

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

Gender is one of the biggest issues in education and there are many different theories and myths on what can affect boys throughout their time in education. For the purpose of this essay I will be focusing on a critical incident that I observed during my time at SCHOOL X and discuss how I will be able to put it into my future teaching career and also how it is linked to certain literature. Critical incidents have two main uses; in education teachers use critical incidents to help develop an understanding and control of their practise and they can also use them for classroom research by helping a teacher to understand the class that they will be teaching (Tripp, 2012). Tripp (2012) states that the majority of incidents are events that occur regularly with hidden motives behind it. For example, a child putting their hand up in class may be due to underlying motives such as attention behaviour and/or classroom culture.

During this essay I will be looking at:

- My observations of the whole school and certain lessons,
- The observation method used
- Donaldson's four purposes
- The details of my specific critical incident
- A literature review about boys' engagement and boys' attainment
- Reflections of the focus of my incident

Within this essay I will be focusing on one incident that took place in SCHOOL X but will be looking into different areas of this incident and researching and reviewing them. The different areas that I will be researching to do with gender divide in a classroom are boys' attainment (Corry, 2016 ;Washbrook and Moss, 2017) and boys' engagement (Martino, 1999; Chris C and Burke D, 2012) and different educational standards (Ofsted, 2003; Estyn, 2017-18).

Observation

The critical incident occurred in an English medium mixed secondary school in a coastal town in South Wales. The school accommodates ages 11-18 and currently has around 1,200 pupils

on roll. During the latest Estyn Inspection, the school was scored as good for all categories which include Overall Performance, Leadership and Management and the Outcomes (Wales Online, 2019). The percentage of pupils that are eligible for free school meals is 8.1% which is nearly half of the national average of 16% (My Local School, 2018).

Before beginning my observations and stepping into the classroom I was made familiar with the schools safeguarding policy which enabled me to ensure that the children were able to stay safe, be comfortable in secure environments and that there were no posed risks for any of the learners. The observation witnessed specifically took place in a year 9 Art lesson. There were 27 pupils present and the class was mixed ability. The class contained 12 boys and 15 girls; this made a huge impact on my decision of which critical incident to focus on as I had never witnessed such a gender divide in a classroom environment. During this lesson pupils were halfway through their topic and the teacher was checking each pupils' individual progress on drawings which were to be completed during the lesson. Pupils were all at different stages which was the reasoning behind the teachers aims and objectives of the lesson (Appendix A). For the purpose of this assignment and to ensure anonymity I will ensure that school, pupils and teacher names are confidential throughout this essay.

Methodology

For this assignment I chose to use a written observation method in the form of field notes. (Appendix A, B, C & D). I felt this was best as I was able to have a clear structure to the form which made sure that my observation would be accurately written and everything I would need was included. Also, I had to ensure that I had enough information written down to enable an accurate reflection in a few weeks' time (Appendix E, F, G & H) Furthermore, this method guaranteed that the information needed would not be forgotten. Dan Willingham main research focuses on working memory and long-term memory. Willingham (2009) states how retrieving memory is brought on by cues. Therefore, poor cues will not help you to access the memory. He continues to say that even though you could remember the memory is in your system, you may not be able to remember distinct points (Willingham, 2009). After looking at Willingham's research if my observations weren't written down, I may have not had the memory cues to be able to remember them when writing this essay. I also felt this observation method was the most discrete as although I would be sat in their lessons there would be no obvious distractions, therefore not using the Hawthorne Effect (Payne & Payne, 2004). The Hawthorne Effect is used to describe how people's behaviour changes when they are being studied or observed. I wanted to observe pupils in a natural environment and to see their true reactions to certain aspects of lessons. Although I feel this is the most positive method of observation, there are also negatives to this technique. During some of the lessons that I

observed I was not able to witness every incident that was happening around the classroom as while concentrating on and noting one incident other were happening at the same time. This means that I could have missed vital information.

Other methods of observation that I considered included the use of technology, time sampling and ABC Analyses. Different observation methods can be very useful, as Neaum writes:

“Different observation techniques need to be used to elicit different information. It is important that the information that you gather in your observation is appropriate and sufficiently detailed to enable you to make accurate assessments of children’s learning” (Sally Neaum, 2014, p. 145)

Selecting the right method is very important and personally I decided that for this assignment Time Sampling and ABC analysis were not appropriate methods for my incident as these are mainly used to assess different behaviours whereas my incident does not look directly at behaviour. For example, Time Sampling is often used to record how often a behaviour is occurring and ABC analysis is used to observe an individual's behaviour by what starts and follows during the incident or behaviour (Complex Needs, n.d). In comparison to the other methods I feel that the use of technology would have been beneficial as I was only able to observe the class at a glance and would have missed information that could have been vital to my incident and would have made my observation even more accurate. However, I decided that the use of a video camera in a classroom environment could have become a distraction for the pupils and some could have displayed a dramatic change in behaviour, whether that be overly positive or negative. Furthermore, I didn’t want to disrupt the class teachers lesson in anyway so felt it was more practical to use written notes. For the purpose of this observation I decided to choose non-participant observation so I could observe without being involved with the children.

Four Purposes

My observation dealt with an obvious gender divide within a mixed ability class. As written before, the class was split into 15 girls and 12 boys. I feel the classroom culture at first was focused although there was slight chatting between certain pupils while continuing with their drawings which they were instructed to do by the class teacher. After observing the class for a short period of time I noticed that no obvious seating plan had been given by the teacher and that the boys and girls were sat completely divided and on separate tables.

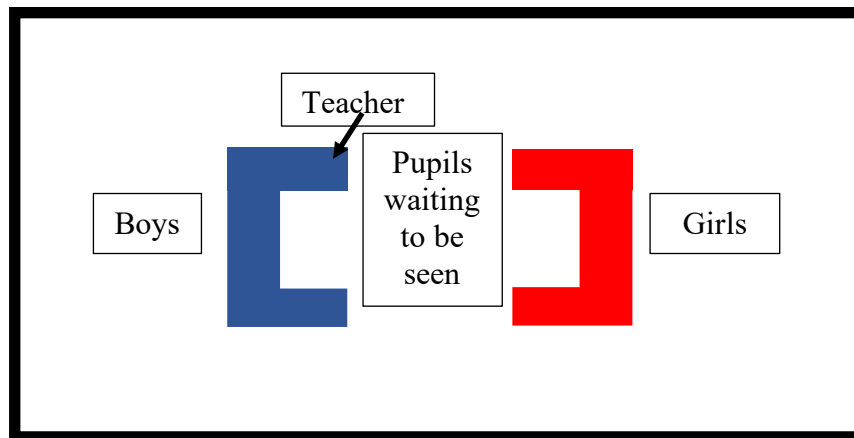


Figure 1: The Layout of the Year 9 Art Classroom that I witnessed my Critical Incident in during my observations at SCHOOL X.

Figure 1 is a diagram showing the layout of the classroom and where the pupils and teacher were sat/stood. The teacher chose to sit on the table with the boys and asked pupils to come up and queue in the centre of the classroom to show her their work if they felt they had finished. The teacher's seat of choice caused confusion for me as she was unable to see the other side of the classroom due to the pupils waiting to be seen which happened to be the girls table. Although the girls definitely seemed more on task, which may have been the reasoning behind it, the teacher was unable to witness any bad behaviour if something had occurred during this lesson. Some of the boys, on the other hand, continually got distracted and the teacher definitely focused on their behaviour and made sure certain individuals from the class were always on task. After speaking to a member of the senior management team and asking if this was what should be expected with seating arrangements during lessons, I was made very aware that it is written in the school policy that seating arrangements for classes must be boy/girl set up. After witnessing this observation, I chose my critical incident to consider gender with a more intense focus on the differences in gender in education and boys' engagement and attainment in a classroom environment.

The new curriculum aims to be up and running in all schools in Wales by 2022. The main purpose of the new curriculum is to focus on 4 purposes and characteristics for the pupils' futures. Professor Graham Donaldson (2015) in his Successful Futures Review states that from the analysis and evidence gained around schools in Wales that he feels there are four main aspects that learners should be leaving school with.

These are:

- “Ambitious and Capable Learners
- Enterprising and Creative Contributors
- Ethical and Informed Citizens
- Healthy and Confident Individuals” (Donaldson, 2015, p.31)

The main Donaldson purpose that I feel would link to my critical incident is Enterprising and Creative Contributors. Although I feel that this was not shown well within my observation and could have been improved. The lesson will have not developed any skills in order to complete this purpose as I felt after this lesson, they would not have been ready to play a full part in their life and learning environment. Personally, I feel that the seating arrangement contributed to this lack. Pupils were unable to concentrate fully due to being sat in their seat of choice which happened to cause a huge gender divide, whereas separating them into a seating plan would have encouraged pupils to be more engaged in the art class. School X advises their teachers to put the learners into a boy/girl seating plan for every lesson. This is significant to the Four Purposes as the seating plans encourage pupils to work with different pupils who they would not normally have the chance to work with, which is alike to the environment of their possible future workplaces. The arrangement of the pupils would, in this case, make a huge difference in the learning as during another lesson that I observed (Appendix C) the pupils were sat in a boy/girl format. The learners seemed more engaged in the actual lesson and its objectives/aims which approves Donaldson’s (2015) four purposes as these seating plans will over time improve their part of work and life which then supports their futures as fulfilled members of society.

Literature Review

There are many different views on gender within a classroom and school environment. Throughout this section the discussion of literature will focus on ‘Boys Engagement’ in the classroom and ‘Boys Attainment’ in schools.

Wayne Martino, a researcher who focuses on the field of gender in Education, published a report called “‘Cool Boys’, ‘Party Animals’, ‘Squids’ and ‘Poofers’: Interrogating the Dynamics and Politics of Adolescent Masculinities in School” (Martino, 1999). This report focuses on how boys relate to themselves and how they work with their peers at a secondary school in Australia. Within the school the boys are identified by certain stereotypes which are given in the title of the report. This identifies the dynamics of certain masculinities within this particular school environment. For the report, the boys were interviewed by a teacher from this school.

This could have caused some bias from the pupils as the students could have produced specific answers as they would have known the teachers expectations of them, whereas the boys may have felt comfortable with the teacher so may have been more honest with them about their experiences with gender in their school environment. From Martinos (1999) research he states how boys manage their masculinity depending on the femininity of a situation which is why boys often try to avoid emotions as this is considered to be very feminine. Martino also focuses on how the idea of rejecting school is often seen as a cool masculine issue. As within the report Nathan (name change due to anonymity) communicates his issues with masculinity in education as

“being smart is more acceptable for girls because this highlights the gendered dimension of 'acting cool' and perhaps accounts for many boys' rejection of schooling.” (Martino, 1999, p.250).

Another student who is named as Shaun describes the issue with boys' engagement coming down to what is actually being taught in the lessons. He explains how they do not get taught things for outside of school life or things that are important to him (Martino, 1999). This research relates to my critical incident as I feel some of the boys were less engaged in the art class due to them focusing on the idea that they will never use this skill in their future lives while also focusing on the girls opinion and wanting to “act cool”. Yet at the end of his research paper Martino (1999) expresses that if educators/management don't change pupils' views on masculinity then the issues in gender will continue without change.

Clarke, C and Burke, D (2012) completed a research task into 'Why are boys falling behind: the impact of boys attitudes towards literacy and their reading behaviours'. The research project focuses on boys' engagement during literacy lessons. The researchers state pupils think

“reading is not cool” (Chris & Burke, 2012, p,2)

Chris and Burke's (2012) research highlights that boys and girls read for different reasons; the girls' reason being to keep them happy while boys' reason being because of boredom (Chris & Burke, 2012). This research project is similar to Martinos (1999) idea of how boys' engagement in lessons depend on their outlook of what looking cool means. Looking at two different pieces of literature and finding similar findings is very dynamic and sure for the issues on gender. Furthermore, the reading concentrates on how the interests of boys are not considered in the school curriculum and how the material used is often aimed at girls

(Chris & Burke, 2012). Chris and Burke (2012) also suggest that boys lack of engagement in school may be due to teachers being in the majority female whereas boys react better to male teachers, although they later disregard this option as their research evidence states there is no link between the gender of the teacher and the success of a pupil. The only objection to this idea could be that a pupil may have a better relationship with a certain member of staff who just so happen to be a certain gender. To conclude their research project Chris and Burke (2012) state that to engage boys in school there needs to be more materials used that are of more interest to this specific gender. Chris and Burke (2012) use the example of linking the curriculum with technology to gain more interest on their behalf. These two pieces of literature both agree that schools need to focus more on what they are teaching the boys rather than how they are actually teaching it. Therefore, teaching things that will interest them will gain their engagement in school.

Legewie and DiPrete (2012) suggest that boys underperform in comparison to girls in an educational context and this is highlighted at GCSE level. 'The Gap Buster Summary Report' (2007) states that for a school to become successful in narrowing the gender gap in education, but especially in literacy, they need to accept whole school issues. These whole school issues are listed in the report and some include independency, listening to views of pupils and respect for others and many more (Gap Buster Summary Report, 2007). Another view on boys' attainment in school is by Val Corry (2017) who writes about the gender gap in the Scottish education system although she explains how it is not limited to a certain country but an issue across the world. Within her research project Corry focuses on Freeman's study of 'Cultural Influences on Gifted Gender Achievement'. From his research Freeman (2004) found that girls outperformed boys in all the subjects and there were more failures with boys than amongst the girls, which supports Corry's research that the gender gap in education is a worldwide issue. Additionally, Corry (2017) discusses how there will always be a gender that performs below the other although boys and girls technically should not be seen by their gender as there is different groups within this and no consideration is given for that. Corry (2017) writes about 'gender blindness' in her report as gender is not diverse in school environments due to the changes in gender fluidity. Additionally, she develops her idea for the education system to not lose the gender barrier as this could limit achievement on both genders (Corry, 2017). Finally, it is stated by Corry (2017) that no changes will be made for the gender gap unless a change in school policies happen. Professor Gemma Moss and Dr Liz Washbrook completed a research paper on 'Understanding the Gender Gap in Literacy and Language Development'. Alike to Corry (2017) research, Washbrook and Moss (2016) discuss the fact that children should not be judged by gender, but by specific groups that can be seen as a risk. Some of these can include domestic violence, mental health, ill-health etc.

In the conclusion of their research paper they state that they are unable to give guidance on how to narrow the gap in education (Washbrook & Moss, 2016). Yet Washbrook and Moss (2016) discuss how home life of a child makes a huge difference in their education and a boy in a good home environment is more likely to excel in school and their subjects. Washbrook and Moss (2016) believe that the argument on gender would be strengthened if theories challenged the expectations of a child's development.

The GCSE results are one of the biggest problematic areas within gender attainment, as the results are always shown and discussed separately as boys' results and girls' results. This is because schools like to compare the performance of learners with previous years and this is the easiest way to write targets and form a tracking system for the school (Ofsted, 2003). Typically girls GCSE results are always higher than boys, this hasn't always been so. During the 1970s education gave a major push into girl's results, especially maths and sciences (Ofsted, 2003). Yet now we are completely opposite with even traditionally male strong lessons like DT pushing the girls ahead during assessments and exams (Ofsted, 2003). During the latest Estyn report which was written in 2017-2018 they stated that

“At key stage 4, girls continue to outperform boys nationally, particularly in subjects such as English and welsh” (Estyn Report, 2017-18, p.40)

This does not come as a shock to the education system as this subject is constantly being focused on and targeted by schools to improve their results overall within genders. The only question now is how boys results for GCSE can be improved to the same level as the girls without seeing a drop in a certain genders result as it seems all the literature focused on in this review has not been able to come up with a significant way to improve boys results in the education system. To the contrary of this SCHOOL X had a significant result with boys not only rising over the national average and local authorities estimate of results, but actually gaining better results than the girls. This is shown in Figure 2.

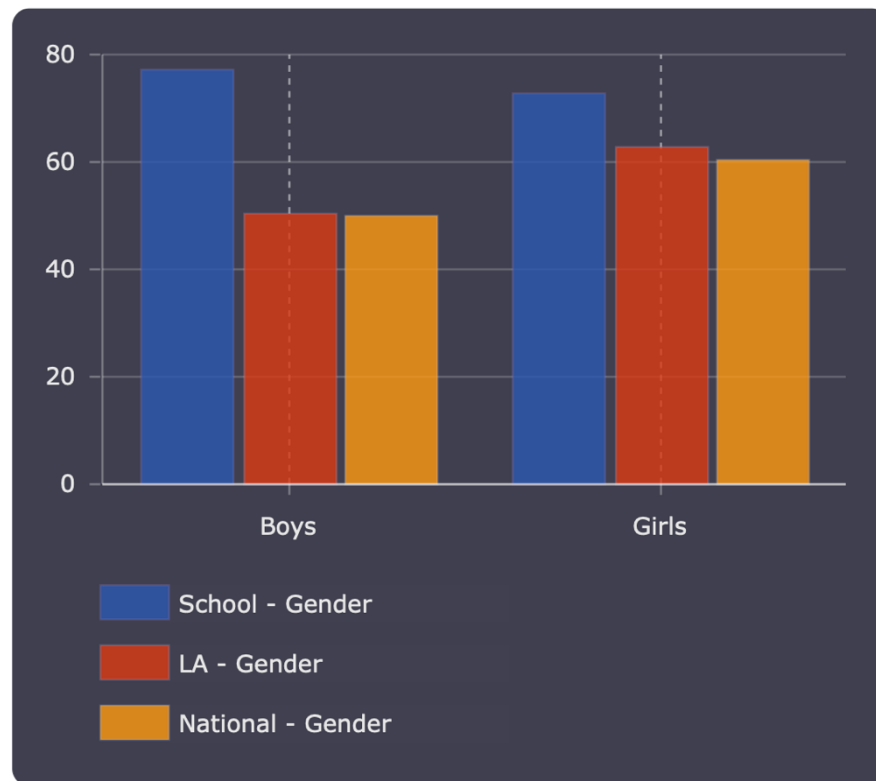


Figure 2: A percentage of boys and girls at School X getting 5 A*- C grades at GCSE and comparing them to the Local Authority and National Average Results (Wales Online, 2019)

So, in some circumstance's boys can do better than girls although it is a minority. Schools need to make sure that when dealing with this they do not turn gender bias. In an article written by Joanne Moorhead (2019), she conducts an interview with Matt Pinkett and Mark Roberts who say the solution to the gender bias problem is that policies need to be clearly displayed and properly signposted to show what is and is not acceptable on subjects like sexism, racism and homophobia. In 'The Guardian' newspaper article Pinkett states

"At the moment, 64% of teachers are unaware of any policy in their school on sexism. They're feeling the effects of it, but they're not seeing the steps being taken that would begin to eradicate it" (Moorhead, 2019)

This shows that the thought that boys are not able to do as well as girls need to be stopped in education if a change in results is wanted by schools as the negativity around the gender could be behind the reasoning of why boys are falling behind girls.

Reflection

I felt it was important to reflect on the observations I made during my time in school as it helped to give me ideas on what to do and what not to do in the classroom environment. To help with my reflection I used an Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) model.

During the ARC model I focused on:

- my feelings of the lessons
- the learning elements that went well
- the elements that were disappointing
- the cause of the disappointing elements
- the solutions to the disappointing elements
- things I will keep the same to ensure effective teaching
- what I will do next during my teaching experience

From the art lesson I observed (Appendix E) my feelings for the lesson were that the objectives given were very clear, and all learners knew what to do and exactly how to do it. The one thing that shocked me during the lesson was the clear gender divide in the classroom as this was not anything I had seen before when observing other lessons in School X. Additionally, I felt this played a big part in the distractive behaviour that took place in the lesson, although this wasn't often witnessed or commented on by the teacher. The aspects of the lesson that went well were that learners were able to individually work on their artwork to their capability while having individual help from the teacher. During my future lessons I hope to track individual learners to ensure all my learners are on task and to make sure that pupils of both genders are being pushed to their full potential. The elements that I thought could have been improved upon in the lesson was that the teacher didn't have a full view of the girls in the classroom and only commented on the boys' distractive behaviour. I feel the cause of this element was that there were no seating plan arrangements in the classroom. A solution to the issue is for the teacher to put a boy/girl seating plan in place to ensure that pupils will be able to concentrate better by not being sat by their friends or their choice of person. In an article from 'The Guardian' newspaper, Beadle (2005) explains how during his classroom experience as a teacher he found that boys don't want to be seen as "thick". So, he suggests that boy/girl seating plans work if you sit boys with girls of a lower attainment and boys will thrive in being able to help in classes (Beadle, 2005). For my future classes I will plan seating plans to ensure that I will be able to grasp the attention and engagement of all my pupils and constantly have a full view of all learners. Personally, I feel this will really help me in keeping my future classes under control with behaviour issues as well as to control the work that they are doing in the lessons.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the critical incident that I witnessed showed how gender divide can sometimes have a negative impact on boys' engagement and attainment in education. By observing the Art Class I concluded that the gender divide was the cause of many issues within the classroom and these would have been solved by having a boy/girl seating plan as this would have engaged the boys more and they would not have been sat by their friends therefore their grades would have improved due to engagement. The positive engagement and attainment that would have occurred due to the seating plan would be in line with Donaldson's (2015) Four Purposes as it will support the learners in being able to become good citizens during their future lives and careers. After observing this lesson, I feel it will greatly impact my future teaching as by using seating plans it will improve my learner's performance overall within my lessons by allowing me to control who they are sat by and what exactly they are doing. After considering the research from my literature review, I've found there are many different views on how to tackle the issue on gender bias/divide yet no researcher has been able to come to a conclusive answer for the cause of girls doing better than boys not only with results but their overall educational experience. But the research does agree on the fact that something needs to be done to stop the divide in gender; to support boys' grades as well as making sure that girls' grades do not drop during the process. This is definitely a huge problem that needs to be focused on over the coming years along with the changes of the new curriculum in Wales.

Reference List

Beadle, P. (2019). A Seating Plan to Soothe the Male Ego. *The Guardian*. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2005/oct/25/schools.teaching> [Accessed 16 Oct. 2019].

Clarke, C., Burke, D. (2012). 'Boys' Reading Commission: A review of existing research to underpin the Commission'. [online] London: National Literacy Trust. Available at: http://www.curee.co.uk/files/RMHolyRosary/Resources/Why_are_boys_falling_behind_boys_attitudes_towards_reading.pdf [Accessed 10 Oct. 2019]

Complexneeds.org.uk. (n.d.). *Observation Methods*. [online] Available at: http://complexneeds.org.uk/modules/Module-2.4-Assessment-monitoring-and-evaluation/All/downloads/m08p110b/observational_methods.pdf [Accessed 10 Oct. 2019].

Corry, V. (2017). *The Gender 'Gap' in attainment: the Scottish Policy Perspective*.

Donaldson, G. (2015). *Successful Futures*. Independent Review of Curriculum and Assessment Arrangements in Wales.

Estyn. (2017-2018). *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales*. [online] Available at: https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/ESTYN_Annual%20Report_Accessible_English__2018.pdf [Accessed 14 Oct. 2019]

Freeman, J. (2004). Cultural influences on gifted gender achievement. *High Ability Studies*, 15(1), pp.7-23.

Gap Busters Summary Report. (2007). *Schools that close the attainment gap between boys and girls in English*

Legewie, J. and DiPrete, T. (2012). School Context and the Gender Gap in Educational Achievement. *American Sociological Review*, 77(3), pp.463-485.

Martino, W. (1999). 'Cool Boys', 'Party Animals', 'Squids' and 'Poofsters': Interrogating the dynamics and politics of adolescent masculinities in school. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 20(2), pp.239-263

Moorhead, J. (2019). Boys will be boys? How schools can be guilty of gender bias. *The Guardian*. [online] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/apr/23/school-guilty-bias-against-boys-gender-gap-education> [Accessed 12 Oct. 2019].

Moss, G. and Washbrook, L. (2016). *Understanding the Gender Gap in Literacy and Language Development*. #01/2016. [online] Bristol: Graduate School of Education. Available at: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/education/documents/bristol-working-papers-in-education/Understanding%20the%20Gender%20Gap%20working%20paper.pdf> [Accessed 10 Oct. 2019].

My Local School (2019). [redacted] [online] Available at: [http://mylocalschool.gov.wales/\[redacted\]?lang=en](http://mylocalschool.gov.wales/[redacted]?lang=en) [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

Neaum, S. (2016). *Child Development for Early Years Students and Practitioners*. 3rd ed. Sage Publications Ltd

OFSTED. (2003). *Boys' achievement in secondary schools*. [Place of publication not identified]: OFSTED.

Payne, G. and Payne, J. (2004). *Key Concepts in Social Research*. London, England: SAGE Publications.

Tripp, D. (2011). *Critical Incidents in Teaching (Classic Edition)*. Hoboken: Taylor & amp.

Wales Online. (2019). [redacted] [online] Available at: [https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/\[redacted\]-7540625](https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/local-news/[redacted]-7540625) [Accessed 8 Oct. 2019].

Willingham, D. (2009). *ASK THE COGNITIVE SCIENTIST What Will Improve a Student's Memory?* Dan Willingham - Science and Education. [online] American Educator. Available at: https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/willingham_0.pdf [Accessed 10 Oct. 2019].

APPENDICES

Appendix A

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26-09-2019
Lesson details: Year 9 - Art Class 27 Pupils 15 Girls 12 Boys
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) - Standing when entering class - Focused on their task although slight chatting - Clear divide in focus levels - No seating plans - Mixed Ability
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) - Objectives given at beginning of lesson - Class told there will be homework given at the end of the lesson during the beginning section - Recap of lesson before (positive and negative space) - Teacher told class about end goal (2 pieces of work)
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) - Students were shown exactly what they needed to do by demonstration - They are told it must be to a good standard and they overall project will not work if rushed - Slide put on interactive board to show what final image should look like - Pupils had to check progress with teacher to show they were clear
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) - Students are at individual stages depending on how far they have gone with their tracing work - Children are challenged individually - Given another task when finished <u>tracing</u> activity - Homework given on board for pupils to see

Assessment

(How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?)

- Teacher has asked pupils to go and show her work when they think they've finished to check progress
- Checking understanding through homework given for next lesson
- Teacher sat among pupils

Specifics / Critical Incidents

(Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?)

- Boys and girls very separated - two tables all boys on one and all girls on other
- Teacher sat on table with boys - Can't see other side of classroom due to pupils waiting to be seen
- Teacher more focused on boy's behaviour
- Girls more on task - Completed work before boys
- Divide in focus levels between boys and girls
- Teacher focused on helping pupils with work rather than behaviour



- Distraction - Boy fell off chair and sat on floor because got no reaction from other pupils
- Distraction - Pupils stood in middle of classroom waiting to get their work checked by teacher, some were distracting and talking to pupils who should have been (teacher spotted and told boy to stop talking twice)
- Distraction - Talking about FIFA no work being produced - same boy hasn't picked up a pencil 45 minutes through, been warned by teacher twice, playing with coin (teacher confiscated coin)

Appendix B**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2-10-2019
Lesson details: Maths Year 9 Set 3 - Lowest set 10 pupils 9 boys 1 girl
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) - Class started off unfocused as had cover teacher for first half of lesson - Lots of fidgeting - Shouting out - Very quick change in behavior when teacher came back
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) - Pupils were given task while teacher was out the classroom - Teacher started "proper lesson" halfway through when he returned - Pupils are told there will be a test in a few lessons, this topic will be on test
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) - Students were clear how to do first task, cover teacher was helping pupils when needed - Teacher has PowerPoint presentation to show new topic - Pupils are told exactly what to write in their books - Teacher went through examples of questions with children before giving pupils some to do alone - Pupils are clear in how to do task as teacher had given clear instructions
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) - Students are challenged during second half of lesson as new topic is started - Teacher reminds pupils to complete work - Teacher gives example of most difficult question they will receive and answers it with class (shows they'll be able to answer question individually)

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

- Teacher checks pupils' answers
- Teacher spoke about activity they completed last lesson to show that they didn't know they were doing activity "Degrees of Accuracy"

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

- Swinging on chairs
- Lower set majority boys
- Addressed class as "boys" even when there is one girl in classroom
- Lots of boys talking across classroom
- Girl sat at front of classroom not talking to anyone
- No hands up
- Boys had to be repeatedly reminded to do the work
- Teacher gave question but answered it himself

Appendix C**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 2-10-2019
Lesson details: Welsh Year 9 24 pupils
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) - Students very focused - No talking throughout starter task given
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) - Objectives given after starter activity - Pupils told they can play Kahoot if work well during lesson - If pupil is sat doing nothing teacher points out children to see if they need help or are finished - Pupils told they will be talking about using phones
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) - Starter activity - done in silence, pupils seem clear about what they are doing, teacher walking around checking pupils progress - Pupils given a worksheet to fill in - silence - Teacher given examples on board of words they can use - Answers given on board for pupils to check their answers against - Clear instructions given by teacher for main activity from white board
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) - Students are challenged by all lesson and teacher walked around helping individuals - Teacher went up to certain pupils addressing that they should only do certain ones - Given chance to expand on answers given if they have any extra information - Teacher asks pupils to repeat welsh words - Teacher writes word phonetically, so pupils know how to pronounce it - All pupils are asked questions throughout the lesson, need to stay engaged - Pupils asking for extra help with vocabulary

Assessment

How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

- Teacher picks pupils instead of hands up to check pupils understand
- Checks on children when explaining answers "... are you done?"
- Pointing children out to check they understand during activities
- Teacher walking around checking on pupils and checking their work
- Teacher checks progress and understanding by KAHOOT at end of lesson

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

- Seating Plan - Sat boy/girl
- Boy sat with head down - teacher says "wedi blino?" to address him lying down instead of telling off
- Boy confuses comma and apostrophe teacher says that they are the same but ones higher and ones lower and says nothing negative
- Boy repeats English back to teacher instead of welsh - girl shows him answer on his paper
- No hands up - answers shouted out or pupils chosen
- Individuals picked on throughout lesson
- Boy pronounced word wrong and teacher points out but says don't apologise just next time
- Boy gives French answer - teacher makes little joke with pupil
- Pupils point out spelling mistake on PowerPoint
- Pupils ask not to write it down but to say it out loud to teacher - Could be struggling or lazy?
- Teacher gets iPads out of cupboard for KAHOOT rather than pupils getting their phones out
- Girl and boy asked to go to the toilet, boy told no and girl told yes (boy keeps asking and is allowed)
- During KAHOOT boys put silly names and keep getting removed by teacher

Appendix D

OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES

(Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016))

Date: 26-09-2019
Lesson details: English Year 9 23 Pupils LSA present - Multiple ALN Weaker Class - Simplified work
Classroom culture (Are the students focused on learning?) - Fidgeting and lots of looking around - Not focused during beginning lesson - Lots of distracting behavior
Objectives (Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?) - Final project revealed - Key vocab given - Starter already on board and explained to class - Given handout for success criteria for essay
Direction (Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?) - Starter activity - clear about starter and it's done in silence, in preparation for final essay - Told that they will be writing an essay at the end of this topic - Pupils are given handout to make sure they are clear about essay - highlighted sheet to ALN students - Given clear essay plan - Introduction etc - White board slide showing what should be written in the introduction - Example of introduction is given on board - Pupils are given sentence starters to help improve writing
Access and challenge (Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?) - Students are challenged by starter, teacher had to do individual explaining to certain pupils again - Some pupils not paying attention don't look engaged in explanation - Due to mixed ability some pupils more challenged than others

Assessment

(How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?)

- Teacher checked understanding from last lesson with starter activity to assess the pupils understanding of the key vocabulary
- Teacher walking around and checking on pupil progression

Specifics / Critical Incidents

Are there particular telling moments and examples which it would be helpful to discuss?

- No hands up - pupils were shouting out answers
- Pupil Distraction - pupil was dancing in the corner with sunglasses on (teacher did not mention unseen or on purpose??)
- Pupil behaviour - lots of talking and dancing across the classroom, swinging on chair (not relevant to lesson)
- 5-minute time given (took longer)
- Whole class became disruptive (teacher told all class to stop)
- Pupil spoke to us to cause distractions
- Pupil got answer wrong, but teacher changed their answer to correct it rather than saying wrong and answering someone else
- No-one answered so teacher picked pupil of her choice
- Non-verbal communication - pupil gave a cheeky comment towards teacher and teacher gave pupil a look which the pupil then apologised for
- Non-verbal communication - pupils were talking so teacher sat in silence until pupils realised, she was waiting before carrying on with sentence
- Pupils began to pack up and fuss before told to

Appendix E

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

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 26-09-2019

Critical incident (focus): Gender Divide

Experience	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	- The lesson objectives were clear for the learners and they were able to get on with the task given - There was a clear gender divide in the classroom which played a big part in some of the distractive behavior that took place during the lesson.
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 aspects that went well were that learners were able to individually work on their artwork to their capability while having help individual help from the teacher. - The elements that were disappointing is the teacher didn't have a full view of the girls in the classroom and only commented on the boy's distractive behavior.
Evaluate <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>	- During my lessons I will try to individually track individual learners to ensure all learners are on track and nobody needs extra help. - I feel the cause of the disappointing element was that there were no seating plan arrangements in the classroom.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	- A solution to the issue is putting a boy/girl seating plan in place to ensure that pupils will be able to concentrate better by not being sat by their friends. - For my future classes I will plan seating plans to ensure that I will be able to grasp the attention of all my pupils and constantly have a full view of all learners.
Transformed experience	

Appendix F

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 02-10-2019

Critical incident (focus): Gender Divide

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	- The class was very small with 10 pupils which enabled extra support for the learners in the class. - The teacher had a clear relationship with the class. During the first half of the lesson they had a cover teacher and the learner's behavior completely changed when class teacher came back.
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 aspects that went well were that the learners were challenged throughout the lesson even though they were the bottom set. For example, the teacher gave example of difficult questions and completed them as a class. - The elements that were disappointing were that the class was majority boys with a 9-1 split.
Evaluate <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>	- During my lessons I will challenge the pupils as much as I can even if it means doing the more difficult questions as a class rather than individually. - I feel that a mix in gender may enable the boys in the class to improve a lot more as they may not be with their friends and a mix in gender often improves boys school scores etc.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	- A solution to the issue is splitting the sets with gender as well as ability to stop such a huge gender divide. - For my future classes I would like to try make sure my classes are even with gender as I will be able to mix up groups and try the learners working with new or different people.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix G

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 02-10-2019

Critical incident (focus): Gender

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	- The learners were very focused, and the teacher had complete control during all moments of the lesson. - The teacher gave clear objectives to the class and spoke about a reward game at the end of the lesson if good work was produced.
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 aspects that went well were that the learners were all engaged in the lesson and this could have been because of the boy/girl seating plan. - The elements that were disappointing were that during the reward game some of the learners were using silly names and messing around.
Evaluate <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>	- During my lessons I hope to engage my classes as much as this teacher did throughout the entire lesson. I will also use the boy/girl seating plan as I feel this worked very effectively in the lesson. - I feel that although the most disappointing element was disruptive behavior the teacher handled this extremely well and kept deleting their names and speaking to them individually without making a huge deal out of the situation.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	- I feel due to the nature of the reward game they were playing the only other possible solution to problem would have been to remove them from the game. - For my future classes I will stick to the boy/girl seating plan as the mix in gender provided a very engaged and positive classroom environment.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	

Appendix H

Yr Athrofa
Addysg a'r Dyniaethau
Education and Humanities

Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model

Date: 26-09-2019

Critical incident (focus): Disruptive Behavior

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	- The lesson objectives were clear for the learners and the teacher worked well to support mixed ability class as there were ALN learners within the lesson. - The teacher had a clear relationship with the class, and she was able to communicate non-verbally without having to raise her voice.
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 aspects that went well were that the learners were shown an end product to what their work should be like before starting the assessment. - The elements that were disappointing were that pupils were often fidgeting and displaying distractive behavior.
Evaluate <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>	- During my lessons I will try to notice disruptive behavior before it gets out of hand and into a much bigger situation. - I feel the cause of the disappointing element was that the teacher wanted to pick her battles with the class so ignored the small distractive behavior and focused on the bigger disruptive issues.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	- A solution to the issue is putting a boy/girl seating plan in place to ensure that pupils will be able to concentrate better by not being sat by their friends. - For my future classes I will plan seating plans to ensure that I will be able to grasp the attention of all my pupils and constantly have a full view of all learners.
<i>Transformed experience</i>	