

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

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List of Abbreviations

MAT – More Able and Talented

ZPD – Zone of Proximal Development

NACE – National Association for Able Children in Education

ELSA – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant

ARC – Assistive Reflection Conclusions

LSA – Learning Support Assistant

Introduction

This assignment is going to critically analyse an incident observed within a Foundation Phase classroom. I will do this by firstly, linking my chosen critical incident to two of the four purposes within the 'Successful Futures' document. As my critical incident refers to a MAT pupil who suffers with anxiety, this assignment is going to explore three key themes within a literature review. The three key themes will be:

1. Meeting the Learning Needs of MAT Pupils
2. Social Issues
3. Anxiety and Stress affecting academic development

I will then reflect and evaluate the chosen critical incident and identify ways in which the pupil can be best supported regarding her academic, social and emotional development.

Tripp (1993) defines a critical incident as

“an interpretation of the significance of an event”. Critical Incidents are first seen as ‘typical’ and then become ‘critical’ when rendered through analysis” (Tripp, 1993).

Critical Incidents allow us to be reflective within our teaching practice, and this is important when continuing our professional development. Jayres (2013) believes that

“reflection, self-analysis, questioning your understanding, and exploring your assumptions is essential to the development of your professional judgement”.

This can be done through carrying out observations and identifying an incident which you chose to critically analyse and evaluate.

Observation

School & Class Context

The school where my critical incident took place was based in the Rhondda, Cynon, Taff area. According to the Welsh Government (2018) the school is an English medium school with 152 pupils on roll, ages 3-11, with only 25.1% of pupils receiving free school meals. According to SchoolGuide (2019), no pupils are looked after by the local authority and roughly 8% of pupils come from an ethnic minority background.

All schools in Wales are put into one of four colour-coded support categories within the National School Categorisation System (Welsh Government, 2019) which highlights the level of outside support the school needs. According to WalesOnline (2019) schools that are ranked green, are the most effective. The school where my critical incident took place, is

currently a green school, demonstrating effective teaching and learning throughout the phases.

The critical incident I observed took place in a Year 1 and 2 classroom, during a mathematics lesson. The incident that I observed, involved a 6-year-old female who has a MAT statement. BERA (2019) state that

“researchers must recognize the participants’ entitlement to privacy and must accord them their rights to confidentiality and anonymity”.

To ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of the pupil observed for this assignment, I have used a pseudonym (Pupil A). BERA (2011) have also highlighted the importance of ensuring that data collection is kept secure and not released for any forms of publication. To ensure I have abided by this ethical guideline, this assignment will only be seen by myself, and the tutor marking this assignment within university.

Methodology

In order to identify and effectively evaluate a critical incident, I decided to gather my data qualitatively rather than quantitatively. According to McLeod (2017) qualitative data allows us to

“understand the social reality of individuals...as nearly as possible as its participants feel or live it”.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) believe that using qualitative data is a naturalistic approach to its subject matter.

I gathered information regarding my critical incident by conducting a case study. Iacono, Brown and Holtham (2009) believe that a case study is a

“preferred research strategy that focuses on understanding a phenomenon within its natural setting”.

Using a case study allowed me to understand the behaviours of a certain child within the classroom.

I collected qualitative data for my case study through participant observation. According to Marshall and Rossman (1989, p. 79), observation is

“the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for study”,

and participant observation is a

“unique method for investigating the enormously rich, complex, conflictual, problematic, and diverse experiences, thoughts, feelings, and activities of human beings” (Jorgenson, 2015).

This method gave me the opportunity to be actively involved in the children’s learning, giving me a detailed insight into what/how the children learn and to observe how they contributed to the lesson. However, according to Robson (2011) participant observation can be problematic when finding opportunities to record what you have observed whilst it is fresh in your mind. I overcame this problem by ensuring I had a notepad and pen at all times, so I was able to record issues that arose throughout the observation process. Iacono, Brown and Holtham (2009) also criticise participant observation by suggesting that it can be difficult to secure access to a site, and to find a role acceptable to the social group without compromising the research collection. I carried out my observation in a class where I was a familiar face to the pupils, therefore my presence did not affect their behaviour in a way that it could negatively impact my research collection.

Like all research methods, a case study has its limitations as well as its strengths. Hodgkinson and Hodgkinson (2001) state that case studies do not lend themselves to numerical representation, arguing that the vast majority of case studies cannot be easily represented in numerical form. Fortunately, my critical incident was based on collecting qualitative data rather than quantitative data, therefore, this limitation did not hinder my research collection.

Critical incident linked to Donaldson’s Four Purposes

I carried out observations and noted four critical incidents (see appendix 1, 2, 3 and 4). The incident I decided to critically analyse involved a 6-year-old female who is statemented as a MAT pupil who suffers with stress and anxiety (see appendix 1). The pupils were given a task to complete within small groups, using marbles to practice their addition skills. The pupils were allowed to choose their own groups to work within.

I believe that this critical incident demonstrates

“ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives” (Donaldson, 2015),

which is one of the four purposes stated within the Successful Futures report. Donaldson (2015) states that ambitious and capable learners set themselves high standards and enjoy challenge. However, Koshy (2002) argues that pupils having high standards for themselves can lead to excessive fear and anxiety, which can later affect their growth and lead to the child feeling guilt. Porter (2005) agrees with this statement by stressing that MAT children are

“commonly impaired by a dysfunctional form of perfectionism whereby they strive to achieve unrealistically high standards and are seldom satisfied, no matter how well they do” (p.68),

but then goes on to highlight that MAT pupils strive for excellence because they know they are capable of achieving it, therefore,

“perfectionism is the engine that drives their achievements” (Porter, 2005, p. 69).

Donaldson (2015) has also stated that children should be able to explain ideas and concepts that they are learning about. Within the maths lesson, Pupil A was able to understand the activity and use her knowledge and understanding to explain to the rest of her peers within the group how they should complete the task. Porter (2005) supports this type of behaviour by discussing how MAT pupils have the developmental maturity to take lead within a group but may not have the emotional maturity to handle that role respectfully. This suggestion may be the reason why Pupil A got distressed and began to cry. Her peers were not listening to her ideas and therefore she became overwhelmed, triggering her anxiety. Sankar-DeLeeuw (2007) agrees by pointing out that children who are emotionally challenged, may find it difficult to function productively in the real and challenging world.

Donaldson (2015) states that pupils should be

“healthy confident individuals who: are building their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy”

Pupil A is confident when undertaking independent tasks or activities that she enjoys. However, her current state of emotional well-being is not great as she suffers from anxiety. Later in this assignment, I will discuss possible strategies that can be used to support Pupil A to achieve the purposes of the curriculum reform. It is also stated within the document written by Donaldson (2015) that in order to be a healthy, confident individual, children must

“know how to find the information and support to keep safe and well”.

Pupil A is now able to identify when her anxiety attacks are starting by the feeling she has in her stomach. She is aware that if she has this feeling, she is to tell an adult within the classroom in order to get the support she needs.

Literature Review

Meeting the Learning Needs of More Able and Talented Pupils

Koshy (2002) believes that teachers should extend learning opportunities for MAT pupils within the classroom. Teachers must ensure to relate these learning opportunities to the interests of MAT pupils, as this will increase their motivation and encourage them to try their best. These opportunities should be placed just above the child's capability, to tackle the task. If the task is too difficult and at an unrealistic high level, the child may become unmotivated, but if the activity is too simplistic, this will lead to boredom and frustration (Koshy, 2002). Vygotsky (1978) proposed the ZPD model, which is used to demonstrate what task the child can do independently, what they can do with a knowledgeable other and tasks slightly outside of their capabilities. He believes that the role of education is to provide pupils with experiences within their ZPD, by providing them with challenging tasks which they can complete successfully and independently. This theory is supported by the Foundation Phase Framework, as it states that MAT pupils should be provided with greater challenge, using material in ways that extend their knowledge and understanding of topics and provide opportunities for independent learning (Welsh Government a, 2015).

NASE (2019) believe that

“all young people deserve access to a challenging and enriching education, with opportunities and support to develop their abilities in all areas”.

The learning opportunities of MAT pupils can be extended through differentiation. Differentiation articulates the teaching and learning differences between the basic curriculum and the elements that have been selected to amend that curriculum to activate, challenge, and extend the characteristics of the gifted (Kaplan, 2018). Olenchak (2001) studied four gifted and talented students aged 9-12 through case studies, over a 3-year period, to examine the nature of their education through the differentiation they were provided with. He found that personalised differentiation is the optimal means for accommodating the needs of more able and talented pupils in school. However, even though these results support differentiation within the classroom for MAT pupils, this study focused on only 4 pupils, therefore cannot be accounted for the whole population.

The implementation of differentiation within the classroom is criticised because according to Olenchak (2001)

“the literature about differentiating education for gifted and talented students remains inconclusive...and continues to generate inconsistent interpretations in practice”.

This statement is in correlation with what was stated by Endepohls-Ulpe and Thommes (2014). They believe that many teachers are often conflicted between their knowledge on differentiation, the delivery of it and the anticipated workload, or the teachers simply aren't sure on how to effectively implement extended activities or challenging methods within their classes. They suggest that differentiation for learning opportunities should be a part of teacher training and continuous professional development, so that we can be effective practitioners (Endepohls-Ulpe and Thommes, 2014).

One organisation that offers specialised courses regarding effective leadership and governance for more able learners, as well as developing provision in specific subject areas is the National Association for Able Children in Education. This organisation works with schools to improve the provision for more able learners,

“driving whole-school improvement and raising achievement for all” (NASE, 2019).

Social Issues

Friendships are an important aspect of thriving and are thought to develop one's self-esteem (McNamara and Moreton, 2001), but Lund (1987) states that children with emotional problems have lower self-esteem than their peers and may find it difficult to form friendships. According to Porter (2005), MAT pupils tend to feel like they don't fit in or don't have much in common with other children, and this sense of being different makes them vulnerable to social maladjustment. This type of mentality can lead to children feeling lonely and socially isolated within school and also within their community. This is supported by Koshy (2002), who suggests that the traits and interests that MAT pupils have may make it difficult for them to socially interact with their peers and connect within friendship groups, this is in agreement with what was stated above by Lund (1987).

Within an article written by Gaesser, Herbert and Smith (2018) a young boy's behaviour within a classroom setting has been evaluated. He was a MAT pupil suffering from anxiety, which relates to my chosen critical incident (see appendix 2). The boy would have outbursts throughout the day, so was placed with an LSA to assist with his emotional needs. This led to the boy feeling even more socially isolated and academically under stimulated. This evaluation is supported by research carried out by Vialle (2007) who studied 950 students, with 65 of the students being more able and talented, regarding their emotional and social well-being. The results demonstrated that the students who were MAT felt unhappy and less satisfied with their social support than their nongifted peers.

Within the book written by Burrell and Riley (2005) Gill Taylors 'Circle of Friends' is discussed as an effective approach to ensuring the inclusion of children with social and

emotional needs within mainstream schools. This approach is implemented within schools for children who are at risk of exclusion, there is typically eight children per group and these children are supported in their relationships and learning. This would be an effective strategy to use as children won't feel isolated and have support from their peers within the classroom.

Fredrickson and Turner (2003) conducted a small-scale study regarding this approach involving 20 participants with emotional and social difficulties, aged 6-12 years. The results demonstrated that the intervention had a positive effect on the social acceptance by their classmates. It was found that behaviours of the child did not change, however, social acceptance by their peers was detected. Thus, suggesting that by their peers interacting with the selected child during this intervention, it allows the children to get to know each other and become familiar with certain aspects of one's social and emotional difficulties. The children are able to understand one another on a friendlier level, rather than just being peers within the same classroom.

Anxiety & Stress affecting academic achievement

“What may appear as a lack of cooperation, or self-discipline could actually be the result of the gifted child's unmanaged anxiety” (Gaesser, Hebert and Smith, 2018).

These researchers also believe that in order to support the pupils' talents, academic progress and emotional well-being, it's important to ensure we, as practitioners, understand anxiety and provide pupils with effective management tools to cope with anxiety (Gaesser, Hebert and Smith, 2019). Koshy (2002) suggests that “it is likely that aspects of giftedness may cause some unique situations of stress” (p. 110) and being able to anticipate signs of stress will allow the teacher to be proactive and support the gifted child.

Most MAT pupils who suffer from social and emotional difficulties might be afraid of failure, which leads to them having a fixed mind set. Fear of Failure is allowing

“fear to stop us doing the things that can move us forward to achieve our goals” (MindTools, 2019)

and can be identified in a child if they have low self-esteem, lack of self-confidence or excessive anxiety. This relates to my critical incident because Pupil A wasn't being listened to by her peers, and because the children had a certain amount of time to complete the task, she had fear of failure and became overwhelmed and struggled to cope with her anxiety.

Dweck (2015) has identified this type of behaviour within people who have a fixed mindset. According to Codella (2019) Carol Dweck identified two ways of thinking, and these were fixed and growth mindset. Having a fixed mind set means intelligence is static and a growth mindset means that your intelligence can be developed (MindTools, 2019). Dweck (2012)

trusts that having a growth mindset will allow you to thrive during the most challenging times in your life. Codella (2019) suggests that

“a fixed mindset inhibits growth and learning, while a growth mindset can help you view failure in a positive light and use it to propel yourself forward”.

This type of mindset would allow Pupil A to understand that it is ok to get things wrong and she would be encouraged by practitioners to thrive and extend her knowledge and understanding without the fear of pressure.

It is improper to think that children will be able to thrive academically if their emotional well-being is unstable. This is supported by Laevers (2003) who believes that having control of your emotional well-being is key to being academically successful. He designed the Leuven Scale for Well-being, to allow children to evaluate their own feelings, he believes it is

“a crucial component of emotional intelligence and good mental health” (Laevers, 2003).

He also created the Leuven Scale for Involvement (Laevers, 2003), which allowed teachers to evaluate the pupils' behaviour within the classroom, to assess where they are regarding their emotional well-being and to assess which pupils might need extra emotional, social or academic support. This would've been beneficial to Pupil A, as the teacher would've already been able to identify that she gets overwhelmed within certain scenarios, so there would've been strategies in place, if she began to emotionally struggle throughout the task.

Reflection/Evaluation and Next Steps

According to Gaesser, Hebert and Smith (2018) pupils will be able to better cope with challenges throughout the school day if they are able to effectively develop anxiety management skills. This section of the essay is going to discuss potential strategies and programmes that can be used to benefit the pupil for the foreseeable future.

I originally used the ARC model to reflect and analyse my four critical incidents, but for the purpose of this section of my essay, I am going to reflect using Gibbs' Reflection Cycle (Gibbs, 1988).

Describe

I observed a maths lesson within a year 1 and 2 classroom, with 31 children. There was 5 members of staff including myself (two teachers and two teaching assistants) involved in the lesson. My critical incident was based on a MAT pupil who suffers from anxiety (see Appendix 2). She would get overwhelmed during timed or group activities and would

hyperventilate and cry uncontrollably. The activity focused on number bonds to 10 using marbles.

Feelings

Originally, I felt calm and confident whilst observing the lesson, but when Pupil A had an anxiety attack, I felt nervous as I didn't know how to respond. I observed the teachers within the situation to see how they dealt with it. It was interesting to see how the other children reacted as well during the set task. After the observation I felt more confident dealing with this issue than what I did during the lesson, as I was able to research ways into how to support MAT pupils with anxiety and possible strategies that can be used, these will be discussed within my action plan.

Evaluation

The younger children were distracted with the marbles and they were rolling onto the floor, this had a negative effect on the task as the children kept miscalculating the sum because the incorrect amount of marbles were present. I think this may have caused the MAT pupil to become distressed as she was trying to complete the task and her peers were not listening to her; resulting in her outburst and lack of control regarding her emotional stability, this may have also been the result of her not being able to tolerate the noise within the classroom, as all pupils were working within groups and the marbles were rolling across the floor and tables. I think if blocks were used rather than marbles, the activity would have been completed differently as they do not roll, and the children wouldn't be as excitable and distracted as they use blocks on a daily basis.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this reflection, through observing this maths lesson, I was able to identify good behaviour management and how to ensure all children met the learning objective. I was able to reflect critically on the behaviour shown by the MAT pupil and extend my knowledge and understanding regarding anxiety in MAT pupils to further my own professional development.

Action Plan

If this type of behaviour were to occur again, I would suggest that Pupil A be informed of the activity before-hand, so if she can feel her anxiety being triggered, she is able to remove herself from the situation by going over to the reading corner and reading a book to calm down. I would also suggest Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) for the pupil. The ELSA project believes that children are happier in school if their emotional needs are

addressed, and this programme is used by children who struggle to understand, identify and manage their own emotions, so they can develop skills and become emotionally resilient (Psychology First, 2019).

Shandomo (2010) suggests that critical reflection is essential for our professional development as practitioners. A study was carried out regarding the role critical reflection has on teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions. By teachers being critically reflective, they had a deeper understanding on teaching styles, and this enhanced their ability to

“challenge the traditional mode of practice and define their growth toward greater effectiveness as teachers” (Shandomo, 2010).

I believe that reflection models are an effective way of evaluating and analysing what you have observed, because you are able to break down what you saw, heard, felt, etc. and gain a deeper understanding of the incident taken place and also identify next steps to better my professional practise. Both the Gibbs Cycle and the ARC Sheets will be beneficial to my own professional and personal development because I will be able to critically analyse my own lessons through reflecting and evaluating in order to improve and become an effective educational practitioner.

Conclusion

In conclusion to this essay, I have ensured to follow the BERA guidelines throughout, keeping the name of the school and pupil confidential, using a pseudonym (Pupil A).

I have identified that in order for a child to thrive academically, they must be nurtured and have a well-balanced emotional and social well-being. I have critically analysed the literature provided regarding anxiety in MAT pupils. I have discovered many strategies that can be used in order support a MAT child suffering from anxiety, such as the Leuven Scales, educating them on the difference between fixed and growth mind-set, and the ELSA and Circle of Friends approach.

However, a GAP within my research was identified as I don't believe there is enough theory regarding anxiety in MAT pupils specifically and how this affects their academic achievement as well as their emotional and social well-being.

I have linked this essay to the new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership in Wales. Within these teaching standards, I have identified differentiation as one of the strands within pedagogy with regards to refining teaching towards highly effective practice.

“The teacher demonstrates knowledge, understanding and experience of high expectations and effective practice in meeting the needs of all learners, whatever their different needs”
(Welsh Government, 2019).

This teaching standard relates to my assignment because I have focused on a MAT pupil who would benefit from a differentiation of learning experiences within the classroom. I have been able to critically analyse the needs of MAT learners, which has had a positive influence on my professional development.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: Mixed Year 1 & 2 Class. The children were asked to recreate the story of Rapunzel using their own nouns and adjectives (let down your long beard instead of hair) (using a different name to Rapunzel etc.)
Classroom culture The children were asked to retell the story numerous times using a story board before going off and completing the task. They used actions to remember and repetition was used. The children were excited to learn and enjoyed retelling the story. The teacher had good classroom control with minimal disruption by pupils.
Objectives There was no written objective, but the teacher said to the class “by the end of today, we are going to finish rewriting our own version of the story Rapunzel”
Direction Preparation for this activity had taken place prior to the day (children already decided what words they were going to change). Staff had previously written these down and child was asked to remember. The child’s version of the first part of the story was written on a small white board and the children were encouraged to copy the first part of the story down into their books.
Access and challenge The Year 2 children were challenged as their versions of the story wasn’t written on a white board, they had to practice letter formation independently.
Assessment The teacher stops the lesson during the middle to ensure all pupils understand, he then brought them back to the carpet and asked children to retell their version of the story at the end of the lesson.
Specifics / Critical Incidents During the activity, a pupil was writing in d’s the wrong way around, I provided him with feedback and showed him how to correctly write his d’s; this gave him the opportunity to practise formation correctly with support. This links to Vygotsky’s ZPD - What the pupil was capable of doing on his own, and what he was capable of doing with a knowledgeable other (myself).

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 26th September 2019

Critical incident (focus): Letter Formation

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings “What are your feelings regarding the experience?”	I feel that the lesson observation went very well, and I was able to identify work that had been differentiated depending on the learning ability of children I was working with, as I was a participant observer.
Remember and Understand “Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?” “What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?”	To introduce the lesson, there was a story board that the teacher had created. The teacher and pupils followed the story board using actions and reading the story aloud. This helped the children to remember the story before re-creating it using their own words. I think I had an influence on the learning experience because I was working with a child who needed practice on his letter formation; I scaffolded the learning and was the knowledgeable other. There were a small group of children working on their story and the rest of the class had free choice. This meant the pupils who had to write their story were distracted as they wanted to go and play.
Evaluate and analyse “What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?” “What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?”	I think the white boards were a good idea for the lower-ability students, because they were able to visualize the letter before writing it down. I think it was effective for the higher-ability children to be challenged through having to independently writing their own story, as they had to really think about what words they were going to use and what letter were in each word. There was too much noise in the classroom as other pupils could play whilst a selected number of pupils had to sit down and complete their story before going to have free choice.
Conclusions and actions “What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?” “What will you do next?”	I think if this activity were to happen again, I would take the children who were working out of the classroom to write their stories (in the hall, in the corridor, out on the yard etc.). So, they can concentrate without being distracted by their peers playing or explain to the children that there are others working in the classroom, so they must try to be quiet.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix 2

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: The class was mixed year with year 1 & 2 pupils. Pupils were practising their addition skills using marbles as a tool.
Classroom culture Most pupils understood the task, some children didn't quite understand, therefore were less motivated than others.
Objectives There was no written objective, but the teacher tells the children "By the end of this lesson, you should be able to understand how to add two-digit numbers".
Direction Most pupils understood the task and the teacher and teaching assistants were floating around the class to ensure all pupils understood and took part.
Access and challenge Pupils were able to choose their own groups to work within and had the same amount of marbles, they had to separate the marbles into bowls and show the teacher how they came up with the answer For example: $20 + 12 = 32$ $10 + 10 + 10 + 2$ (3 bowls with 10 marbles in each, with 3 marbles left over).
Assessment Mental maths activity at the beginning of the lesson to test their knowledge, then stops the children during the task to ask which methods they have been using during the middle of the lesson, and then asks them at the end how they got the correct answer.
Specifics / Critical Incidents A MAT pupil who suffers with anxiety was not able to cope working within a group and began to cry. She felt pressured as the teacher had given them a time-limit to complete the task and found it difficult. This critical incident would be useful for my essay as I can discuss how anxiety and stress affect her academic development, and I will be able to explore strategies that can be used, beneficial to her.

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 26th September 2019

Critical incident (focus): MAT pupil with anxiety

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	I enjoyed observing this lesson as I was able to identify the lower, middle and higher ability children. It was interesting to see them problem-solve as groups and discuss what possible methods could be used to work out the sum.
Remember and Understand <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	The children were able to work in groups to find a method that best suited them in order to get to the correct answer. They had lots of different resources to use and the teacher brought all children back to the carpet during the lesson, to ensure they understood what they had to do. The marbles were a distraction to the pupils within the lesson because they were rolling everywhere. The younger pupils just wanted to play with the marbles and didn't understand the lesson objective. This led to the Year 2 pupils working towards getting the answer and the Year 1 pupils not really working with them. I liked that the teacher brought the pupils back to the carpet during the middle of the lesson because he was able to recap what the lesson objective was and help the pupils. This meant the Year 1's were able to understand the activity and took part once they were able to go back to their groups. The children were able to choose their own groups, this influenced the learning experience because the groups were random. The lesson would've had a different outcome if children were based in groups based on ability. Benefits of the plenary – The plenary was effective because the children were able to feedback to the teacher what method they had used. This was beneficial to the pupils because they were able to share ideas with their peers and understand that different methods can still make the same answer. Benefits of the main part – The main part of the session was effective because the children were able to find methods to get the correct answer using practical resources. I think this was more beneficial than just writing the question down.
Evaluate and analyse <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	If I was to teach this lesson, I would use objects that don't roll and that the children use on a regular basis (blocks etc.), as the children use them on a regular basis, they are familiar with them and therefore the objects won't disrupt the lesson as much as the marbles did. One of the MAT pupils who has anxiety couldn't cope with the noise and working within a group, so she began to cry and hyperventilate. If this were to happen in my lesson, I would ask the child if she would like to remove herself from the situation by going over to the book corner and reading a book to calm down.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	Other objects that don't roll or distract the children will be used. There will be sums on the board for the higher ability children, so they are able to move on to the next sum if they completed the first one. Explain to the MAT pupil before-hand that if she feels anxious during the activity, she can take 5 minutes in the book corner to calm down.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix 3

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26 th September 2019
Lesson details: Children were all sitting on the carpet and the teacher was asking questions to improve their mental maths. (16+4) etc. They were only allowed to put their hands up once they knew the answer and only had 3 seconds to give their answer if they had been picked. The teacher split the points into boys/girls year1/year 2. Each pupil had one point if they got the answer correct.
Classroom culture All students were excited to take part as they knew they could earn points for their team if they had the answer correct.
Objectives The teacher verbally gave the lesson objective "By the end of this lesson you should know your number bonds to 10".
Direction All students understood the task and took part to the best of their ability.
Access and challenge There was a MAT pupil who was continuously putting his hand up first with the correct answer. To ensure all pupils had a fair chance of getting points for their team, the teacher asked the MAT pupil to whisper into my ear the answer as well as asking other pupils for the answer. This way, he was able to gain points for his team as well as other children having a chance also.
Assessment The teacher ensured he wasn't just asking the same pupils for the answer, he assessed the pupils understanding by picking different children to answer.
Specifics / Critical Incidents MAT pupils whispering the answer in my ear to ensure other pupils also had a fair chance of getting points for their team. Differentiation within the classroom could be discussed as part of the critical incident and how teachers extend the learning opportunities for MAT pupils.

Date: 26th September 2019

Critical incident (focus): Extended opportunities for a MAT pupil

<i>Experience</i>	
<i>Feelings</i> “What are your feelings regarding the experience?”	This lesson was interesting for me to observe as I was unaware of what number bonds meant before this lesson. It was new for me and I enjoyed watching the children use mental math to answer the questions.
<i>Remember and Understand</i> “Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?” “What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?”	As this lesson began with a game on the carpet, all pupils were excited as they were all placed into teams and were given points each time an individual answered the question correctly. The questions related to Vygotsky’s ZPD because the questions were slightly harder than what they usually do but weren’t too hard that they were unable to answer. This was challenging all pupils apart from the MAT pupils as they found these questions easy. This was disappointing because their learning opportunities were not being extended.
<i>Evaluate and analyse</i> “What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?” “What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?”	I think the class being split into teams was an effective part of the learning process as all pupils were eager to get the questions correct, in order to gain points for their team. However, I think the MAT pupils should’ve been challenged as well as the other pupils in the class.
<i>Conclusions and actions</i> “What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?” “What will you do next?”	I think a MAT pupil should be placed in each group, and the teacher could ask challenging questions specifically for the MAT children (without specifically saying “this question is for MAT pupils only” the names of the pupils could be called “this question is for you” to ensure they don’t feel singled out or different to the other pupils. This will allow their learning opportunities to be extended but within a social group.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix 4

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 9 th October 2019
Lesson details: A Biology lesson within a year 7 classroom in a secondary school.
Classroom culture All students respected the teacher, walked into the classroom and sat behind their desks. They were all quiet and faced toward the front of the class ready for the lesson to begin.
Objectives The lesson objective was written on the white board, which all pupils had to copy into their books at the top of the page. The lesson focus was learning about different bones in the body. Around the classroom there were fact sheets regarding different types of bones. The pupils had to go around the classroom to find the fact sheets and answer questions given to them prior.
Direction All pupils fully understood the task and they quietly worked together to complete it.
Access and challenge If the pupils had completed the task set, the teacher would provide them with extension sheets to further test their knowledge and understanding.
Assessment When the pupils came into the classroom and sat down, the teacher asked the children questions about different bones in the body, this allowed the teacher to visually see who already had knowledge regarding this topic and who didn't. Once the task was completed and all the children were sat back in their seats, he went through the questions and asked the students for the answers.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss? There was one pupil in the class who suffered with autism. He carried around a small toolbox and held it close when he was sitting down. Inside the toolbox was all of his favourite things, this can be seen as a comfort blanket. This could be used as a critical incident as I could discuss and evaluate different coping mechanisms pupils with autism use when transitioning from primary school into secondary school.

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 9th October 2019

Critical incident (focus): Coping strategies for a pupil with Autism

Experience	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	I was nervous to begin with as I had never observed a lesson within a secondary school before. I was curious as to how the students would respond to having me in the classroom. I was surprised as to how well behaved the year 7 students were and it was nice to see the level of respect they had for the teacher.
Remember and Understand <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	The teacher explained the task to the students and asked if they all understood before allowing them to work in pairs to complete it. There was a recap activity at the beginning where the students were asked to recall what they learnt last lesson. The student who had autism didn't have a 1:1, he didn't taken part in the activity, he walked around the classroom instead, ignoring the task that was taking place.
Evaluate and analyse <i>"What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i> <i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i>	Whilst the other students were carrying on with the activity, I would've approached the student who has autism and asked if he would like me to go through the questions with him. The teacher explained that the student will have a 1:1 depending on if the agency are able to send one into school for him. This means there is no consistent contact with a member of staff, and this can affect his academic, social and emotional well-being.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	If I were to teach this lesson, I would want the student with Autism to be involved. By making myself aware of what interests him, I can then adapt the lesson to include things that he is interested in. For example if he was interested in dinosaurs this could be incorporated into the lesson when discussing different bones in the body and comparing.
Transformed experience	