can be supported by engaging in dialogue, encouraging discussion and by asking open-ended questions to offer to challenge and extend thinking (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008). This reflects the social interaction theory by Lev Vygotsky (1978) and the socio-constructivist theory by Jerome Bruner (1961). Vygotsky (1978) believed that important learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skilful tutor and/or peers, otherwise referred to as collaborative dialogue. Vygotsky (1978) viewed interaction with peers as an effective way of developing skills and strategies. The use of 'Talk Partners' is a highly effective and commonly used teaching tool in classrooms and supports Vygotsky's views that teachers' use collaborative learning exercises where less competent learners develop with the help

and support from more skilful peers (Vygotsky, 1978). From researching the topics of the effectiveness of questioning, the importance of discussion and the power of story time for children the research question was formulated to determine how the use of questioning during story time can engage learners but paying particular interest on different types of questions.

Methodology

Lesson Study Design

This research was conducted in order to explore what types of questions influenced pupil engagement during story time. This research used a lesson study approach with the aim collecting qualitative data. Lesson study (LS) is a highly specified form of classroom action research and focuses on the development of teacher practice knowledge (Dudley, 2014). LS involves teachers working collaboratively in order to develop and refine pedagogical approaches to improve pupil's learning by reflecting on and developing strategies together (Dudley, 2014). As previously mentioned, one of the main purposes that this research was carried out was to develop and extend my own teaching practice. Peter Dudley (2014) states that the use of LS by teachers and practitioners has been found to be successful in the improvement and development in teaching practices and pedagogic approaches.

The data collection methods used in this research were non-participant observation, a semi-structured group interview and reflection, both individually and collaboratively with my partner, all of which resulted in the collection of qualitative data. Qualitative data collection is recognised as interpretative and subjective in nature (Atieno, 2009), therefore in order to

reduce subjectivity within this research a structured observation schedule was designed using aspects of both Leuven's Involvement Scale and Schlechty's (2002) Five Levels of Engagement (see appendix A). By designing an observation schedule for the purpose of the research question, it enabled my partner and I to form a shared understanding of what was being observed and what needed to be recorded during the observation, therefore allowing us to focus on how the pupils responded to the questions being asked and how talk partners enabled pupil's engagement to the questions. Further to this, refined definitions of both scales were formed in order to sustain consistency between the two lesson studies and reduce subjectivity (see appendix B). A drawback of designing an observation schedule to specifically address the research question, is that the results generated are not comparable to any other studies but ultimately, we decided that a specifically designed observation schedule would be fundamental to our research question.

Observation can be used as a research tool to allow practitioners to gather information about the children before, during and after a child has been taught a skill and can therefore enable practitioners to identify areas of success, difficulties, misunderstandings and common misconceptions (DCELLS, 2008). Due to the nature of a lesson study and in order to reduce bias, a structured observational method was used, also known as a non-participant observation. This involved my partner observing the target pupil's response to the questions and discussions in their pairs. Then, their level of engagement was recorded based on the scales refined definitions (see appendix B). It was decided that a structured observation was the best fit for purpose as it enabled the observer to understand the context in which the observation was taking place, but also allowed the observer to be open-ended and inductive (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2005).

The Hawthorne effect otherwise known as the observer effect, a widely used research term and a phenomenon first discovered in the 1920s, refers to the alteration of behaviour by participants due to their awareness of being observed (Stephanie, 2017), therefore in order to ensure that the presence of an observer did not cause disruption to the class routine and affect the pupils involved, my partner was introduced to the pupils at the beginning of the lesson.

Sample

As highlighted by Dudley (2014), an important aspect of LS is having 'case pupils' thus, four target pupils were chosen to be observed. A purposeful sample of pupils was chosen through discussions with the class teacher. Due to the nature of an LS, a purposeful sample method was considered most appropriate for this research and from discussions with the class teacher, a number of potential pupils were identified and selected based on their willingness to take part in classroom activities and their willingness to share their opinions and thoughts. This was considered an important trait for the semi-structured group interview, noted as important by Bernard (2002). To address the purpose of the research, four target pupils were selected to allow for the pupils to discuss in talk partners. Although this method of sampling was employed to maximise efficiency, it was noted that this method of sampling does not represent the wider population within the classroom and can be seen as biased (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2005).

Semi-structured Interview

Another method of collecting data was through a semi-structured group interview which took place once the lesson observation was completed. For the purpose of this research, a semi-structured interview took place with four target pupils in each lesson study. The semi-structured interview was carried out in one sitting in an open environment within the school in order to provide the pupils safe and comfortable surroundings. The interview questions were pre-determined and open-ended in order to 'yield considerable and multi-dimensional streams of data (Galletta, 2013) (see appendix C). This approach provided the opportunity for the target pupils to voice their opinions honestly, in compliance with Article 12 of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (1989) which states that the child has the right to have their opinion listened to and taken seriously. Although the interview questions were sufficiently structured in order to address the specific focus of the research question, the benefit of using a semi-structured interview approach was that it allowed for flexibility to probe the pupils further and offered clarification whilst also providing space for critical reflection. Moreover, as an Estyn report has highlighted, a strong pupil voice can be beneficial to both schools and its learners. It has been found that schools which have developed strong pupil participation have been seen to develop pupil's confidence and self-esteem (Estyn, 2016).

Reflections

Reflection is a well-known part of Lesson Study. Reflective practice is learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and practice (Learning Wales, 2016). The last method of collecting data was from both individual and collaborative reflections. The reflections were captured using an Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model (see

appendix D). This method of reflecting was chosen due to having had experience using this model from professional teaching practice. After both lessons, a joint discussion took place and after the lesson that was taught by myself, an ARC was written reflecting on the lesson experience (see Appendix L).

Ethical Considerations

The research project involved a lesson of normal classroom practice however, with conducting any research in a classroom environment involving children, there are a number of ethical considerations. The research methods were chosen fit for purpose to achieve qualitative data and therefore endeavoured to reduce any sense of intrusion and distress to anyone involved. Firstly, prior to conducting research informed assent was obtained from the children involved and also adult consent from the parents/legal guardians of the children involved in line with the code of conduct in relation to Education Workforce Council (EWC), British Education Research Association (BERA, 2011) and The University of Wales Trinity Saint David's code of practice (UWTSD, 2017). A letter of consent was sent to the parents of all the children in the class. The letter asked permission for the children to be included in the research project being conducted (see appendix E). Informed assent was obtained verbally from the children with the class teacher present to sign a written acknowledgement that the relevant information had been provided to the children (see appendix F).

Throughout the research project, the school's safeguarding policy in all aspects was adhered to ensure the safety of the children, the school and my own personal safety and

professional name were not put at risk. The treatment of the children involved was of paramount priority and it was ensured that all children were treated equally and with the highest respect. For the target pupils, an outline of the research being conducted and their right to withdraw from the research at any given point was carefully explained. In order to reduce bias on the data and to ensure that the children did not feel pressured into taking part in the research no incentives were provided. The research was undertaken in the children's ordinary classroom environment to ensure the children felt safe and secure. The focus group interview was conducted in an open area within the school with another adult present. This was done to ensure a safe and comfortable environment was provided for both the children and myself as a researcher.

The data collected from the research did not include any personal or sensitive information about the children or school and any information that could possibly identify the children involved. In order to protect the children's confidentiality and anonymity, both the school and the children's names have not been disclosed within any documents or information in this research project and the children involved have only been referred to as Child A, B, C and D on the observation schedule and all other documentation. The two schools have been referred to as School A and School B throughout this research. The data collected has been stored in a password protected file.

Lesson Study 1 and Analysis

Contextual Information

Lesson study 1 was undertaken in School A. The lesson was delivered by my partner as the teacher and my role was the observer. Four target children were observed in pairs, for the purpose of the research Child A and Child B will be referred to as Pair 1 and Child C and Child D will be referred to as Pair 2. The main goal of the lesson was to engage pupils using different types of questions during story time. The lesson involved reading a story to the class, asking questions before, during and after the story, with a planned activity after. The story book had been chosen to fit the class current theme but also suit the age range of the class. Each of the question types were pre-determined and when they were going to be asked had also been planned to ensure there was consistency between the teacher and the observer. Within the context of the class, Child A and Child B were considered as high attainers. For the purpose of this research, the story was delivered whilst the children were seated on the carpet area in their 'sitting spots' therefore, their 'talk partners' were determined based on their regular seating arrangements, providing familiarity for the children. The method of using 'Talk Partners' in this research was to enable the observer and initially chosen for the purpose to observe the children discuss the questions asked and a means of observing their engagement to the questions.

How did the children achieve the research goal?

The research goal was to engage pupils in story time through the use of different types of questions. As demonstrated within the observation schedule (see appendix G) the research goal was achieved by all four target children. Although all four children achieved the

research goal and showed signs of being engaged by the different types of questions asked, the levels of engagement between each question type and between each pair differed considerably. As demonstrated within the data collected, there is an evident difference in the level of engagement between each pair. An explanation of this could be that the 'talk partners' were determined by their regular seating spots and these spots had been determined by the teacher based on the children's attainment. Child A and Child B have been identified by the class teacher as higher attaining pupils and as the results show for Pair 1, their levels of engagement ranged from mainly continuous to sustained intense engagement for all types of questions asked, and both Child A and Child B showed similar levels of engagement. Both Child A and Child B showed signs associated with sustained intense engagement for the more challenging application and evaluative questions, which requires a higher order of thinking which is a skill developed over time. Pair 1 being identified as higher attaining would support the results collected. Pair 1 were greatly involved throughout, contributing fully in collaborative discussion, shared their opinions openly and honestly, maintained eye contact and showed eagerness to answer questions.

In contrast, Pair 2's engagement ranged between mainly continuous to frequent engagement. As a pair, there was frequent engagement in discussion, lacking full concentration but showed signs of some progress. Although Pair 2 were not as engaged in their 'talk partner' discussions, with regards to answering questions they did show signs of willingness to contribute their thoughts and ideas with the teacher and the rest of the class. Unlike Pair 1, who seemed fully engaged in discussions with their partner, Pair 2 seemed less interested in discussing with one another but showed signs of continuous engagement in relation to the story content. This was confirmed when the pupils were interviewed after

the lesson. Although initially transcribed and thought of as irrelevant, their demonstration of interest in the story book could be interpreted as their engagement in the session but could be related to the story book chosen rather than the types of questions asked.

LG: What did you enjoy about the lesson today? What did you enjoy about how I read the story?

Child D: I liked when they pulled it out because it was like a chopped.... *(Irrelevant)*

LG: So, you liked the story itself, did you? Wow, Excellent. Child A, anything you liked about the story today? Did you like the story and how it was told?

Child A: I liked it when the farmer said I am growing carrots next year

LG: Aw that bit was funny, so if you were growing a vegetable what would you grow?

Child D: I would grow parsnips; Cos I have tried them before and I don't think I like them anymore... *(Irrelevant)*

Subsequently, when interviewed the pupils expressed their enjoyment of being asked questions with Child A stating, "I would rather you asked questions" and although each pupil expressed positivity in relation to being asked questions during story time, the children should have been encouraged to expand on their answers by providing a reason why or further explanation in order to produce depth in the data collected.

As previously mentioned, 'talk partners' was chosen as a means to observe the pupils engage with the questions. While this was not the lesson goal, the data collected showed us that the method of discussing the questions with their partner seemed to encourage the pupil's engagement. The data collected from the interview, shows each pupil stating that they preferred answering the questions with their partner and went on to provide a reason why (see transcript below).

LG: You preferred being asked questions with your partner? Ok thank you, **Child A** What about you?

Child A: Partner

Child B: Partner

Child D: PARTNER!

LG: So, you all prefer answering questions with your partner?

Child D: Because we had to think what's coming next because your partner knows the answer, your partner can just tell you...

Child B: Yeah and if you are stuck on something your partner can help you

Child A: Yeah and they can help you do it.

The transcript above shows that each pupil found talking to their partner as a useful strategy. Child A and B both stated 'help' in their responses thus interpreting that they may find comfort in working collaboratively with their peers.

How was the lesson improved?

From discussions with my partner, it was established that no changes would be made to the lesson but decided that a further refinement to the observation schedule in order to provide further clarification to which question type produced what level of engagement.

What have we learned?

From the data collected in lesson 1, we have learned that the use of questions during the story did engage the four target pupils. While all four target pupils showed a continuous level of engagement at some point during the story, there were a number of points of interest to consider. Although different types of questions produced different levels of engagement, it was not consistent across all four of the pupils. For example, the

comprehension question which is considered a low-level question and is found to require a lower level of thinking produced a different level of engagement between the four target children. Thus, highlighting individual differences plays a factor with question asking.

As demonstrated in the observation schedule, Child A showed signs of continuous engagement when discussing the comprehension question, however when compared to Child D of Pair 2, they showed a lower level of engagement. An explanation of this could be that due to the lower level of thinking required for a comprehension question that it was not challenging and interesting enough for the pupils therefore not engaging the pupils in a discussion. Furthermore, we discussed that the level of engagement could depend on the individual. As previously discussed, Pair 1 have been identified as higher attainers than Pair 2 and even so, there is variation between the pupils in the pairs therefore learning that different question types can engage learners differently based on their individual development and skills.

Lesson Study 2 and Analysis

Contextual Information

Lesson study 2 was undertaken in School B. School B was set in a suburban area on the outskirts of Swansea. The lesson was delivered by myself and my partner was the non-participant observer. For the purpose of the research and in order to maintain consistency, four target pupils were observed in pairs. The only difference was the story book that was read. We felt that the type of book was not relevant to our research and did not affect our research goal. Due to circumstances beyond our control, this lesson consisted of only six

Foundation Phase children. This included the four target pupils and an additional two from the class. Unlike lesson 1, the 'talk partners' were established by random pairing. Pair 1 consisted of Child A and Child B and Pair 2 consisted of Child C and Child D. Child B and Child C have been identified as high attainers by their class teacher whereas Child A and Child D have been identified as having the capability to work to a high standard but overall identified as intermediate therefore both 'talk partners' were of a mixed attainment.

How did the children achieve the research goal?

The data collected from lesson 2 was of a similar nature to lesson 1. Two themes were of a similar nature to lesson 1, the pupils showing signs of engagement from the use of questions and the use of talk partners which showed to encourage engagement. The pupils achieved the lesson goal through engaging in discussion with their talk partners after every question asked, although this did differ from pupil to pupil. As demonstrated in lesson 2's observation schedule (see appendix H), although Child A and Child B made up Pair 1 their levels of engagement were considerably different throughout the lesson. Child A could be described as having been mainly continuously engaged with moments of sustained intense engagement. As noted in the observation schedule, Child A was less engaged in discussions with talk partner, allowing their partner to talk but having moments of distraction from the discussion. Whereas, it was noted that Child B sustained an intense level of engagement throughout, showing signs of concentration through facial expressions, displaying energy and creativity when sharing their ideas and thoughts with the rest of the group and displayed continuous eagerness to contribute their answers. Also, it was noted that Child B would occasionally encourage Child A to engage in discussion. Although Child A's level of engagement decreased during the lesson, when asked in the interview , "What did you

enjoy about the lesson today?” Child A expressed their enjoyment of the lesson because of being able to talk with their partner (see transcript below).

RM: What did you enjoy about the lesson today?

Child C: I enjoyed the book.

Child B: I enjoyed the pink crayon and that we got to use our imaginations.

Child A: I enjoyed it because of what we did. We were whispering to each other and deciding and making decisions together.

RM to Child A: Did you enjoy talking to your partner?

Child A: Yeah, it was really fun.

Similarly, to the data collected from lesson 1, the ‘talk partners’ strategy appears to have encouraged pupil engagement with the questions asked. The results suggest that by providing the opportunity to talk and discuss their answers with their partners encouraged engagement and was described as ‘fun’ and enjoyable by the pupils when interviewed (see transcript above).

Moreover, Child C and Child D’s data shows similar results to Pair 1. Both pupils showed mainly continuous level of engagement throughout the story and showed similar behaviours with regards to ‘talk partners’. Although, Pair 2 appeared interested in the story and contributed to discussions throughout, the data from the interview told us more about Child C and D thought processes. Interestingly, Child D appeared to find being asked questions helpful because they were relevant to the book whereas Child B appeared to remember the story because they found the book funny (see transcript below).

RM to Child D: Did the questions help you remember the story?

Child D: Yes, they did. Because all the questions were about the book.

Child B: Yeah, because it was a funny book.

Child A: Yeah.

Discussion

Our results suggest that asking questions during story time does encourage pupil engagement however our results did highlight that in order for the questions to be effective for learners it is important to consider the questioning strategy employed by the teacher. As discussed by Cunningham (1977) how you ask and present a question has been found to have an impact on how effective a question is on a student's learning. Research by Ramnarian (2001) found by pre-determining the type of questions that were asked and determining when the questions were going to be asked was found to significantly facilitate productive learner thinking during a science investigation. Similarly, prior to conducting our research the type of questions and at what stage the questions would be asked were also planned in order to ensure effectiveness. This is supported by Cunningham (1977) who indicated the most effective use of a question is when they are tailored to the lesson objective (as cited by Wilen, 1987). Furthermore, as research suggests, a well-conceived question, presented in a timely manner can be useful to a learner's clarity of a topic and to expand their thinking (Sund and Carin, 1978 as cited by Wilen, 1987).

For the purpose of the research method, it was decided to use 'talk partners' as a means of observing the children engage with the questions asked. Our results showed that this research tool was both successful and beneficial to both the learners and to our research question. However, our results showed us that by encouraging the children to discuss the questions with their partner may have in fact encouraged the pupils to engage with the questions being asked. As previously discussed, Vygotsky (1978) believed that important learning occurs through social interaction with a teacher or peer which supports our results and suggests that although the questions were being asked to the children as individuals by providing them with the opportunity to engage in discussion with their peer and share their thinking, it allowed for the experience to be effective. Shirley Clarke (2008) emphasises that strategies such as 'Talk Partners' and 'Think-pair-share' is vital to ensuring quality talk within the classroom.

Our results suggest that the children enjoyed discussing with their partners and expressed that talking with their partner 'helped' them answer the questions. A case study identified that from implementing a 'Talk Partners' strategy within a classroom can generate greater pupil engagement leading to less passive listening; enables participation by children who may not be as confident in whole class situations and enables children to learn from one another (Clarke, 2008). Researchers such as Froebel (1852), Montessori (1952), Issacs (1948) and Vygotsky (1978) all support the notion that children develop through play and active learning and pupil talk has been identified as central to active learning (Clarke, 2008).

Conclusion

The purpose of the research was to gain an understanding of how the use of different question types can encourage pupil engagement during story time. This was achieved by the pupils engaging in discussion with their 'talk partners'. From this research it was highlighted how effective the use of 'talk partners' was to engaging children with the questions and in discussion. In my next teaching placement, I will definitely implement this strategy within my classroom to encourage collaborative working between the pupils but to also support my teaching. From using observation in this research, I have noted how important and how much can be learned from just listening and seeing the children's learning taking place. From my previous teaching experience, I am aware that as a teacher time can be an issue however, from participating in this lesson study and experiencing being the observer, I found by taking a step back and just listening and looking can be highly valuable to understanding the learning that is taking place.

With any research, there are strengths and limitations that need to be considered. I am now going to critically reflect on the research methods chosen for this study. In order to address the purpose of the research, it was essential that the questions were planned and prepared prior to conducting both lessons and both interviews. Upon self-reflection, I found this to be fundamental to the data collected. This enabled us to determine that different question types produced different levels of engagement and it was established that this was different in each pupil therefore raising further considerations for future research, for example, the sample of participants.

The research carried out was a small-scale study and due to the nature of the study, a purposeful sample was chosen as best fit for the research purpose. However, taking into consideration the differences in engagement between each pupil and question type, if I were to carry out this research again I would consider increasing the number of pupils being observed in order to provide a representative sample and increase reliability.

On the other hand, from establishing that pupils engage differently with different questions raised considerations in relation to my own future teaching practice. Although prior to conducting this research study, I was aware that each child is an individual and learns at his/her own individual pace based on their development and skills and work is planned tailored to your children's needs. What I have learned from conducting this research is that this also applies when asking questions. From reading and researching the topic of questioning and questioning techniques, I have learned that a number of different elements contribute to a question being effective. Moving forward, on my next placement I will endeavour to ensure that when planning questioning into my lessons, I will acknowledge the type of questions I ask and develop these questions around the lessons learning intentions in order for the questions to have an impact on both teaching and learning.

From conducting this research, I have learned the importance of reflecting and learning from each experience. Working collaboratively with my peer allowed me to take responsibility of my professional learning and take a proactive approach with the development of the study. I found continuously reflecting, both collaboratively and individually, helped me to understand and learn from the lesson study experience. Moving forward, in my next teaching placement and my future as a practitioner, I will continue to

reflect on my professional learning and experiences and continue to be open-minded to alternative ways of working and remaining committed to improving the quality of my teaching.

References

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Appendices

Appendix A – Observation Schedule

+							
Child A	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension						
	Application & Analysis						
	Synthesis & Evaluation						
	Comments:						
Child B	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension						
	Application & Analysis						
	Synthesis & Evaluation						
	Comments:						

+							
Child C	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension						
	Application & Analysis						
	Synthesis & Evaluation						
	Comments:						
Child D	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension						
	Application & Analysis						
	Synthesis & Evaluation						
	Comments:						

Appendix B – Refined definitions of Leuven's Involvement Scale and Schlecty's Five Levels of Engagement

Observation Schedule Scale

Low Engagement

Child is absent and displays no energy. There is an absence of cognitive demand. The child may characteristically stare into space. The child may fidget and not be looking in the right direction, seeming distracted.

Frequent Engagement

The child is engaged in the story, but half of the observed period includes moments of non-activity, in which the child is not concentrating and staring into space. There may be frequent interruptions in the child's concentration.

Mainly Continuous Engagement

The child is engaged in the story, but it is at a routine level and the real signals of engagement are missing. There is a sign of some progress, but energy is lacking, and concentration is at a routine level. The child can easily be distracted.

Continuous Engagement

The child's engagement in the story has intense moments. Child seems interested in the story and is engaged in answering questions with his / her partner.

Sustained Intense Engagement

The child shows continuous and intense engagement revealing the greatest involvement. The child shows sustained signs of concentration, creativity, energy and persistence. This intensity must be present for almost all the observation period. The child maintains eye contact, volunteers to answer questions and contributes fully to discussions with talk partner.

Appendix C – Pre-determined Questions

Analysis - What does the word quit mean?

Knowledge - How does the red crayon feel? And how do you know this?

Application – What do you think Grey Crayon’s letter is going to say?

Synthesis – What do you think Duncan has learnt from reading the Crayon’s letters?

Evaluation – How do you think Duncan will treat his crayons in the future?

Comprehension – Which letter did you like best?

Appendix D – ARC Reflection

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date:

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus):

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings <i>Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad?</i> <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand <i>Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda?</i> <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgu oedd yn siomedig?</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse <i>Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol?</i> <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf?</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	

Casgliadau a chatau gweithredu/ <i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materiaon siomedig a nodwyd?</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf?</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	
Y profiad newydd / <i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix E – Consent Form



Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child's school is a partner with Yr Athrofa at University of Wales Trinity Saint David in Carmarthen and Swansea. This school offers placements to students who are learning to be teachers.

The student-teacher in your child's class has been given the task of planning, teaching and evaluating one lesson so that he/she can develop specific strategies to improve their own teaching. As part of this, student-teachers will be observing the children's responses and asking some pupils their views on parts of the lesson. This is designed to inform students' own practice and support children's learning.

Any information collected would remain confidential, and both the school and the children would remain anonymous in work produced. The work undertaken would be in line with the University's ethical guidelines. If, at any time, your child does not want to share ideas, they would not be required to do so.

If you are happy for your child to contribute to the project, please complete the parental consent form below and return directly to the school as soon as possible. If you are interested in the outcome of this project or if you have any questions, please contact the University Partnership Office - partnership@uwtsd.ac.uk.

Yours faithfully,

Catherine Morgan
Module lead – The Enquiring Teacher

As Parent/Guardian of..... (pupil name), I do / do not give consent (please delete) for my child to take part in this project.

Signed.....(Parent/Guardian).

Date.....

Appendix F – Assent Form**Method of Recording Assent**

Class teacher's signature to confirm children's assent to participate in the research.

Right to withdraw has been explained by the researcher and understood by the children.

Signed: _____

Print: _____

Date: _____

Appendix G – Observation Schedule Lesson 1

Rachel
Miles

Name: Miles Date of Observation: 27.03.18 Duration: 9:15 - 9:50 Lesson: Literacy Focus: Questioning
(35 minutes)

Child A	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension			✓c	✓✓ an	✓ k	an - Hands up after questions - eager to answer. Minimal discussion in pairs but continued engagement - hands up to answer.
	Application & Analysis					✓ ap	
	Synthesis & Evaluation					✓ ste	
Comments: <u>Throughout story maintained eye contact in direction of story/miss G.</u>							
Child B	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension				✓ an	✓ c	an - Hands up after questions - eager to answer. C - one of the pair only seemed to discuss.
	Application & Analysis					✓ ap	Minimal discussion to discuss - but continued engagement - hands up to answer.
	Synthesis & Evaluation					✓ ste	
Comments: <u>Throughout story maintained eye contact in direction of story/miss G.</u>							

Pairs were determined by their sitting spots (positioned at the back of carpet area).

e:

Date of Observation:

Duration:

Lesson:

Focus:

Child C	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension		✓ K	✓ C			K - Not fully engaged in talk partners - looks off at others.
	Application & Analysis		✓ AP				
	Synthesis & Evaluation			✓ S+E			
Comments: Not engaged in story - talking, fidgeting, not looking at Miss G (Half way through)							
Child D	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension		✓ C	✓ K			C - didn't seem engaged in discussion. distracted.
	Application & Analysis		✓ AP				
	Synthesis & Evaluation			✓ S+E			
	Comments: Not engaged in story - talking, fidgeting, not looking at Miss G (Half way through)						

Appendix H – Observation Schedule Lesson 2

Lauren
Gage

Date of Observation: 28.03.18 Duration: Lesson: Literacy Focus: Questioning.

Child A	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension			✓C		✓K	
	Application & Analysis			✓An		✓Ap	minimal discussion prepared for partner to talk
	Synthesis & Evaluation			✓S	✓E		prepared to partner, but doesn't contribute.
	Comments: Frequent eye contact but not continuous. A little ambiguity half way through but still maintains eye contact. Getting more easily distracted towards end. Engagement levels with partner decreases.						
Child B	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension					✓K	Hands up & eager to answer.
	Application & Analysis				✓Ap	✓An	Am-eager to express opinion.
	Synthesis & Evaluation					✓S ✓E	Hands up - gives sensible suggestion related to story. Encourages partner to engage with her.
	Comments: Engaged throughout & making sensible suggestions, to apply to the story. Responds to the text effectively. Displays concentration via facial expression. Displays energy & creativity when answering questions. Continuous throughout.						

Name:

Date of Observation:

Duration:

Lesson:

Focus:

Child C	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension		✓		✓		Engaged in ~~task~~ but not continuous.
	Application & Analysis			✓ AN	✓ AP		AN engaged but energy is slacking.
	Synthesis & Evaluation			✓ S ✓ E			S prepared to partner but doesn't contribute
	Comments: Engaged in the story the majority of the time, lower level of concentration compared to the task partner.						
Child D	Types of Questions	Low Engagement	Frequent Engagement	Mainly Continuous Engagement	Continuous Engagement	Sustained Intense Engagement	Comments
	Knowledge & Comprehension				✓ AP ✓ C		Participating in answering. Eager to express opinion.
	Application & Analysis				✓ AN	✓ AP	Hands up after all questions.
	Synthesis & Evaluation				✓ E	✓ S	
	Comments: Engaged throughout. Showing energy & concentration. Eye contact throughout. Continued levels of engagement throughout.						

Appendix I – Transcript from Lesson Study 1

Transcript of Focus group semi-structured interview between LG, RM and 4 children

LG: We are looking to see how we can ask questions during story time and if that makes us learn... and if it makes you enjoy the story. So we are going to ask you some questions now is that ok?

Child A , Child B , Child C , Child D : *(In Unison)* Yeah

LG: What did you enjoy about the lesson today? What did you enjoy about how I read the story?

Child D: I liked when they pulled it out because it was like a chopped.... *(Irrelevant)*

LG: So you liked the story itself did you? Wow, Excellent. **Child A,** anything you liked about the story today? Did you like the story and how it was told?

Child A: I liked it when the farmer said I am growing carrots next year

LG: Aw that bit was funny, so if you were growing a vegetable what would you grow?

Child D: I would grow parsnips; Cos I have tried them before and I don't think I like them anymore....

(Irrelevant)

LG: **Child B & Child D** what did you enjoy about the lesson?

Child B: I liked it when the Mum and the Jack *(Irrelevant)*

LG: So did you like being asked questions and answering the questions during story time?

Child A, Child B, Child C and Child D – Yeah

Child D: Yeah I liked all of it

LG: Would you rather being asked questions during story time or would you prefer sitting through the story without being asked any questions?

Child A: I would rather you asked questions

Child B and Child D: Me too

Child C: Yeah me too

LG: Yeah ok do you think they helped you remember the story then?

All : yeah

LG: I agree, I think so! OK, what about when Miss Gaze asked you to talk to your partner, did you enjoy that? Would you rather being asked questions with your partner or by yourself?

Child D: Partner

LG: I'll ask everybody, what do you think **Child C?**

Child C: Partner

LG: You preferred being asked questions with your partner? Ok thank you, **Child A** What about you?

Child A: Partner

Child B: Partner

Child D: PARTNER !

LG: So you all prefer answering questions with your partner?

Child D: Because we had to think what's coming next because your partner knows the answer , your partner can just tell you ..

Child B: yeah and if your stuck on something your partner can help you

Child A: Yeah and they can help you do it

LG: I agree definitely well done! Ok so how do you like being read a story? Would you rather a picture book? Would you rather listen to in on the computer or would you rather listen to it using head phones?

Child A: Head phones because I have... (*Irrelevant*)

All: head phones, head phones

LG: So how did you feel when Miss Gaze was asking you the questions? Did you feel happy with them?

All: Yeah

LG: Did you feel like there was too many?

LG: or did you think there was not enough?

LG: What do you think ?

Child D: just right!

LG: **Child C** what about you ?

Child C: Just right!

LG: Is there anything that Miss Gaze could have done better to make you enjoy the story that little bit more?

Child B: It was fine

LG: It was fine, you don't think I need to change anything? **Child C** what about you ?

Child C: it was fine,

LG: ok what about next time I bring some props in? like we did for the Gruffulo?

Would that be fun?

ALL: YEAH

LG: OK well thank you so much for today you have been so helpful! Thank you very much!

Appendix J – Transcript from Lesson Study 2

Transcript of Focus group semi-structured interview between RM, LG and 4 children

RM: What did you enjoy about the lesson today?

Child C: I enjoyed the book

Child B: I enjoyed the pink crayon and that we got to use our imaginations.

Child A: I enjoyed it because of what we did. We were whispering to each other and deciding and making decisions together.

RM to Child A: Did you enjoy talking to your partner?

Child A: Yeah, it was really fun.

RM to Child D: What did you enjoy about the lesson today?

Child D: I enjoyed the naked crayon and I enjoyed sitting on the chairs.

RM: Excellent, thank you. Did the questions help you remember the story?

Child A, Child C and Child D: Yeah

Child B: I don't know actually. Do I? Don't I?

Child C: They did make me remember the story.

RM to Child D: Did the questions help you remember the story?

Child D: Yes, they did. Because all the questions were about the book.

Child B: Yeah, because it was a funny book.

Child A: Yeah.

RM: Great, thank you. Next question, did you enjoy answering the questions in your partners?

Child A, Child B, Child C and Child D: *(In unison)* Yes!

Child C: Yes, definitely.

Child D: Yes

RM: Did you find that talking with your partners helped you answer the questions?

Child A, Child B, Child C and Child D: Yes.

RM: Thank you. Okay, have a think about how you like to be read a story?

Child C: I like being a read a story because it is a little rest time and helps my listening skills.

Child D: It's like having a break from you work and being sat down.

Child A: I like being read a story when I am sitting down, relaxed and being read a story.

Child B: I like sitting down when reading a story.

RM: Thank you all. How do you feel about being asked questions during story time? All of you have mentioned that you like a story being read because you find it relaxing so how do you feel about Miss Miles asking you questions during a story?

Child D: Challenged.

RM to Child D: You feel challenged? Excellent. Why do you feel challenged?

Child D: Because you don't know if you will get the answer wrong or right.

RM: Excellent, good answer. Child A, how do you feel about being asked questions during story time?

Child A: I feel like it makes it fun and it helps you enjoy it. It doesn't matter if you get them wrong or right.

Child B: I feel challenged plus I don't feel comfortable.

RM to Child B: You don't feel comfortable? Can you tell me why?

Child B: No, like challenging questions.

RM to all children: Did any of the questions today make you feel uncomfortable?

Child B: No, because the story was so good.

RM: Okay, great. Thank you, **Child B**. **Child C**, how do you feel about being asked questions?

Child C: I feel challenged.

RM: Last question then, thank you all for your answers. Is there anything Miss Miles could have done today to make this lesson better?

Child C: I think you do not need to do anything else. You really excellent at it.

RM: Aw thank you so much **Child C**.

Child B: I feel the same as **Child C**.

Child A: I feel the same as **Child C** and **Child B**.

RM: Well, thank you all for your hard work and your brilliant answers. Give yourselves a clap.

Appendix K – Lesson Plan

Name of Trainee: Rachel Miles Session ref: 280318(1) Date: 28/03/18 Class: School B					Cynllun Ffocws y Cyfnod Sylfaen 2d
Targed(au) Hyfforddi Personol Number of learners: 26 Age: 6-8					
Learning objectives/intentions:	To engage in a discussion during story time	Success Criteria	To use their communication skills to discuss the story To express their opinion	Meeting learners' needs:	N/A
Introduction/Plenary tasks	Main activities	Resources/ Key Vocabulary	Questions in order:	Assessment for Learning (strategies and opportunities)	
Introduction Introduce Miss Gaze, my partner, to the class and obtain assent from the 4 target children. Provide the whole class with the objective of today's session and an outline of the research.	Trainee focused task (purpose, outline of trainee's role and children's learning): Read "The Day the Crayons Quit" and ask a combination of pre-determined questions as planned stages throughout. Ask children to 'talk' in partners to discuss the questions and then allow time for number of children to share their thoughts and answers with the rest of the class. <u>Additional adult tasks (purpose, outline of additional adults' role and children's learning):</u> Miss Gaze (the researcher) to observe lesson, recording levels of engagement on observation schedule. Miss Gaze will be observing levels of engagement by target pupils after each type of question is asked. <u>Independent learning opportunities:</u> N/A	The Book "The Day the Crayons Quit" Task worksheets for after the story has been completed – contingency task if there is time Key Vocabulary Quit Feelings Empty – what does this mean?	Questions in order: Analysis: What does the word 'quit' mean? Knowledge: How does the rede crayon feel? How do you know this? Application: What do you think Grey crayon's letter is going to say? Synthesis: What do you think Duncan has learnt from reading the crayons letters? Evaluation: How do you think Duncan will treat his crayons in the future? Comprehension: Which crayon did you like best and why?		
Plenary:	Finish off with asking the Evaluative question. Thank children for their participation. Semi-structured interview with 4 target children				
Curriculum coverage (range and skills)					
Literacy (LNF) listen to others, with growing attention, usually responding appropriately contribute to conversations and respond to others, taking turns when prompted, "express a view about the information in a text, "explore language, information and events in a text				Numeracy (LNF)	

Appendix L – Completed ARC Reflection

Model Beirniad Wedi Adfyfyrio (BWA) Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Dyddiad/Date: 28/03/18

Digwyddiad critigol (Ffocws)/Critical incident (focus): The use of questioning to engage pupils during story time.

Profiad/ Experience	
Teimladau/ Feelings Beth yw eich teimladau ynghylch y profiad? "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	Overall, I feel happy with how the lesson went.
Cofio a Deall/ Remember and Understand Allwch chi restru'r agweddau ar y profiad dysgu a aeth yn dda? "Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?" Pa elfennau o'r profiad dysgu oedd yn siomedig? "What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"	Although the questions were pre-determined I don't feel that it disrupted the flow of the story. As I had planned when I was going to ask each question, it allowed for the story to be read without feeling disjointed. The story chosen seemed to be a firm favourite of the children's therefore the children seemed engaged. The children engaged with the questions and using talk partner's seemed to work well in getting the children to engage in discussion. Due to circumstances beyond my control, my lesson only consisted of a group of 6 children. Although I don't feel this affected the data collected, I had prepared to deliver the lesson to a whole class and as lesson 1 was delivered to a whole class, it would have been better for consistency of the research. The room which was provided. I don't feel that this affected the results collected but the children were on chairs and it was unfamiliar for the children to be read a story in this manner.
Gwerthuso a dadansoddi/ Evaluate and analyse Beth fyddwch chi'n cadw'r un fath i sicrhau dysgu ac addysgu effeithiol yn y dyfodol? "What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?" Beth oedd achos yr elfen siomedig bwysicaf? "What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"	The way I delivered the story – the use of expression and using the book to create suspense. Using talk partners – I feel this was fundamental to engaging the children in discussion and answering the questions. Planning the questions before hand – ensuring the questions are relevant to the learning and ensuring the questions have a purpose. The number of children – due to circumstances, only had 6 children for the session.

Casgliadau a chymau gweithredu/ <i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>Beth yw eich atebion posibl i'r materïaon siomedig a nodwyd?</i> <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>Beth ydych yn mynd i'w wneud nesaf?</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	Next time, I would like to deliver session with a full class of children. I will continue to use 'talk partners' as a strategy of engaging children in discussion and as a way of engaging with questions. I found this strategy highly effective.
Y profiad newydd / <i>Transformed experience</i>	