

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.

Introduction

The professional standards for school practitioners in Wales, states that pedagogy is paramount and suggests that every aspect of a teacher's role should lead to the improvement of pedagogy (Welsh Government, 2017). There is also a demand in Wales for teachers to become research driven, and therefore, teachers are required to research specific areas of their practice in order to make informed improvements. As such this essay will be presented as a critical evaluation, with the aim of suggesting possible next steps for improving practice. In forming a critical evaluation, this essay has taken the case study of a year one class in School X and identified a critical incident (the negative reaction of a pupil to not receiving a prize for effort in a task), that was observed within this classroom during a lesson. Tripp (2011) argues that a critical incident does not exist as an observable object, but rather that it is an individual's interpretation of the significance of an incident, that defines it as a critical incident. Adopting this definition, critical incidents are useful in reflective practice in teaching because they allow the observer to consider the wider context of the incident, such as social setting, classroom culture or environment.

This essay will ethically present important contextual information regarding the identified critical incident, before discussing research methodologies. It will then explore how the critical incident relates to Donaldson's four purposes and, review the literature concerning the critical incident, before finally reflecting on the research and suggesting how this can be used to inform professional and personal development.

Observation

Before outlining the full context of the critical incident that was observed, it must be expressed that this essay will be presented in accordance with British Educational Research Association guidelines (BERA, 2018), and as such, sensitive data including school and pupil

names will not be revealed. These will instead be referred to as School X and Pupil X, Y, Z etc. School X is categorised as green and is situated in rural south Wales. According to the most recent Estyn report concerning the school, it currently has 448 pupils ages 3-11, an average of 38% of students are entitled to free school meals (20% above average in Wales), 36% of pupils are identified as having additional learning needs (15% above average in Wales) and it is currently a pioneer school for the new curriculum (Estyn, 2019). Four observations were undertaken as seen in Appendices A-H, and one was chosen as the focus for this essay. The focus observation took place within a year one classroom in School X, however the class consisted of a mixture of year one and year two pupils, as pupils are grouped by ability across the foundation phase for Read/Write Inc. sessions within the school. The observations were conducted in a structured manner, using a written lesson observation record and an assisted reflective conclusions record, each consisting of pre-determined questions. Finally, the lesson was observed in a non-participant capacity, however, even in this capacity it is important to acknowledge the potential presence of the 'Hawthorne Effect'. Festinger and Katz (1966), describe the 'Hawthorne Effect' as the change in behaviour of the subject of observation when they are aware that they are being observed. In the context of this essay, the behaviours of the classroom teacher and pupils may have been affected.

Methodology

When discussing methodology in the context on educational research, it is important to recognise the many different paradigms that exist. Even within these paradigms, attempting to define specific methods of observation can be problematic. In *Research Methods in Education*, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011), have compiled a comprehensive list of research methods from a large array of sources which can be helpful when exploring methodology. Descriptions of the various paradigms are given, but it is acknowledged that the various paradigms rest on three theoretical foundations; quantitative, qualitative and critical theory. Researchers from the quantitative perspective believe that human behaviour is governed and should be investigated scientifically. Researchers from the qualitative perspective believe that research should examine the individual and are generally anti-positivist. Critical theorists believe it is not sufficient to just understand situations but will look to change them. Critics of the quantitative approach believe that it fails to acknowledge freedoms of choice and individuality. Critics of the qualitative approach believe that it focuses too heavily on the narrow views of the individual. Critics of critical theory believe that the presence of an agenda for change removes objectivity. Cohen, Manion and Morrison go

on to discuss the emergence of a mixed approach, where the three theoretical foundations are mixed and used where they best fit the research.

Ranjit Kumar (2011), also outlines various research methods. Kumar states that research can be looked at from the perspectives of application, objectives and enquiry process. Application of research can be applied or pure, objective of research can be descriptive, correlational, explanatory or exploratory and enquiry or research and be qualitative or quantitative. Kumar also acknowledges that there are many who advocate a mixed approach and states that it is the purpose rather than the paradigm of research that should dictate the mode of enquiry.

These previously discussed research perspectives were useful when deciding which method of research to use for this essay. As seen in Appendix A and Appendix B, it was decided that a written lesson observation record and an assisted reflective conclusions record would be used whilst observing the lessons. Adopting Cohen, Manion and Morrison's descriptions, it was decided that a mixed method would be used. The structured nature of the questions presented a quantitative perspective, the use of the assisted reflective conclusions record provided a qualitative perspective and the identification of a critical incident presented a critical theory perspective. Also, adopting Kumar's three perspectives, it was decided that an applied application of research would be used, as the findings were intended to provide understanding and bring change of practice, an explanatory objective was used when reflecting on why the incident happened and again a mix of qualitative and quantitative enquiry were used within the written lesson observation record and an assisted reflective conclusions record. These methods were purposefully implemented to allow the recording of the factual contexts of the lesson, such as the lesson objectives and classroom culture but also to recognise individuality and morals to lead to informed recommendations for improvements in practice.

For the purpose of this essay a critical incident was identified within the context of the case study of one lesson within a year one classroom. Case studies can be defined as "the study of an issue explored through one or more cases within a bounded system" (Creswell, 2017, p.73). Case studies are useful in research because they show people in real-life situations and provide an in-depth investigation, however some criticisms of case studies are that it can be difficult to generalise the findings and difficult to define what a case is. Taking Tripp's definition (2011), alluded to in the introduction to this essay, critical incidents are useful in research because they occur in routine professional practice and can be typical or atypical, however some criticisms are that the presence of an agenda for improvement removes

objectivity and that the incident may not be worthy of further reflection. The specific design of research for this essay was chosen because the case study presented a holistic view of the classroom environment, that gave a context to the critical incident, which in turn provided an area of focus, but also an element of open-mindedness, as it was not predetermined what would be classified as a critical incident.

Four Purposes

Any current research conducted in the field of education in Wales, must consider the major changes to the curriculum that will be taking place in 2022, which are underpinned by Donaldson's review of the curriculum in *Successful Futures*. In *Successful Futures*, Donaldson (2015), outlines his recommendations for Wales to follow many higher performing countries in moving away from a curriculum founded on traditional subjects and instead base it on key skills and competencies. The review goes on to recommend a curriculum that adopts the following four purposes;

- Ambitious, capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives,
- Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work,
- Ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world
- Healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society.

In *Education in Wales: Our national mission*, Cabinet Secretary for Education, Kirsty Williams AM (2017), echoes Donaldson's recommendation for the adoption of the four purposes and throughout the action plan she highlights the need for leadership within the educational workforce to be driven by the four purposes in the years leading up to 2022 and beyond.

In order for this essay to be able to make recommendations for improvements in professional practice that meet the requirements of the proposed 2022 curriculum, it must first consider the observed critical incident in the context of the four purposes. To allow this, a brief account of the lesson and the identified critical incident will now be given (For more detail on the full context of the lesson, see Appendix A). The incident took place within a Thursday morning session on 26/09/19. The class was a mix of year one and two pupils that were grouped on ability and the pupils were involved in a Read/Write Inc. lesson. The objective of the lesson was for the pupils to recognise one and two letter sounds within words and be able to read 'red' words which cannot be sounded phonetically. This was

shared with the pupils and they were told that one pupil would receive a prize at the end for extra effort. The whole class read the red words from cards that the teacher held up at the beginning of the lesson, then the group was split into pairs to read. Once pairs had read the book, one member of the pairs took a lolly pop stick and the pairs took turns testing each other on different red words. The critical incident was observed once the task was completed and unfolded as follows; The teacher gave the reward for effort to Pupil Y and Pupil X began to act negatively. In the context of the four purposes (Donaldson, 2015), it can be said that the lesson was helpful in encouraging ambitious, capable learners as it met the criteria set out in *Successful Futures* of allowing learners to set themselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenge. The lesson also met the criteria of creating enterprising, creative contributors when pairing students and allowing them to give of their energy and skills so that other people will benefit. However, by offering the one student who showed the most effort a prize as an incentive, it is possible that the lesson failed to meet the criteria for developing ethical, informed citizens and healthy, confident individuals respectively, as the critical incident indicated that Pupil X was unable to understand and consider the impact of their actions when making choices and acting or form positive relationships based upon trust and mutual respect, perhaps feeling that their efforts should have been recognised.

Behaviour Management

It is worth noting at this point, that after the critical incident took place, the classroom teacher proceeded to give Pupil X the responsibility of collecting equipment and then praised her for her positive change in behaviour. The classroom teacher's reaction to the critical incident, was not classified as being a part of the critical incident, as this was a reaction to the critical incident and the purpose of the observation was to identify a critical incident, with the aim of improving practice. With this being stated, the key literature regarding behaviour management will now be explored.

Rudolf Dreikurs (1968), presented the logical consequences model. This model proposes that a child's misbehaviour is motivated by four unconscious needs (to gain attention, display inadequacies, exercise power or exact revenge) and if the need for attention is satisfied, then behaviour associated with the other three needs will not be displayed. The model proposes that the misbehaving child should be disciplined using the logical consequence of the behaviour e.g. if a child misbehaves at play time, then play time should be taken away. Dreikurs conducted case studies observing various age groups, demonstrating the effectiveness of his model. Alfie Kohn (1996), disagrees with the degree to which the logical

consequences model creates a democracy, arguing that the consequences presented in the case studies appear the same as punishment, just presented in a different tone.

William Glasser began his studies in the field of psychology working specifically on reality therapy. Throughout his life, his work broadened into other areas, including education, and his body of work became known as control theory and later evolved into choice theory. Glasser (1997), writes that humans have five genetically driven needs that influence our behaviours (survival, freedom, power, belonging & love and fun), and that these can be met in the classroom in a variety of ways e.g. making students feel safe, allowing students to choose how they learn, giving students responsibilities, allowing students to work in groups and making lessons fun. He also states that children should be shown how to make good choices regarding behaviour. Glasser's theory allows the children to contribute to the rules, which is in contrast to Dreikurs model, which relies more heavily on the teacher to establish the logical consequences.

Haim Ginott (1972), outlines in his classroom behaviour model, that teachers should separate the pupil from the behaviour and avoid punishment if possible, as this encourages misbehaviour. He also believed that teachers should model self-control and use positive comments to encourage good behaviour. Critics of Ginott's model note that he was never an active teacher and therefore isn't equipped to comment on the day-to-day classroom environment. It is possible that Ginott's model could easily be adapted to compliment many of the other behaviour management models.

Perhaps a more radical approach can be observed with the assertive discipline model (Lee and Marlene Canter, 1976). In this model the teacher sets the rules and other aspects of the classroom environment, as well as the consequences for breaking rules and the children must comply. This model states that teachers have a right to teach without disruptions and students have a right to learn in a safe and calm environment. This model takes a behaviourist view of the classroom by rewarding good behaviour and deterring bad behaviour.

In what could be considered the polar opposite of the assertive discipline model, (Slavin, 2014), endorses a consistency management and cooperative discipline (CMCD) approach. This constructivist approach promotes shared leadership and democracy, where students all have the opportunity to become actively involved in the management of the classroom. Quantitative and qualitative research supports the benefits of this approach, showing a significant reduction in discipline referrals and an increase in student achievement.

There are many different approaches to behaviour management, but upon exploring the literature regarding some of the key models, it is interesting that even the most firmly behaviourist models, promote a calm, teacher lead approach in direct contrast to some, who believe that it is the angry authoritarian teacher that commands respect. As Wales moves towards 2022 and the introduction of the new curriculum, it is possible that behaviourist theories such as the assertive discipline model, won't be adequate in promoting the four purposes and instead, a combination of the more constructivist approaches may be required. In relation to this essay's critical incident, it can be said that the teachers reaction within the observation was applicable with Ginott's model, however perhaps a CMCD approach, giving Pupil X an ongoing responsibility in that classroom, may have prevented the negative behaviour before it began.

Assessment for Learning

Another potential reason for Pupils X's negative reaction to not receiving the prize, may be attributed to her belief that she had been participating successfully in the lesson. Perhaps by introducing more of the assessment for learning (AFL) principles and potentially removing the prize incentive altogether, Pupil X may have better understood her learning progress and not have displayed negative behaviour. This idea will now be explored by reviewing the relevant literature concerning AFL.

In *Visible learning for teachers: maximizing impact on learning*, Hattie (2012), outlines the benefits of an AFL approach to teaching, in what he labels visible learning. In this book that synthesises evidence from over 50,000 studies, Hattie describes visible learning as making the learning more visible to teachers and students. This is achieved by adhering to four critical parts of planning; establishing prior achievement, targeted learning such as learning objectives and success criteria, identifying progression, through formative, self and peer assessment and teacher collaboration. Hattie also places a large emphasis on the impact of effective feedback in learning progression. The book rates a variety of interactions that teachers make with a numerical value, however Hattie warns teachers not to begin making changes bases on the raw numerical value, but instead evaluate interactions based on the resources needed and the effectiveness in their school environment.

Black & Wiliam (1998) also outline the benefits of an AFL approach in, *Inside the black box: raising standards through classroom assessment*. The book observes the classroom as a 'black box' and describes how various external inputs affect learning outcomes. It argues that teaching and learning must become interactive, and this can be done by using formative

assessment to tailor lessons to the specific needs of the individuals and by doing this, not only is the gap between higher and lower performing students bridged, but overall achievement is raised. The book also suggests that formative feedback can approximately double the rate of learning. In relation to the critical incident, this book specifically states "Where the classroom culture focuses on rewards, 'gold stars', grades or place-in-the-class ranking, then pupils look for the ways to obtain the best marks rather than at the needs of their learning which these marks ought to reflect." (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p. 6). This appears to validate the argument that the classroom culture that lead to Pupil X's negative reaction could be improved by adopting an AFL approach and specifically providing more formative feedback.

One opposing view towards the benefits on AFL is presented in *what if everything you know about teaching was wrong?* (Didau, 2016). With the book being endorsed by Dylan Wiliam, it would seem counter-productive for it to oppose the sentiment of Wiliam's own work in *Inside the black box*. In fact, Didau doesn't explicitly disagree with the benefits of an AFL approach, but rather raises concerns about teachers using short-term formative assessment methods in lessons to assume students have mastered a concept and then moving on. He warns that this type of teaching only allows students to store the learning in their short-term memory and therefore cannot recall the information in further tasks. To combat this, Didau promotes the use on interleaving, where teachers purposely reteach key concepts in order to commit them to student's long-term memory. While Wiliam acknowledges in the foreword to this book, that formative assessment can be oversimplified, he retains that formative feedback is universally beneficial.

The key literature regarding AFL provides evidence from various sources, obtained through both quantitative and qualitative methods, pertaining to the benefits that it has to student progression. When AFL is effectively integrated into the classroom in an interactive manner, it has been observed that it can approximately double the rate of learning. The arguments presented by Didau, raise concerns about the oversimplified implementation of AFL principles within the classroom, however he too, agrees that it is effective when material is revisited. In relation to this essay's critical incident, perhaps by employing an AFL approach in the classroom, Pupil X may have better understood her progress by relating to clear success criteria and feedback and become more focused on her learning, perhaps not requiring the validation of a prize.

Reflection & Next Steps

As previously mentioned, an assisted reflective conclusions record was completed following the observation, to allow critical reflection and propose ways of improving professional and personal practice. The assisted reflective conclusions record as seen in Appendix B, follows a similar format to Gibbs' reflective cycle (Gibbs, 1988). Gibbs describes the reflective cycle as having four steps which promote continuous improvement in practice; concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation, which are repeated in order to continuously improve practice. In the context of improving professional practice within education, these steps can be translated as teaching/observing a lesson and recording your initial feelings (concrete experience), recording what went well and not so well (reflective observation), evaluating why the lesson unfolded this way (abstract conceptualisation) and proposing solutions to be tested in future lessons (active experimentation). The effectiveness of this reflective model and the use of a critical incident will now be discussed.

The assisted reflective conclusions record has been hugely advantageous in encouraging a deeper analysis of the critical incident. Using this reflective model, it has been possible to systematically analyse the potential reasons for the critical incident occurring and to formulate possible solutions. Through allowing the use of thoughts and feeling as opposed to being purely objective, the reflective model allows considerations for the individual learner and their needs whilst reflecting on an experience and this can lead to further proposed solutions which can then be evidenced by reviewing the relevant literature. Looking forward to informing my own personal practice, I will consider using the reflective model after every lesson to continually reflect on and improve my practice.

The use of a critical incident was highly effective for this essay, as it allowed there to be a focus on one aspect that was out of character with the rest of the observed lesson. By identifying the critical incident, it was possible to focus on Pupil X's negative reaction and use the case study as the context, to begin to analyse potential reasons for the reaction. When reviewing the literature concerning the critical incident, it was decided that the research could be split into two areas; behaviour management, as this would allow there to be an analysis of different strategies for managing negative behaviour and AFL, as this would present possible strategies that may have helped Pupil X understand her progress and prevented the negative reaction to not winning a prize. Through reviewing the literature concerning these two areas, it was identified that possible next steps for improving practice could be, to allow more pupil responsibility in the classroom, which could leave pupils with a better sense of belonging in the classroom and less likely to react negatively, and to employ

AFL strategies by presenting clear success criteria and providing more formative feedback, which may enable pupils to better understand their progress.

Within Appendix B, I expressed an initial concern towards the affect that the critical incident may have had on Pupil X's attitude towards learning in the future. The fact that Pupil X didn't win the prize may have left her believing that she simply wasn't intelligent enough. Haimovitz and Dweck (2017), explain that children with fixed mindsets believe that their performance in tasks is down to the fixed attribute of their intelligence and that this mindset can be changed to a growth mindset through positive adult interactions such as praising effort instead of praising intelligence. This form of praise could be used in conjunction with the formative feedback within an AFL strategy to promote growth mindsets.

Using the previous next steps to inform my professional and personal development, I will consider utilizing a constructivist approach to behaviour management, where the learners can contribute to rule making and also become actively responsible in the class. I will also consider incorporating AFL strategies to give clear success criteria, that allow students to assess their own progress and use formative feedback, praising effort, to allow learners to become leaders of their own learning.

Conclusion

Throughout this essay the benefits and limitations of different observation methodologies have been discussed and after evaluating them, it was decided that a mixed approach, using both qualitative and quantitative research with critical theory would provide the best results. This was completed by observing four lessons as case studies and identifying a critical incident within each of the observed lessons and then choosing one as the research focus. The data was recorded quantitatively, via a written lesson observation record and qualitatively via an assisted reflective conclusions record. The importance of conducting the research in an ethical manner was also highlighted. As this essay was aimed at improving personal and professional practice in the context of education in Wales, it was important to indicate the relevance of the research in relation to the forthcoming curriculum in Wales and this was explored by describing how the focus critical incident related to the four key purposes of the new curriculum. To enable this essay to suggest informed next steps for improving practice from observing the critical incident, it was identified that the literature regarding behaviour management and AFL would be explored. Upon reflecting on the different strategies contained in the literature, it was concluded that a constructivist approach to behaviour management that encourages pupil voice and pupil responsibility, combined with AFL

strategies such as sharing success criteria and providing formative feedback could lead to improvements in practice.

In the introduction to this essay, it was stated that the professional standards for school practitioners in Wales, places pedagogy as paramount and that teachers in Wales must therefore become research driven as we move towards the new curriculum. This essay has demonstrated that by investigating and reflecting on the seemingly insignificant occurrences observed within everyday practice, continuous improvements can be made to pedagogy and perhaps the importance of pedagogy is best summarised by this closing quote; "Pedagogy trumps curriculum. Or more precisely, pedagogy is curriculum, because what matters is how things are taught, rather than what is taught." (Wiliam, 2018).

Appendix A



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26/09/2019
Lesson details: This lesson took place in a year one class, but some year two students were present as groups are mixed by ability across the foundation phase for Read/Write Inc. sessions in this school. The lesson begins by reviewing Read/Write Inc. concepts and then moves on to carpet time where students are paired and read together before the teacher asks the whole class some comprehension questions.
Classroom culture: Students are greeted at the door as they enter the classroom, they are then told to sit on the carpet ready for the lesson to start. The lesson objectives are explained at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher uses a 3-2-1 count and clapping a rhythm, which the students must repeat, to control class behavior. There is a prize box in the classroom and the teacher picks the student who has shown good effort in tasks to win a prize. Pupils put their hands up to answer questions.
Objectives: The lesson objectives are explained to students at the beginning of the lesson. The purpose of the lesson is for the students to recognise one and two letter sounds within words and be able to read 'red' words which cannot be sounded phonetically. The whole class reads the red words from cards that the teacher holds up at the beginning of the lesson, then the group is split into pairs to read. Once pairs have read the book, one member of each pair takes a lolly pop stick to point at words and the pairs take turns testing each other on red words. This use of learning through play brings an element of fun to the learning.
Direction: All students appear engaged and clear about the learning objectives. The use of pairing helps share the knowledge of the learners and promotes working towards the objective. The teacher moves around the pairs stopping any minor disturbances by refocusing pairs on the task.
Access and challenge: All students appear engaged in the task, however some find it easier than others. When higher achieving students have finished the reading task, they are still kept engaged with the competition presented by the testing game at the end.
Assessment: The teacher moves around the classroom to assess learning as the students are engaged in the task. The teacher also assesses the learning of the whole class by asking comprehension and reading questions at the end on the lesson.
Specifics / Critical Incidents: The teacher presented a small prize to one student at the end of the task who had shown excellent effort. Another student became upset and began slightly misbehaving. This pupil turned away from the teacher and began to show negative body language.

Appendix B



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Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 26/09/2019

Critical incident (focus): The teacher gave the reward for effort to Pupil Y and Pupil X began to act negatively.

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	This critical incident was identified because it was out of character with overall behaviour during the rest of the lesson, which was overwhelmingly positive, and therefore deemed worthy of further investigation. After observing Pupil X's negative behaviour during the critical incident, I was left wondering how this would affect her attitude to future learning.
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 lesson was a positive experience overall. The pupils appeared engaged and challenged at the correct level. The pupils also appeared to enjoy the challenge presented by the game at the end of the lesson. The negative reaction of Pupil X at the end of the lesson seemed out of character with the overall feel of the lesson. The lesson may have benefited from being more pupil lead, perhaps letting the pupils hand out equipment or choose who they were paired with. Although the lesson objectives were made clear to the pupils, perhaps more emphasis on the success criteria may have helped the learners better understand how to meet those objectives.
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>	The clear presentation of the lesson objectives was successful as the pupils knew what they would be covering in the lesson. The way the teacher moved around the classroom and used the 3-2-1 and clapping method to stop minor disturbances was also effective, as was the use of pairing the pupils and having a game at the end of the lesson. The negative reaction of Pupil X appeared to be caused by her not being able to understand why she didn't receive a prize.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	In order to make improvements from observing the critical incident, I would consider introducing a success criteria at the beginning of the lesson to allow pupils to self-assess and also allowing more pupil responsibility throughout the session. I would also consider removing the prize incentive all together and instead providing formative feedback during the lesson and giving praise where necessary. To establish if these solutions would be effective, I will read the literature regarding these areas.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix C



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Education and Humanities

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26/09/2019
Lesson details: This lesson takes place in a year five class. This is an expressive arts lesson where the students are split into groups and are to create a song. Each group must have an album designer, a song writer, a merchandise designer and performers. Each member of the group must contribute in their different areas and the songs will be performed at the end of the lesson.
Classroom culture: The students are greeted at the door as they enter by the teacher and routinely sit down and await further instruction. The teacher explains the learning objectives to the class and then they are allowed to form their own groups, which they do without much disruption. There is considerable noise throughout the lesson as the students are playing instruments, however if the teacher believes the class is losing focus on the task, she uses the "McDonald's" chant by shouting "ba da da da da" to which the class must respond "I'm loving it" and then refocuses them on the task.
Objectives: The teacher explains the lesson objectives at the beginning of the lesson. The purpose of the lesson is for each group to create a song which they will perform at the end of the lesson. The album designers are to design the album cover using paper and coloured pencils. The merchandise designers are to design different merchandise for the band using paper and coloured pencils, the song writers must write lyrics, which the teacher suggests doing by writing a poem and the performers must create the music, working closely with the song writer.
Direction: Most students appear engaged in the task and are overwhelmingly enthusiastic towards it. All groups assign roles independently without disruption and appear to know where their individual strengths lie. The teacher moves around the groups offering help where needed but also allowing student independence.
Access and challenge: All students appear suitably challenged as they were allowed to pick their own role within the groups. The slight pressure of a performance at the end of the task provides an element of urgency within the students.
Assessment: The teacher moves around the classroom providing formative assessment during the task. When the groups perform at the end of the lesson, the teacher offers the students a chance to provide peer assessment as well as questioning the groups about the creative process that went into the songs, the album covers and the merchandise design.
Specifics / Critical Incidents: Although most students appeared engaged in the task, one student appeared to lack the confidence to contribute within their group. The student had been assigned the role of song writer, but had little input to the song and became withdrawn during the task.

Appendix D



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Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 26/09/2019

Critical incident (focus): Pupil X became withdrawn during a group task and didn't contribute.

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings "What are your feelings regarding the experience?"	This was identified as the critical incident as the pupils attitude towards the task was the exception to the rest of the class that appeared fully engaged and contributed equally. The incident left me feeling that perhaps this kind of withdrawal may be common in group tasks where one member lacks the confidence to contribute and appeared worthy of further investigation.
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?"	Considering the nature of the lesson, the students remained well disciplined and managed to control their excitement. The teachers use of the McDonalds call and response to manage disturbances was an effective way to maintain control of concentration levels. The lesson may have benefited from a basketball approach within the groups, which encouraged each member of the groups to pitch ideas as this may have better engaged students who lacked the confidence to contribute.
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?"	The lesson as a whole was a great example of expressive arts done well, where the pupils are actively encouraged to be creative and the lesson is pupil lead. The teacher incorporated many AFL strategies, providing formative feedback and peer and self-assessment. The withdrawn nature of Pupil X within the task appeared to be caused by a lack of confidence and not feeling able to contribute due to the free nature of the group activity.
Conclusions and actions "What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?" "What will you do next?"	A solution to the issue presented by Pupil X within this critical incident, could be to introduce a basketball approach within the groups, where all members must have a chance to pitch ideas and the other member within the group will actively listen. To establish if this would be effective, I would read the literature regarding this area.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix E



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 02/10/2019

Lesson details: This lesson took place in a reception class. The focus task is an LLC task based around the class topic of Funny Bones. The class is grouped by ability and while one group is working with the teacher, the rest of the class is split between the provisions within the classroom. There are two teaching assistants present.

Classroom culture: The students enter the room and routinely sit on the carpet before taking the register. They then sing some songs containing the days of the week and the months of the year before talking about the weather in Welsh. After the daily routines are finished that class is split into groups and the students are directed towards different provisions. One group remains with the classroom teacher for the focus task. The teaching assistants move around the classroom making sure students remain focused on the task within their provision and any minor disturbances are controlled, firstly by using a call and response clapping rhythm, and then refocusing the class.

Objectives: As is commonplace in the reception year, most of the class is divided between the different provisions and are well informed about what they need to be doing in each area. The objective for the focus task is written in the student's work books and the teacher explains it verbally as the children are unable to read sufficiently at this point. The purpose of the task is for the students to write about why they want the characters from the Funny Bones story to visit their school and also to draw a picture representing this.

Direction: The students are given clear direction at the beginning of the task and appear engaged in it. Most students appear to enjoy talking about their ideas and drawing the pictures more than the writing aspect of the task.

Access and challenge: The students are grouped based on current ability and therefore the success criteria are amended accordingly. The more able students are able to write a few sentences and there is more focus on grammar, whereas the less able students only write a few words and there is more focus on the picture element of the task. Most students appear appropriately challenged, however some struggle with forming letters correctly.

Assessment: The teacher provides formative assessment throughout the task as well as using the two stars and a wish strategy at the end of the task. The written feedback is then read aloud and explained to the students individually.

Specifics / Critical Incidents: One pupil is unable to actively participate in the lesson as he is crying inconsolably about missing his mother and when the teacher is able to calm him, he still appears distanced from the task.

Appendix F



Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 02/10/2019

Critical incident (focus): Pupil X was unable to fully engage in the lesson as he was upset because he missed his mother.

Experience	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	This was identified as a critical incident because it stood out from the overall behaviour of the class which was good. The incident left me wondering if this was common in this age group and what could be done to help.
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 lesson as a whole was a positive experience. Most students appeared engaged in the focus task and the provision tasks and were carrying out their activities independently. It was disappointing that Pupil X couldn't fully engage in the task because he was upset.
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>	The way in which the students engaged in the opening part of the lesson was exemplary, the children were fully engaged in the songs and this was also building their knowledge of the days of the week and the months of the year. The focus task appeared well tailored for that ability of all students in the class and the use of AFL principles promoted the student's development. The cause of the critical incident appeared to come from Pupil X not feeling as safe at school as he does at home and therefore missing his mother.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	In order to improve practice after observing this critical incident, I would consider reading the literature surrounding student's feelings, particularly Maslow's hierarchy of needs as it appears that the cause of this critical incident lies with some of Pupil X's base needs not being met.
Transformed experience	

Appendix G



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OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 08/10/2019
Lesson details: This lesson took place in a reception class, but some year one pupils were present as groups are mixed by ability across the foundation phase for Read/Write Inc. sessions in this school. The lesson begins by reviewing the sounds covered in the previous lessons before the teacher shows the students some green words which they have to read back to her. Once this is complete the teacher calls out some green words and students must spell them out on magnetic white boards.
Classroom culture: Students enter the room and sit on the carpet, awaiting further instruction. The teacher recaps some previous sounds before explaining that the students would be introduced to some new sounds today. The teacher uses a 3-2-1 count to stop any minor disturbances.
Objectives: The teacher explains the learning objectives at the beginning of the lesson. She also conducts a mini plenary in between each task. The purpose of the lesson is for students to learn this week's new sound and to use it within some new green words.
Direction: Most students appear to understand each task and are engaged in them. The teacher asks questions from the front of the room and the students answer by shouting out.
Access and challenge: The students are grouped by ability for this activity and therefore all appear appropriately challenged. Some students are quicker at shouting out the answers and some appear happy to remain passive in the lesson.
Assessment: The teacher assesses whether the whole class knows the new sounds and words by the answers that are shouted out. The teacher also assesses individual understanding when pupils hold up their magnetic white boards.
Specifics / Critical Incidents: One pupil doesn't shout out any of the sounds or words and then is unable to correctly present them on her magnetic white board.

Appendix H



Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 08/10/2019

Critical incident (focus): Pupil X didn't participate during the first two tasks and then was unable to answer in the third task.

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	This critical incident was identified because Pupil X was able to get through the first two tasks without participating and then struggled in the third task. It appeared too easy for Pupil X to not participate in the lesson and this was detrimental to her in the third task.
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 lesson was a positive experience overall, most of the students appeared engaged and participated in the lesson by shouting out answers. Most students also appeared to grasp the new sounds and words presented in the lesson. The lack of participation from Pupil X in the first two tasks was disappointing and her subsequent struggles in the third task was also disappointing.
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>	The students entered the room and sat on the carpet independently, with little disturbance and this was a positive aspect of the lesson. Most of the students also appeared to grasp the new sounds and words. I would keep the three tasks as they scaffolded the students from being introduced to a new sound to then reading it in a word and then spelling new words. It appeared too easy for Pupil X to not participate in the lesson and this may have been because of the shouting out method used for answering.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	In order to make improvements from observing the critical incident, I would consider using the lollipop stick method for answering to encourage all students to answer and also to assess who is grasping the material. To establish if this would be effective, I will read the literature regarding answering in the classroom.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

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